

Emerging emotional terms in difficult times

Términos emocionales emergentes en tiempos difíciles

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Abstract

This article aims to show, from the lens of anthropology, the conditions under which ways of naming emotions arise in difficult times by drawing on two contemporary examples. This approach focuses on the discourse of the actors who produce meaning about emotions in relation to contemporary crises. Anthropology allows us to understand how emotions are formed by paying attention to the conditions of existence and the meanings that occur around them. It is interesting to observe how, in a crisis context, emotions can be rethought in relation to the social conditions of existence. The two contemporary examples taken here one is called languishing, made popular by the psychologist Adam Grant during COVID-19, and the other is about the emotions of the earth, a series of terms coined by the environmental philosopher Glenn Albrecht to respond affectively to the environmental crisis. These examples show that the meaning given to emotions is not given once and for all, but are located in particular socio-historical, geographical, and cultural conditions and is constructed by social actors.

Key words: Emotions; Crisis; Contemporary times; Languishing; Earth emotions.

Resumen

Este artículo pretende mostrar, desde la perspectiva de la antropología, las condiciones bajo las cuales surgen las formas de nombrar las emociones en tiempos difíciles, a partir de dos ejemplos contemporáneos. Este enfoque se centra en el discurso de los actores que producen significado sobre las emociones en relación con las crisis contemporáneas. La antropología nos permite comprender cómo se forman las emociones al prestar atención a las condiciones de existencia y a los significados que surgen a su alrededor. Es interesante observar cómo, en un contexto de crisis, las emociones pueden repensarse en relación con las condiciones sociales de existencia. Los dos ejemplos contemporáneos que se presentan aquí son el denominado languidecimiento, popularizado por el psicólogo Adam Grant durante la COVID-19, y el otro se centra en las emociones de la tierra, una serie de términos acuñados por el filósofo ambiental Glenn Albrecht para responder afectivamente a la crisis ambiental. Estos ejemplos muestran que el significado que se otorga a las emociones no se da de una vez por todas, sino que se ubica en condiciones sociohistóricas, geográficas y culturales particulares y es construido por actores sociales.

Palabras clave: Emociones; Crisis; Tiempos contemporáneos; Languidecimiento; Emociones de la tierra.

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Anthropology helps us understand that the meanings of emotions are not fixed but change over time and place. This shift in meaning is becoming particularly visible with the emergence of new terms to describe emotions that draw their meaning from the concerns and priorities of the contemporary world. An anthropological perspective invites us to examine emotions through the lens of context, taking into consideration the dynamics at work. This entails considering the socio-historical, cultural, and spatial frameworks, social relations, power relations, and ideological frameworks that contribute to the creation of the meanings of emotions. Understanding emotions by being mindful of the context also involves shedding light on the negotiations of meaning and their questioning by social actors.

Temporal dynamics are transforming the way we experience, interpret, and express emotions. Contemporary crises—whether environmental, health-related, or sociopolitical—have given rise to affective experiences—both subjective and collective—for which there were previously no linguistic qualifications. This is how new terms have emerged, such as *flygskam*, cave syndrome, and black joy. *Flygskam* is a Swedish word meaning “flight shame”, coined in 2018¹ to denounce the harmful effects of this practice on the environment. The term *cave syndrome*² refers to the anxiety of leaving home due to the prolonged confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. *Black joy* refers to the expression and resistance of Black people to overcome pain and oppression, where the experience of Black joy becomes a political force for emancipation (Johnson, 2015). In this context, language becomes a catalyst for changes in sensitivity and morality in the face of

contemporary challenges.

A recent study entitled “Neo-emotions: an interdisciplinary research agenda” (Cottingham, 2024) draws attention to these new terms that are situated at a macro level and that emerge in response to the felt experience of different new contexts. The author mentions many neo-emotions while emphasizing the richness of this object of study, which is situated in contemporary changes such as digitalization, global capitalism, crises, social movements concerning gender, racism, and environmental issues. The author suggests research questions to examine this object and invites the social sciences to produce knowledge on this little-explored phenomenon. Although Cottingham proposes a research agenda for psychology, anthropology, sociology, and history, her approach is rather sociological. Indeed, it considers emotions from a Bourdieusian perspective in the sense that they are considered as social practices in articulation with the concept of cultural capital, which includes emotional capital, referring, among other things, to the capacity to recognize and regulate one's emotions. Possessing emotional capital could, in such a way, reinforce the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. It thus invites us to explore the conditions that shape these processes in relation to power dynamics and social inequalities.

Another study, “Feelings of (eco)-grief and sorrow: climate activists as emotion entrepreneurs”, by Leonie Holthaus (2023), focuses on emerging emotions through the case of ego-grief, a psychological state experienced in response to the environmental crisis. Similar to Cottingham, Holthaus adopts a Bourdieusian perspective and focuses on how environmental activists—who possess the appropriate cultural capital—position themselves as emotion entrepreneurs by introducing new emotions and rules for expressing them.

1 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidebanis/2019/04/26/will-flygskam-or-flight-shame-be-the-buzzword-of-this-years-summer-holiday/>

2 <https://damorementalhealth.com/what-is-cave-syndrome/>

The present article is a continuation of this scholarly work. The first study (Cottingham, 2024) deals with neo-emotions from a generalist and programmatic perspective and is part of a sociological approach, while the second (Holthaus, 2023) focuses on a specific group, activists, from a sociological and political perspective. The study I present here is part of an anthropological approach —although it also includes sociological perspectives— and seeks to understand how the concerns and priorities of an era contribute to the construction of the meaning of emotions.

According to Aranguren (2017), many emotions can be felt without there being linguistic terms to name them. According to him, a limited range of emotions, however, is named. In the first case, the emotion can be felt but not articulated verbally, and sometimes it can be limited to the expression of certain physiological aspects of the feeling. The author, therefore, shows that emotions can exist beyond language. This raises the question of whether a feeling is named when it is relevant in a context and becomes socially shared. Temporalities can create conditions for the emergence of new affective experiences that need to be qualified to be recognized and give meaning to the experience lived individually and collectively.

From the perspective of the linguist Louis Guilbert (1973), neologisms emerge in response to the need to designate new social realities. “In fact, language, and especially the lexicon, reflect the general movement of society” (Guilbert, 1973, p. 28). “A new sensibility, a certain way of envisioning life, an aspiration for change - these are realities as precise as any manufactured object and they deem to be named” (Guilbert, 1973, p. 25). The author emphasizes the idea that language plays an important role in naming new experiences that are related to social transformations. In this sense, the study of neologisms can be a clue to understanding the social and cultural transformations specific to an era.

Anthropologists and sociologists have shown that in Western societies, the meanings of emotions come from medicine, science, psychology, philosophy, or religion and morality (Lutz, 1988; McCarthy, 1989, 1994). Historian Barbara Rosenwein (2006) called “emotional communities” social groups that share common expressive styles, ways of thinking, values, and goals. This article does not address the aspect of the appropriation of new emotional terms by social groups but limits itself to the study of their condition of emergence.

For McCarthy (1989), emotions are experiences felt according to the context and reactions to situations; they are social, cultural, and historical phenomena. They are shaped by events, interactions, language, values, meanings, and the broader context. In other words, they are embedded in cultural and social processes. According to the author, the meanings we give to emotions depend on the forms of knowledge that prevail at a given moment in history. In other words, emotions emerge in the circumstances of a time, and the need to interpret them is based on the knowledge specific to that time. If in the past, religion influenced the way emotions were interpreted (the fear of hell, for example), whereas today, according to McCarthy, it is different psychological knowledge that gives meaning to our feelings. The author emphasizes that knowledge about emotions is constructed in relation to the experiences lived in different historical periods. This knowledge is constructed in dialogue with collective concerns. McCarthy shows that in the 19th century, a group of practitioners and educators (doctors, teachers, social workers, etc.) emerged and participated, in the name of the common good, in disseminating new knowledge about feelings and educating the feelings and social relations of the masses, in response to the social changes of this period.

Thus, following McCarthy, when seeking to understand emerging emotions, it is important to focus on the actors who produce new knowledge, the meanings of this new knowledge, as well as the times and reasons for their emergence. Furthermore, the perspective of anthropologists Abu-Lughod & Lutz (1990) on discourses on emotions is relevant here. This perspective implies that language is a vector of emotions, and the way in which we talk about them reveals cultural conceptions, whether it is the conception of the person, social relations, or power relations. Other researchers go further in defining the link between emotions and discourse. “At the level of ‘discourse’, emotions evolve in relation to social and cultural categorizations, associations, imaginations, interpretations, and evaluation” (von Poser et al., 2019, p. 243). This approach allows us to understand how discourses on emotions do not develop in a vacuum, but are linked in multiple ways to a social, cultural, historical, and political context. The premise of this article is to consider the emergence of neologisms around emotions as new interpretive frameworks in response to social and cultural changes, or shifts in meaning, caused by contemporary crises.

The purpose here is to examine the processes of constructing the meaning of emotions, focusing on:

- contexts: that is, the conditions that favor the emergence of new terms for emotions, in other words, when do these terms appear and for what reasons?

- discourses: how is the construction of these terms justified in response to social conditions, what logics constitute these discourses, what evaluations, imaginaries, and associations of ideas are mobilized in these discourses, how do words convey new meanings, and what constitute the emotions described?

- actors: who produces these terms?

I will proceed with an analysis based on the definition of emotional terms by two psychologists and a philosopher, actors who promote new interpretations and perceptions of certain affective experiences that are part of a contemporary temporal framework. This analysis is based on a scientific article written by a psychologist, Corey Keyes (2002), a press article written by another psychologist, Adam Grant (2021), and a book on emotions written by a philosopher, Glenn Albrecht (2019). I will describe the way in which the authors define new emotional terms and place them in the contemporary context, thus creating new emotional meanings and norms. First, I will analyze the popularization of the term “languishing” that emerged during the COVID-19 period, and second, I will draw on different terms from Glenn Albrecht’s book, “The Emotions of the Earth”, in response to the environmental crisis. These two cases allow us to understand the emergence of new meanings of emotions in relation to contemporary crises.

Languishing

The etymological meaning of this word was “fail in strength, weaken”, “grow dull”, “less intense”.³ This concept was put forward in the 2000s by sociologist Corey Keyes, who described it as follows: “Whereas the presence of mental health is described as flourishing, the absence of mental health is characterized as languishing in life” (Keyes, 2002, p. 208). Indeed, in his article “The mental health continuum: from languishing to flourishing in life”, Keyes (2002) associates mental health with the ability to be “productive” and “functional”. On the other hand, people who are in a state described as “languishing” are likely to develop mental disorders. These cause

economic loss, making the people concerned unfit for work. “Languishing is associated with poor emotional health, with high limitations of daily living, and with a high likelihood of severe number (i.e. 6 or more) of lost days and work cutback that respondents attribute to their mental health” (Keyes 2002, p. 217). The author suggests the promotion of mental health prevention policies that should not be limited to reducing mental disorders but to improving well-being.

Keyes's work on *flourishing* and *languishing* contributes to constructing cultural frameworks where the former is considered desirable while the latter must be resisted. This suggests an emotional rule where personal fulfillment must be achieved. The author thus contributes to promoting a functionalist understanding of the psychological state and emotions, which could be mobilized to improve individuals' abilities to work. In this way, Keyes's approach contributes to the construction of a politics of affects where certain emotional states are favored to the detriment of others. His work is part of the positive psychology movement, which encourages the development of individuals' skills with a view to improving their well-being. The devaluation of languishing on the one hand and the valorization of flourishing on the other could be part of a historical moment where new concerns are emerging in economically prosperous Western societies. Furthermore, to maintain the efficiency of these economies and the contribution of individuals to them, languishing is considered an undesirable emotional state, which must be addressed to avoid depression, which is equivalent to an inability to work. This analysis highlights that scientific work on emotions can be shaped by ideologies.

It is interesting to observe how the meanings of emotions can be embedded in different temporal frameworks and be redefined according to these frameworks. As a reminder, neologisms concern both the production of new words but also the assignment of new meanings to already existing terms. In the case of languishing that I will describe here, it is the second case.

The term languishing was popularized by American psychologist Adam Grant in an article entitled “There's a Name for the Blah You're Feeling: It's Called Languishing”, published in the New York Times in April 2021. Grant describes it as an emotional state that has been prevalent during the pandemic. He thus gives it a new meaning by placing it in the context of the COVID crisis. In his article, the author considers this emotion to be characteristic of the 21st century.

3 Barnhart, Robert K., Sol Steinmetz (1988), The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology, H. W. Wilson Co., Bronx, NY https://archive.org/details/barnhartdictiona0000unse_i0f4/page/574/mode/2up?q=languish

This state is characterized by a "sense of stagnation and emptiness", "without joy, without purpose." According to Grant, COVID-19 has not only affected bodies and caused deaths but has also generated states of emotional suffering. One of the conditions of the pandemic was uncertainty, which caused anxiety. This created the fertile ground for a chronic presence of the state described as languishing. Adam Grant draws attention to the trend in contemporary psychology that emphasizes the idea that naming an emotion contributes to its regulation.

By reexamining the meaning of this emotion, the psychologist Adam Grant challenges an emotional norm that seeks to mask and repress the expression of a state of demoralization. Grant affirms that naming languishing: "it could give us a socially acceptable response to "How are you?" Instead of saying "Great!" or "Fine", imagine if we answered, "Honestly, I'm languishing". It would be a refreshing foil for toxic positivity — that quintessentially American pressure to be upbeat at all times" (Grant, 2021, p. 2). Indeed, the author, by attributing a name to an emotional state that is felt collectively, encourages the legitimization of the expression of a feeling usually disqualified in a context where the dominant culture values emotions described as positive and relegates the expression of malaise to the private or pathological sphere. Thus, this example highlights the role of social transformations in the change of meanings surrounding emotions. The conditions of existence, along with the adaptation of social expectations to these conditions, play a role in how their interpretations are contested and negotiated by social actors. These actors contribute to redefining what is socially acceptable in light of changes in social reality, thus participating in the construction of new emotional norms. This social process allows for the recognition of certain affective experiences by reexamining them in relation to contemporary challenges, which makes it possible for individuals to readjust emotional expressions and to situate them in the circumstances of the time. The emotional neologisms proposed by Glenn Albrecht also illustrate the way in which terms of emotions emerge in response to difficult times. These neologisms bring another dimension to the construction of the meaning of emotions, which is part of the intersection between affective experiences generated by contemporary conditions of existence and an aspiration to drive social change by mobilizing emotions.

Earth emotions

Glenn Albrecht is an Australian environmental philosopher.⁴ The book "Earth Emotions: New Words for a New World" was written in response to the environmental crisis, in which he seeks to name emotions in the face of this crisis to propose new interpretative frameworks. To do this, he drew on both his own sensibilities and his trajectory, which shaped his response to the Anthropocene and the aspiration to find ways out. He defines Earth emotions as: "the particular human emotional responses we have to the scale and pace of ecological and environmental change. I call these responses 'Earth emotions'" (Albrecht, 2019, p. IX). By creating these neologisms, he seeks to make visible affective experiences related to the environmental crisis that are unnamed. Intending to build a new relationship with the earth, he introduces the idea of "secular spirituality", which he calls "the ghedeist".⁵ He draws on the indigenous traditions of Australian Aborigines because of their long relationship with the land and their ability to cope with loss, both through colonialism and environmental degradation due to climate change. He also draws on environmental thinkers to construct his typologies. According to him, ancient wisdom is not sufficient to respond to the current crisis, and he calls for a revolution in scientific and cultural thinking around symbiosis.

Albrecht presents the Anthropocene as self-destructive. In this context, humanity is experiencing an "emotional war" that translates into a tension between, on the one hand, the forces of creation—which refer to regeneration and hope—and the forces of destruction—which refer to despair and loss. Albrecht speaks of "emotional death" to describe our relationship with nature, where the Anthropocene has contributed to a gradual separation between humans and their environment, where some individuals no longer react to the disappearance of ecosystems. According to him, technology exacerbates this

4 On the back cover of the French edition - Albrecht, G. (2020). *Les émotions de la Terre: Des nouveaux mots pour un nouveau monde*. Editions: Les liens qui libèrent - the author is presented as "the world specialist in the study of emotions felt towards the Earth" and his book as "the culmination of a lifetime of research".

5 "ghedeist (the) "The awareness of a spirit or force that holds all life together; a feeling of profound symbiotic interconnectedness in all life between the self and other beings (human and nonhuman) and their gathering together to live within shared Earth places and spaces. It is a secular feeling of intense affinity and sense of mutual empathy for other beings" (Albrecht, 2019, p. 199).

disconnection and diverts attention from natural phenomena. For him, the Anthropocene disrupts our emotional relationship with the earth. Earth emotions, which he calls "psychoterratic emotions", refer to the experiences and perceptions, positive or negative, that we can have with the earth. He distinguishes between terraphthoric emotions (destructive and linked to defense and survival) and terranascient emotions (emotions linked to cooperation, care, and the preservation of life). The domination of the earth without concern for its preservation reflects the predominance of terraphthoric emotions. This is accentuated, according to him, by the break with ancient spiritual traditions which focus on an interdependence between humans, nature, and the cosmos.

He develops the concept of "solastalgia", ⁶ which refers to a time marked by distress due to the loss of beloved places. According to him, we are in the "era of solastalgia", considered a pandemic marked by depression in the face of environmental degradation, which he calls *tierracide*. The development of the new emotional terms he proposes, allows us, according to him, to renew terranascient emotions in order to cultivate a relationship with the Earth in which it can flourish.

Glenn Albrecht defines emotions as forces that drive us to action. He coined terms to describe negative psychoterratic states related to the Anthropocene, such as *terrafurie*, *tierratraumata*, *meteroanxiety*, and *tierracide*. These negative psychoterratic states describe emotional reactions related to the separation between humans and nature, a separation that is characteristic of the Anthropocene. According to him, these terms help to account for the emergence of negative emotional states.

Terrafurie, or earth rage, describes the extreme anger of people who perceive the self-destructive tendencies of industrial and technological society but feel powerless to change these tendencies. This anger, which is directed at those perceived as destroying the earth, is, according to Albrecht, a protective rather than an aggressive anger. This emotion is likely to escalate as environmental conditions deteriorate. It is already experienced by Indigenous peoples who see their lands and cultures destroyed. The term *tierratrauma* refers to the trauma that can be felt due to a sudden negative event that contributes to a change in the environment. This event could be a devastating fire or the destruction of a familiar

landscape due to construction or an oil spill. According to Albrecht, with the increase of disasters due to the progress of global warming, future generations are at risk at exposing themselves to situations that provoke this psychological state. The term *meteoranxiety* refers to an anxious state caused by weather hazards, which continuously provide information on weather forecasts and warnings. Climate change contributes to the emergence of this state, due to extreme weather events. According to Albrecht, this state can manifest itself due to a lack of rain in a drought-stricken region. This psychological state is felt primarily by people who live in areas at risk of flooding or fires. *Tierracide* refers to the total destruction of the biosphere to the point of rendering the Earth incapable of supporting life. This term represents the final stage of the Anthropocene, as large-scale changes threaten life on Earth. According to the author, in order to avoid this catastrophe, it is important to face these challenges through a revolution, that is, by building a new narrative or imaginary to promote sustainable evolution within the Earth's ecosystem.

Glenn Albrecht coined the concept of the *Symbiocene* in response to the Anthropocene, characterized by the destruction, exploitation, and domination of humans on Earth. The *Symbiocene* is considered a new era characterized by symbiosis and harmony between humanity and living things. This concept has its origins in the symbiotic processes of life. According to the author, in the Anthropocene, negative psychoterratic emotions dominate due to the destruction of environments, while in the *Symbiocene*, positive psychoterratic emotions are favored. Thus, the emotions that can support the *Symbiocene* according to Albrecht are *sumbiophilia*, *soliphilia*, *eutierria*, *endemophilia*, *tierraphilia*.

Sumbiophilia refers to the love of living together and shows that life, even at the level of organisms, is interconnected. He gives the example of our body, which hosts trillions of bacteria and fungi, emphasizing that this symbiotic relationship influences our health and our emotions. This new understanding of interconnections could, according to him, help build new practices and discourses. This change of perspective could awaken an instinctive love of life. *Soliphilia* is a political concept that refers to the love and political responsibility we can feel towards the places we love. This feeling would create a sense of unity and solidarity in favor of life and combat the harmful policies of the Anthropocene.

Albrecht seeks to move beyond a right-left divide to establish a global commitment to ecosystems. *Endemophilia*, which combines the roots *endemia* (to inhabit) and *philia* (love), refers to the love of a place

⁶ "I define "solastalgia" as the pain or distress caused by the ongoing loss of solace and the sense of desolation connected to the present state of one's home and territory" (Albrecht, 2019, p. 38).

and its inhabitants. It is a unique and irreplaceable place and the deep attachment it arouses. This feeling also carries the potential for solastalgia, since deep love for the place can be undermined if it is lost. Eutierra is a psychological state that refers to a connection with the earth, where the boundaries between the self and the rest of nature are erased, generating a feeling of inner fulfillment. Albrecht seeks to move beyond a right-left political divide to establish a global commitment to ecosystems. Endemophilia, which combines the roots *endemia* (to inhabit) and *philia* (love), refers to the love of a place and its inhabitants. It is a unique and irreplaceable place and the deep attachment it arouses. This feeling also carries the potential for solastalgia, since deep love for the place can be undermined if it is lost. Eutierra is a psychological state that refers to a connection with the earth, where the boundaries between the self and the rest of nature are erased, generating a feeling of inner fulfillment. This term was constructed from the word *eu* (good), *tierra* (earth) and *ei* a suffix used to designate positive psychoterratic conditions. Glenn Albrecht draws inspiration here from his own experience where he observes birds to the point of being drawn into their presence, a state he considers close to a secular spirituality. He compares eutierra to the "oceanic feeling" in reference to a mystical experience or a feeling described in psychoanalysis. For Albrecht, in a world where the connection to nature is absent, it becomes a priority to rediscover this state. Glenn Albrecht's neologisms emerge in a context where the usual frameworks of categorization are challenged in the face of an unprecedented event like the Anthropocene.

The event and the shift in intelligibility

In the article "Les sciences sociales face à l'événement" Alban Bensa and Eric Fassin (2002) question the concept of event in the social sciences. This concept has been eclipsed by that of structure, duration, and regularity. The authors draw attention to the need to consider this concept because it reflects how social transformations occur through the modification of categories of thought or the emergence of new social and political issues. They do not separate the event from the structure because an event is part of a socio-historical context, which can constitute a moment of crystallization where underlying tensions become visible. We can consider the novel nature of emotional terms as phenomena that are part of a context that creates the conditions for their emergence. After having

presented, in the preceding paragraphs, these three cases of construction of meaning around emotions, the question that arises is to know which political, economic, and social events influence the production of emotions.

The concept of languishing, according to C. Keyes (2002) allows us to understand the emergence of a new category of thought that is embedded in a specific social, economic, and cultural context. In his article, the author emphasizes that individuals who experience a state of languishing are less productive and more at risk of developing more serious disorders. Considering languishing from its economic consequences suggests a consideration of the human being from their economic contribution, which requires performance. Thus, the state of languishing refers less to a subjective state than to a criterion of employability and ability to work. In this functionalist approach to psychological health, languishing is presented in relation to flourishing, which is the ideal psychological state. The promotion of flourishing can be seen as an injunction to perform. By drawing attention to languishing and its challenges, Keyes makes this topic visible and advocates for its consideration by public health. These terms emerge in the context of the development of positive psychology, which consists of focusing not only on mental illness but also on what can contribute to good mental health and fulfillment. The emergence of these new emotional terms may also stem from transformations in work that challenge the psychological endurance of individuals. The emphasis placed on personal fulfillment may also be a reflection of prosperous societies that are no longer preoccupied with material hardship. This example illustrates the assertion that the conditions of existence as well as the ideologies that predominate, structure acceptable and undesirable emotions.

This concept, which was introduced by Keyes in 2002, takes on a different meaning in the context of the pandemic in 2021. It has become popular thanks to psychologist Adam Grant. The Covid-19 pandemic, as a global event, has contributed to profoundly changing the conditions of existence and work. This context has favored the emergence of another meaning of languishing, or rather, it has allowed the concept put forward by Keyes to be circumstantial. The conditions of weariness and uncertainty generated by the pandemic have constituted an unprecedented collective affective experience, for which there were no specific terms, and the terms depression and anxiety were not considered appropriate. The case

of languishing, as explained by Grant, illustrates the theory of neologisms for which new terms or new meanings are assigned to existing terms to meet new social needs. Indeed, the term languishing, which designated a state of loss of motivation, stagnation, withdrawal, was a collective state shared by many people during the pandemic. Thus, the concept of languishing did not emerge ex-nihilo but was mobilized due to the conditions created by the pandemic. This term was then taken up in the media, which provide advice on how to overcome this psychological state.⁷ Thus, the pandemic constituted a shift in intelligibility with long-standing representations in the USA, where the expression of emotions related to laziness and lack of motivation were not socially acceptable. The pandemic made the expression of an emotion related to depression acceptable. This example shows how a crisis like the pandemic can structure and revisit acceptable emotions in light of the specific conditions of this event.

Glenn Albrecht's proposals for new emotional terms to rethink our relationship with the earth show that the ecological crisis is contributing to the upheaval of categories of thought and affective experiences. Albrecht's neologisms show that the ecological crisis is challenging our lived experience and our relationship with the earth. This has created new lived experiences for which there are no qualifiers. Albrecht, by creating new terms to name these experiences, but also to name those that are desirable to respond to contemporary ecological challenges, reflects the need for new emotional categories in this context. Faced with a loss of familiar frameworks engendered by the environmental crisis, Glenn Albrecht offers a structure of intelligibility to qualify both painful feelings, such as solastalgia, related to the consequences of environmental degradation, and emotions that promote a constructive connection to the earth as a possible solution to this crisis. In this sense, the production of neologisms, such as *sumbiophilia*, can be seen as a proposal for collective action with a view to repairing the world. The invention of vocabulary, such as solastalgia, can also play the role of an act of resistance and a political act that consists of directing subjective experiences towards activist actions to denounce interventions that can have destructive consequences on the environment.

Glenn Albrecht can be seen as an *emotion entrepreneur* (Holthaus, 2023) insofar as he promotes ways of responding to climate change. Holthaus shows how environmental activists possess cultural capital that allows them to promote new emotional rules. Glenn Albrecht, as an emotion entrepreneur,

lays the foundations for a new imaginary that is situated in contemporary concerns to establish a means of action based on priorities to address the crisis. While Holthaus highlights cultural capital in the production of such emotional norms, it is also important to highlight the biographical and subjective dimension of the author, who claims to have drawn his inspiration for the production of this new lexicon from his trajectory, his sensitivity, and the environment in which he grew up. Like Aranguren, who reminds us that there are affective experiences that have no name, contemporary living conditions generate new feelings. Cultural capital is not the only factor that allowed Glenn Albrecht to propose this new lexicon, but the process of producing emotional neologisms was also made possible by the shift in intelligibility generated by the challenges related to climate change, as well as by his subjective reaction to this advent.

Conclusion

Unlike the way emotions have been studied from a constructivist perspective that focuses on the long term and continuity, the approach adopted was focused on the construction of emotions in relation to rapid changes. While the former have focused on social norms, learning, transmission, and comparison (Lutz, 1988; Abu-Lughod, 2016; Briggs, 1970; Rosaldo, 1983; Geertz, 1959), the latter have focused on contemporary crises and social changes in a globalized world. The traditional approach to the cultural construction of emotions in anthropology has examined how societies shape their relationship to emotions. The approach to contemporary issues has focused instead on how the meanings of emotions are renewed in response to contemporary crises and social and cultural changes.

We have seen throughout this article that what shaped the production of new emotional terms was a set of conditions, associations of ideas, interpretations, ideological frameworks, individual trajectories, and subjectivities. In the cases studied here, following a pragmatist perspective, we can consider the emergence of new emotional terms as a response to new problems, which contributes to the creation of new meanings or cultural frameworks to provoke action. The production of emotional neologisms reflects the need to adjust to emerging social realities.

On the one hand, the meaning of emotions derives from the dominant knowledge of a society and lived experiences, and on the other hand, the ways of thinking and naming emotions in Euro-American societies are located in religion, intellectual traditions (such as philosophy, literature), and professions (such

⁷ <https://www.verywellhealth.com/what-is-languishing-5181172>

as those of doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists) (McCarthy, 1989; Lutz, 1988). Just as in the 19th century, experts proposed meanings to educate emotions in the face of the social changes of the time (McCarthy, 1989), the contemporary era produces its own experts who propose emotional models to respond to contexts that generate new experiences for which existing meanings are incompatible or non-existent.

Indeed, the production of knowledge about emotions in Euro-American societies is not limited to experts as legitimate authorities. The media participate in the dissemination and popularization of terms related to emotions (e.g., emotional intelligence). It can also occur through social movements or individuals.⁸ Moreover, as mentioned in this article, communities with their own emotional styles (Rosenwein, 2006) produce and mobilize new emotional concepts, such as flight shame, for example. In this sense, it may be interesting to study the communities or individuals who appropriate these new emotional terms. Australian artist Jenny Brown⁹ draws on the concepts developed by Glenn Albrecht and applies them to her personal experience, which, through her work, embodies the concept of solastalgia, develops a critical reflection on the Anthropocene, and proposes an orientation towards the Symbiocene. The association *Réseau des professionnels de l'accompagnement face à l'urgence écologique* (Network of Professionals for Support in the Face of the Ecological Emergency) based in France brings together psychologists, psychotherapists, doctors, and coaches who seek to respond to "new ecological suffering resulting from the degradation of our ecosystem, such as eco-anxiety, solastalgia, and ecological grief".¹⁰ One of the association's co-founders,¹¹ a psychotherapist, specializes in supporting individuals and groups experiencing solastalgia. It would be relevant to explore how new emotional terms drive discourses and practices such as these. It may be interesting to seek not only to understand how these emotional terms are appropriated, but also if and how they are challenged or negotiated by social actors.

8 Koenig, J. (2021). *The dictionary of obscure sorrows*. Simon and Schuster. J. Koenig, a writer, has created new words for emotions to describe different kinds of feelings for which there were no words based on Latin, English, French, German, Italian and Ancient Greek.

9 <http://jennybrownjenny.com/collaborations/hitchhikers-guide-to-the-symbiocene/>

10 <https://eco-anxieux.fr/rafue-un-reseau-daide-pour-accompagner-les-eco-anxieux/>

11 <https://www.solastalgie.fr/mon-approche-de-la-psychotherapie/>

Furthermore, another question that could be asked is whether the emergence of new emotional terms due to contemporary affective experiences (such as climate change or the pandemic) reflects the gestation of a globalized emotional culture, albeit partial and heterogeneous, whose meanings are transmitted in a fragmentary and diffuse manner across different sociocultural contexts?

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