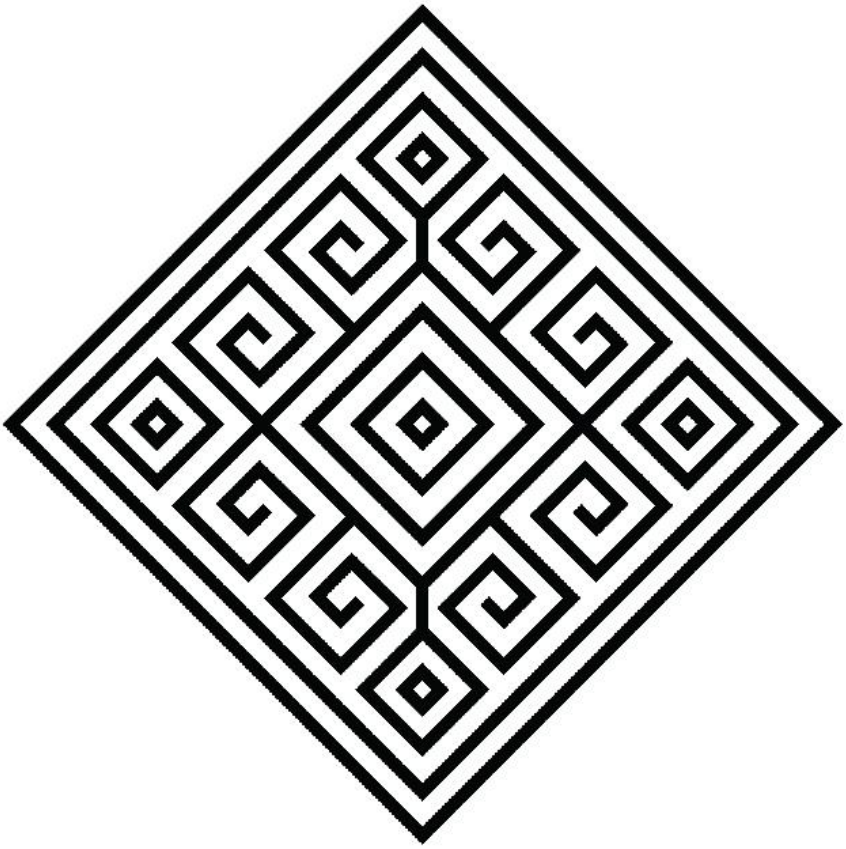
TOWARDS A BUEN VIVIR-CENTRIC DESIGN:

Decolonising artisanal design with Mayan weavers from the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico

A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy



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“Quisieron enterrarnos pero no sabían éramos semillas”

(They tried to bury us. They didn’t know we were seeds)

Mexican proverb

“Muchos dicen que rescatan la cultura, pero la cultura nos rescata a nosotros”

(Many claim they rescue culture, but culture rescues us)

El Coyote, danzante Mexica

Abstract

The highlands of Chiapas is a Mayan region in southeast Mexico recognised for its richness in artisanal textiles. The intervention of hegemonic design in textile traditions has been used as a developmental strategy, following market-driven approaches in a field known as "*diseño artesanal*" (artisanal design). However, the role of artisans as producers of designers' creations, the lack of reference to the cultural context, the unequal relationships of power, and the colonisation of Indigenous knowledge is a critical concern.

This research aims to contribute to the decolonisation of artisanal design through *Buen Vivir* (good living, collective well-being), and the recognition of Indigenous design. At the same time, it challenges inequalities in the Mexican context with those in the conventional design field. In a similar manner to the concept of to *Buen Vivir*, *Lekil Kuxlejal* (a fair and dignified life) from the Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal people, is explored through visual-digital-sensorial ethnography and co-design alongside Mayan weavers whose work demonstrates alternatives to textile artisanal design from a community perspective. The wider project seeks to develop a foundation for a context-based, non-Western/Indigenous design from the Global South.

The study is rooted in *jolobil*, an ancient precolonial textile tradition known as backstrap loom weaving. Using *jolobil* as a research metaphor and methodology, a *yosotros* approach (*Yo+Nosotros*) weaves embodiment, *sentipensar* (feeling-thinking or sensing-thinking), and *corazonar* (reasoning and feeling with the heart) with decolonial theory, design research and co-design from the Global South. Further, drawing on Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies such as *Buen Vivir* and *Zapatismo* the study proffers a new approach to textiles as resistance, based on Mayan *cosmovisión* (vision of the cosmos), contributing to the collective well-being of artisanal communities. As a result, a central proposal of this study is a *Buen Vivir*-centric design model, the guiding principle for ethical and fair collaboration which, above all else, respects the *autonomía* of the community towards *Lekil Kuxlejal*.

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Attestation of authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

July 3rd, 2020

Signature Date

Acknowledgements

El telar de cintura or *jolobil* is a collective weaving practice intertwining different threads using the body as support, and most importantly, putting the heart into the task. In a similar manner to *jolobil***,** this research is the result of intertwining stories, knowledges and experiences with people of great heart, who selflessly shared them with me. Thank you all for being part of this collective fabric, ¡*mil gracias*! *kolaval, kia ora***.**

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Chi'iltak ta komon kolavalik ti laj a chanu'm tasikun, laj a vak' vekun ta ilel jabijilike, chiuk ti laj a vak'vekun ta k'ak'alike li sk'anelal ja vo'onik tasventa li jolobile. Chiuk no'oxtok laj a chanu'mtasikun ti ja'no'ox ta sk'anelal ko'ontik tas pasku'untik li k'usi ja'tajk'antik ta jpastik' ech'ele, ja'no'ox mi lajch'unbetik smantal li ko'ontike. Jnatik lek li antsetike xu'ku'untik k'alal mojel volol tsobol chixanav'echel tasventa tajk'eltik lijkuxlejtike. Kolavalik tijmojel lajpastik ech'el li am'telal sventa ko-riseño li tasjunul ja vo'onik la am'tejike. Mary kolaval ti laj a vak'vunkutik ta ch'om li yut a nae, mojel volol tsobol ji ech'ku'untik chiuk ja chi'iltak tanak'lej: Cristi, Tere, Lucy, Juana, Petrona, Pascuala, kolavalik ti jun ko'ontik lijtseinutik k'alal lij am'tejutike, ti laj jelbebatik ti loil a'yejetik ta junantale. Kolaval Mary ti laj a chanum'tasun ta jolobile ti tas lekil ja vo'on la chanum'tasune, Lola kolaval ti laj a chinunkutik' ech'el tas jelum'tasel li loile. Karla kolaval ti ich'el javak'ojbe yipal cha tsom' ech'el li ja chi'iltak ta am'tel chiuk no'oxtok li tasjunul ja vo'on chak'el ech'el li am'telaletik sventa lek xbat li ja kuxlejik chiuk ja chi'iltake, cha vaktailel li cha tunes li ja bijil chiuk ja chi'iltake ja' te taxvinaj li ja k'anoj li k'usi ja'chapas ech'ele. Kolavalik ta ja tekelik na'oj li tas junlejal ja vo'onik la am'tejik lajelbebatik k'op nop'bentik ta ko'ol, xkalveba kolaval jo'on Frida, chiuk mek kolaval.

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Preamble: My voice in the background story

I am a woman and mother from the Global South, born and raised in the state of Chiapas, Mexico. Since childhood, my family and I have often visited San Cristóbal de las Casas, a picturesque city surrounded by hills, that maintains its Spanish colonial layout and architecture, with red tile rooves, cobblestone streets, and wrought iron balconies, often strewn with flowers. This city is still considered the culture capital of the state due to its history and Indigenous population.

Visiting the *mercado* (market) of Santo Domingo was an important part of our weekend trips. This outdoor market remains a colourful display of Indigenous crafts surrounding the beautiful eponymous church, and its side chapel *Templo de la Caridad*. The stalls are filled with creative and ancestral traditions such as textiles, embroidery, saddlery, basketry, jewellery, and stones. Over the years, I became consciously aware of how the motifs, colours and styling of the displayed garments were evolving. I also started to notice the emergence of crafts from other Latin American countries, now contrasting with mass-produced pieces from Mexico, Latin America and Asia. I started my studies as an industrial designer, and these changes became increasingly evident, further piquing my interest in the development, quality, making and meaning of crafts. It turned into an obsession. I regret not keeping all of the garments acquired since I was a child, or at least not taking pictures of them to retain a visual record of the evolution.

After graduating and working for a couple of years, I moved to Spain to do a master's degree in design management and product development. In the coloniser's land, I questioned many things about identity, race, ethnicity, gender roles, social inequalities, migration, and colonisation, amongst others; it was a face-to-face encounter with my "otherness". Until that point, I had been a middle-class Mexican *mestiza* woman. Living in Europe made me discover that I was a Latina, a "*Sudaca*" (pejorative term for South Americans), and a migrant, and I had to unlearn the conditioned "pursuit of civility" and make a firm decision to root myself better in my own land and culture.

Back in Mexico, I got my first job in design education, married, and continued to "follow the script" for a woman of my age and socio-economic status. But I dreamt of collaborating with Indigenous communities to "help them improve" their work in

things like quality, standardisation, and the creation of new products that were more suitable to a contemporary lifestyle. I was certain design could impact their crafts and communities in a positive way, and because of this, I wanted to co-ordinate designer-artisan collaborations around the world. This led me to apply for a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) scholarship for the training programme in Modern Design and Traditional Craftsmanship in Japan, which I was fortunate to obtain. In 2009, I spent nine months under the tutorship of Yamamoto sensei from the Kyoto Institute of Technology, and was awed by the beauty of making Japanese crafts under such distinguished masters. The result of this programme was the creation of a design guide for artisans in Mexico in collaboration with my two fellow design *kenshuin* (trainee). We blended the Japanese learnings, observations, design, creativity, and ways of making crafts, with traditional Mexican games, to make the design process enjoyable, familiar and non-invasive.

Life continued on my return to Mexico, and my daughter was born in 2011. The same year, we moved to Singapore (where I could not legally work), for my former husband's job, away from family and friends. I learned to be a mother, and an "ex-pat" wife, largely in isolation. There were multiple challenges in this new land, but travelling around South East Asia kept me afloat. In my disconnection from home, exploring culture and crafts became my focus and saviour. The contrast between Singapore's affluence and the neighbouring "underdeveloped" countries further ignited my sense of social justice and fuelled a desire to walk alongside those communities. After three years in Singapore, fortunately, an opportunity to go to New Zealand emerged, and we moved again.

The many journeys through various countries, cultures, and identities, shifted my views of crafts, which, despite my conventional design training, I now considered as art. I was more interested in the artisanal communities, and their understandings and ways of embracing heterogeneity, rather than standardisation and universalisation, and the exploration of links between art-design-crafts to nature-culture, as well as the importance of creative-art practices to individual and collective well-being.

Life's challenges continued.

In July 2015, I started a part-time lecturing position in the School of Art and Design at Auckland University of Technology, and in March 2016, I was accepted into a

PhD programme. It was also the month my marriage ended. The support of Dr Amanda Bill, my manager and supervisor support, at that time was crucial. After a few months, I took leave from my PhD while I taught more hours to support myself and my daughter, and applied for a Vice-Chancellor's scholarship, of which I was an incredibly blessed recipient. I restarted the research journey in January 2017. During my PhD years, institutional and life changes impacted my research, resulting in a change of faculty from Design and Creative Technologies to Te Ara Poutama – my current *whare* (house) - where I was warmly welcomed. I have had five official supervisors and one non-official one, due to my change of faculty. I have learned from the words and actions of all of them.

I have been fortunate to attend many Māori and Indigenous research and design events in Aotearoa-New Zealand, Australia, and Canada, sharing with other "mixed" Indigenous people like myself. From them I learned that mixed ancestry does not erase our Indigenous heritage, and one identity is not exclusive to the other, but rather, they co-exist.

Parallel to the PhD life, and ignited by life's struggles as an "ethnic migrant solo mother", I started to volunteer in community projects, particularly in the Latin American community. I was invited to be a board member for a non-for-profit organisation working with refugees and migrants; I participated in forums and conducting design workshops; I returned to creative and activist practice through textiles; I co-founded the *Buen Vivir* women's collective and joined the *Sororidad Latina* group, involving my daughter in everything. Using art and textiles, I joined public demonstrations against racism after the March 15th terrorist attack in Christchurch. I fought gender and diversity inequality in design, climate change, and denounced femicide in Latin America to mention only a few (see appendices C:c).

While the past four years have been transformational professionally and personally, I understand these are but a series of short cycles in a life-long journey. In some ways, I consider this PhD to be the formal approach to a topic that has always been an incredibly pivotal component of my heritage, and central to my life: namely, culture through art-design-crafts, particularly textiles. I am fortunate and grateful that this part of my identity can form the basis of PhD research. I have learned much about this from *mis compañeras* of *Malacate Taller Experimental Textil* (independent textile collective and research partners), Mayan artists and scholars, and their

embodied experiences of knowing, doing and connecting. Bonding with these wise women who live/practise their ancestral knowledge has been a true privilege. Nevertheless, the lived experiences of being Indigenous and the onto-epistemic guidance from *tangata whenua* (people of the land) in Aotearoa, from my supervisor, and research and design *whānau (*family*)***,** all contributed significantly to this research.

Throughout these years, I have learned much about myself, to understand my processes as a primarily *sentipensante* being, and to accept, respect, balance, embrace, and use it positively. I could understand I am someone who feels first, strongly and deeply, needing to let the emotions emerge. However, balancing the emotions of the heart with the reasoning of the mind, to question, understand, and process my feelings, especially while dealing with people, is paramount. I learned I must comprehend other peoples' emotions, listen to their stories, make sense of their backgrounds, and establish connections from a place of empathy, from the heart. Most importantly, I learned that after the processes of feeling and thinking, the final decision needs to make sense, to have meaning, and for this, it needs to come from the heart. For me, being *corazón* is not the romantic view of love where everything is positive. *Yollotl (corazón* in *Náhuatl,* one of my ancestors' languages*)* is emotions; anger, sadness, happiness, fear, to mention some, but it is also the source of courage, passion and peace.

Many transformations have happened in Aotearoa, Latin America and around the world, that have shifted old ways of knowing and doing, towards new possibilities. The Latin American movements in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Haití, Argentina, and México, have inspired and triggered me to participate and contribute whenever and however I can.

At this point, I say I am a woman of Mesoamérica, a mother, a feminist, an activist, a researcher from the Global South (re)connecting with indigeneity. I am *sentipensante*, I am *Yollotl*, I am *uno con el todo* (one with the whole). This is my truth.

This work is dedicated to my sisters, brothers and third spirits in Abya Yala (the Americas*)*, to Indigenous people worldwide, to weavers and anyone familiar with the

language of the threads; to women, to mothers (especially solo mothers), to my feminist sisters, *a mis hermanas de Cemanáhuac, a mis sororas*…

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Con todo, si no, ¿pa´qué? (Give it everything, otherwise, what's the point?)
(Feminist chant)

Introduction

"De ningún lado del todo y de todos lados un poco"
(We are not completely from one place, and a little from everywhere)
Jorge Drexler

This research aims to contribute to the decolonisation of design through *Buen Vivir*, a simple quality of life and well-being of an individual as well as a part of a community in relation to other cultures and the environment, a collective well-being (Gudynas & Acosta, 2011). It also seeks to recognise Indigenous design alongside *mis compañeras*, the Mayan Tsotsiles and Tseltales people from the highlands of Chiapas, challenge the inequalities of the Mexican context, and simultaneously, the wider design field.

Due to the decolonising approach, the research strives to shift from Western/Global Northern practices of research and design and moves towards Global Southern ways of being and doing. Therefore, it uses "Epistemologies of the South" as the central research paradigm, giving necessary visibility and credibility to non-Western knowledges and practices that emerge and develop out of social movements against oppression and injustice as a result of colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy (De Sousa Santos, 2015, 2018a). A distinctive Latin American view is manifested throughout the thesis, a positioning characterised by constant movements, and with a rich diversity of people, ethnicities, cultures, and biodiversity, to mention a few. Borrowing the words from the song *Movimiento* (Movement) by the Uruguayan musician and poet, Jorge Drexler, this research mirrors the approach and my intended worldview:

> *Las cosas solo son puras si uno las mira desde lejos. Es muy importante conocer nuestras raíces, saber de dónde venimos, conocer nuestra historia. Pero al mismo tiempo, tan importante como saber de dónde somos, es entender que todos, en el fondo, somos de ningún lado del todo y de todos lados un poco.* (TED, 2017, pt. 12.23)
>
> (Things only look pure if you look at them from far away. It is very important to know about our roots, to know where we come from, to understand our history. But at the same time, as important as

> knowing where we are from, is understanding that deep down, we are not completely from one place, and a little from everywhere.)

Here, the importance of knowing and connecting to our roots is underlined, while at the same time, acknowledging the exchange of knowledge and culture throughout history. Knowledge, method, and tool exchange are also present between disciplines where boundaries shift and overlap. This thesis exists at the boundaries of a number of disciplines, spanning an "in-betweeness" through applied anthropology and design, and shifting from the Global North towards the Global South. In other terms, this study is an ethnographic approach to Indigenous artisanal textiles and design, combined with embodied reflexivity, through a design lens and design thinking.

This research is rooted in textiles as an important practice in the Global South, critical for individual and community well-being. This collective well-being is present in the *Lekil Kuxlejal* philosophy (a fair and dignified life, known as *Buen Vivir* by the Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal people) exhibited through *cosmovisión Maya*, *Zapatismo*, and "being" textiles (López Intzín, 2015; Schlittler, 2012). Therefore, the use of textile metaphors is pivotal in this research, which aims to decolonise artisanal design, from Global Northern to Global Southern ways of doing research. A shift towards research by/in/from the Global South is evident in the thesis structure, reconfigured to reflect the production process of textiles, instead of following a conventional thesis arrangement. Textile creation is a long, labour intensive, complex process, that requires time and patience. In order to understand a textile fully, weavers rely on their senses to analyse the production, what materials are used, and how they could be utilised, but without breaking the components apart, because this would destroy the textile. The complexity of artisanal textiles is part of its richness, beauty, and meaning, allowing weavers to innovate by modifying some processes, materials, and colour arrangements. Similarly, this research and thesis structure are like textiles, weaving the threads of the research journey and chapters to create a new fabric (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Thesis structure using epistemologies from the Global South, and as a textile metaphor. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Textiles were an important part of pre-colonial Mayan culture, tradition and identity, and remain today through *jolobil* or backstrap loom weaving. Utilising *jolobil* as a research metaphor, a novel methodological approach, interweaves decolonial theory, ethnography, design research and co-design from the Global South, textiles as resistance, and Mayan *cosmovisión* and moves towards collective well-being. In a similar way to how the weaver's body supports the *jolobil*, embodiment (Maturana & Varela, 1987; Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 2016) is required to weave the research through *sentipensar* (Fals Borda, 2015) and *corazonar* (Méndez Torres, López Intzín, Marcos, & Osorio Hernández, 2013) as distinct ontologies from Latin America (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Jolobil or *telar de cintura* (backstrap loom weaving). The loom is supported by the weaver's waist, giving the name to the technique. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The jolobil methodology uses the base threads of the warp (*urdimbre)* as *patrones* (patterns) *sentipensantes*, the patterns identified in the findings throughout the *sentipensante* research journey, weaving them with the embodied reflexivity of the weft (*trama)* through *sentipensar corazonando.* The cyclical motion of the weaving process of *jolobil* facilitates the analysis and creative exploration in the research towards the creation of a new textile (Figure 3). In this case, the research has resulted in the proposal of a *Buen Vivir*-centric design model as guiding principles for ethical and fair collaboration which, above all else, respect the *autonomía* of the community towards a fair and dignified life.

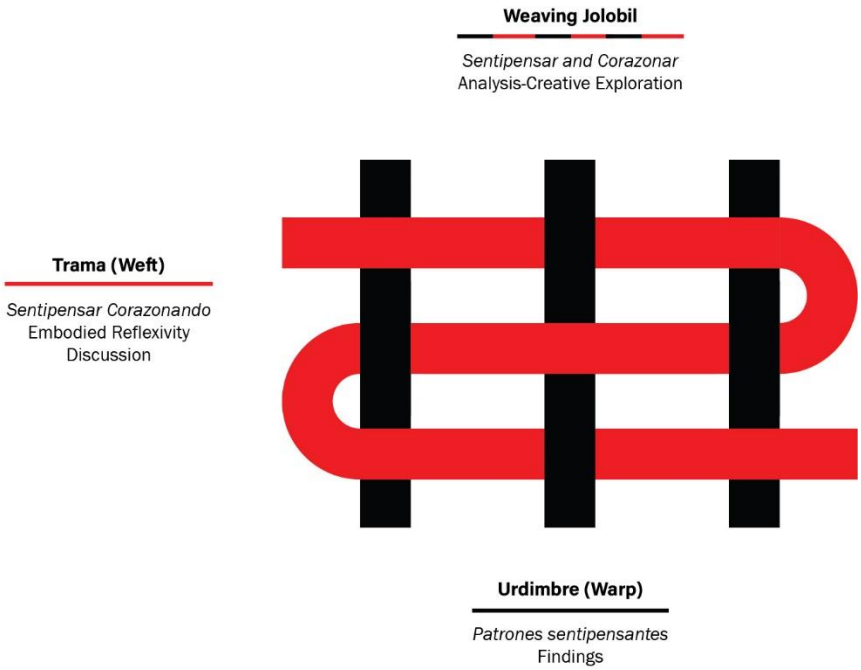

Figure 3 Jolobil, weaving the threads of the *urdimbre* and *trama* through an embodied *sentipensar* and *corazonar*. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

This thesis weaves eight main chapters that combine Global Northern and Global Southern structures. Chapter One is an overview to my research position, rationale of the study, research questions, and language/s and translation. Chapter Two situates the research context in the Mayan land of Chiapas, by providing a literature review on crafts, design, and art, artisanal design, and ethical trading. Chapter Three unpacks how decolonisation is approached and its impact on the researcher. It goes further to discuss ontology, epistemology, methodology, methods, data collection and analysis, explains the design research and ethnographical approaches from a Global Southern perspective and, in particular, being, doing and knowing by *sentirpensar* and *corazonar*. Chapters Four, Five and Six differ in that they elaborate on the research journey as three different research cycles that focus on using visual-digital-sensorial ethnography (Figure 4). Chapter Four concentrates on Malacate's approach to textile design and trading with an emphasis on the visual. Moreover, it incorporates Global Southern concepts of doing research, particularly Māori and Mayan ways. Chapter Five approaches the digital aspects in the artisanal design field, Malacate's use of and reliance on social media, and doing research in a digital-online era. Chapter Six discusses sensorial-embodied approaches to textiles through co-design and *jolobil* apprenticeship. Further, it discusses the meanings and significance in Mayan textiles patterns and its metaphorical use during this research.

Chapter Seven starts the process of *empuntar*, the finishing or casting off of a textile piece. Here, the proposed decolonial design approach of a *Buen Vivir*-centric design model is developed and presents some recommendations moving decolonial design forward. Chapter Eight closes with an embodied reflexive conclusion, *plantar las semillas del corazón (*to plant the seeds of the heart) as an invitation to adopt and transform these proposals towards *Buen Vivir*.

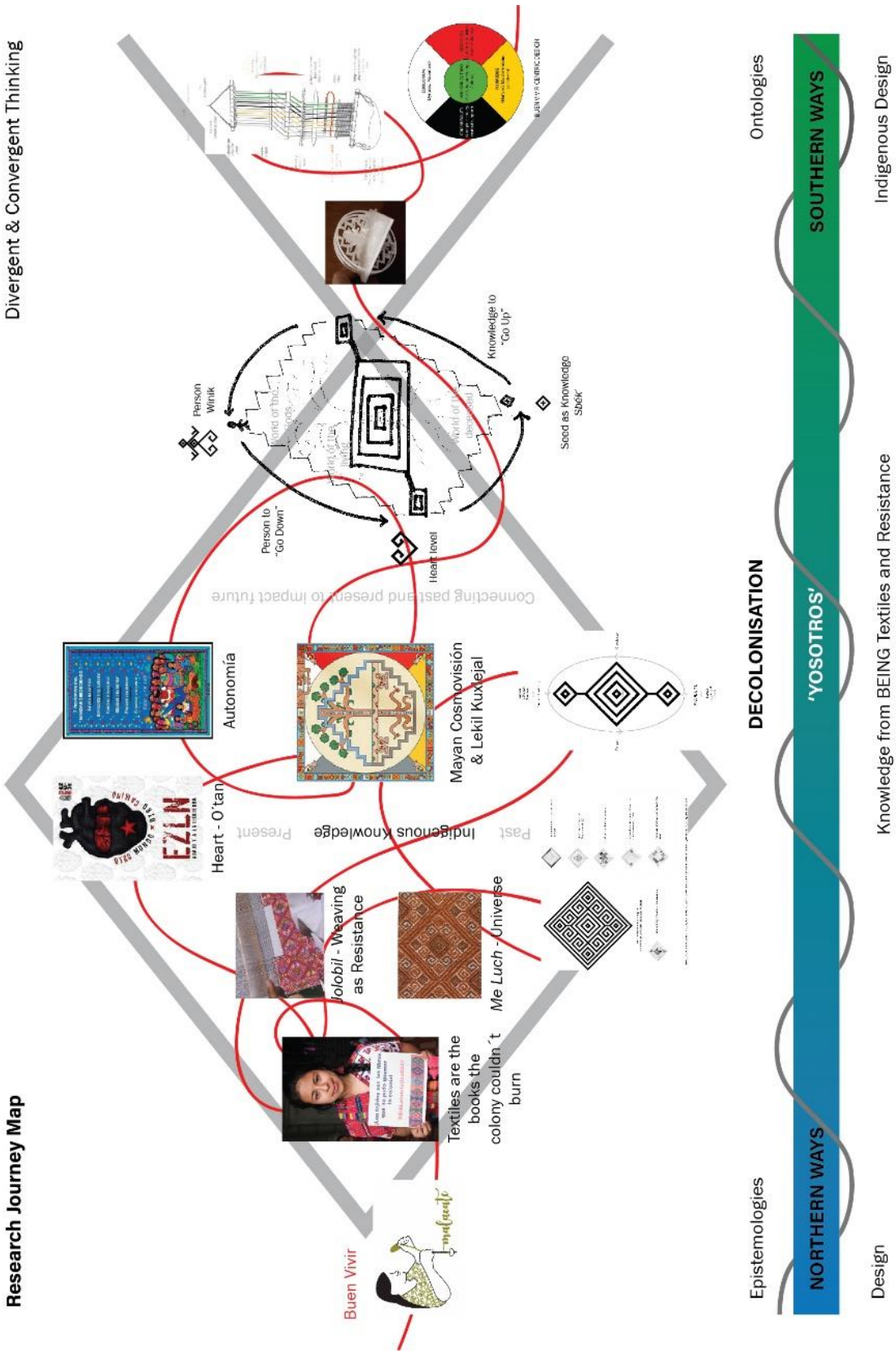

Figure 4 Research Journey Map, from Global Northern to Global Southern ways to decolonise design. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Chapter 1: Artisanal design, a decolonising approach for redefining the designer

1.1 Researcher positioning: An "outsider-within"

The researcher's presence impacts the design work, and design research also impacts the researcher. This reciprocal mechanism is evident throughout this thesis as the writing shifts between the first and third persons, a manifestation of decolonial research practices, and challenging the conventions of Western-Global Northern (W/GN) academia. My positioning in this research is in the role of design researcher and artisanal designer, educated under hegemonic design (Akama, 2017; Ansari et al., 2016; A. Escobar, 2016). My approach to the Indigenous community in Mexico is as an "ethnic" woman of the Global South in the diaspora, living and performing in Global Northern spaces. This position could be considered a paradox due to the power relationships in my various roles and identities, the situated knowledge (Haraway, 1988) that emerges from advantaged and disadvantaged positions, and provides embodied perspectives reflected in the varying narrative styles. As Mignolo (2003) observed, taking an impersonal position and language hides an order in which "proper thinking" comes from disciplinary rules. However, in the pluriverse, all narratives are valid and questionable. Therefore, the arguments presented in the research are personalised sometimes, as a person from the Global South[1] (De Sousa Santos, 2015; A. Escobar, 2016; Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015).

According to the most widely known definition, I am *mestiza*[2]. Thus, when I approach Indigenous groups, I am considered an outsider by and from the community. I am also a researcher and designer in the context of embedded hierarchical epistemologies in which Indigenous knowledge is commonly positioned as "inferior". Furthermore, when the Indigenous is invoked in these contexts, it is primarily in a passive role. I am a Mexican woman living and studying in a foreign country, where I am granted privileges due to common perceptions that higher education is superior in W/GN countries. At the same time, my political status is one

[1] Global South refers "broadly to the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. It is one of a family of terms, including 'Third World' and 'Periphery', that denote regions outside Europe and North America, mostly (though not all) low-income (…) The term 'Global South' functions as more than a metaphor for underdevelopment" (Dados & Connell, 2012, pp. 12–13).

[2] "*Mestizo*" is a non-pejorative allusion to a person of mixed-race or non-Indigenous. This term is used in Mexico to refer to the mixed heritage of Indigenous and Spanish descendants, although "*mestizaje*" is a process of whitening (Navarrete, 2017).

of a migrant from the “Third World” living in the “First World”, curiously located in the last land to be inhabited and then colonised, Aotearoa-New Zealand. I am a woman of colour studying in a predominantly white, male, academic environment, and am researching topics that recognise “other” knowledge as having equal value to that produced in W/GN contexts.

Simultaneously, I have a strong connection with the land and cultural heritage of Chiapas through birth and upbringing, which provides a deeper connection with the topic. Also, the context in which I live, and study has unique established views on Indigenous knowledge, in the brokered biculturalism (Hayward, 2012) of Aotearoa. Māori have in many ways regained a strong position in many aspects of New Zealand society since colonisation, such as in the arenas of politics, the economy, and research (Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002; L. T. Smith, 1999a; Walker, Eketone, & Gibbs, 2006). All these contexts have intrinsically influenced (and motivated) the direction of this research.

I have positioned myself as an “outsider-within”, a place of “border spaces occupied by groups of unequal power” (Collins, 1998, p.5). This “in between” space has led to my questioning of my identities in relation to other people and within myself. For example, being a *mestiza* places me in middle spaces on Indigenous topics. According to Rivera Cusicanqui (2010), *mestizo* identity is a place of simultaneous being and not being; the conjugation of the Indigenous and its opposite without mixing them. For other scholars, *mestizaje* suggests being “mixed” or a hybrid (Aboul-Ela, 2004; De la Cadena, 2005). A mixed identity is thought to explore a range of opinions on the ethics of doing research with Indigenous communities (Benton Zavala, 2018; De la Cadena, 2005; Sahagún Sánchez, 2015). Some opinions might be that I should not work with an Indigenous group that is not my own community. Meanwhile, others may consider that I am undertaking native research as someone “who (has) their origins in non-European or non-Western cultures and who shares a history of colonialism, or an economic relationship based upon subordination” (Tedlock, 1991, p. 80). For others, my Indigenous *whakapapa* (ancestry or genealogy) places me as an Indigenous researcher. While Indigenous identity is relevant in this research, the diversity of contexts and historical background are important aspects to consider inside and outside academia for respectful and ethical approaches. In this sense, there is no such “one size fits all” Indigenous identity, a point I develop in the next section.

1.1.1 Native Latin American: An ongoing decolonising journey of a mestiza

Indigenous identity is a complex topic, subtly touching this research. This section addresses the research positioning based on my cultural background and heritage, a small window to the Mexican context, and the modern-colonial impact still latent today.

Due to the colonial education system, I grew up understanding I am mestiza, the result of unknown Indigenous and Spanish ancestors. For many years, I knew very little about my ancestors beyond that we were Mexicans, and there was no incentive to acknowledge our ancestry, particularly where this was not European, a reflection of the coloniality of being (Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2007a; W. D. Mignolo & Walsh, 2018).

The *mestizo* identity was the result of a caste system imposed by the Spaniards in the colonial period (1521-1821), which created a hierarchy based on blood quantum, washing the blood, and ethnic inequality and discrimination became a method of maintaining social status, power and wealth. After a century of Mexican independence, the mestizo identity was re-signified and appropriated in the creation of a new race, *la raza cósmica*[3]. However, this nationalistic and homogenous mestizo identity assimilates Indigenous people (*pueblos originarios*), African descendants, and migrants. In this sense, the mestizaje was not a project of unification, but one of whitening and Westernising, and "washing out" Indigeneity (Ferri, 2019; Navarrete, 2017). Aguilar Gil (as cited in Ferri, 2019) aptly stated in a recent interview about Indigenous populations:

> *Fue adscrita, sobre todo por la escuela, a la ideología nacionalista del mestizaje. Decimos que tú no eres mestiza, eres desindigenizada por el Estado. La opresión opera en este mecanismo. Para el Estado, el éxito es que todos nos identifiquemos como mestizos.* (para. 10)
>
> (It was ascribed, especially by schooling, to the nationalistic idea of mestizaje. We say you are not *mestiza*, you are de-indigenised by

[3] *La raza cósmica* or the cosmic race, is the term proposed by José Vasconcelos, a Mexican philosopher who was the Secretary of Education. This "fifth race" in the Americas transcended race and nationality. At that time, it was believed that Latin Americans had the blood of all the races in the world: European, native Americans, Asians and Africans, surpassing the peoples of the Old World (Vasconcelos, 1923).

> the State. The oppression operates through this mechanism. For the State, success is that we all identify as *mestizos*).

Consequences of *mestizaje* identification are reflected intensely in many racist and classist behaviours now considered "normal" by the Mexican population. The National Survey on Discrimination reported on the relationships between skin colour and employment position, economic situation, and education, revealing that Indigenous people were amongst the most discriminated groups in Mexico at that time (INEGI, 2017). Since the 16th century, privilege has been linked to one's place of origin and language. For example, the most privileged social positions were reserved for people of European origins, directly impacting and determining new Hispanic societies (Navarrete, 2004). This situation persists in Mexico, where preference is given to Spanish[4] speakers over those with Indigenous languages, of which there are 68, from 11 linguistic families, and 364 identified variants (Benton Zavala, 2018).

This research is primarily based on decolonisation, on issues around and to do with undoing the coloniality of thinking and being, to address the questioning of the mestizo identity. Rivera Cusicanqui (2010) considered the decolonisation of mestizos from their "*ilegítima, espuria y violenta"* (illegitimate, spurious and violent) position of power and privilege (Bringas, 2016, para. 3), while drawing from her Aymara heritage. She unpacks *Ch'ixi,* a type of "grey" that is the result of a combination of small white and black dots, the idea of being and not being at the same time, the conjugation of the Indigenous and its opposite without mixing. Cusicanqui (as cited in Pazzarelli, 2016) says of mestizaje:

> *No es síntesis, ni es hibridación, mucho menos fusión. Se mantienen esos opuestos y para mí el gesto descolonizador consistiría en rescatarlos de los envoltorios capitalistas, consumistas y alienantes a los que la historia del capital los ha condenado.* (p. 90)
>
> (It is not synthesis, nor hybridity, far less fusion. They keep opposite and, for me, the decolonising gesture would consist in rescuing them from the capitalistic, consumerist and alienating wrapper that the history of the capital has condemned them to.)

[4] In some Latin American countries, the official name of the language is *Castellano* (Castilian) instead of Spanish since its nomenclature is considered colonised. In Spain, the official language is *Castellano*, recognising other co-official languages such as *Euskera* (Basque), *Català* (Catalan), *Valencià* (Valencian), *Galego* (Galician) among others.

Further on, she utilises an analogy to a piece of weaving made by the twisting of threads, in which it is possible to identify the different components, techniques and spaces in the creation of a new pattern (Cusicanqui, as cited in Pazzarelli, 2016). This helped me understand the importance of knowing 'the threads' that form our woven pieces and to explore our roots and "identification". Echoing her ideas, I approach identity through *identificación,* a process in which different identifications evolve and develop during one's life journey (Bringas, 2016, para. 4). In this sense, the exploration of my Indigenous roots became a relevant aspect of my personal journey as a design researcher from the Global South. However, this examination emerged with a concern that I articulate in this fundamental question: is it possible for mestizos to reclaim our Indigenous identity and reclaim our Indigenous heritage without reproducing mestizo dominance and privilege? While I still cannot fully answer this question, the search for my Indigenous roots became an embodied experience of transformation and healing and gave me permission to name my Indigenous *whakapapa:* I am *Nahua* (Aztec descendant) from my mother's side and *P'urhépecha* (Tarasca) from my father's side.

Indigenous identity, as mentioned earlier, is diverse and changes according to context. Being Mexican in the diaspora and researching on Indigenous topics, sparked conversations around identity, as experienced by colleagues (see Benton Zavala, 2018). This triggered the exploration of narratives in relation to my origin and ancestry in a way that different audiences may have to come to understand. For this reason, I identify as a Native Latin American, and more specifically, a native person from Abya Yala[5]. This distinguishes me from Native Americans from the US, but simultaneously recognises me as a Spanish speaker from a Latin American country. Nonetheless, placing the term Native before Latin is a decolonising act where I give priority to my Indigenous roots.

1.1.2 Designing and researching by/from the Global South: A decolonising approach

What we know about design in the modern colonial world is that it originated in W/GN tradition where Anglo-Eurocentric approaches are considered the "legitimate"

[5] "*Abya Yala*" is the ancient name the Kuna people of Panamá and Colombia give to America (Gutiérrez Borrero, 2014b), meaning "land in full production." Traditional cultures in their connection to nature recognise it as "mother" (Cáceres, 2014). Abya Yala has been widely used to name the American Continent instead of the coloniser's-imposed name of America.

way of designing (Akama, 2017; Akama, Hagen, & Whaanga-Schollum, 2019; Ansari, 2016; Botero, Del Gaudio, & Gutiérrez Borrero, 2018; A. Escobar, 2016, 2018b; Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015; Schultz, Abdulla, Ansari, Canlı, et al., 2018; Tlostanova, 2017). However, design has existed in other contexts without being recognised as such, as Gutiérrez Borrero claimed: "*diseños con otros nombres e intenciones*" (2014a, p. 2) (designs with other names and intentions). Crafts, folk art, and popular art are some of the other tags that place design from the Global South in a different hierarchy from those in the W/GN world (A. Escobar, 2017b; Fry, 2017; Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015), an issue that is developed in Chapter Two. Conventional designers in the Global South are educated under the hegemonic discourses of W/GN design disconnected to our realities and contexts. As a Colombian designer expressed:

> *El diseño como me lo habían enseñado era un diseño que no estaba situado, un diseño descontextualizado. Un diseño que se ubicada en Europa, un diseño que se ubicaba en Norteamérica, que nos hablaba y nos reafirmaba el paradigma del diseñador y nos mostraba un arquetipo de diseñador que, definitivamente yo, como ser humano, latinoamericano, mujer, con un color de piel especial, con un cabello especial no podía cumplir. Es decir, yo no encajaba con el arquetipo de diseñador europeo o norteamericano*. (Velez, 2016, pt. 5:17)
>
> (Design how I had been taught, was a design that it is not situated, a de-contextualised design. A design that was located in Europe, a design that was located in Global North America, showing and reaffirming a paradigm of the designer that I definitely, as a human being, Latin American, woman, with a special skin colour, with special hair, I could not fulfil. That is, I did not fit the archetype of the European or Global North American designer.)

Considering many designers around the world do not fit the conventions of the W/GN designer, it is necessary to (re)address the meaning of design and design practitioners to recognise Global Southern modes of design. As a woman, designer, and researcher from the Global South, this research aims to contribute to the decolonisation of design through the embodiment of design and research, alongside *mis compañeras* from the collective *Malacate Taller Experimental Textil* and other actors in the highlands of Chiapas, to generate alternatives to W/GN design and research.

Similar to the design process, this research follows an iterative and cyclic approach, and embodied ways of being and knowing design using body-mind-heart-spirit in *colectividad* (see Giasson, 2000; Hall, 2017) (see Chapter Seven). During this research, I recognised how deeply embedded in my thinking, understanding, and meaning-making processes, are visual representations and diagrams. These became a central tool through which to conceptualise and communicate ideas with *mis compañeras*, supervisors, peers and audiences. Composing and building diagrammatic representations of central concepts was a useful process for approaching the research, and became a significant component in my writing process. Without this representational process, writing this thesis would not have been possible. Nevertheless, intuition, metaphors, making, and creative exploration, are important components of doing research in/by the Global South (Fry, 2017; Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015), as evident throughout the thesis. These ways of being design in the Global South are also noticeable in the work of Malacate as reflected in Chapters Four, Five, and Six.

1.1.3 My research hosts in Aotearoa: Learning from *te ao* Māori

Context impacts the researcher just as the researcher impacts the work. My location during the research journey in Aotearoa-New Zealand, besides the three field trips to Chiapas in 2018 and 2019, had a deep influence on the ways of doing the research in Indigenous spaces, and the embodiment of indigeneity. While this research is not a cross-cultural or comparative study, the influence of *te ao Māori* (Māori world) is a fundamental contribution. Three key areas of *te ao Māori* that will be drawn on in this study are: *te reo Māori* (Māori language), *tikanga Māori* (protocols and customs) and *te Tiriti o Waitangi* (the Treaty of Waitangi[6]). The influence of *te ao Māori* is highlighted throughout the thesis in the use of concepts and language. Nevertheless, this Māori worldview has impacted my professional and research practice as an appropriate context-based approach, as well as in my personal life and identification.

[6] "The Treaty of Waitangi is an agreement signed in 1840 between Māori tribes (*hapū*) and the British Crown. There is an English and a Māori language text of the Treaty. The Māori text is called *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* and is the text signed by the overwhelming majority of Māori leaders and Captain Hobson (on behalf of the British Crown). There are significant textual differences between the two versions of the Treaty. For the New Zealand Crown, the Treaty represents the transfer of Māori sovereignty to the British Crown in 1840 and the eventual establishment of New Zealand as a nation state" (Hoskins, 2010, p. 3).

Being a migrant in Aotearoa locates me under the auspices of *te Tiriti o Waitangi*, a document that protects the interests of *Tangata Whenua* (the people of the land). Here, I am considered *tangata Tiriti*, a person permitted by the Treaty, who acknowledges and respects the position of Māori (Treaty Education for Migrants Group, 2006). At the same time, I am *tangata taketake* (native) of my land, Mexico. Thus, there is an awareness of the privilege of being in Aotearoa in direct relation with and to the people of the land.

The experiences with my Māori *whānau***,** colleagues, supervisor and friends inside and outside academia, have taught me ways of being and doing that resonate with my own cultural background and heritage, familiar elements in which relationships, dignity, and care, are fundamental. Therefore, through this research I honour and reciprocate the meaningful contributions to my professional and personal life, in accordance with my duty as *tangata Tiriti*.

1.2 Research rationale, questions and style

This section provides the research background and rationale for this study, which is further developed in Chapter Two. It also gives a broad overview of the ontology, epistemology, theoretical framework, methodology, methods, data collection and analysis (Table 1), which is further developed in detail in Chapter Three. It is important to note that there is no clear separation between the afore-mentioned areas; overlaps between ontologies, epistemologies, theories and methodology invariably exist. Furthermore, the notion of strict silos and divisions between those elements is a W/GN construct that contrasts with "other" ways of knowing and doing research. Therefore, this research aligns with decolonising approaches that echo ontologies and epistemologies from the Global South, seeking to contribute to these other spaces.

Table 1: Research question, ontology, epistemology, theoretical framework, methodology, methods, data collection and analysis.

Research question	How might decolonise design work for/by Indigenous artisans?		
Ontology	*Sentipensante*		
Research paradigm/ epistemology	Epistemologies of the South		
Theoretical perspective	Decolonial theory	Indigenous knowledge at the	Decolonisation

Methodology	Decolonising methodologies		Design anthropology	
Methods	Visual-digital-sensorial ethnography		Decolonising (co)-design	
Data collection	First Cycle	Second Cycle	Third Cycle	Heart-led / *Buen Vivir*-centric
	Visual ethnography	Digital ethnography	Sensory ethnography	
	Collective gatherings	Online research (social media)	co-design workshops	
Simultaneous data collection & analysis	*Sentirpensar/corazonando* (embodied reflexivity)			
Data analysis / creative exploration	*Patrones sentipensantes* (feeling-thinking patterns)			

1.2.1 Rationale for the research

Artisanal products have grown in popularity with an increased market interest for authentic artisanal creations (Hnatow, 2009; Klamer, 2012; McIntyre, 2010; Sullivan, 2013). In this space, designers engage with Indigenous artisans in the development of new artisanal products, mainly tailored for W/GN contexts. Artisanal products often have allure for consumers, with the "ethnic" flavours of artisanal work from Indigenous peoples from Asia, Africa, America and Oceania, without reference to the work's cultural origins and background (Kumar & Dutta, 2011; Vencatachellum, 2005). Unethical practices ignoring such significant features impact Indigenous approaches and *autonomía,* as well as the generation of dependency situations, taking *autonomía* as "*un proceso cultural, ecológico y politico. Implica formas autónomas de existencia y toma de decisions*" (A. Escobar, 2016, p. 198) (cultural, ecological and political process that involves autonomous forms of existence and decision making). There are latent concerns about designer-artisan collaborations, like the colonisation of Indigenous peoples' knowledge (L. T. Smith, 1999b; Tunstall, 2013), the unequal relationships of power where artisans are "used" for hand-labour only, and largely with no positive impact on artisanal communities beyond a short-term income (Lamrad & Hanlon, 2014; K. Murray, 2010b). These power imbalances and hierarchies are reflected in design literature and practice, pivoting primarily on the designer's role in such collaborations without the acknowledgement of "other" ways of knowing and designing. Therefore, this research aims to contribute to the decolonisation of design in artisanal spaces,

placing Indigenous peoples, knowledge, and experiences at the centre, and moving towards respectful and ethical approaches that are attentive to the collective well-being of the artisanal community. The research weaves together professional and personal experiences, decolonial theory, and the research contexts of Mexico and Aotearoa.

1.2.2 Research questions

This research is guided by one main question and two sub-questions, both of which address the decolonisation of design in artisanal spaces. The research questions that defined the ontology, epistemology, theoretical framework, methodology, methods, data collection and analysis follow.

Research Question 1: How might decolonised design function for/by Indigenous artisans in Mexico?

The main objective of utilising decolonial theory and decolonisation is to explore and shift the power imbalances in design, to change the hierarchy to where Indigenous knowledges and experiences are the focus. Current literature shows W/GN epistemologies and approaches to crafts in the Mexican context (e.g. Díaz, n.d.; Gil Tejeda, 2002; Gómez Villegas, 2009) producing a hierarchy in the epistemology, as well as power imbalances and unethical practices. These de-contextualised approaches continue modern colonial practices of oppression that for centuries have subjugated Indigenous artisans. Considering the diversity of Indigenous artisanal textiles, and the identified gap in the existing research, the second question is:

Research Question 2: How might decolonised textile artisanal design work for/by Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal weavers in the highlands of Chiapas?

Indigenous textiles in Mexico, particularly in Chiapas, have been extensively researched in anthropology, archaeology, and the social sciences (e.g. Kolpakova, 2017; W. F. Morris & Karasik, 2015; W. Morris, F, Karasik, Martínez, & Schwartz, 2014; T. Ramos Maza, 2004, 2018; “Textiles de Chiapas,” 1998; Turok, 1974, 1987). However, there is a gap in the literature from a design perspective. Approaches that focus on the holistic artisanal work of weavers beyond materiality, aesthetics, and meanings including their own ways of designing are largely omitted. Similarly, many approaches to Indigenous craft development are done in collaboration with designers, topics that are not widely discussed from a design research perspective.

Considering decolonisation recognises the importance of Indigenous epistemologies and territories (De Sousa Santos, 2015; W. Mignolo, 2009; L. T. Smith, 1999a), it became necessary during the research to generate alternative approaches to working with Indigenous artisans in various contexts. Therefore, this research seeks to contribute to the literature by generating context-based collaborative approaches that are aligned with Mayan worldviews from the highlands of Chiapas. Since collaboration is a key factor in artisanal design, the third question emerges:

Research Question 3: What are the ethical characteristics of a decolonised design process in collaborative projects between Indigenous artisans and "hegemonic[7]" designers?

This question sets the research foundation, and my collaboration with an Indigenous artisanal group, Malacate, who are pivotal in this study and who helped me understand and define ethical interactions in relation to power imbalances and hierarchies. The question permits a wider view in the context of the highlands of Chiapas and of other collaborative approaches in the region.

Considering the Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal term of *Lekil Kuxlejal*, the research envisions the pursuit of a fair and dignified life, much like the concept of *Buen Vivir* in other Indigenous groups in Abya Yala, and the exploration of the *Lekil Kuxlejal* concept becomes a central research focus to determine what constitutes ethics and fairness from the community's perspective.

1.2.3 On thesis structure: language, style and chapter overview

In this section, I discuss the thesis structure, to guide readers through the research journey. I start with the connection to *jolobil* and the strong cyclical approach throughout. Following that is an explanation of the rationale behind the diversity of languages used, including visual language, and the stylistic approach to distinguishing them. Finally, I close with an overview of each chapter.

This thesis is primarily structured as a non-linear research journey, where the central Chapters (Four, Five, and Six) are cycles with distinctive foci. Using *jolobil* as the

[7] Most designers are conventionally trained under Western-Eurocentric discourses. However, based on experience, some might shift their practices towards alternatives pathways. In this research, hegemonic designers refer to conventionally trainer designers who despite having experience with Indigenous communities still reproduce hegemonic design practices and do not try to balance their power, privilege, politics and access (3P-A), point developed further in Chapter Five.

metaphor, each cycle follows a rhythmical back and forth motion in which the threads of the *urdimbre* (warp), and *los patrones sentipensantes*, which act as findings, are woven with the embodied reflexivity of the *sentirpensar-corazonando* or *trama* (weft) (Figure 5). Here, the action and motion of weaving *jolobil* functions as analysis and creative exploration through *sentirpensar* and *corazonar*, the intrinsic ways of being and doing for myself, as woman, a designer, and a researcher from the Global South, and as further explained in Chapter Three. *Jolobil* is distinctive to other types of weaving looms. In order to pass the *trama* through the threads of the *urdimbre*, the weaver must keep the threads tense with the position of her body, specifically her waist and hips, giving the name to the technique, *telar de cintura* (backstrap loom). After passing the *trama* back and forth, left to right and right to left (or vice versa), the weaver leans her body forward to loosen the threads and change the direction of the *urdimbre*, raising the ones behind forward, and sending the ones in front to the back with the *alzador* (bar for pulling threads to change direction in weaving). This tension and flexibility are important for the weaving cycles, a key feature during the research. *Jolobil* is explained as a methodological approach in detail in Chapter Three.

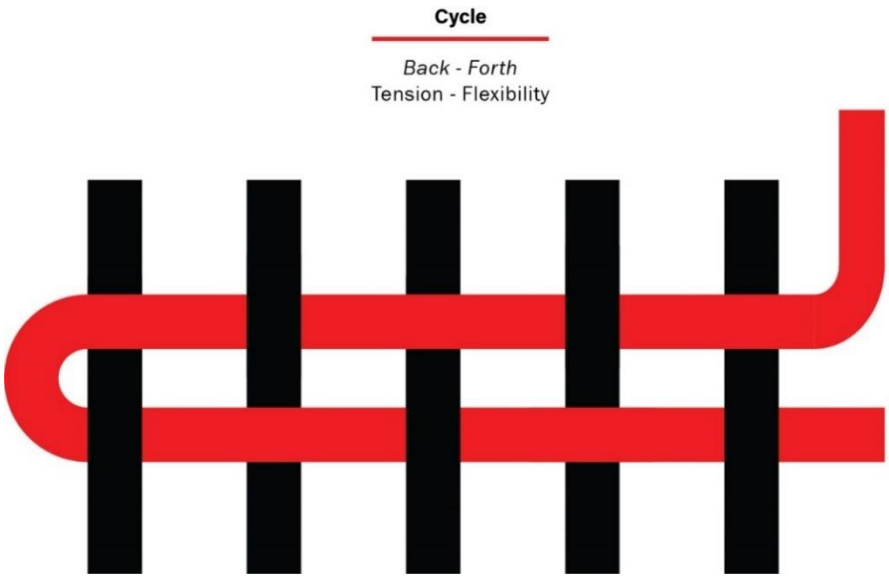

Figure 5. The cycle in *jolobil*, back and forth with tension and flexibility. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

This research is for/by the Global South, thus, there are many efforts to show the vast pluriverse (Chapters Three and Seven) of languages and approaches, and ways of being and doing that are distinct from W/GN traditions. Therefore, the use of

Indigenous and Latin American scholars is given priority. At the same time, word for word translation in various parts of the thesis is avoided for three main reasons: 1) There are concepts in Spanish and Indigenous languages that change the meaning or main idea when translated into English; 2) to give the opportunity for readers to see the original source, especially with the predominant use of Spanish in Abya Yala, and 3) to give non-English languages an important role, to keep their *mana* (spiritual authority)**.** Hence, most non-English terms are presented in *italics*, and the glossary is divided into sections to show the Indigenous languages from Abya Yala, Māori, and Spanish[8]. My translations from literature and quotes are placed in brackets (…) for English speakers. However, it is important to clarify that translations are not literal, but an intent to transmit the original message. Also, as mentioned earlier, visual language plays an important role on the research journey, my meaning-making process, and consequently in the thesis. Accordingly, there is a significant presence of diagrams, images and photography to visually transmit ideas, as the colloquial phrase in Spanish says: *una imagen vale más que mil palabras* (a picture is worth a thousand words).

[8] Except place names and common terms or obvious terms
.

Chapter 2: Craft, design or art? Situating the research area and context

This research strives to generate an experiential approach to Global Southern designers trained under hegemonic discourses, collaborating and learning from Indigenous artisanal textiles group in Chiapas, Mexico. My own experience as a conventionally trained design practitioner, and later as a design researcher, forced me to realise my practice required a paradigmatic shift and a decolonial journey. This challenged my personal notion of Indigenous design and Indigenous artists/designers/artisans as significant cultural peoples, guardians of ancestral knowledge and the acknowledgment of their own design processes. As a consequence of challenging my own thinking, particularly in terms of practice research/research practice, the importance of horizontal collaborations, respecting the *autonomía* of groups, putting Indigenous worldviews and ways of being and knowing at the centre, and having a reflexive practice as crucial part of the process, all became pivotal. An embodied reflexive approach such as this contested the methods and research processes of design, and destabilised my various identities as a designer, researcher, woman of colour, mother, daughter and Native Latin American.

In this chapter, I discuss the area of artisanal design, providing a literature review to situate the research in the context of Mexico and Chiapas. Firstly, the chapter reflects on the meaning of "crafts" and using decolonisation as the critical lens, explores craft's distinction from design and art. This is followed by an examination of *diseño artesanal* (artisan design) in Latin America and Mexico, while addressing challenges within the design discipline. Secondly, it explains the difference between social design and decolonising design, the presentation of design alternatives from the Global North and Global South, and *Buen Vivir* as a potential decolonial device from Abya Yala. Finally, it locates the research in the context of Mexico, specifically in the Mayan land of Chiapas, in relation to crafts and textile artisanal design, to give a brief background of *mis compañeras* of Malacate as research partners, and their vision and approach to artisanal textiles.

2.1 What is a craft?

There is certainly a wide range of worthy definitions of what craft is, and many have in common aspects of "artefacts and activities" connecting to family, community, context, and culture.

Within the various definitions, differences commonly depend on the context of the cultural origin and language. While they have the common notion of handmade products, cultural aspects and functionality differ. A conventional definition explains that craft is "work or objects made by hand" and simultaneously an "activity involving the making of decorative domestic or other objects by hand" (Oxford dictionary, n.d.). The nature of these artisanal pieces vary depending on features and purpose, which might be utilitarian, embellishment, religious, or socially symbolic, for example (Greenhalgh, 2003).

Another term associated with crafts is artisanal products "either (produced) completely by hand, or with help of hand tools or even mechanical means (…) the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most substantial component of the finished product" (UNESCO, n.d., para. 1). In this sense, those who make crafts are artisans. Sennet (1999) approached the issue of roles for craft producers in *The Craftsmen*, in which he discussed the "special human condition of being engaged" (p. 20) and, how hand and head are inextricably linked. However, this thread of thought also examines the consequences of the division of labour. This approach is linked to conventional W/GN thought and ancient Greek culture which emphasises head, and reason (Cepeda H., 2017; Fanon, 1986; W. D. Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; W. Mignolo & Vazquez, 2013). Contrastingly, in Eastern/Global Southern (E/GS) contexts, the heart and the spirit are important aspects in craft creation, beyond the head and hand (Junaidy, Kaner, Ioras, & Nagai, 2015; Klamer, 2012; Sullivan, 2013; UNESCO, Nagar, & UNESCO, 2005; J. K. T. Wilson, 2017). This research approaches craft-designs from the Global South(s), acknowledging the importance of embodied context-based cultural experiences, ecosomaesthetics,[9] and significance to Indigenous peoples seeking to decolonise artisanal design.

[9] Ecosomaesthetics is an inquiry into the lived experience of environmental interactions and relations. "The prefix eco signifies a non-anthropocentric, or ecocentric, disposition in inquiry. Soma, from the Greek, locates this disposition in the sentience of human being and actancies of non-human bodies and things in nature and its various environments. "Somaesthetics" refers to the bodied generation of meanings and making of understanding." (Payne et al., 2018, p. 95)

2.1.1 Crafts and emerging markets: Fair trade and ethical consumption

Globalisation in the 21st century has been challenged by different movements in which hyper-consumption and fast production are no longer what consumers focus on. In this age of mass-produced objects and global commercialisation, handcrafted products are popular, evidenced by the growing niche for supposedly unique and authentic products (McIntyre, 2010). Initiatives like the Slow Movement originating in Italy (Petrini & Padovani, 2006), Fair Trade (Lyon, 2006) and Ethical Consumerism (Auger, Devinney, & Louviere, 2007) go beyond economic benefits, bringing producers and artisans closer to consumers in areas like food and crafts. Mass-produced goods do not provide the same meaning as artisanal products such as cultural significance, materiality, context, and stories. Consumers, in some spaces at least, are abandoning the traditional throwaway culture associated with consumerism looking for meaningful products where price is no longer the main purchase decision factor. There is a growing consumer base that is now interested in goods that demonstrate both integrity in production, and community values (Curtis, 2016; Deschamps, Carnie, & Mao, 2016; Nicholls & Lee, 2006; Perez Canovas, 2014).

There are increasing tensions regarding appropriate market spaces for artisanal products, as they heavily rely on manual labour. Depending on the country of origin, these can be considered a high cost luxury item, and at the same time, they can reflect “cheap” and exploitative labour. In markets around the world, it is possible to find stalls of artisanal products next to mass-produced pieces with an “ethnic look.” Consumers are misled about the artisanal origin of some pieces, and the value of the artisanal work is diminished, as is the ancestral history, processes and meanings of the pieces (K. Murray, 2010a; Sullivan, 2013). Such sellers and stores are profit driven and are not focused on the rich cultural contexts of such valuable crafts (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Mass-produced bags from China next to handmade artisanal pieces in *mercado* Santo Domingo, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas in November, 2018. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Cultural significance, uniqueness, meaning, and aesthetics are changing production practices towards high-quality products in smaller quantities to target niche markets (Creative and Cultural Skills, 2009). These new markets open opportunities for artisanal products appreciation where the source and their contexts are important in acquisition decisions such as in ethical consumption spaces.

The Ethical Consumerism Report (Co-operative Bank, 2010) defines ethical consumption as the "personal allocation of funds, including consumption and investment, where choices have been informed by a particular issue –be it human rights, social justice, the environment or welfare" (p. 8). It is also defined as a space where consumers can purchase intangible justice and conscience, challenging common theories of consumer rationality (Bezençon & Blili, 2010). Bryant and Goodman (2004) considered this kind of consumption a "new form of activism" in which the individual's spending choices can impact on world issues, and signal decision-making beyond economic and functional values. Growth in ethical consumption mobilises conscious awareness to support a range of political causes, enabling consumers to share identities beyond nation-states (Barnett, Cloke, Clarke, & Malpass, 2005). Regarding crafts, activist consumers manifest preferences for artisanal products, the importance of origin, and time invested in the production process, contrary to their preferences for mass-produced goods. When the artist is

involved in the purchase of items, often the value of the historical, cultural and personal relationships to the work is amplified (Curtis, 2016; Daya, 2016). This phenomenon is evident in W/GN market spaces and in Global Southern contexts where informal markets are common.

Ethical consumption can be a paradoxical concept, and it has challenges in practice. Much of the work in ethical market spaces seeks to connect producers and consumers across distance, which highlights the ethical complexity in the context of a globalised world (Daya, 2016; Freidberg, 2003). As mentioned, conscious consumers value the interaction with the producer at the time of purchase. Fair trade and ethical consumption originated in the W/GN world, which influences the understanding of what is considered ethical. For some, consumption is an entry-point to think about political and ethical responsibility from a mostly privileged position (Hartwick, 2000). Research suggests growth in ethical consumption campaigning could be a new approach in which unequal power relations are formed and reproduced (Barnett et al., 2005). An important consideration however, is that it focuses on consumers in W/GN contexts, and little attention is given to consumers located in the Global South, where they are very commonly studied in their role as artistic producers, and not consumers. Daya (2016) challenged this notion, and considered research centring on consumers from Global Southern contexts to access differences in economic power and access.

A certification of ethical origin is now a commercial strategy for artisanal products. Various brands selling artisanal products emphasise a collaboration with artisans as a social cause, and focus on the producers of the goods as an added value and mark of authentication in design (Duarte, 2011). The rationale for underlining this emphasis has been referred to as "ethical-washing[10]" (Altes-Mathieu, 2012) by falsifying ethical production and the sourcing of materials and goods. Initiatives that are ethical and seek to benefit artisans and their communities from those that focus on profit remains challenging (K. Murray, 2010b; Watt, n.d.).

One of the best known certifications in ethical consumption is Fair Trade (*Comercio Justo*) (Connolly & Shaw, 2006; Lyon, 2006; Nicholls & Lee, 2006). Fair Trade

[10] While there are not well-established definitions in academic circles for the term "ethical-washing," it has been used in social media and blogs by ethical and sustainable consumers. Referring to "greenwashing" definitions, I use ethical-washing as falsely conveying to consumers that a given product, service or company incorporates ethical practices into its offerings and/or operations (see Ethicalconsumerenquiry, 2016).

Certification often implies prohibitive high costs for many artisanal communities in Global Southern contexts and therefore limits the artisans' access to ethical markets. For example, in Abya Yala, various organisations use the term "Fair Trade" without certification, on digital platforms and in physical shops, to falsely identify as ethical traders. This strategy may be effective to engage with conscious consumers, but there is no guarantee these organisations operate under ethical trade standards.

Unethical and abusive practices occur outside and inside artisanal communities. There are instances where local traders pay remarkably low prices to artisans in remote communities who generally have no direct access to markets in tourist destinations, a practice known as *coyotaje* (Rodriguez, 2019). *Coyotaje*[11] is at the first level in the supply chain of artisanal products and is especially difficult to identify when there is no direct contact with the makers.

Ethical consumption and Fair Trade practices are positive shifts towards appropriate relationships with producers, and it is palpably clear that these forms of trading follow capitalistic models of operation, with an emphasis on commercial outcomes. Contrastingly, the artisanal design initiatives in the Global Southern approach, diverge starkly from commercialisation, and even aim to interrupt current methods. The Global Southern logic seeks trading through social, solidarity, political, communal, and reciprocal ways of commerce. Social and solidarity economies are examples of alternative frameworks that focus on principles of reciprocity and strive for social goals and mutual economies, with economic activities that go beyond the rationales of private accumulation of capital (Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance, n.d.). These points are further developed in *patrones sentipensantes* in Chapter Four.

2.1.2 Craft, design and art: Differences in hierarchy, power and access

In this thesis, I explore these questions and challenge assumptions about the design, production and distribution of artisanal pieces, to (de)construct hegemonic classifications from the Global North and to (re)construct new ways of thinking and appreciating Indigenous craft-design-art from the Global South.

There are many discussions in art, design and craft spaces regarding the "blurred

[11] *Coyotaje* is an act by a *coyote*, a person who buys from artisans at very low prices and re-sell for higher in other contexts. Term commonly used in the textile field in Mexico.

boundaries" between these concepts and fields (Shiner, 2012, p. 230). In the last few decades, art museums have crossed the art and craft divide in their exhibitions by not making a distinction between artisanal pieces and art (Buszek, 2011; Oliver, Adamson, Wiggers, & Cassidy, 2010; Tucker, 2005). For example, in 2002, the American Craft Museum in New York changed its name to the Museum of Arts and Design. Reflecting on this institutional shift, the museum changed its status to art and design while the artisanal pieces remained the same. Shiner (2012) expressed that the boundaries between art and craft had disappeared, underlined in established disciplines grouped by techniques and materials. Despite questioning the status and boundaries of these fields, assigning hierarchies in which craft is relegated an inferior status to that of art, remains.

Greenhalgh (2003) considered crafts to be on the border between art and design economies, and in particular, to lack the prestige of art pieces, and unable to be mass-produced like product design or fast fashion. Shiner (2012) ruminated that crafts have a relational position between industrial production and fine art. Clearly, there is a delicate balance in crafts that places them as art, art-object, limited edition, artisanal and mass-produced objects. Nevertheless, creators frequently have little influence on decisions around placement, and many times these are made according to organisational interests and power relations. It is also relevant to note that if some artisanal processes are replaced simply to reduce costs and placing in price competitive markets, authenticity is at risk.

Scholars have critiqued the classification of traditional crafts as distinct from modern design primarily because modernity excludes history, practices and the innovation of Indigenous communities and people from the Global South (Leong & Clark, 2003; Lodaya, n.d.; Tunstall, 2013). Remarkably, these hierarchies have been imposed by modern-colonial classifications of "other" people and knowledges, positioning themselves above the Indigenous, minorities, migrants and other marginalised communities who are "coded into the Western system of knowledge" (L. T. Smith, 2013, p. 43). Unfortunately, this classification remains, especially in regard to craft and design, where the latter is required to assist artisanism following a W/GN view of design.

2.1.3 Crafts for development through design

The use of design to intervene established craft traditions has been used by governments and not-for-profit organisations as a development strategy that aims to improve the lives and working conditions of those in artisanal communities. The strategy protects craft traditions and stimulates the creation of artisanal pieces to enter new markets by generating new designs. The origins of this instrumental interaction between craft and design comes under the banner of "design for development" (Margolin, 2007), the agenda for which was sanctioned in 1979 when the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) held the Ahmedabad Conference. From this forum, the concept of development was expanded to include human well-being, and not simply profit (Margolin, 2007). The sanction solidified in the "dialectic between preserving design as an embodiment of national identity and authenticity, and the explicit drive to innovate new designs fit for export to a Western market" (Clarke, 2016, p. 49). The design input is largely necessary to innovate existing crafts, to increase market shares, and assist community development (FONART, 2013; UNESCO et al., 2005; Vencatachellum, 2005). This raises important questions about the instrumentality of design for commercial purposes, the creation of artisanal pieces that are considered desirable to purchase, issues of power, and a lack of *autonomía*.

The anthropologist and historiographer of development policies, Arturo Escobar (2010), argued strongly to shift development from a decolonising approach that is relational, disconnecting it from a W/GN growth model. Consequently, focusing on design for development from a Global Southern perspective fosters ethical trading and innovation by/for artisanal communities. This perspective is aligned to the idea of the "decolonial turn" and decolonisation, pivotal to this research. The decolonial turn shifts the focus from dominant W/GN perspectives to Indigenous experiences and knowledge, and propels Global Southern worldviews into a higher place in the hierarchy (Maldonado-Torres, 2006, 2011). Doing so forces thought about development, design, artisanal pieces and commercialisation from the gaze of the other, and diverts from conventional academia (Maldonado-Torres, 2011, p. 18). The discussion on decolonial theory and decolonisation is further developed in Chapter Three.

In the Global South, some communities do not want to be used for commercial and promotional purposes and are leading the way in defining what is beneficial for them beyond current capitalist models. Latin American post-neoliberalism is shifting in development thinking to emphasise human rights, well-being, individual and community capacities, as well as a fair distribution in nature, resources and territories (A. Escobar, 2010, 2014; Radcliffe, 2012). Examples of this shift are reflected in the use of Indigenous principles in the restructuring in politics and constitutions such as in the cases of Ecuador and Bolivia under *Buen Vivir*. This term (*Sumak Kawsay* in Quechua) is used to convey the quality of life and well-being that comes from being part of a community in nature-culture environments (Vanhulst & Beling, 2014). This incorporates ideas of degrowth and a strong critique of extractivism (Boehnert, 2019; A. Escobar, 2014, 2017b; Fuad-Luke, 2009; Salazar, 2015). *Buen Vivir* is a decolonial stance from Indigenous communities that has been adopted in academic and activist circles in public and political Latin America, and developed further on in this chapter.

In these Latin American contexts, or in *Cēmānāhuac*[12], the intervention of design in crafts for development aims to improve the living conditions of artisans. *Diseño Artesanal* is a collaborative space between artisans and designers. Here, public and private institutions and organisations bring designers to artisanal communities to work directly with craftspeople.

2.1.4 *Diseño Artesanal*: Collaboration between artisans and designers and its challenges

Globally, there are many initiatives involving artisans and designers collaborating in the development of crafts to suit ethical markets. For example, in 2005 *Designers meet artisans* was launched as a practical guide developed by the Craft Revival Trust, *Artesanías de Colombia* and UNESCO (UNESCO et al., 2005). The guide sought to build an equitable partnership between designers, makers and commercialisation processes. Another example, *Aid to artisans*, aimed at creating a positive impact in artisanal communities in design, marketing, and business, and helping to increase their income through the commercialisation of their crafts

[12] *Cēmānāhuac* is the name given by the Aztec people to the continent known as America. The Aztec, and the Mexica (the Aztecs who stayed in central México) are two of the most important civilisations in the continent (Moraña, Dussel, & Jáuregui, 2008). This *Náhuatl* word is derived from "cē" as one/whole and "*Ānāhuac*", deriving from "atl" as water and "nahuac", a locative meaning "circumvented or surrounded". Therefore, this name has been translated as “land surrounded by water,”

(Hnatow, 2009). The collaboration was quite simply a “dialogue” between the parties.

The use of dialogue in designer-artisan collaborations (Borges, 2001; UNESCO et al., 2005) indicates the willingness of both parties to learn and exchange skills and knowledge (Dykes, Rodgers, & Smyth, 2009). Multidisciplinary and intercultural dialogues are important for addressing issues that may arise, the creation of new cultural patterns, and eliminating potential problems (Marchand, Leitão, Marques, & Coninck, 2013). The need for real dialogue between artisans and designers, where all knowledges are on the same level preventing unilateral benefits, is pivotal.

By the end of the 1970s, the application of design in crafts by government institutions, non-for-profit organisations, and cooperatives, started in Mexico, and was firmly established by the early 1980s (Perez Canovas, 2014). The interaction and intervention of artisanal design emerged to support the economic development of artisanal and Indigenous communities, many of whom were living in poverty, mirroring conditions in various other developing countries. The practitioners of *diseño artesanal* are known as *diseñador artesanal* (artisanal designer), and defined as:

> *El diseñador artesanal es un individuo preocupado por no sólo la utilidad, la estética y la economía de un producto sino por el bienestar de la comunidad con quien está trabajando y el impacto a largo plazo de la capacitación.* (FONART, 2013, p. 16)
>
> (The artisanal designer is a person concerned about not just the utility, aesthetics, and economy, of the product, but also about the well-being of the community for whom he is working, and the long-term impact of capacitation.)

According to FONART, artisanal designers need to be aware of market demands and being strategically connected to enter the markets to follow the latest trends. The market-driven approach of artisanal design in Mexico, despite the narrative around difficulties with community well-being, and related issues around the balance between community and market needs is none-the-less remarkable.

Artisanal design has existed in Mexico for almost 50 years, however, in practice it does not reflect key aspects such as community well-being, long-term impact, and

benefits beyond the aesthetic and economic values of the products. There are cases where the main actors benefit from design collaborations and gain recognition by selling creations bearing Indigenous signifiers and stories to gain international recognition (see A. E. Escobar, 2017; Glocal, 2017; Redaccion AD, 2017). If Indigenous artisan knowledge is key, can designers then claim pieces based on artisan knowledge as their own? Who owns the intellectual property for artisanal creations when Indigenous artisans and artisanal designers collaborate?

Fashion, visual communication, industrial and textile designers are engaging with Indigenous artisans in the creation of new products, which cater primarily to the W/GN markets. In the rush to create seemingly unique, ethically crafted, authentic products, it appears designers and Indigenous artisans may be unwittingly engaged in practices that are inherently unethical, by generating dependency situations in developing countries. Indigenous artisans accept very low wages for survival, while their handcrafts are sold for exorbitant prices (I. Escobar & Rodríguez, 2017). In some instances, designers appeal to global markets by using terms like "ethnic," and include traditional artisanal works of Indigenous people from "exotic" countries without reference to their origin (Kumar & Dutta, 2011). These designers neither acknowledge the artisans' creativity and cultural background, nor seek long-term positive impacts on the communities (Lamrad & Hanlon, 2014). Furthermore, many artisan-designer projects do not follow collaborative or participatory approaches, and use artisans for labour rather than aiming for the welfare of artisanal communities.

Scholars and practitioners have explored many diverse challenges in artisan-designer collaboration practice. Tung (2012) examines the gap between artisans and designers that should ideally be addressed in advance by the parties involved. Artisans sometimes find difficulty in creating new products because they are used to applying their skills to traditional products. Meanwhile, designers may lack knowledge of artisanal processes, and consequently the production of new proposals is not feasible. Another challenge is to measure the level of participation from both parties to reach equality (K. Murray, 2010b). Uneven collaboration could be considered a form of cultural colonialism, in which Indigenous approaches from a distinctive creative tradition are undermined (Tunstall, 2013). These power imbalances and hierarchies are reflected in the literature focusing on the role of the designer (e.g. Díaz, n.d.; Gil Tejeda, 2002; Gómez Villegas, 2009).

A polemical question was raised by Nussbaum (2010): “are designers the new anthropologists or missionaries, come to poke into village life, “understand” it and make it better –their “modern” way?” (para. 5); such an enquiry pivots on the reality of inequality between conventional ideologies and the Indigenous. Concerns around the colonisation of Indigenous knowledge (L. T. Smith, 1999b), the role of artisans as producers of the designer’s creations (Lamrad & Hanlon, 2014), and the lack of reference to the cultural context of the pieces (Vencatachellum, 2005) parallel the research in this thesis.

It is debatable that designers have the appropriate background and knowledge to approach Indigenous artisanal communities without the proper formation, consciousness, and sensibility to work with them. A high proportion of designers are formally educated under hegemonic design discourse (Akama, 2017; A. Escobar, 2012; Fry, 2017; Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015; Tunstall, 2013). Consequently, little has been challenged in terms of the requirements or specialist skills of designers beyond conventional practices, which include their mindset and cultural sensitivity education.

Many collaborations between artisans and designers have been successful, but the ethics of this type of collaboration requires deeper analysis. The goal for designers should be generating alternative design approaches, appropriate to Global Southern contexts. At the same time, they need to be aware of the possible impacts if their work in terms of wider social and economic perspectives (H. Clark, 2011), and to have in mind the cultural context and knowledge of the artisanal community, rather than seeing them simply as “poor people who need to be helped” (Watt, n.d., p. 4). Another crucial aspect is the importance of not creating dependent relationships between producers and consumers by having a market-centred approach towards artisanal products. Crucial to this is building the understanding that crafts are important sources of income for artisanal communities, and key components of their livelihoods, lives and identities. Therefore, the goals of collaborative initiatives should look beyond economic benefit and think about communities’ well-being, self-determination and *autonomía* (Aparicio Wilhelmi, 2008; Botero et al., 2018; A. Escobar, 2016).

2.1.5 Indigenous artisans and hegemonic designers: The clash of different worlds

Following on from Mignolo (2007b), Escobar (2012) described how Western local history turned into "Global Design" a global hegemonic practice. Hegemonic design has dominated, established the discipline of design, set knowledge and research ideals, and is disconnected from local contexts and realities. This universalised approach impacts on non-Western artistic cultures, and extends into Indigenous populations (Fry, 2017). For example, Holm (2006) demonstrated how the practice of design is signified by the values of practitioners, exemplified in their work. Beliefs, attitudes, values, and orientations strongly influence the professional practice of a designer. Therefore, it is necessary for designers in the Global South to reflect on and question their practice when approaching Indigenous communities for collaborations, as well as for Indigenous designers who have been conventionally trained.

Ideally designers will go beyond hegemonic practices, to stop reproducing capitalistic models, and take more responsible and reflective approaches towards alternative ways of design (Bonsiepe & Cullars, 1991; Papanek, 1971; Tunstall, 2013). Irwin (2015) invited designers "to examine their own value system and the role it plays in the design process" (p. 235), encouraging them to be better connected with humanity. Tunstall (2013) expressed the importance of going beyond empathy and acting with compassion, to respectfully approach people's cultural values, and translate them into inclusive collaborative design processes. It is increasingly necessary to decolonise designers, especially from the Global South, so as not to replicate conventional W/GN models.

Global Northern and Western designers have limited forms of design outside their own practice, which has created tension and disconnection with Global Southern designers. For example, in Aotearoa New Zealand, organisations of Māori designers are promoting "cultural design integrity," the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge of Māori and iwi (tribe) world views (Nga Aho, n.d.). Māori researchers are working towards developing appropriate Māori alternatives to design, such as in design language (Witehira, 2013), media (Waipara, 2013), architecture (Linzey, 1990; McKay, 2004) and urbanism (Marek, 2010; Murton, 2012). Together, these create and develop distinctive Māori design research and practice, so exemplars of how this could be achieved are available.

The focus on artisanal products fulfilling market needs without actively considering the well-being of artisanal communities beyond economic benefits, has its origins in hegemonic design education. But have designers trained in conventional design courses been taught to be respectful of artisans? I am particularly interested in exploring approaches by designers from the Global South acting in their own contexts, which may be the focus of an exploration in a future study. However, interventions and interactions between artisans and designers in Global Southern regions need further attention and debate. Tunstall (2013) asked, "what does it mean to bring design (…) to places that already have their own Indigenous forms of thinking also critical of linear and rational models?" (p. 236), exemplified clearly in Figure 7 and explored further throughout this study.

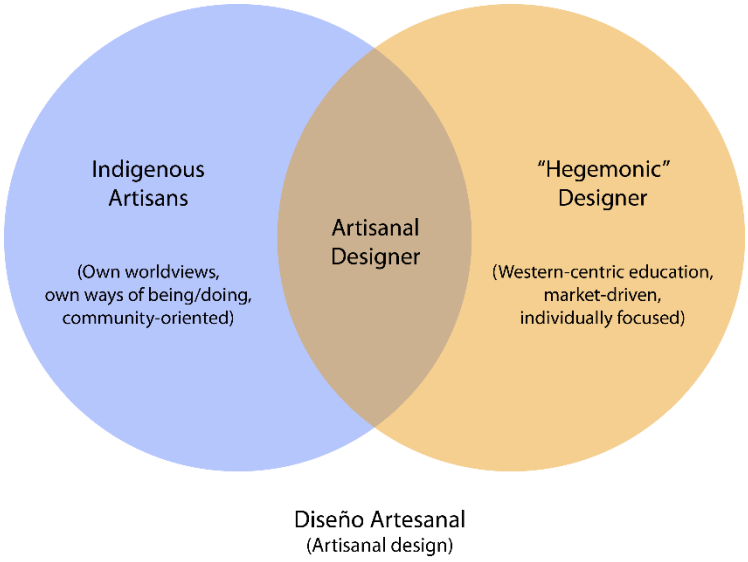

Figure 7. Artisanal design field: A clash between Western-centric design and Indigenous world views. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Some scholars have identified concerns about the roles design and designers play in relation to culture, which is particularly relevant in the case of crafts, and indeed material cultures. In an interview, Tunstall (as cited in Andersen, 2017) as Dean of the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) university design school, he stated that students needed to

> …understand the cultural implications of what they are designing, as well as the role they play in the creation of culture by making things. That leads to questions of ethics, questions of social justice, questions of accountability, appropriation, indigenization, and decolonization (para. 5).

This is particularly relevant when considering that commercial designers have generally been educated in hegemonic design practices (Akama, 2017; A. Escobar, 2012; Fry, 2017; Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015; Tunstall, 2013). There are seldom discussions on cultural sensitivity (Kauffman, Conroy, Gardner III, & Oswald, 2008), cultural appropriation (Arya, 2017; BBC News, 2017; Gray, 2009) or the requirements for artisanal designers to go beyond conventional design paradigms, and the inclusion of frameworks such as design anthropology (Gunn, Otto, & Smith, 2013; Martín Juez, 2002; Tunstall, 2013), and decolonial theory (De Oto, n.d.; Maldonado-Torres, 2011; W. Mignolo, 2008) to name a few.

2.2 Design beyond market to decolonise design: *Buen Vivir*, *Lekil Kuxlejal* and Indigenous decolonial alternatives

This section presents an overview of design approaches that aim to shift the focus from being market-driven production, towards social issues, as world-making projects (A. Escobar, 2017b). However, trading components are still present in many design alternatives, with a variety of commercial approaches. Some of them, such as Malacate - partners in this study- operate under a logic beyond colonial, capitalistic models, and as a cultural manifestation towards achieving a good living, *Buen Vivir*, which I explore in more depth in this section.

In past decades, the role of design beyond market needs has been widely debated. Design practitioners and design schools are increasingly concerned about socio-ethical issues (Nieusma, 2004; Ramirez Jr, 2011), and question the impact of the work on both people and the environment (Bonsiepe & Cullars, 1991; A. Escobar, 2016; Fry, 2017; Tunstall, 2013). Papanek's (1971) *Design for the real world* is a seminal text challenging designers to move beyond market considerations, and not simply satisfy one's wants and desires. The auspices of such a shift asks designers to consider the genuine needs of people, to use their knowledge to aid disadvantaged minorities, and exercise social and moral judgement before starting design work. Bonsiepe and Cullars (1991) worked within a "centre/periphery" model in a number of Latin American countries. In this, the disparate relationships of power and privilege between developed and developing countries, and the important roles of design plans in the industrial development of peripheral countries were closely examined. More recently, Escobar (2016) emphasised that most design treaties still have an orientation towards technical skills and market orientation, without

questioning the capitalistic nature of the disciplines. In Aotearoa, Bill (2011) wrote that designers can help to create a social economy by taking responsibility for being the ethical interface for new kinds of relationships people can have with society and themselves. This research aims to explore and contribute to alternatives to artisanal design, shifting towards context-based, ethical, respectful, social, and communal forms of designing with a focus on Indigenous perspectives, and according to a trading logic that is separate and distinct from capitalism.

2.2.1 From social design to decolonising design

The initial approach to crafts contemplated a social design outlook that considered many artisanal design initiatives in Latin America that were operating according to a social design scheme. The *Social Design Futures Report* (Armstrong, Bailey, Julier, & Kimbell, 2014) indicated that social design had been used in the last decade, but little is known about its structures, methods and objectives. On the opposite side of the spectrum, design for the market is well-known and cuts across many disciplines such as design, management, and marketing (Margolin & Margolin, 2002). The main difference between the two approaches is that design for market focuses on the creation of products, whereas social design focuses on the satisfaction of human needs. Social design emphasises research, and the generation and development of new ways to create change towards collective and social ends (Armstrong et al., 2014). Social design is also known as "design for social innovation" (R. Murray, Caulier-Grice, & Mulgan, 2010), "socially responsible design" (Ramirez Jr, 2011) and "design activism" (Fuad-Luke, 2009) amongst others.

In Abya Yala, many artisanal design organisations operate under social design models, and as such, design approaches working with Indigenous artisans in Mexico have benefited Indigenous communities economically. However, there are concerns about the impact and influence of market forces on Indigenous communities. Tunstall (2016) claimed that "diversity and inclusion is not enough (…) design for social impact is not enough (…) sustainability is not enough" (pt. 1.54, 2.17, 2.38). In this view, decolonisation goes beyond good causes, and addresses issues around power imbalances, privilege, access, and intellectual ownership and protection.

Social design and ethical consumption are functional in many initiatives in the field, but there are latent concerns about intellectual property, ownership, and commercial gain of artisanal pieces, a form of colonisation. Indigenous artisans are aware of

these issues and organise to protect their rights. The National Movement of Mayan weavers in Guatemala for example, continually strives to reform legislation to protect its collective intellectual property rights, and with that, the local textile heritage (Picq, 2017).

In 2006, Angelina Aspuac (as cited in Viernes Tradicional, 2017) confirmed that AFEDES (*Asociación Femenina para el Desarrollo de Sacatepéquez*) received a legal warning from a designer that action would be taken if they continued with the use of a particular pattern. In an interview, her response was:

> *Es un trabajo que desde siempre hicieron, sus madres, sus abuelas. Las compañeras le vendieron a la diseñadora sus tejidos y se los apropió y dijo que de ahí en adelante ella tenía exclusividad sobre esos tejidos y que ya no los pueden hacer, eso, en nuestra lógica no cabe, porque es un conocimiento popular y desde siempre los hemos hecho.* (para. 11)
>
> (It is a work they have always being doing, their mothers, their grandmothers. The weavers sold to the designer their textiles and she appropriated them. She said, from now on, she had the exclusive rights and they could no longer make them. That, in our logic, does not fit, because it is popular knowledge and we have always done that way.)

The ownership of designs is underlined in current W/GN design schools, where designers learn that their creations belong to them despite being strongly inspired by other cultures. Conversations about cultural appropriation, and consequently, designers inadvertently engaging in unethical practices, may be seldom held.

Unethical practices in the fashion industry emanate from a central notion of ownership, in which designers plagiarise or make slight variations to Indigenous creations, using them as inspiration, or use cultural references without giving credit to their origin. For Arya (2017), cultural appropriation is the adoption of elements from a culture (e.g. artistic style and representations, land, artefacts, intellectual property, folklore and religious symbols) by “outsiders”, in an unbalanced and highly political act. Designers often justify cultural appropriation by questioning the authenticity of artisanal pieces and techniques used as inspiration, claiming non-exclusivity. Haupt (BBC News, 2017) affirmed the importance of addressing cultural appropriation and power relations “between people who colonised the Global South and people who are economically and politically dispossessed and marginalised”

(para. 20). In Mexico, Aguilar Gil (2012) wrote of "*apropiación cultural indebida*" (improper cultural appropriation) abuses from dominant, hegemonic, cultural groups, upon oppressed groups or populations. It is urgently needed to confront these issues in design education through the decolonisation of design, towards ethical, respectful and fair ways of doing design.

2.2.2 Design alternatives in the Global North and Global South: From Eurocentric to pluriversal approaches

Hegemonic design has been instrumental for the modern-colonial world, affecting humanity and nature. The W/GN project of civilisation under the auspices of capitalistic and neoliberal logic, supports the idea of the universe as an homogenic world operating under a "single order of market, greed and capital" (W. D. Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 87). However, there are initiatives seeking to rescue design from this hegemonic logic and acknowledge that design exists in other forms, and by other names (Gutiérrez Borrero, 2014a). For Escobar (2017b), this "require(d) extricating design from its dependence on modernist unsustainable and de-futuring practices and redirecting it towards those world-making projects that are agreed upon collectively by communities, in all of their heterogeneity and contradictions" (p.44). In other words, to (re)imagine and (re)construct other worlds, as *un mundo en donde quepan muchos mundos* (a world where many worlds can fit) (Figure 8). The many worlds align with the concept of a *pluriverso* (pluriverse), a notion subscribed to by the *Zapatista* resistance movement in Chiapas, and echoed by many social and political movements across Latin America. For them, there is *una grieta en el muro,* a deep fissure in the wall from which *mundos muy otros* (very other worlds) are emerging (Félix Pichardo, 2017).

Mignolo (2008) discussed pluriversal thought as "border thoughts of thinking and to re-inscribe languages and cosmologies, knowledges and philosophies, subjectivities and languages that were and continue being demonised (this is, racialised), from the dominant and hegemonic position of modern epistemology" (pp. 36-37). Border thoughts are a source for alternative approaches to hegemonic design in Global Northern and Global Southern contexts. In these spaces, the designer no longer assumes an authorial role but collaborates with a number of disciplines and communities (Irwin, 2015; Manzini, 2015; Montaña, 2010; Sanders, 1999). In the Global North, concepts and movements such as degrowth, communing, conviviality, and transition initiatives have been pushed forward. In the Global South, it is

reflected in transition narratives and radical alternatives to development like *Buen Vivir* (collective well-being), rights of nature, *comunalidad* (communality), civilisational transitions, and *autonomía* (A. Escobar, 2017b).

Figure 8. Un mundo donde quepan todos los mundos (A world in which many worlds can fit)*Zapatista* view of the pluriverse. "Entrevista a Beatriz Aurora", from Rufián Revista, 2014. (http://rufianrevista.org/?portfolio=entrevista-a-beatriz-aurora). CC BY 4.0.

Design alternatives from the Global North and Global South have emerged to challenge hegemonic design. Escobar (2012, 2016, 2018b) approached design by researching the emergent alternatives from both contexts as current trends and tendencies. In 2018, he participated in the Design Research Society's keynote debate, "Whose design?" and presented a diagram showing transnational critical design

studies (Figure 9) (Design Research Society, 2019). Some of these and other approaches were discussed in the previous section, which is continued here with a Global North and Global South focus.

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Figure 9. Transnational Critical Design Studies presented by Arturo Escobar in DRS2018. Still image from "DRS2018 Keynote Debate 3: Whose Design?", by Design Research Society, 2019. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wuf91I247b8&t=2959s). Copyright 2019 by Design Research Society.

In Italy, Manzini's (2015) *Design, when everybody designs* approaches collaboration between designers and ordinary people from the community to rediscover the power of doing things together. Such a method calls for a shift from individualism to more communal approaches, an idea that aligns with the shift from hegemonic design towards relational and community-based approaches.

Transitional design from Carnegie Mellon University in the US proposed a "shift from the current situation whereby industrial capitalism, in the way in which it provides for 'needs,' undermines localized self-determination and diversity by creating a 'globalized but fragmented homogeneity'" (Irwin, Kossoff, & Tonkinwise, 2015, p. 1). Transitional design stands for systematic, holistic, and collaborative approaches, based on long-term vision, transdisciplinary knowledge, and with a conscious understanding of the interconnection of nature, social, political, and economic paradigms. This requires holistic worldviews for the generation of transition solutions that are collaborative, interactive and responsible (Irwin, 2015).

Tunstall's (2013, 2017) research approach is in collaboration with Indigenous and Afro-American communities through design anthropology in Australia and Canada. She critiqued the traditional anthropology approach that classifies people in relation to white Europeans as "others," impacting the creative and artistic work of these communities that are considered to deviate from modern design. In this, the use of design thinking as a "rescuing" approach, ignores other ways of thinking and knowing, and positions W/GN design at the top of the innovation hierarchy (Leong & Clark, 2003; Lodaya, n.d.; Tunstall, 2013). Therefore, Tunstall (2013) promoted a decolonising alternative of "respectful design as the creation of preferred courses of action based on the intrinsic worth of all human, animal, mineral, fauna and flora and the treatment of them with dignity and regard" (p. 12), by recognising the concept's origin, following on from Sennett (2003) and Simon's (1969) definitions of respectful design.

In Australia, Akama (2017) drew on her Japanese heritage to collaborate with Indigenous communities. She wrote that in both academia and industry, the visibility of men and "whiteness", and the simultaneous invisibility of women and ethnicities is another form of colonialism (see Akama & Barnes, 2009; Ansari et al., 2016; Buckley, 1986; Thomson, 1994). For her, design research has the potential to change dominant discourses around power, growth, and stability, and encourages heterogeneity to be central to design. She proposed "*kokoro* of design" with no separation between mind-spirit-heart, to infuse the being and the world as interrelated. On this note, heterogeneity is reflected as being mindful of "how design takes place 'among beings and non-beings, systems and power, among places and atmospheres'" (Akama, 2017, pp. 82–83). Akama (2017) also considered an inseparable dynamic of form with formlessness, where form holds utility and formlessness is the essence. Evoking her own culture and spirituality, she engages with *kokoro* (mind-spirit-heart) of beings (form) and non-beings (formless) to work with Indigenous communities to pursue interrelatedness and to work across differences.

In the Global South, Escobar (2016, 2017b) proposed *autonomía* as pivotal to re-shift design from its dominant functionalism, rationalism, and industrial tradition, also known as "Design for Autonomy" (D/A). This alternative emerges from contemporary Latin American experiences and epistemologies of social movement, community struggle, and resistance, whilst defending their territory and self-

determination. *Autonomía* is theoretically rooted in the work of Maturana and Varela (1980, 1987) *autopoiesis* (creation, production), the capacity of living systems to self-create using their own resources, where *autonomía* is a fundamental feature to achieve this. According to Esteva (2005, 2015), *autonomía* is the ability to create the conditions that enable a community to change its norms and traditions, and is deeply rooted in the *Zapatista* experience. From these definitions, Escobar (2016) defined: *autonomía es un proceso cultural, ecológico y político. Implica formas autónomas de existencia y toma de decisiones* (p.198) (autonomy is a cultural, ecological and political process implicating autonomous forms of existence and decision making). Therefore, *autonomía* allows us to rethink Indigenous arts-design-crafts as living systems, enabling communities to generate local and context-based design, and decide the conditions of collaboration from their own worldview.

Comunalidad is also an important aspect of D/A, and pivotal in the social movements in Chiapas and Oaxaca, South Mexico. *Comunalidad* requires the rethinking of community as community-based ways of being, knowing and doing, or more simply, the condition of being communal. For Esteva (as cited in A. Escobar, 2017b) *comunalidad*

> constitutes the core of the horizon of intelligibility of Meso-American cultures…it is the condition that inspires communitarian existence, that which makes transparent the act of living, it is a central category in personal and communitarian life, its most fundamental *vivencia*, or experience. (p. 44)

Autonomía, *comunalidad*, transitions, *muchos mundos* (pluriverse) and cultural studies of design are further developed for English-speaking audiences in Escobar's recent book *Design for the pluriverse* (A. Escobar, 2018b). This research aligns with some of these perspectives and considers the context-based nature of design research and the relevance of the *Zapatista* experience in Chiapas.

In Colombia, Gutiérrez Borrero (2014b, 2015) developed two distinctive terms to approach design acknowledging a different origin to W/GN design: *diseños otros* (design otherwise or design with other names) and *diseño del Sur* (design of the South). He explored the importance of generating alternatives that coexist with an industrial civilisation, equivalents to design from different cartographies, and epistemologies from W/GN contexts, and predominantly from Indigenous wisdom. His approach recognises the act of designing as a distinctive act in all human beings

and societies, and the need to decentralise design from the capitalist model of development. Making reference to Illich (1974), he discussed a post-industrial society based in *convivialidad* (conviviality), as opposed to industrial productivity, in which relationships between humans, environments, and artefacts, exist in a wide range of forms, from industrial to convivial. Gutiérrez Borrero's proposal of *diseño del Sur (o Sures)* is aligned with De Sousa Santos' (2015) idea of the South as a space of marginalisation and discrimination where some communities are placed, but not as a geographical location. From a pluriversal perspective, there is not simply one type of design, but many coexisting at the same time, perhaps with other names (Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015).

Fry (2017) too, considered design from the South, although he complemented the term "design" including by and for the South, a further development from his previous work with Kalantidou, *Design in the borderlands* (2014). Situated in the Global South, the struggles and agendas cannot be separated from social, political, economic and cultural perspectives. Design therefore requires rethinking and to be reframed to avoid mimicking Global Northern models. Fry (2017) continued on to suggest three desired perspectives: redirection; undoing and recreation of design education; and design discovery, recovery and efficacy.

Alternatives to design from the Global North and Global South have similar characteristics, and despite the difference in names, the concepts are related, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Design alternatives from the Global North and the Global South

Global North	
Terms	*Characteristics and concepts*
Transitional design	Degrowth
Design when everybody designs	Connection to nature
Respectful design	Communing (commons)
Social design	Interconnectedness
Kokoro of design	Situated
	Community-based
	Heterogeneity
	Self-determination
	Transition
	Collaboration
Global South	
Design from/by/for the South	Alternative to development
Autonomía y diseño	Rights of nature
Design for the Pluriverse	*Comunalidad*
Decolonising/decolonial design	Relationality
Diseños Otros	Situated/context-based
	Convivialidad
	Pluriverse
	Autonomía
	Buen Vivir
	Connection
	Indigenous knowledge
	Marginalised communities

Most of these initiatives centralise on the idea of the community creating solutions by and for itself. A remarkable point is the interconnectedness of people with other forms of beings, material or immaterial, to have holistic and long-term systemic approaches. They establish a need to separate design from its hegemonic discourse, to give power to those considered as other, based on *autonomía* or self-determination.

2.2.3. *Buen Vivir* as a decolonial stance in Abya Yala

Over the last decades, the concept and philosophy of *Buen Vivir* has gained interest and strength as a decolonial stance in Abya Yala (Benton Zavala, 2018; Cubillo

Guevara & Hidalgo Capitán, 2016). According to Solón (2017) this view was adopted primarily by Andean communities referred to as *Suma Qamaña* in Aymara and *Sumaq Kawsay* in Quechua. *Buen Vivir* made reference to a system of knowledge, practices and organisations from *pueblos originarios* in South America, as a living practice among Andean communities. A few years later, *Buen Vivir* was widely discussed and integrated into the constitution of Ecuador in 2008, and Bolivia in 2009 (Cubillo Guevara & Hidalgo Capitán, 2016; Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015).

For *Buen Vivir* to decolonise design, the use of alternative epistemologies and ontologies from the Global South is necessary. De Souza Santos (2018b) stated the cruciality of recognising epistemologies that have suffered epistemicide as a consequence of colonialism, genocide, and modern science. Elsewhere he went further (2015) to explain that "dominant epistemologies have resulted in a massive waste of social experience and, particularly, in the massive destruction of ways of knowing that did not fit the dominant epistemological canon" (p. 371). The approach De Sousa Santos promoted, highlights the oppressed ontologies and epistemologies from Indigenous and marginalised communities. Therefore, *Buen Vivir* could be considered part of the epistemologies from the South, decolonising knowledge, and an alternative to what is considered development, social justice and the (re)visualisation of Indigenous cultures, knowledge, and experiences.

Gudynas and Acosta (2011) stated that *Buen Vivir* offers an opportunity to build a globally diverse society sustained on the harmonious co-existence of diverse human beings with nature. *Buen Vivir* transmits the concepts of a simple but quality life and well-being of an individual as a part of a community both in relation to other cultures and the environment; ideally, it is a collective well-being. These principles are present in the belief systems and practices of many Indigenous groups in Abya Yala under their own terms and ways of living (*Table 3*) (Benton Zavala, 2018; Cubillo-Guevara & Hidalgo-Capitán, 2016; Cubillo Guevara & Hidalgo Capitán, 2016b; Díaz Muñoz et al., 2017; Huambachano, 2016; López Intzín, 2015; Macleod, 2013; Rojas Pedemonte & Soto Gómez, 2016; Schlittler, 2012; Solón, 2017; Sulvarán López & Sánchez Álvarez, n.d.; Vanhulst & Beling, 2014).

Table 3. Buen Vivir from some Indigenous peoples in Latin America[13]

Name	Indigenous Group	Country	Spanish	English
Allin kawsay	Quechua	Perú	*Vivir bien, buen Vivir*	Well-being, living well
Anaa akuaipa	Wayuu	Colombia, Venezuela		
Aubun amuru nu	Garífunas	Belize, Guatemala		
Balu wala	Kunas	Panamá, Colombia		
Küme mongen	Mapuche	Chile, Argentina	*Vida en armonía*	Life in harmony
Lekil kuxlejal	(Maya) Tsotsil and Tseltal	México (Chiapas)	*Vida digna y justa*	Fair and dignified life
Naas mliika aakri	Ramas	Nicaragua		
Penker pujustin	Shuar	Ecuador	*Bienestar, vivir bien*	Well-being, living well
Shiir wara	Achuar	Ecuador	*Bienestar, vivir bien*	Well-being, living well
Shin pujut	Awajúns	Perú, Ecuador		
Sumak kawsay	Quechua	Ecuador	*Vivir bien, buen vivir*	Well-being, living well
Suma qamaña	Aymara	Bolivia, Chile, Perú	*Vivir bien, buen vivir*	Well-being, living well
Teko kavi, Ñandereko	Guaraní	Paraguay, Brasil	*Vida armoniosa*	Harmonious life
Ti núle kûin	Ngobes	Panamá		
Utz k'aslemal	(Maya) K´iche and Kaqchikel	Guatemala	*Buena vida*	Good life
Yamni iwaia, laman laka	Miskitos	Nicaragua, Honduras		
Yamni yalahmin	Mayagnas	Nicaragua, Honduras		
Yeknemillis	Nahua	México	*Vida buena*	Good life

[13] It is important to mention that *pueblos originarios* are not limited to geo-peolitical divisions, and their people inhabit different countries such as do the Guaraní in Bolivia and Paraguay, and the Mapuche in Chile and Argentina, to mention some. I am mentioning some countries as representation where their territory is located or officially acknowledged. It is also relevant these are the official names given as *pueblos originarios* but they named themselves differently, as in the case of Tsotsil, as "*Bats'i winik*."

Considering this research is situated in the highlands of Chiapas, woven in partnership with *mis compañeras* the Mayan Tsotsiles and Tseltales from Malacate, the exploration of *Lekil Kuxlejal* as their *Buen Vivir* was an important factor to integrate, further developed in the following section and in Chapter Six.

2.3 Situating the research: Mexico, Chiapas and *Malacate Taller Experimental Textil* as research partners

This section situates the research in Mexico, particularly in the Mayan land of Chiapas, an important location regarding crafts and textile artisanal design, and the place I am connected to by birth, ancestry, education and culture. It also gives the background to *mis compañeras de Malacate Taller Experimental Textil*, their vision and approach to artisanal textiles, and ways of operating.

2.3.1 Mexico: Ancient civilisations and Indigenous population

Mesoamerican civilisations, where Mexico is located, have been considered one of the six pillars of universal history, together with the ancient civilisations of China, India, Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Inca region (E. Dussel, 2018). The first civilisation in Mexico was the Olmec in 2000 BC, followed by Mayan, Teotihuacan, Zapotec, Mixtec, P'urhépecha (Tarasca) and Aztec, among other nomadic groups (Figure 10) ("Culturas Mesoamericanas: Información, resumen, cronología," 2018). The timeline in Figure 10 illustrates the vast history and diversity in the region, where crafts have an important role in the economy, culture, religion, and everyday life.

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Figure 10. Mesoamerican civilisations in Mexico. From "Culturas Mesoamericanas: Información, resumen, cronología", by Informacionde.info, 2018. (https://informacionde.info/culturas-mesoamericanas-informacion-resumen-cronologia/). Copyright 2018 by Informacionde.info.

Contrary to beliefs that these ancient civilisations were eradicated by colonisation, it is important to establish the current Indigenous people as direct descendants of these distinct groups, some of whom remain repositories of knowledge, beliefs and practices that originated centuries ago. *Los pueblos originarios*, the original people, have been the keepers of the ancient knowledge that evolved beside the wider culture.

The Indigenous population in Mexico is categorised into 68 groups, each with its own language, and comprising 6.5% of the total population, according to the Mexican Government (INEGI, 2016). Nevertheless, it is important to note how these official numbers were established. According to INEGI, Indigenous people are those who either speak a native language or live in Indigenous communities (Navarrete Linares, 2010). However, because of colonisation, numerous Indigenous people no longer speak their language, and others migrated to other regions. According to INEGI's principle, migrants and non-speakers are excluded from indigeneity. How the Indigenous are quantified and qualified then, is at best questionable, and needs to be challenged. This is an important question this thesis explores and contests.

An unofficial census registered the increase in the Indigenous population up to 21.5% of the total living in Mexican territory (Redacción El Economista, 2018). Some countries have distinctive ways of recognising their Indigenous identity. For

example, Native Americans in the US are identifiable by blood quantum with a minimum of 25%, and this percentage is registered on an identity card. Similar recognitions exist for some First Nations peoples in Canada. In Aotearoa, Māori identity is established by whakapapa. If a person can prove family connection through genealogical ties, they are considered Māori.

2.3.2 Crafts in the Mexican context

Mexico has a long artisanal tradition that remains relevant to the population, culture, and economy today. It is important to make a distinction between the meaning and origin of the word "craft" (*artesanía* in Spanish, one of the official languages in Mexico, and many other Latin American countries). The etymologic origin of the word "*artesanía"* comes from the Latin words "*artist-manus"* which means art with the hands ("Raíces Proto-Indo-Europeans," n.d.). Artisanal or hand-made processes are called *artesanal*, derived from *artesanía*. Sharing the hand-made process meaning, the term "*manualidad"* is mistakenly conflated with "*artesanía*", which is not connected to culture from a particular context. For this reason, the National Fund for Crafts Promotion (FONART, 2009) published a manual to identify the difference between *artesanía* and *manualidad*. *Artesanía* is defined as:

> *…un objeto o producto de identidad cultural comunitaria, hecho por procesos manuales continuos, auxiliados por implementos rudimentarios y algunos de función mecánica que aligeran ciertas tareas. La materia prima básica transformada generalmente es obtenida en la región donde habita el artesano. El dominio de las técnicas tradicionales de patrimonio comunitario permite al artesanos crear diferentes objetos de calidad variada y maestría, imprimiéndoles, además, valores simbólicos e ideológicos de la cultura local. La artesanía se crea como producto duradero o efímero, y su función original está determinada en el nivel social y cultural; en este sentido, puede destinarse para el uso doméstico, ceremonial, ornato, vestuario, o bien, como implemento de trabajo. En la actualidad, la producción de artesanía se encamina cada vez más hacia la comercialización. La apropiación y dominio de las materias primas nativas hace que los productos artesanales tengan una identidad comunitaria o regional muy propia, misma que permite crear una línea de productos con formas y diseños decorativos particulares que los distingue de otros.* (FONART, 2009, p. 14)
>
> (… an object or product from a cultural community, made with manual processes, aided by elemental tools, and some by mechanical functions to alleviate certain tasks. The raw material generally comes from the region where the artisan inhabits. The

> proficiency of traditional techniques coming from communal heritage, allows the artisan to create different objects of diverse quality and mastery, imprinting symbolic and ideological values from local culture. *Artesanía* is created as a long-lasting or ephemeral product, and its original function is determined by social and cultural standards, from that origin. It could be allocated uses such as domestic, ceremonial, adornment, garment or as a working tool. Currently, the production of *artesanía* goes towards commercial purposes. The ownership and mastery of native raw material grants a community or regional identity to artisanal products and allows the creation of product lines with a particular decoration with forms and designs distinguishing it from others.)

Noticeable is the importance of culture embedded in the objects, and the relationship of intergenerational knowledge transmitted within artisanal communities. On the other hand, *manualidad* is defined differently:

> *Debe entenderse como aquel objeto o producto que es el resultado de un proceso de transformación manual o semiindustrializado, a partir de una materia prima procesada o pre-fabricada. Tanto las técnicas, como la misma actividad, no tienen una identidad de tradición cultural comunitaria y se pierden en el tiempo, tornándose en una labor temporal marcadas por las modas y practicada a nivel individual o familiar. La creatividad en las manualidades alcanza importante valores estéticos en el dominio de la transformación técnica y la ornamentación, pero estos adolecen de elementos simbólicos e ideológicos de la sociedad que los crea. La calidad de las manualidades es tan variable como la de las artesanías: existen desde productos muy sencillos hasta muy elaborados en cuanto a formas, diseños y decoraciones. Contraria a la tradición artesanal, las manualidades se rigen en los tiempos presentes y tienden a la estandarización de su producción con los fenómenos de la globalización y la cultura de masas.* (FONART, 2009, p. 14)
>
> (It has to be understood as the object or product result of a manual transformational process or semi-industrialised, from process or pre-fabricated materials. Techniques and the activity itself, do not have cultural communal tradition and get lost through time, resulting in temporary labour led by trends, and practised by individuals or families. Creativity in *manualidades* reach important aesthetic values in the mastery of technical transformation and ornamentation but this lacks the symbolic and ideologic elements of the society that creates them. The quality of *manualidades* is as variable as the *artesanías*: there are very simple products to very elaborated ones in shapes, designs and decorations. Opposite to artisanal tradition, *manualidades* are ruled by present times and tend to standardisation of their production with globalisation and culture of the mass.)

While both terms describe hand-made processes, they are distinguished by the origin of materials and the strong cultural basis of *artesanía* that *manualidades* do not have. In English, both terms are commonly referred to as "crafts". This research focuses on craft-design-art linked to objects and processes with cultural heritage and significance, referred to in Spanish as *culturas populares tradicionales* (Traditional folk or popular culture) (M. Ramos Maza, 2004).

Crafts in Mexico have evolved beside the ongoing shifts and renewal of their culture; some sectors utilise crafts as a medium for reaffirming identity, to distinguish themselves as refined, and educated about traditions (Guzmán Donsel & García Quintero, 2010; Instituto Casa de las Artesanías de Chiapas, 2013; Novelo, 2002; Sales Heredia, 2013). Governments use crafts to consolidate national unity, to generate employment, to diminish migration, for export, and to link with tourism (García Canclini, 1989; Novelo, 1993; M. Ramos Maza, 2004). Turok (1988) indicated that crafts can be classified according to the type of external consumers in four categories: tourism, interior decoration, collectors, and art galleries. However, artisanal pieces inside communities play different roles than those produced for external commercial purposes.

Modern artisanal production can be distinguished by the heterogeneity of products, as well as organisational and social relations regarding labour, distribution and consumption. In this century, craft-design-arts are no longer exclusive to educated sectors, and are encouraged as cultural manifestations of resistance to capitalism (Novelo, 1993). Artisanal products are no longer simply mementoes from exotic travels, but a practical part of everyday life and use to local people. While some sectors use the products for cultural status, their aesthetics and function are becoming increasingly important (Ejea, 1998).

As a result of globalisation, new paradoxes have emerged in production and consumption. In a study conducted by Ejea (1998), Mexicans expressed that crafts as a representation of roots and cultural heritage, are part of the wider national identity. However, influenced by globalisation, artisans sometimes reproduce figures from European artists and cartoons such as Disney characters. Another paradox is found in the evident difference in socioeconomic and cultural sectors reflected in quality, price and retail location, so artisanal products can also be seen as a symbolic bridge between diverse social groups and different countries (M. Ramos Maza, 2004). It is

possible to see international and national tourists wearing artisanal pieces next to Indigenous people as a representation of this symbolic bridge. These events are a sign of globalisation, a reordering without suppression (García Canclini, 1995).

Mexican artisans-designers-artists are aware and proud of the cultural heritage of their creations, as mentioned by an artisan from Michoacán in the forum *Las artesanías en México: Situación actual y retos* (Crafts in Mexico: Current situation and challenges):

> *Este país la mayor parte de las artesanías son herencia cultural de los pueblos indígenas y por ello forman parte importante de la identidad histórica, siendo los artesanos quienes mantienen viva esa historia, y la escriben a diario en cada pieza que elaboran. Consideró que en la mayoría de los casos, familias completas viven directamente de este trabajo, generando además empleo a muchas otras personas que surten de materias primas a los talleres artesanales o a los comerciantes que venden las artesanías* (Sales Heredia, 2013, p. 9).
>
> (In this country, most crafts have cultural heritage from Indigenous people, and for this reason, they are an important part of the historic identity. Artisans keep that history alive, writing it every day in the pieces they create. He considered that in the majority of cases, complete families live directly from this work generating employment to other people that provide raw material to artisanal workshops and merchants who sell those crafts.)

Despite the cultural heritage from Indigenous groups in some crafts, not all artisans identify as Indigenous or belong to Indigenous communities as registered by the previously referred to INEGI standards. Here, Indigenous identity is particularly relevant considering intellectual property, copyright, and cultural appropriation, relevant points in this decolonising design research.

2.3.3 The Mayan land of Chiapas: An important place for Indigenous people and knowledge

Chiapas is a state in South east Mexico next to the border to Guatemala. This Mayan territory has 74,415 km^2 with 122 municipalities and a population of 5,228,711 people (INEGI, 2015). The inhabitants are Indigenous, afro-descent, *mestizo* and migrants living in a vast territory abundant with flora, fauna, minerals, rivers, mountains and cities that concentrate services, government, power, and groups with diverse interests in different levels, regional, national, and international (Santiago Santiago, 2017). It is relevant to note that the official census in 2010 identified the

1,141,499 people who speak an Indigenous language as “officially” Indigenous. Chiapas represents the second highest number of Indigenous language speakers (INEGI, 2010). However, there are many more people who identify as Indigenous, despite post-colonial language loss. Various Indigenous groups are conscious of the richness of their culture and land, and a spirit of resistance such as that found in the Tseltal, Tsotsil, Chol, Zoque, Tojolabal, Mam, Mocho, Cakchiquel, Lacandon, Acalteco and Chuj (Santiago Santiago, 2017), most of whom are Mayan descendants.

Mayan culture has a long history divided into three predominant periods: Formative or

Pre-classic between the 10th century BC and 3rd century AD; Classic between the 3rd and 10th centuries; and Post-classic from the 10th century until colonisation in the early 16th century. Mayan society developed unique features that distinguish it from other societies in Mesoamerica. For one, they developed a hieroglyphic orthography which comprised more than 700 symbols. Others include a unique architecture and structures, and two calendars with a distinctive time measuring system. Currently, Mayan territories are present in Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo, Tabasco and Yucatán in Mexico, and parts of Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras (J. E. Clark, Hansen, & Pérez Suárez, n.d.; “Cultura Maya,” n.d.; Thompson, 1975) (Figure 11).

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Figure 11. Mayan culture map. From “Cultura Maya”, by Historia Mexicana, n.d. (https://lahistoriamexicana.mx/antiguo-mexico/cultura-maya). Copyright by Historia Mexicana.

Chiapas is a strategic territory for Mexico's development because of its oil and electricity production. It boasts a vast jungle and forests, biodiversity, agriculture, and is famous for its cattle (Figure 12). Exploiting the development of these strategic resources could be a central goal for governments or transnationals who justify a military presence in Mexico. Regardless, although the Indigenous Mexican people have historically resisted colonial domination, they have long suffered the confiscation of their lands, labour exploitation and abuse, in a similar manner to other colonised territories with Indigenous populations around the world.

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Figure 12. Map of Chiapas with important cities and Mayan sites. From "Chiapas", by Tourism in Chiapas, n.d. (https://sites.google.com/site/tourisminchiapasjimena/). Copyright by Tourism in Chiapas.

On the dawn of January 1st of 1994 - coinciding with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Canada, the US and Mexico, the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN[14], *Zapatista* National Liberation Army) started a rebellion movement. The *Zapatistas* declared war against the Mexican state, and military, paramilitary and corporate incursions into the state. *Zapatista* resistance and *autonomía* demonstrated the importance of territory defence (Santiago Santiago, 2017). Some 25 years on, the *Zapatista* movement remains, and has evolved into a political movement and civil resistance that advocates for Indigenous people in Mexico (Romero, 2014) (Figure 13).

[14] The EZLN was funded in November 17th, 1983 in the Lacandona Jungle in Chiapas (Santiago Santiago, 2017).

Figure 13. Zapatistas inside *auditorio Comandanta Ramona* on the night of *día de muertos Caracol Oventik*, November 1st, 2018. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The *Zapatista* presence has impacted Indigenous perspectives inside the autonomous *caracoles* (snail) communities, the Indigenous population in Chiapas, and wider Mexico. Artisanal work reflects this as demonstrated in this statement by Pedro Meza (2014):

> *El zapatismo trajo nuevas formas de responder socialmente querían romper con la tradición con lo clásico, los zapatistas decían somos mas libres y no vamos a seguir como antes, cambiaron las blusas de Larrainzar de rojo a morado y ha ido cambiando, ya no se usan los diseños clásico de San Andrés solo punto de cruz* (as cited in Perez Canovas, p. 77).
>
> (The *Zapatismo* brought new forms to respond socially, they wanted to break the tradition with the classic. The *Zapatistas* said we are freer and we will not continue as before, they changed the blouses of Larrainzar from red to purple and it has kept changing, and they no longer use the classic designs of San Andrés - just cross-stitch).

Initially, this research focused on crafts and design interaction through a social design lens. However, the interests, resources, knowledge, and ownership of design

became important topics of exploration. Politics, in relation to power, could not be avoided, which decolonial theory and decolonisation offer this study.

2.3.4 *Lekil Kuxlejal, Buen Vivir* from *los altos de Chiapas*

A similar concept to *Buen Vivir* amongst Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal peoples in the highlands of Chiapas is known as "*Lekil Kuxlejal.*" "*Lekil*" literally means "good," and "*kuxlejal*" is "life." An established definition is *vida digna y justa* (fair-dignified life). *Lekil kuxlejal* involves aspects of *autonomía*, the recognition of all living beings, and harmonious relationships between humans and nature (Prage, 2015; Schlittler, 2012). According to Ávila Romero (2011):

> *Trabajar en Lekil Kuxlejal implica el jun ko´tantik estar en un solo corazón, el sna´el yayel a´yej saber escuchar, el komon u´ntik el bien común, el koltomba la ayuda mutua, el ch´unel maltal que significa obedecer un mandato, es decir el mandato del pueblo, el que manda, manda obedeciendo.* (p. 3)
>
> (To work in *Lekil Kuxlejal* implies *jun ko´tantik* (to be in one heart), *sna´el yayel a´yej (*knowing how to listen), *komon u´ntik (*common good), *koltomba (*mutual aid), and *ch´unel maltal (*obeying a mandate). In other words, that is the mandate of the people, those who lead, leading by obeying.)

Here, the importance of *colectividad* through mutual aid and common good, leading by obeying, and the importance of the heart as axis of Mayan culture and *cosmovisión*[15] are all underlined. Consequently, these are explored in this research.

El Mandar obedeciendo, leading by obeying, is a *Zapatista* concept. It was initially stated in 1994 by Subcomandante Marcos during a speech (EZLN, 1994), proffering an inversion of conventional notions of governance and leadership. It has been further developed by *las Juntas del Buen Gobierno* (Good Government assembly) defining seven principles: 1) *obedecer y no mandar* (obey, don't lead), 2) *representar y no suplantar* (represent, don't replace), 3) *servir y no servirse* (serve, don't serve yourself), 4) *convencer y no vencer* (convince, don't defeat), 5) *bajar y no subir* (go down, don't go up), 6) *proponer y no imponer* (propose, don't impose), 7) *construir y no destruir* (construct, don't destroy) (Esteva, 2014). These principles are important for the *Congreso Nacional Indígena* (National Indigenous Congress)

[15] "*Cosmovisión*" is translated as "cosmology." However, I keep it in Spanish for its composition of *cosmos* and *visión*, the vision of the cosmos, an important aspect of the Mayan civilisation, past and present.

(CNI, n.d.) and because of the Chiapanecan context, I have consistently referred to them as guiding principles to the research, and to mediate collaborations with *mis compañeras*, Mayan weavers members of the collective Malacate. I develop these further in Chapter Three. The principles are crucial to established decolonial and collaborative relationships, aligned with *Lekil Kuxlejal*.

2.3.5 *Malacate taller experimental textil*: "*Nuestro Camino, Nuestra Lucha*" (Our path, our fight)

A pivotal element in this study is fieldwork conducted amongst Malacate which follows a long gestational period. As a conventionally trained designer, my initial perception of artisanal design followed hegemonic design practices that sought to benefit Indigenous communities, despite not having a formal design education. However, approaches from this perspective do not recognise Indigenous peoples' *autonomía*, as self-determined and as designer-artists. To recognise other ways of designing, how Indigenous ways of being and doing shape design as a medium and tool to transform their own worlds, and to acknowledge design by their Indigenous names, in this case, Mayan design from *los Altos de Chiapas* became a crucial element to my own journey towards decolonising my personal design practice.

Engagement with some artisanal groups as a client or in casual conversation with key people in the field was part of my professional role as a designer. After asking designers in Mexico, the search pointed to *Malacate Taller Experimental Textil*, a group of Indigenous women from Los Altos de Chiapas established in 2010. The group piqued my interest due to a range of factors, including:

- Conventionally trained designers are not part of the collective, which differs from other initiatives explored in the field.
- It is part of a movement fighting for ethical trade and practices.
- Directly designing, making and selling of its artisanal products.
- It is an economically independent organisation as it does not rely on external funding, as is common in other initiatives.
- The members are mostly Indigenous artisan women, except for a mestiza ethnologist.

My initial idea was to work with a group of exclusively Indigenous artisans. However, the reality was that the research and researchers are not always suitable to

community groups (L. T. Smith, 2013). Firstly, most artisanal groups are not exclusive to Indigenous peoples and involve mestizos. Secondly, to form an entirely Indigenous group may have exceeded the period of this research. Most importantly, the Indigenous artisans considered the mestiza women as an important part of the group, showing me that the division existed externally. However, tensions between Indigenous and mestizo identity remain in Chiapas, and evident in some cases (Perez Canovas, 2014; T. Ramos Maza, 2004; Treviño & Coautoras, 2018). Identity is a debatable topic not only in Mexican and Latin American territory, but also worldwide, particularly for the Indigenous.

Malacate commenced operations in 2010, with an objective of rescuing and promoting Indigenous textiles from the highlands of Chiapas, and simultaneously achieve economic independence through generating income for the members' families. They learned to work in *colectividad* despite their various cultural backgrounds and being united by the heart, "*pues acá en las montañas del sureste mexicano se aprende con el corazón no con la cabeza"* (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018c, p. 2) (because here in the South Eastern Mexican mountains, we learn with the heart not with the head) (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Malacate Taller Experimental Textil founding group in Paraje Nachig. Picture by Isaac Guzman Arias. From "Grupo base fundador de Malacate Taller Experimental Textil. Paraje Nachig. Foto: Isaac Zoom", by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018 (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/photos/a.226504714149457/1330293103770607/). Reprinted with permission.

In 2012, Malacate started its second research project with co-founder Karla Pérez Cánovas, to understand the impact and transformation of artisanal textiles due to commodification. The group members identified the growing trend of artisanal textiles, pieces used, and various trade methods that differed from their own community customs. This decontextualisation provoked a lack of acknowledgement of weavers as carriers and guardians of traditional knowledge. For this reason, Malacate decided to create its own designs, using the members' cultural backgrounds. It was important to adapt to other contexts, and they began online trading through a dedicated Facebook page.

The Malacate Facebook page provided a platform to share the members' own voices about their cultural backgrounds, community and territory, textile processes, and life stories. This generated online attention, new contacts and, due to the increased interest, they started to receive visits to their community from students and women interested in their work. Some included intercultural exchange with other Indigenous women or mestizas from other latitudes such as the *P'urhépecha* from Michoacán or *Mapuche* from Chile (Figure 15). These connections and knowledge exchanges have enabled the development of their own dedicated methodology: "*A través de la pluralidad de conocimientos hemos podido crear nuestra propia metodología desde lo local y desde nuestras propias prácticas* (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018c, p. 7) (Through plurality of knowledges, we have been able to create our own methodology from the local and from our own practices).

Figure 15. Exchange with compañeras Mapuche in Nachig. Picture by Karla Pérez Cánovas. From "HOY CONTINUAMOS COMPARTIENDO OTRA DE LAS FORMAS EN COMO TRABAJAMOS", by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018 (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1349777951822122). Reprinted with permission.

The networks created have allowed Malacate to generate consistent work for the members and for women and families in different contexts, far beyond their imagination in the early years. The personal connection created an awareness of similar struggles in other territories, the respect of differences, and the importance of embracing the plurality of knowledges towards a fair-dignified life:

> *Hemos aprendido que no podemos revindicar nuestras culturas desde la exclusión de otras y otros, no podemos exigir nuestros derechos y al mismo tiempo negárselos a otras personas. Pues creemos que donde existe respeto, transparencia, compromiso, visibilidad ,reconocimiento mutuo, pasión por lo que hacemos y corazón, siempre habrá un horizonte.* (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018c, p. 6)
>
> (We have learned that we cannot revendicate our cultures by the exclusion of others, we cannot demand our rights, and at the same time, deny them to other people. We believe that where there is respect, transparency, commitment, visibility, mutual recognition, passion for what we do, and heart, there is always going to be a horizon.)

The presence of the heart is evident in Malacate ways of being and doing, and it has been used as a filter to establish collaborations, pivotal to the development of this research methodology (Chapter Three), and reflected throughout the research journey (Chapters Four, Five, and Six). Nevertheless, the collaborative research with university students has contributed to reciprocal learning, research advancement, and generating meaningful, wholehearted and long-lasting relationships, "*quienes lo han hecho se han comprometido siempre a ser recíprocas y entregar de vuelta lo que su corazón les ha dictado (…) compartir y comprometerse con nosotras, lo valoramos y no olvidamos.*" (those who have done it have committed to be reciprocal and give back what their heart dictates (…) sharing and committing with us, we value it and do not forget it) (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018c, p. 8) (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Nachig, municipality of Zinacantán: Gloria María in field work for her Master's research in CIESAS, México City. Picture by Karla Pérez Cánovas. From "En Malacate Taller Experimental Textil contamos con el área de investigación pues Malacate Taller Experimental Textil nació también de una investigación de tesis elaborada por la Antropóloga Karla Pérez Cánovas buscando con ello transformar la realidad de las mujeres indígenas y no sólo que los resultados de esa investigación quedara sólo en la teoria", by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2017 (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1013510702115517). Reprinted with permission.

Malacate ways of being and doing are embodied practices that reflect the importance of *colectividad*, solidarity, friendship, love, life and unity, validated in this quote:

> *Tener claro desde dónde caminamos, el por qué y para qué siempre será la brújula cuando nos sintamos desanimadas. Que el amor, la amistad y la solidaridad en colectivo sea la base más allá del dinero, recuerden compañeras que nuestra lucha es por la vida y juntas podemos.* (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018c, p. 9)
>
> (Clarity in knowing from where we are walking, the "why" and "what for" is always going to be the compass when we are feeling down. That love, friendship and collective solidarity is the base beyond money. Remember, *compañeras*, that our fight is for life and, together, we can.)

Malacate are research partners and co-creators of this project, practicing embodied epistemologies and ontologies from the South, generating decolonial alternatives in textile artisanal design towards *Buen Vivir* and a fair-dignified life. Their teachings are pivotal to my design and research practice moving forward, and personal life as a Native Latin American woman.

To summarise, this chapter has provided a literature review of design and artisanal design, starting with reflections on the distinction of craft, design and art through a decolonising lens. Later, it discussed the design alternatives from the Global North and Global South and explained *Buen Vivir* as a decolonial stance in Abya Yala. Finally, it situated the research in Mexico, particularly in the Mayan land of the highlands of Chiapas, and introduced my research partners of the collective Malacate, their ways of being, and doing design from the Global South.

Chapter 3: From the Global South: Decolonising approaches to research

This chapter is primarily a research overview from a Global Southern perspective and outlines the research question, ontology, epistemology, theoretical framework, methodology and methods for data collection and analysis. It unpacks the development of a research proposal based on a precolonial textile tradition backstrap loom weave, or *jolobil* in the Mayan Tsotsil language. *Jolobil* is used as an analogy for a decolonising research framework that weaves theories and methods from various disciplines. Utilising decolonisation as a transversal base provides a distinctive lens for framing tools and methods in open collaboration with research participants and stakeholders in the field, searching for a fair dignified life, or *Lekil Kuxlejal.* This approach aims to speak to textile artisans, allies, and scholars in the highlands of Chiapas, as well as to other weavers who are familiar with this technique in Mexico.

3.1 On decolonising research and methodologies

Decolonial theory emerged as an alternative theory and practice from Eurocentric modernity, a resistance to colonialism. Power and knowledge are at the crux of the colonial agenda, and are important aspects to be attentive to while in the field. In this research, Indigenous knowledge and experience have been central to balance the unequal hierarchies in the knowledge from the Global North, as valid sources of lived knowledges (De Sousa Santos, 2018b). Acknowledging and counteracting our power, privilege and hegemonic knowledge formation from the Global North, warrants the need to deconstruct the unequal hierarchy of epistemologies approaching decolonial theory on the basis that decolonisation is action. However, the limitations and complexity of breaking those hierarchies inside an academic context are palpable.

3.1.1 What is decolonial theory?

To understand decolonial theory it is necessary to understand colonisation, colonialism, coloniality. and its relationship to modernity. The process of colonisation involves hegemony and asymmetry, an imperialist process and external determination of territory, economy, people and culture. The coloniser occupies foreign territory and cultivates it through military, political, economic, cultural,

religious and ethnic actions (Estermann, 2014). Specifically, in Cemanáhuac or Abya Yala, colonisation was present between different native groups before the so-called "discovery" of the Americas by Christopher Columbus in 1492. The Spanish colonial project set the agenda of seizing land and exploiting resources and people, the latter of which was achieved by imposing a caste system positioning the colonisers at the top. This complex classification created a hierarchy based on ethnic inequality, discrimination, and blood quantum, to maintain power, social status, and wealth. Through this event 'modern colonisation' became the current global paradigm and has remained so since the 16th century, a persistent asymmetry of the coloniser and the colonised world, between Global North and Global South, West and East (Estermann, 2014), or notions of otherness and alterity.

Colonialism is the consequence of external and internal transformation suffered after invasion, defined as "a broad concept that refers to the project of European political domination from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries that ended with the national liberation movements of the 1960s" (Kohn, 2011, para. 7). It is an ideology that justifies and legitimates the hegemonic and asymmetrical order established by the colonial power in a phenomenon called "coloniality", persistent in many people of the world subjected to the colonisation process (Estermann, 2014).

Modernity was built through coloniality and became the Western model of civilisation, lowering nature, bodies, and other worlds within the hierarchy. The colonial model affirmed itself as a universal reality, the centre of world history through conquest and colonialism (W. Mignolo, 2000). According to Dussel (as cited in Vazquez, 2017)

> 1492 is the date of the "birth" of modernity… (M)odernity as such was "born" when Europe was in a position to pose itself against another, when, in other words, Europe could constitute itself as a unified ego exploring, conquering, colonizing an alterity that gave back its image of itself. This other, in other words, was not "dis-covered" (…) as such, but concealed. (p. 66)

The Eurocentrism of modernity occurred through cognitive and material processes of production and the suppression of the other. Alterity created a separation between the human and the savage, civilisation and barbarism, the developed and the underdeveloped, creating a systematic discrimination of other worlds to a non-

modern past, racial classification, and colonial gender systems (Lugones, 2014; Vazquez, 2017)

As resistance to colonialism, decolonisation emerged as an alternative theory and practice to Eurocentric modernity. Decolonisation as a concept emerged from the Bandung Conference in 1955, where leaders from newly independent countries from Africa and Asia met to discuss perspectives on the new forming world, echoed by Afro-Caribbean scholars who suffered from British and French colonialism during the 19th and 20th centuries (Césaire, 1955; Fanon, 1970; Maldonado-Torres, 2006). Decolonisation differs from post-colonial theories by geopolitical geographies and histories, in which perceptions of race and hybridity are predominantly significant. For post-colonial thinkers, colonialism produced hybridity or mimicry (Bhabha, 1984, 2004; Easthope, 1998) originated in the West, where "race has thus figured as a category central to postcolonial criticism while its position in anti-colonial discourse varies" (Chakrabarty, 2005, p. 4812). For example, race is central to the arguments of Fanon (1970) and Cesaire (1955), but is not as relevant to Gandhi or Tagore on their formulation of colonial domination. Therefore, this research aligns to decolonisation for its different approach to hybridity and race, and its direct relation to the research context in the Americas.

In Abya Yala, Quijano (2000) discussed coloniality as the

> culmination of a process that began with the constitution of America and colonial/modern Eurocentered capitalism as a new global power (…) The racial axis has a colonial origin and character, but it has proven to be more durable and stable than the colonialism in whose matrix it was established. Therefore, the model of power that is globally hegemonic today presupposes an element of coloniality. (p.533)

In this sense, decoloniality challenges the manifestations of coloniality at different levels. According to Maldonado-Torres (2006)*:*

> Decoloniality is the dismantling of relationships of power and conceptions of knowledge that foment the reproduction of racial, gender, and geo-political hierarchies that came into being or found new and more powerful forms of expression in the modern/colonial world. (p. 117)

Here, the importance of power and knowledge as pivotal tools of the colonial agenda is noticeable, as is the need to deconstruct these hierarchies to approach decolonial

thought; the fundamentality of decolonisation as action is palpable. This definition in which power and knowledge are important aspects, particularly in relation to field research, is central to this study. Nevertheless, the recognition of Indigenous ways of knowing as important sources of lived knowledges, most of which are decolonial, is crucial.

Decolonial thought is detached from the colonial matrix of power, separated from the imperial imaginarium and its legitimising discourses (W. Mignolo, 2009). One of its primary foci is the recognition of the pluriverse where multiple forms of articulation about culture and the notion of social life exist. These other worlds in the pluriverse do not necessarily assimilate each other, but can be linked transversally away from the colonial matrix (De Oto, n.d.; W. Mignolo, 2007b). This is particularly relevant to this research because of two major reasons: first, the field research site in Los Altos de Chiapas, and second, my location in Aotearoa. Comparison between both realities and contexts is challenging, but there are some connections between the colonial Indigenous experiences in Cemanáhuac and Aoteraoa.

Decoloniality is not just a matter of simply forgetting European political and theoretical thought, but rather, a critique that modernity entails coloniality. In this sense, it should not be isolated but explained in historical and spatial terms. Therefore, this research emphasises a context-based approach, in the field of Chiapas and my lived experiences as a researcher in Aotearoa. This differs from the W/GN perspective of objectivity, acknowledging and recognising my privileged positions, both as a researcher as an outsider-within, a decolonial stance (Collins, 1986).

Coloniality is reflected in external aspects such as territory, power (Quijano, 2000), economic, and education systems. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge, reflect and act on the internal aspects of coloniality and the need to decolonise them, such as the mind (Wa Thiong'o, 1987), the being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007b), knowledges (E. D. Dussel, Krauel, & Tuma, 2000; Fals Borda & Mora Osejo, 2003), gender (Lugones, 2014) and others. In particular, the need to decolonise knowledge was recognised in 1970s and remains undeniably present in disciplines related to social science and philosophy. As an alternative to colonialism, De Sousa Santos (2015) suggested Epistemologies of the South, which foremostly denounces the suppression of knowledges in the last centuries from those who validate dominant epistemologies, and facilitate the resurgence of others. This is reflected in the re-

emergence of epistemologies once ignored and validated as sources of knowledge to reinforce the community's well-being (De Sousa Santos, 2015; L. T. Smith, 1999a). There are various iterations to this discussed epistemologies (Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015), for example:

- *Sumak Kawsay* from the South American concept of *Buen Vivir* or living well, in harmony and balance with, and respect to the land, cosmos and all life forms (Vanhulst & Beling, 2014);
- *Ubuntu*, a South African concept addressing a common humanity and responsibility to each other (Nussbaum, 2003);
- *Satyagrah*a, an Indian idea that encourages a new way of life using the soul (Singh, 1997);
- *Mitakuye oyasin*, a Dakota framework for thinking, acting and relate to and with others, the land, the cosmos and the totality (Ruml, 2010); and
- *Kaupapa Māori,* the Māori way of doing things (Pihama et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2006).

Following examples from different regions, part of this research explores the equivalent of the epistemologies of *Buen Vivir* from *los Altos de Chiapas*, *Lekil Kuxlejal*, as pivotal.

3.2 From the Global South: Epistemologies and ontologies

Considering the importance of decolonising design research, the use of epistemologies and ontologies from the South, aligned with the Latin American context, particularly the Mayan region of the highlands of Chiapas, is proposed. This section elaborates on the ontological and epistemological approaches to the research from the Global South.

3.2.1. *Sentipensante* ontology, an embodied approach

Winograd and Flores (1986) defined ontology as "our understanding of what it means for something or someone to exist" (p. 30). In simpler terms, it is the study of "being" (Crotty, 1998). Ontology has to do with assumptions made by different social groups about the kinds of entities taken to exist in the real world (A. Escobar, 2012). Decolonisation and epistemologies from the South recognise the importance of the revitalisation of other ways of being and context-based approaches. Therefore,

this research follows a *sentipensante* ontology as a distinctively Latin American approach.

The term "*sentipensante*," linked to Orlando Fals-Borda (2015), talks about human beings that combine reason with love, the body, and the heart. He acknowledges the origin of the concept as Colombian Caribbean culture, later echoed by the writer Eduardo Galeano in *El libro de los abrazos.* honouring the fisherman of the Colombian coast (Galeano, 1991). Cepeda (2017) proposes *sentipensant*e as an ontological approach, a decolonial act of using different ontologies and epistemologies from thinkers in the Global South. He mentions:

> In order to develop a better understanding of cultural feelings as well as appreciate the natural, the rhythmic and the vital in the Latin American context, I propose that we follow the ontological sentipensar. By using this methodological framework, I seek to reveal a sense of being germane to Latin American intercultural philosophy (p. 12).

He also explained how *sentipensar* as a research method requires "learning with humility from the Indigenous" (p.18), giving the same importance to popular wisdom as to scientific research, an appropriate approach through which to collaborate with Indigenous artisanal collectives.

Sentipensante was indeed experienced or embodied in the first field research trip as recorded in my field notes, which reflected on the first meeting with Malacate discussed in Chapter four. Nevertheless, being *sentipensante* connects decolonising design with two relevant concepts from Mayan culture and academic research: the heart and embodiment. First, I will elaborate on the connection of *sentipensante* with the heart, and second, to context-based embodiment or emplacement.

López Intzín mentioned the importance of the heart in Mayan thought, also reflected in the language (Hemispheric Institute, 2016; López Intzín, 2015). Boff (2015, 2016) recognised the rights of the heart as the axis of the Mayan culture as manifest in the *Popol Vuh*[16] and the books of Chilam Balam of Chumayel. Also present in Mayan celebrations were priests and priestesses to invoke the heart of the winds, the waters, the trees, and the ancestors. The heart plays an important role in *sentipensar*:

[16] The *Popol Vuh* was written by *Maya Kiche* nobility from the highlands of Western Guatemala pre-colonisation, and is the book of Mayan creation (Christenson, 2012).

> That is why the nature of sentipensar requires a connection from the heart with nature as a whole; understanding the cosmos with all its meanings and senses implies not a pure and simple reasoning — only reasoning— But a reasoning-with (with-everything-that-is and with-the-heart), that is to say: to co-reason: corazonar. To understand is corazonar (Cepeda H., 2017, p. 26).

The significance of the heart was explored in the second field research which also went beyond academic literature in the topic (Boff, 2015; Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, Campos, et al., 2015; Pérez Moreno, 2012), understanding that its importance in action was palpable amongst the members of Malacate.

The second concept aligned with *sentipensar* is embodiment, an imperative part of decolonial design practices (Schultz, Abdulla, Ansari, & Canlı, 2018). As the integration of mind and body, embodiment has impacted fields such as the cognitive sciences (A. Clark, 1998; Rowlands, 2009; Varela et al., 2016) and social sciences. In contrast with Turner's (1986) approach to objectify the corporeal experience by the rational mind, embodiment encompasses body-mind as source of knowledge and agency, and not just as a source of experience to be rationalised (Pink, 2009). There are at least two important aspects to embodiment. First, the direct relation of the body-mind agents with the environment (A. Clark, 1998), and second, the physical/corporeal experience of engagement of the body with space and material artefacts (Malinverni, Mora-Guiard, & Pares, 2015). This body-mind experience became more integrated through practice and time, as exemplified by Varela et al. (2016) who explained that "one achieves a certain condition that phenomenologically feels neither purely mental nor purely physical; it is, rather, a specific kind of mind-body unity" (p. 29). Therefore, embodiment - in relation to experience - involves enaction.

From a cognition point of view, embodied action encompasses various aspects. Cognition emerges depending on the experiences of the body with sensorimotor capacities, and these capacities are embedded in biological, cultural and psychological contexts (Dreyfus, 1979; M. Johnson, 2013; Lakoff, 2008). In relation to the body's capacities and the corporeal experience, a *sentipensante* ontology also considers the integration of affection-emotion and spirituality:

> The path we have followed à la Latin American starts with corporal experience, with material experience, with the affective-sentimental attitude of feeling the feet on the ground. To feel ourselves one with each other, palpating us naturally, affectionately, spiritually (…) starting from that natural interconnection of one with each other and everyone to everyone, under the horizon of sensing sensitivity which, as a starting point, is basic and fundamental, irreplaceable. (Cepeda H., 2017, pp. 16, 17)

Notions of affection and spirituality are aligned to Varela's view of embodiment, a topic that was found in field research in the relationship of *O'tan* and *Ch'ulel*. However, the richness and complexity of this area requires deeper and further exploration. A brief exploration is discussed in *patrones sentipensantes* in Chapter Five.

3.2.2. Epistemologies of the South as the research paradigm

Epistemology is the study of knowledge and how it is identified, constructed and validated (Alcoff, 1991). This notion of epistemology carries an intrinsic dimension of normativity (De Sousa Santos, 2018b). In this research, the use of epistemologies of the South is a decolonial stance acknowledging "other ways of knowing" not necessarily recognised by dominant epistemologies from the Global North. According to De Sousa Santos (2015, 2018b), epistemologies of the South challenge hegemonic epistemologies by identifying and validating other ways of knowing, by focusing on non-recognised knowledges that are produced by "intelligible methodologies or because they are produced by absent subjects" (2018b, p. 2), and by emerging from resistance to oppression. Hence, the concept of epistemology itself is re-signified to break the dominant politics of knowledge and focuses on lived experiences as experiential epistemologies.

In this regard, epistemologies of the South as lived experiences link back to a *sentipensar* ontology as an embodied approach focusing on "ways of knowing, rather than knowledges", or as embodied social practices. In other terms, "knowledges appropriate reality, ways of knowing embody reality" (De Sousa Santos, 2018b, p. 3). Thus, this research takes ways of being and ways of doing from the Global South, particularly from Latin America, as an appropriate approach to the context and field.

This approach also aligns with decolonisation which aims to dismantle the conception of knowledge, and to fracture the reproduction of hegemonic hierarchies

caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy (Maldonado-Torres, 2006). Here, epistemologies of the South and its "focus on cognitive processes concerning meaning, justification, and orientation in the struggle provided by those resisting and rebelling against oppression" (De Sousa Santos, 2018b, p. 3), allow historically oppressed social groups to represent and reinvent their own worlds according to their perspectives and practices.

Considering the context of the research and the relevant knowledges emerging form groups resisting oppression, an important learning comes from the *Zapatista* who commenced their resistance in Chiapas. The *Zapatismo* has been explored and utilised by Latin American scholars in terms of decolonisation, *sentipensar* and epistemologies of the Global South (Duffy, 2006; Félix Pichardo, 2017; Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, Campos, et al., 2015; Mora Bayo, 2017; Prage, 2015; Schlittler, 2012; Tradition, 2018). The movement validates ways of knowing that encourages the reinvention of other worlds reflecting their famous slogan "*Otro mundo es posible*" (other world is possible). Therefore, the use of *Zapatista* principles aligns with epistemologies of the South as other ways of knowing. Some of these principles have been used as research guidelines which will be unpacked in the next section.

3.2.3. "*Mandar obedeciendo*": *Zapatista* principles as research guidelines

As mentioned previously, on the dawn of January 1st 1994, the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN[17], *Zapatista* National Liberation Army) started a rebellion movement. *Lxs compañerxs*[18] *Zapatistas* practice resistance and *autonomía* showing the of the defence of territory and resources, and collective property means of production (Santiago Santiago, 2017). Currently, this movement is a political and resistance movement advocating for Indigenous people in Mexico, and the reinvention of new worlds in their own terms, "*Otro mundo es posible.*"

"Lxs compas" (*Zapatistas* are named this by each other and their allies, with a meaning similar to "comrade", or "*compañero*" in Spanish) says "*no se trata de cambiar al mundo sino de construir uno nuevo"* (it is not about changing the world, but building a new one) (Komanilel, 2018, p. 2). Thus, creating different

[17] The EZLN was funded on November 17th, 1983 in the Lacandona Jungle in Chiapas (Santiago Santiago, 2017).
[18] Instead of talking in female and masculine articles, I use an inclusive language in Spanish. Therefore, instead of saying *las compañeras y los compañeros*, it changes to *lxs compañerxs*.

relationships among humans and with Mother Earth, to build fair, complete, and happy lives outside the logics of capital, and organising our lives and societies based in other logics is a central notion (Figure 17). As cited in Escobar, Esteva (2018a) referred to *autonomía* from the *Zapatista* experience, as "the ability to create the conditions that enable communities to change their norms from within, or the ability to change traditions traditionally" (p. 143).

Figure 17. Lxs compas in the first *Zapatista* film festival. Caracol Oventik, November 1st, 2018. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

From the perspective of creating new norms, the *Zapatistas* and the CNI[19] developed principles of *Buen Gobierno* (good government), also known as "*Mandar Obedeciendo"* (leading by obeying):

1. Obedecer y no mandar (Obey, don't lead).
2. Representar y no suplantar (Represent, don't replace).
3. Servir y no servirse (Serve, don't self-serve).
4. Convencer y no vencer (Convince, don't conquer).
5. Bajar y no subir (Go down, don't go up).
6. Proponer y no imponer (Propose, don't impose).
7. Construir y no destruir (Construct, don't destroy) (Komanilel, 2018, my translations).

[19] *Congreso Nacional Indígena*, National Indigenous Congress

These principles are the research guidelines that have regulated my role as an outsider-within, my interactions with Malacate and other stakeholders in the field, and relevant for presenting our collaborative work and research in various contexts. I will exemplify how these guidelines have been interpreted and applied in different situations throughout the journey of this thesis.

Table 4 Zapatista and C.N.I's *Mandar Obedeciendo* as research principles. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

Principle	Example
Obey, don't lead	In the first meetings with Malacate, my participation was listening, learning, and following their protocols rather than guiding the sessions.
Represent, don't replace	The ideal scenario to present our research was alongside Malacate at an event conducted in Chiapas. However, when this was not possible, I consulted with them about the content, and mentioned the important role they play in the research at the presentation.
Serve, don't serve yourself	My collaboration with *Malacate* and other stakeholders in the field goes beyond research outcomes, it's being an advocate for their work and creating spaces to echo their voices and creations.
Convince, don't defeat	This principle is applied in the writing of the thesis, trying to focus on arguments that validate other ways of knowing through the ontologies and epistemologies of the South, and putting Indigenous experiences at the centre.
Go down, don't go up To work from below and not seek to rise (Wedes, 2014)	The importance of being humble. It has been important not to consider my education and W/GN formation as superior to the experiences and ways of knowing from my Indigenous *compañeras*, and to treat everyone with respect.
Propose, don't impose	Similar to "convince," this research focuses on the creation of alternatives to hegemonic design through Indigenous Mayan knowledge and experience rather than imposing

W/GN approaches to the research.

Construct, don't destroy	At different points throughout the research, it became important to see and read more critiques than alternatives to what has been working in artisanal design. This was particularly evident in social media platforms where the focus was on discrediting initiatives rather than proposing alternatives, and generating concerns on comments about my work with Malacate. However, this principle helped to direct efforts into the creation of alternatives and proposals rather than just making a critique.

3.3. *Jolobil*, a decolonial methodology

This section discusses *jolobil* as a new decolonial methodology. It gives a brief precolonial overview of backstrap loom weaving, through to recent changes in practice, particularly in terms of gender roles. Using the components and characteristics of *jolobil* as a metaphor, decolonial theories, interdisciplinarity, Mayan knowledges and *saberes*[20] developed a *Lekil Kuxlejal* fabric, seeking a fair-dignified life.

Crafts as research methodology have been used by researchers in the past. There are Māori methodologies based on weaving traditions. For example, Jani Wilson (2013) wove a three-stranded cord where each represents a tool for Māori film studies called *whiripapa* (rope). One of those strands is based on "*whatu tāniko*, a fine-finger weaving process and technique, to discuss theory and to inspire a film analysis tool to aid in the close reading of film texts from a specific world-view" (p. v). Hinekura

[20] While in English *saberes* and *conocimientos* are translated as knowledge, in Spanish they are used differently, especially in relation to Indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is commonly referred as *saberes*, and scientific Western knowledge as *conocimiento* (Crespo & Vila-Viñas, 2015; Martínez Novo, 2016; Zuluaga Duque, 2017). This research aligns to Zuluaga Duque (2017) approach as "*nos referiremos a saberes como el conjunto de creencias que son útiles para la vida práctica y para el desarrollo de los colectivos humanos. Así, al referirnos al conocimiento estaremos hablando de ciencias, tecnologías, incluso técnicas; mientras que al referirnos al saber, estaremos haciendo alusión a doxa legítima, saberes ancestrales, sabiduría popular, filosofía, artes, humanidades, religiones, metafísicas, entre otros*" (p. 67). (We will refer as *saberes* to the group of beliefs that are useful to everyday life and for the development of human collectives. Thus, when referring to *conocimiento* we will be talking about sciences, technologies, even techniques. While referring to *saber* we will be alluding to doxa *legítima*, *saberes ancestrales*, popular wisdom, philosophy, arts, humanities, religions, metaphysics among others.)

Smith (2017) developed a decolonised research methodology through weaving cloaks called *"whatuora,"* intertwining "*Mana Wāhine* theory, Māori creative practice and Māori and Indigenous methodologies into an interwoven set of ideas and theory" (p. iv). From an Andean perspective, Mariaelena Huambachano (2016) proposed an Indigenous research framework called *Khipu*, based on an Andean knowledge-keeping system based in "talking knots" (p.82). *Khipu* integrates an Inca counting device known as *"yupana"* for data analysis. These examples show how Indigenous crafts are valuable knowledge-generating resources going beyond materiality and the ongoing evolution of Indigenous knowledge that disrupts W/GN academia, and creates research methodologies from the Global South. This research aims to contribute to the creation of Indigenous knowledge-based methodologies using textiles as metaphor, and the decolonisation of artisanal design.

3.3.1. Backstrap loom weaving through time

Jolobil is a technique linked to Mesoamerican cultures. Rivera García (2017b) mentioned that *telar de cintura* is a biocultural knowledge that involves social and collective memory, a resistance process surviving colonisation. Mayans believe this technique was passed down to women by the goddess of the moon, weaving and fertility, *Ixchel*, and there are diverse versions of this story. It is possible to find this story in other Indigenous communities in México that still preserve the backstrap loom. As discussed by Rivera García (2017) in her thesis:

> *Ixchel, la diosa de la luna. Fue la que otorgó a las mujeres el arte de tejer, ella les dio los telares y las instruyó sobre los símbolos sagrados que había que utilizarse y plasmarse en los tejidos. Para las mujeres mayas, el tejer representa el nacimiento y la creación. Los bastidores del telar eran: el de arriba la cabeza, el de en medio el corazón, y el de abajo los pies. La lanzadera representaba las costillas y los hilos de la urdimbre que pasan por el corazón era el sustento. El telar se sujeta con una cuerda, cordón umbilical, a un poste o árbol, que era el símbolo de la madre o del árbol que estaba al centro del universo. El movimiento de abrir y cerrar el telar era representar el latido del corazón y el movimiento que hacía la tejedora al mecer su cuerpo representaba las contracciones del parto.* (Yecenia as cited in Rivera García, 2017b, p. 226)
>
> (*Ixchel*, the goddess of the moon, was the one who gave the art of weaving to women. She gave the looms and instructed them about the sacred symbols to use and record in the textiles. For Mayan women, weaving represents the birth and creation. The bars were:

> the top is the head, the middle is the heart, and the bottom are the feet. The shuttle (or bobbin) represented the ribs and the warp threads that pass through the heart were the sustenance. The loom is held by a rope, the umbilical cord, to a post or a tree, that was the symbol of the mother or the tree that was in the centre of the universe. The movement of opening and closing the loom was to represent the heartbeat, and the weaver's movement rocking her body represented the contractions of birth.)

Ixchel is the Mayan goddess of the moon, daughter of *Ixchebel Yax* and *Itzamná*, patroness of weaving, medicine, birth, flooding and protector of the arts. In the Madrid Codex[21] she was represented weaving in a backstrap loom, with the sword, *machete* or *tzotzopaztli* on the left hand (Figure 18). In other Mayan myths, the goddesses of the moon are related to the creation of the world and time, as the origin of *jolobil.* In a Mayan Tsotsil version, linked to the origin of maize and the sun, the sun mother was poor, so she did weaving and spinning for people in exchange of maize ("Atlas de Texiles Indígenas," 2014).

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Figure 18. Madrid Codex. From "Mujeres, Diosas y Tejido" by Ramírez, 2014, *Arqueología Mexicana, Atlas de textiles indígenas*, p. 71. Copyright 2014 by Editorial Raíces, S.A. de C.V.

Currently, Tsotsil and Tseltal weavers pray for good weaving sessions to Saint Mary Magdalene, the post-colonial representation of the deity of weaving (Quiroz Flores, 2018) (Figure 19). Despite that, *jolobil* is mainly practised by women due to the direct link to a female deity. Men have recently started weaving, challenging

[21] The Madrid Codex was made in the late Mayan period, post-classic in 1400 CE. (The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, 2012)

established norms inside communities. However, they still follow some of long held customs such as a prayer for good weaving, as narrated by Alberto López Gómez, a Tsotsil weaver from Madgalenas Aldama, and collaborator of Malacate (personal communication, 2018). López Gómez explained how weaving is a woman's practice but something he wanted to learn for many years, having grown up amongst weavers and their products. Five years ago, he had the courage to share his desire with his mother, an experienced weaver. He recollected a dream that Saint Mary Magdalene asked him about his desire to weave, and she gave him a cane as a symbol of the loom shuttle, and a small chair. Saint Mary Magdalene said he would help the weavers in his community (Figure 20). Currently, López Gómez is an active weaver and advocate who shares about his community through *K'uxul pok'* on social media, and assists in organising events to promote and commercialise their work.

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Figure 19. St. Mary Magdalene in a tree. She taught the women how to weave and brocade designs. Reproduced from *Maya threads: A woven history of Chiapas* (p. 28), by Morris, Karasik, and Schwartz, 2015, Canada, Thrums. Copyright (2015) by Janet Schwartz. Reproduced with permission.

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Figure 20. Statue of Mary Magdalene in procession in the community of San Andres. Reproduced from *Maya threads: A woven history of Chiapas* (p. 28), by Morris, Karasik, and Schwartz, 2015, Canada, Thrums. Copyright (2015) by Janet Schwartz.

Jolobil is a living practice directly linked to an individual's well-being as part of a community, and a medium to reconnect with Indigenous heritage and ancestry. Textile practices have evolved over time, adapting and transforming through the changes in Indigenous communities, and in a contemporary and connected world.

3.3.2. *Montando el telar*: The analogy of the components

Components of *jolobil* have deep, ancient, symbolic meanings for Mayan weavers. In this research, meanings are reinterpreted and combined with conventional and Indigenous theories, disciplines, and metaphors to develop a context-based research framework centring on Mayan knowledge.

Figure 21 shows the different components and meanings of *jolobil* in combination with new interpretations from a decolonial perspective. These are:

1. *Jolobil* weaving represents birth and creation, in this case, the creation of a collective woven research.
2. The tie cord attaches the *telar* (loom) to a tree, representing the umbilical cord connected to Mother Earth, a symbol of respect and connection to culture.
3. The superior warp bar is the head. Here, decolonial theory and decolonisation as action is the transversal support crossing the warp threads as disciplines.

4. The warp is the sustenance. The threads of the warp symbolise different disciplines (theories, methods and tools). In this case, using design, anthropology, sociology and *saberes indígenas*.
5. *El alzador* (the heddle bar) represents the breathing as a living being.
6. The strike of *el machete, jalamte'* or sword tightening the weft after each cycle is *el golpe del corazón* (the strike of the heart), as suggested by the Mayan scholar Enrique Pérez during consultation.
7. The passing of the weft across the warp as a constant action and in a cyclical time is *Lekil Kuxlejal* or *Buen Vivir*.
8. *La lanzadera* or bobbin is where the thread weft is wrapped around. Preparing the bobbin is one of the first steps before assembling *jolobil***.** *La lanzadera* is the holder of *el hilo del Buen Vivir or Lekil Kuxlejal*, allowing the passing of the thread.
9. The loom bar or inferior support is commonly known as "the feet." This symbolises *los conocimientos indígenas* or Indigenous knowledge as established local knowledge.
10. The act of weaving or *sjalel* through the embodiment and movement of the weaver lining forward and backwards represent birth contractions.
11. A unique characteristic of *telar de cintura* is the requirement of the constant movement of the weaver's body to create tension and to loosen the threads in order to let the bobbin pass, as further developed in the next section.

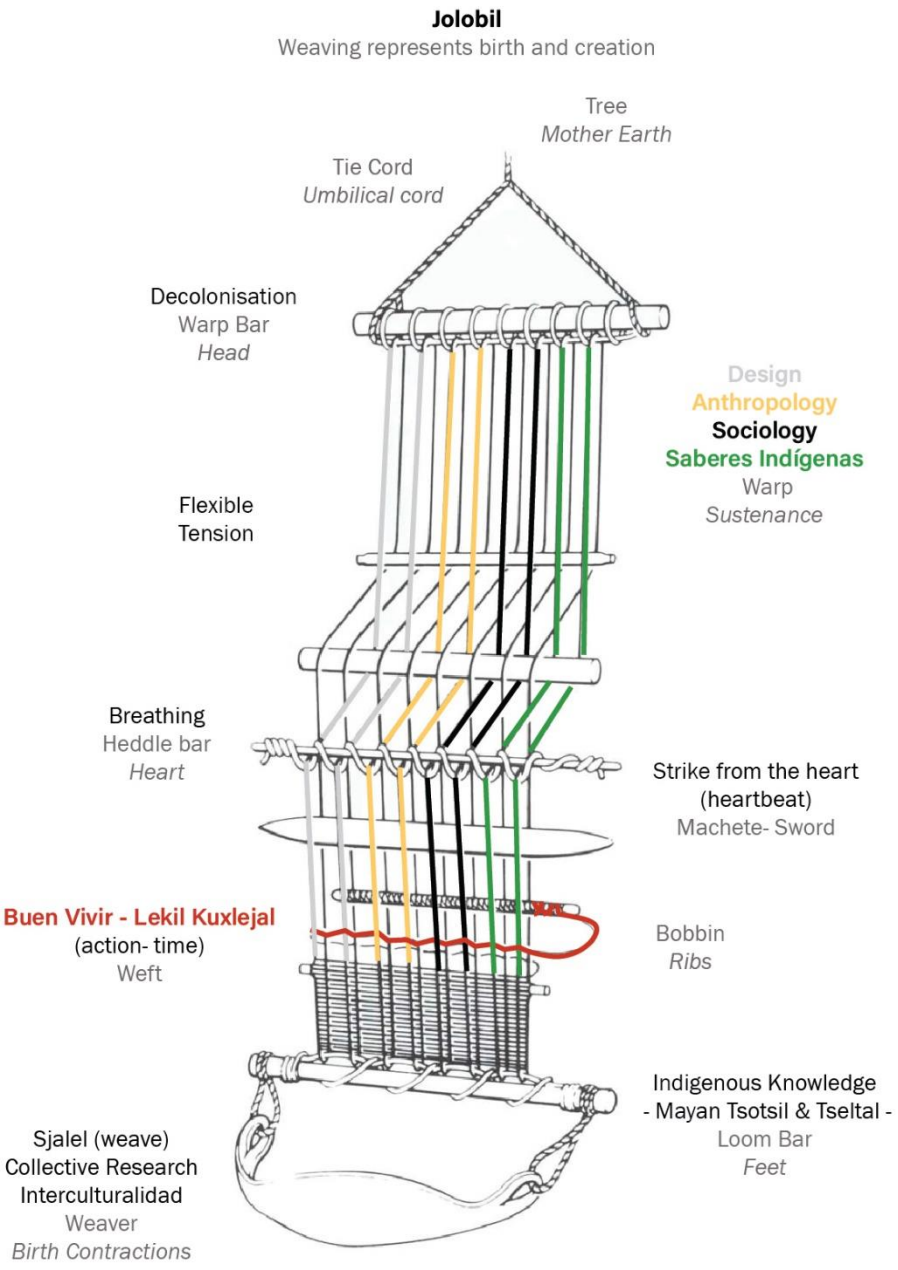

Figure 21. Jolobil as a Mayan context-based methodology. Adapted from "Weaving with a Backstrap Loom", by konob' weavings, 2013. (https://konobweavings.wordpress.com/2013/07/30/weaving-with-a-backstrap-loom/). Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

3.3.3. *Tensar y soltar*: A shifting balance

The *telar de cintura* is unique. It is flexible because it requires two main bars to structure the warp in connection with the weaver's body. The loom is stored by rolling the threads around the bars, and easily installed by tying it to a post or fixed structure. Consequently, the weaving process requires the movement and adaptation of the body to tense the threads of the *urdimbre. Tensar y soltar* is a cyclical movement of leaning back and forth to loosen the threads to allow the *alzador* to

change the direction of the warp, and passing the *lanzadera* through the threads without complication. According to Mayan *cosmovisión*, the weaver's movement is seen to represent birth contractions.

The cyclical movement of *tensar y soltar* (tensing and loosening) is a metaphorical representation of flexibility during the research journey, constant cycles of tension and letting go allowing collective creations to emerge and flow (Figure 22). The flexibility and portability of *jolobil* illustrates the freedom to adapt to different contexts and fields. Nevertheless, it is key to give priority to the heart, letting *O´tan* (heart) be the guide, *tejer con el corazón* (weave with the heart), as expressed by novice and master weavers.

Figure 22. The cyclical movement of *tensar y soltar*, leaning backward and forward as in birth contractions. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

3.3.4. *Sjalel Lekil Kuxlejal,* the connecting thread for a fair-dignified life

Sjalel[22] *jolobil* through the body, mind, heart and spirit in a cyclical movement, gives birth to a collective research based on Mayan knowledge. In this sense, the researcher weaves the investigation in *colectividad*, *horizontalidad* (horizontality), and *interculturalidad* (interculturality) alongside Indigenous communities (Chapter Seven). Here, the thread of *Lekil Kuxlejal* transverses many theories, fields,

[22] *Sjalel* means to weave in Mayan Tsotsil.

knowledges and places, seeking to weave *Buen Vivir* for all the people involved in pursuit of a fair-dignified life.

3.4. Design research from the Global South: Design anthropology and co-design from a decolonial perspective

This research touches on different aspects of design reflecting on the origin of the design, the design discipline, and what is considered design, from what perspective, and questioning what other forms of design that are not considered legitimate may exist. The relationship between research and design is complex, yet it has the potential for "just and sustainable social transformations" (Bærenholdt, Büscher, Scheuer, & Simonsen, 2010, p. 1). Design research as an established area is supported by practices across traditional fields of design and research in a synergetic way, fluctuating

> between analysis and design, between different disciplines and design in different domains, between humans and non-humans, between intention and emergence, between small and large worlds, between lived practices and theoretical abstraction, between training and scientific enquiry, between reflection in-action and problem-based learning and between very different persons. (Simonsen, Bærenholdt, Scheuer, & Büscher, 2017, p. 201)

In this sense, the in-between nature of design research is an appropriate approach for this research, allowing the researcher, participants, and stakeholders to co-create and give shape to the research journey, also reflecting the researcher's positioning as an outsider-within. This is similar to the notion of "Ma" as 'between-ness' to explore how we are transforming and becoming together among this heterogeneity", as an important aspect of co-design emanating from "relational sensitivity" (Akama, 2015, p. 262).

Rigid and prescriptive approaches where the researcher from within the academy identifies what needs to be done, fracture the *autonomía*, self-determination, and sovereignty of communities, replicating colonising research models. Therefore, design research permits the research to transform according to the context, situation, and participants evolving through time, and aligning to the needs and desires of the community during collaboration and beyond. However, it is important to acknowledge the W/GN origin of design research that has served as a tool to colonial agendas and Western modernity. Here, decolonisation helps bring balance to power

relationships and hierarchies across collaborations in Global Southern contexts. The following section analyses design research literature and explains how this research proposes a distinctive approach from the Global South.

3.4.1. On design research, from the Global North to the Global South

There are several definitions of design in the literature. According to Atwood et. al (2002), the most cited definition is "courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones" from Simon's (1969) *The science of the artificial* (p.111). While this definition is aligned to my perception of improving design, it is important to question who defines the "preferred" situation, especially when working with historically marginalised communities.

The Design Research Society (as cited in Simonsen et al., 2017) recognised

> design as a creative act common to many disciplines' and to "promote the study of and research into the process of designing in all its many fields". Thus, design research investigates the process of designing with the overall intention to better understand and to improve the design process "advancing the theory and practice of design. (p. 202)

In this, designing implies an action that is investigated through design research. The influence of research in design has been widely explored in disciplines such as architecture (Alexander, 1964; J. C. Jones, 1970), urban planning (Rittel, 1984), designers' working and learning processes (Schön, 1983, 1987), cognitive engineering (Rasmussen, Pejtersen, & Goodstein, 1994), participation in design (Ehn, 1988), and research for designers (Muratovski, 2015) to mention a few. However, Bærenholdt et. al (2010) claimed there are not many studies on how research works in designing.

Design scholar Nigel Cross' (1995, 2006, 2007) work has been influential for design thinking over the past 45 years, making relevant contributions in design research. He claimed that in the search of knowledge, designers search around people, processes, products and their social and material configuration. Nonetheless, his research warns about the intention to turn design into a replicable and exact science, remarking there is art in design practice. He also established three different forms of design research:

- Research for design (research-based design),

- Research into design (research analysing how design works), and
- Research through design (design-based research) – which also includes design through research.

In the first two, there is a separation between design and research, and between the roles of researcher and designer. Research for design is functional, in which research provides information and inputs for designers, while in research into design, the researcher studies and analyses the design process. Unlike these types of design research, research through design keeps design and research attached, and the roles of the researcher and designer are linked and in synergy. Design-based research follows the iterative design process involving abstraction and observation of context, process and participants, as self-observation during designing and its iterations (Bærenholdt et al., 2010), testing and prototyping. It also integrates the complexity and multi-directionality of research and design, in which the latter become a process and a medium of research simultaneously.

Existing research in this area has relevant contributions on the way designers think, in other terms, "designerly" ways of knowing (Cross, 2006), design thinking (Brown, 2008; Cross, 2011; Dorst, 2011; Kolko, 2015) design revolution (Buchanan, 2001; Fuad-Luke, 2009), the reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983, 1987), and the integration of the social, the material, and the scientific in knowledge production (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001). However, these established design research trajectories originated from W/GN traditions and there is little reference to how design research exists and operates in Global Southern contexts. Opportunely, researchers from the Global South have started to raise their voices about the recognition of other ways of designing. As Gutiérrez Borrero (2015) mentioned:

> *El resurgimiento de conocimientos silenciados despeja regiones para existir y da paso a equivalentes del diseño con otros nombres, cuyos linajes etimológicos y epistemológicos son ajenos a la Europa fundadora del mito homogeneizador de la humanidad.* (p.117)
>
> (The resurgence of silenced knowledges clears regions to exist and give way to design equivalent with other names, whose etymologic and epistemological lineage are alien to humanity's homogenising myth of the founding Europe.)

Based on this resurgence, Chapter Two explored design from the Global South in search of design research alternatives.

My position is an outsider-within researcher who shifts between the symbolic and literal Global North and Global South, and integrates aspects of both worlds. This research is aligned with design-based research from the Global North, where I play the roles of researcher and designer, collaborating and co-creating the research journey in synergy with Malacate and stakeholders in the field. However, the proposal has a particular Latin American context pivoting on the use of a *sentipensante* ontology, epistemologies of the Global South, and decolonising ways of being and doing research, seeking to contribute to a distinctive design research from the Global South.

3.4.2. Visual-digital-sensorial ethnography, an applied design anthropology method

Design anthropology has been used as a methodological approach in this research, and is aligned with Tunstall's (2013) proposal that "the methodology of design anthropology as an answer to how one might create decolonised processes of design and anthropological engagement" (p. 232). Based on this, we can acknowledge that anthropology and design have been instrumental to the colonial, imperialist, and modernity project (Schultz, Abdulla, Ansari, & Canlı, 2018; Tlostanova, 2017; Vazquez, 2017). However, there are significant efforts to redirect research and practices towards respectful, decolonising approaches considering communities can reject the research and researchers within which they are volunteers. In this space, *Decolonizing methodologies*, the seminal work of Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999a), has greatly contributed to the discussion of decolonisation of research methodologies to disrupt how the Indigenous, minorities, and other marginalised communities have been "coded into the Western system of knowledge" (p. 43). Anthropology (Harrison, 2010; L. T. Smith, 2013), design (A. Escobar, 2017a; Schultz, Abdulla, Ansari, Canlı, et al., 2018; Tlostanova, 2017; Vazquez, 2017) and design anthropology (R. C. Smith & Kjaersgaard, 2015; Tunstall, 2011, 2013) have joined decolonial efforts recognising the valuable contribution from these historically marginalised communities.

Instrumental to colonisation, conventional anthropology has limitations in terms of temporality focusing on the present and past experiences, in contrast to design. This approach inevitably refers to the immediate or remote past, while design engages with the future by exploring, creating and innovating new alternatives. The interdisciplinary nature of design disciplines also allows anthropology to have alternative routes to integrate into the future of theory and practice. This approach allows that ethnographic discussions with participants in their spaces can explore their context and practices with projections about the future (Akama, Pink, & Fergusson, 2015; Akama, Pink, & Sumartojo, 2018; Fry, 2009; Pink, 2001, 2009, 2014). Furthermore, Tunstall's (2013) principles in design anthropology are appropriate for work with Indigenous communities. These are:

- context-based starting points using macro aspirations, histories and cultural preferences of the communities;
- designers and researchers approach creating processes to support respectful dialogue and horizontal-relational interactions;
- enabling to change hegemonic value systems putting back the community well-being; and
- "to eliminate false distinctions between art, craft, and design in order to better recognise all culturally important forms of making as a way in which people make value systems tangible to themselves and others" (p. 243).

The approach for a decolonised anthropology is "a system of methods, principles, and rules that are free from the biases of the last five centuries of colonization and imperialism. Further, it contributes to the self-definition and self-determination of those formerly colonized" (p.239). While it is questionable how free from bias we can be while existing and operating in systems that continue colonising and oppressing other ways of being and doing, design anthropology facilitates the interconnecting and weaving of threads of value (philosophy), design (academic design research), and experience (psychology). Awareness of power, privilege, and hierarchies is important for making conscious efforts to counteract them, having decolonising approaches. This research, therefore, joins these decolonisation attempts that consider Indigenous experiences and knowledges as key research components in horizontal collaboration with the communities involved, and the integration of the future for the co-creation of alternatives. This approach is also

aligned with other ways of being as a *sentipensante* ontological approach, and other ways of doing with epistemologies of the South, through an ethnographic approach.

Ethnography is widely described as a method, an approach, a literary genre, a data collection process, a tool and a research instrument (Rivera García, 2017b, p. 126). It is further considered as an applied method of anthropology and design anthropology. In this sense, ethnography has been used by design researchers to engage in a deeper understanding about people and contexts (J Blomberg & Karasti, 2012; Crabtree, Rouncefield, & Tolmie, 2012; Hernández Villalobos, 2018; Pink, 2015; R. C. Smith & Kjaersgaard, 2015; Tim Plowman, 2003; Ventura, 2013). New expansions to ethnographic research include "auto-ethnography" in which the researcher's experience, thoughts, and perspectives in social interactions are central components (Reeves et.al, 2008, p. 512), an approach considered in the early stages of this research. However, a researcher-centred perspective would divert attention from collective-horizontal experiences by creating a hierarchy to the researcher's position.

Scholars of anthropology have contributed to the construction of ethnographic approaches from diverse perspectives that could be aligned with decolonising practices (Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, Speed, et al., 2015). In Latin America, Rappaport (2005) and Marcus (2001) developed collaboration and collaborative ethnography concepts. They proposed the integration of people with local knowledges for the creation of collective knowledge. In this sense, people are no longer participants or information providers but co-authors and close research collaborators, aiming to mitigate power relationships between the researcher and participants. Jimeno (2012) stated that ethnography is an approach concerned with knowing the subaltern point of view, a tool that goes beyond textual recording - a joint action. She also suggested alternative routes using collective actions such as sharing feelings, and the generation of communities with emotional bonds where people can be identified and recognised as equals, allowing collective ideas and goals development (p. 22). Similarly, Rivera García (2017b) said:

> *Concibo la etnografía como un proceso, también como un encuentro y un diálogo intercultural, es la encarnación de experiencias diversas que atraviesan las capas corpóreas, tanto físicas como emotivas y simbólicas. La etnografía significa reciprocidad, horizontalidad, intercambio, negociación, complicidad, creación de nuevos conceptos y definiciones a partir de la co-teorización. Involucra la creatividad y el contraste de*

> *subjetividades. Es un ejercicio altamente reflexivo, lo que significa ser consciente de su papel histórico, de sus búsquedas y sesgos para evitar relaciones de poder desiguales.* (p. 128)
>
> (I conceive ethnography as a process, also, as an intercultural encounter and dialogue. It is the incarnation of diverse experiences that cross the body layers, physical, emotive and symbolic. Ethnography means reciprocity, horizontality, exchange, negotiation, complicity, the creation of new concepts and definitions from co-theorisation. It involves creativity and the contrast of subjectivities. It is a highly reflexive exercise, meaning to be conscious of its historic role, their searches and biases to avoid unequal power relationships.)

Reflexive practice allows the researcher to challenge false anthropologic objectivity, by consciously assuming the implications that her presence brings to the field whilst being aware of the power relationships that are built into various situations among diverse actors. This generates multifocal and polyphonic narratives, where the senses, perceptions, and emotions enable the ability to sense and feel other cultures.

Here, feeling-thinking or *sentirpensar*, the corporeal and emotional experience, play an important role in embodiment. Based on Pink's (2016) approach:

> The ethnographers' embodiment is always at the core of this process, although to different degrees. For instance, researchers may seek to experience the same environments and activities as others as a route through which to empathetically connect with their sensory, embodied and affective experiences, or use their own experiences in seeking to comprehend what it might be like to feel those of others. (p. 61)

In a similar manner to that in this definition, Rivera García (2017b) wrote about the importance of the senses letting the ethnographic practice to *"pasar por el cuerpo y el corazón* (go through the body and the heart) (p. 141). In ontological *sentipensar*, the emotional-affective dimension and the heart are present in this type of ethnographic approach. As Calderón Rivera (2012) established:

> *La dimensión afectiva abre espacios para formular preguntas antropológicas ya que ésta es constitutiva de la cultura y también de lo que denominamos identidad y alteridad. Los procesos del conocimiento, comprensión, interpretación, interacción, descripción y percepción no pueden eludir la presencia de esta dimensión. Por lo tanto, la dimensión afectiva resulta ser un tema fundamental para la antropología* .(p. 31)

> (The affective dimension open spaces to formulate anthropological questions because is constitutive of the culture, also to what we denominate identity and alterity. The processes of knowledge, comprehension, interpretation, interaction, description and perception cannot elude the presence of this dimension. Therefore, the affective dimension turns into a fundamental topic in anthropology.)

The affective dimension of the embodied experience, aligned with Latin American and Indigenous ways of being, establishes family as the fundamental part of our existence (Díaz Gómez, 1994). In this regard, the integration of family in ethnographic field work becomes a decolonising practice where researchers present themselves as members of a family. This was particularly relevant in my case where I presented myself as a woman, a mother, and a daughter to a woman-led artisanal group. Hence, my mother and daughter took part in some of the gatherings with *Malacate*, which are explored in Chapter Four. Other female researchers have brought their families into the field (Porter, 2018), exploring the role of gender and gender embodiment in knowledge production (Chambers & Rakić, 2015; Pritchard, Morgan, Ateljevic, & Harris, 2007; Small, 2016), and the role of ethnographer and mother through reflexivity (Canosa, 2018).

Incorporating these concepts, the ethnographic perspective in this research followed Pink's (2014) digital-visual-sensory methods, establishing a connection between design and anthropology. She wrote:

> Digital, visual and sensory theory, methods and media are increasingly becoming part of ethnographic research practice across the social sciences and humanities, offering innovative ways of developing informed understandings and interventions for change. (p. 414)

Combining these perspectives creates dynamic relationships and emergent approaches to designerly thinking and ethnographic practice, and proposes new methodologies and practices in the creation of social interventions that are designed based on the communities' needs. Nevertheless, this proposal contributes to a "future-focused applied visual anthropology that is attentive to the sensory and digital environments of the everyday" (Pink, 2014, p. 414), an appropriate approach for considering the conditions (location, distance, time, resources, context) of this research. These were the digital social relationships, and the concept of co-presence supports the expansion of how human relationships are shaped by the characteristics

of digital media technologies. Similarly, Madden (2010) proposed cyber-ethnography in which a range of social relations existing in online networks and communities on the internet are taken into consideration. These approaches allow the integration of Malacate's Facebook page into the research. In Chapters Four, Five, and Six, the characteristics of each stage's ethnographic approach, as visual, digital and sensorial are developed further.

In summary, the ethnographic methods mentioned above are fundamental to this research. They could be considered in support of/from the Global South, where horizontal collaboration, heart-led/affective connection, collective action, future-orientation for alternatives generation, creativity, *sentipensar*, embodiment, family integration, and the intercultural exchange of experiences and emotions are important elements for decolonising actions in design research.

3.4.3. Co-design as method from a decolonial perspective

Collaboration is an important factor in artisanal design as a space where Indigenous artisans and designers work together. In research and education institutions, there is a definite increase in interest in collaborating with communities in design, research, and design research. However, there is no apparent recognition of historical approaches where collaboration, participations and partnerships go "beyond the recent emergence of calls for 'co-produced' knowledge" (Thedore & Alexiou, 2018, p. 4). This section is a brief review of co-design and participatory design. It then explores the connection between ethnography and co-design, and some observations of co-design from a decolonial perspective.

The terms of "co-design" and "participatory design" (PD) have been used interchangeably in research literature. Nonetheless, each tradition originated in various contexts. Participatory research encourages people to be small active parts in research wider activities to ensure "authentic, useful, fair, ethical, and relevant" participation (Foth & Axup, 2006, p. 93), primarily to have more effective and shortened communications between the researcher and the researched, and between research practice and the real world. In 1971, the Design Research Society (DRS) organised an international conference called "*Design Participation*" defining this term for the first time as a distinctive field (Y. Lee, 2008). The objective was to discuss the relevance in the participation of users in diverse design practices. The

origin of PD comes from the Scandinavian culture of social democracy and powerful unions to integrate workers in technology development processes. Participatory design aims to include the participation of stakeholders with diverse expertise and experience, and is characterised by its use of "informal processes with a strong emphasis on ethnographic and in-situ methods and frequent user involvement" (Foth & Axup, 2006, p. 94).

Co-design derives from disciplines related to development, products and technology design, exploring different degrees of the connection between imagining new products and the people interacting with them; in simpler terms, it is the user-designer relation (Voss et al., 2009). Sanders and Stappers' (2008) definition of co-design as "collective creativity as it is applied across the whole span of a design process" (p. 6) is commonly referenced. It is related to a collaborative learning process in which practitioners and designers interact and co-create (Ehn, 1988; Greenbaum & Kyng, 1991; Suchman, 1987), an in-between space for collaboration among users and developers. This condition of in-betweenness relates to the researcher's position as an outsider-within operating between spaces (Akama, 2015). Here, co-design is acknowledged as a method, a role, a process, and a product, where the situated collaboration goes beyond design spaces of actions, and as a collective development of commons and culture (Marttila & Botero, 2013).

Participatory design and co-design go beyond consulting and testing ideas with participants and look for active contribution from co-designers in the creation of proposals through the design process (Jeanette Blomberg, Giacomi, Mosher, & Swenton-Wall, 1993; Sanders & Stappers, 2008, 2012). Therefore, knowledge is generated by researchers and participants through methods designed to support mutual learning (D. Schuler & Namioka, 1993). This approach is known for its generative, experiential and action-based methods, emphasising play and cooperative learning, and allows to create visions of the future and design-by-doing (Greenbaum & Kyng, 1991) (Figure 23).

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Figure 23. The roles of the researcher, designer and user change in the transition from the traditional design process to the co-design process. From "Co-creation and the new landscapes of design", Sanders and Stappers, 2008, *CoDesign, 4*(1), p. 11. Copyright 2008 by Taylor & Francis.

As mentioned, situated and ethnographic approaches are frequently used in PD and co-design. In these spaces, approaches like rapid ethnography or "short-term ethnography" (Pink, 2014, p. 420) with a shorter duration in comparison to conventional anthropology, allow faster transference of information to the design process and seeking interventions to change for improvement (Brereton, Roe, Schroeter, & Lee Hong, 2014, p. 1183). In this way, the act of designing *and* doing together influences the people involved in the co-design process as a collective action. The act of "co-designing can catalyse a transformative process in revealing and unlocking tacit knowledge, moving people along on a journey to 'make real' what proposed services might be like in the future" (Akama & Prendiville, 2013, p. 30), where "participants and researchers cross-pollinate and 'make' together; and how serendipity and experimentation are generated and incorporated as a central ingredient" (Akama et al., 2015, p. 539). Here, we see the importance of making, experimenting and focusing on future-focused alternatives, where possible futures are considered indirect forms of activism which in turn inform design practice (Pink, 2015). Further, horizontal collaborations allow the cross-pollination of ideas, embracing heterogeneity (Akama, 2017). This organic, co-created process in which co-design is transformative, encourages us to "design our world, and ourselves, with others" (Akama & Prendiville, 2013, p. 31).

In these participatory and co-design spaces, the embodied experience plays a relevant role, and it is important to go beyond using and documenting PD and co-design methods in a research project, to embodying them. In this respect, Light and Akama (2012) mentioned the importance of a focus towards:

> …understanding the designers' participatory practice, rather than reporting participatory methods alone. The act of engaging others involves an embodied knowing, with moment-by-moment shifts in position, focus and delivery. (p. 61)

Embodiment, as I have mentioned, is a relevant component of decolonising design. Decolonial practices recognise and honour the context and culturally based ideas, projects and designs, acknowledging that knowledge production is situated and relational, where "ideas are embodiments of a designerly effort to make sense of experiential situations, and the transfer of ideas into and across different contexts informs how they affect thinking and action" (Schultz, Abdulla, Ansari, & Canlı, 2018, p. 2). This relates back to the ontological *sentirpensar* as an embodied approach and a contribution to design research from the Global South, operating in alternative spaces that are co-existing with the colonial matrix of power (W. Mignolo & Vazquez, 2013; Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Chimbati, 2013). However, it is important to be conscious that "it is impossible to be freed completely from the material and onto-epistemological subjugation of the Global North without constantly contesting our own positionalities and privileges within it" (Schultz, Abdulla, Ansari, & Canlı, 2018, p. 4). The decolonial level necessarily involves the affective-emotional experience (heart-led), embodiment, in which reflexivity is a key component for challenging our power and privilege, and where being and doing this alongside communities, is design activism (Fuad-Luke, 2009). In this sense, my parallel work and activism alongside Latin American women in Aotearoa exploring *Buen Vivir* functions as "*investigación activista"* (De la Piedra & Méndez, 2018, p. 13) (activist research) in which co-design and design theory is taken into practice with the community (Appendix C:c).

Through combining Sanders and Stappers' (2008) landscape of human-centred design research, in which PD and co-design exist as well as decolonising methodologies, it is possible to establish decolonising co-design in a Global Southern/decolonised dimension, to de-link (detach) from that overall structure of knowledge in order to engage in an epistemic reconstitution (*De-linking across*

indigeneity: Walter Mignolo and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 2019) (Figure 24). In this sense, decolonial co-design is projected between design-led and research-led approaches, making conscious efforts to move from decolonising design literature into actionable-open source guidelines, resources, and tools created in collective action (Figure 25).

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Figure 24 Decolonising methodologies in co-design, based on Landscape of Human-Centred Design Research. Adapted from "An Evolving Map of Design Practice and Design Research" by Liz Sanders, 2008 (http://www.dubberly.com/articles/an-evolving-map-of-design-practice-and-design-research.html). Copyright 2008 by Liz Sanders.

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Figure 25. A projection of decolonising methodologies in co-design at a decolonial level, projected in Landscape of Human-Centred Design Research. Adapted from "An Evolving Map of Design Practice and Design Research" by Liz Sanders, 2008 (http://www.dubberly.com/articles/an-evolving-map-of-design-practice-and-design-research.html). Copyright 2008 by Liz Sanders.

During the visual-digital-sensorial ethnographic work, various tools, or methods, were used such as digital photography, audio-visual recordings, collective dialogues and interviews, online and offline observations, and visual representations such as drawings and diagrams. In the co-design sessions, a multisensorial approach was proposed during the creation of collective posters. For this purpose, colours, pencils, pens, sticky notes, craft paper, paper sheets, glue sticks and an instant camera were available. It is important to highlight the impact the instant camera and photographs had during the co-design session, a point that is developed further in Chapter Six. More details on the application of methods and tools are in Chapters Four, Five, and Six.

In summary, like the ethnographic practice mentioned in the last section, this research seeks to contribute to the decolonising design efforts, a co-design practice from/by the Global South. The intention is to generate alternatives and show how other designs exist, operate, evolve and resist (Gutiérrez Borrero, 2015). This resistance is "within the colonial matrix of power due to specific historical, social, political, and economic reasons and rationalizations" (Schultz, Abdulla, Ansari, & Canlı, 2018, p. 4). Thus, it is necessary to have organic, fair, and ethical research approaches, that are heterogenous, collective creativity and the cross-pollination of ideas, horizontal collaboration, heart-led/affective connections, collective development of commons and culture by "changing tradition traditionally" (Botero et al., 2018, p. 53), embodiment, *sentipensar*, and future-making generation of alternatives and activism as important conditions of decolonising efforts.

3.5. *Patrones sentipensantes*: *Sentirpensar* and *corazonar* as analysis proposal for the pluriverse

Data analysis is "a systemic search of meaning" around "asking questions of data" (Hatch, 2002, p. 148). However, this concept of analysis links back to a W/GN research approach. In this paradigm, images of a sterile laboratory analysis to identify exact results, disconnected from the origin, context, embodiment, and affective experiences replicate colonising models of objectivity in research. Existing and performing in the Global South, this view of analysis is alien, and does not correspond to Indigenous world views. This research aspires to contribute to alternative ways of analysis that integrate *sentipensar* and *corazonar*, linking the

body, the mind, and the heart as embodied experiences, combined with metaphors and textiles, a decolonial option for the pluriverse.

The pluriverse seeks to divert from universal approaches, to embrace the existence of different worlds within the same world, an important concept in the *Zapatista* worldview resisting neoliberalism, coloniality and modernity. Pluriversality (W. Mignolo, 2011) encourages the coexistence of multiple worlds and alternatives. For Tlostanova (2017) this concept:

> …entails a coexistence, correlation and interaction of many intersecting nonabstract universal and countless options grounded in the geopolitics and corpopolitics of knowledge, being and perception, reinstating the experiential nature of knowledge and the origin of any theory in the human life-world. (p. 56)

In this, the acknowledgment of distinctive ways of being and knowing in coexistence with multiple dimensions differs from the notion of feminist objectivity and situated knowledges from Haraway (1988). While they are related in the recognition of the indivisibility of subject and object, and the connection of mind and body or embodiment, pluriversality entails the simultaneous existence of different worlds and knowledges that interact within the same situated experience. For Escobar (2016) the pluriverse is fractal, with auto-similarities in different scales or dimensions, with a similar ensemble but not identical. Like the decolonial dimension in co-design, Global Southern worlds are projections or dimensions in the colonial matrix of power in which academic research exists, shifting and intersecting between different dimensions.

Paradoxically, despite academia's proclivity for coloniality and modernity, scholars from the Global South have been proposing and pushing to decolonise Western universities. Abdulla (2018) advised to rethink universal approaches and solutions for an "epistemic pluriversality" (p. 90), suggesting that Global Southern epistemic traditions decolonise institutions. This echoes the ideas of Grosfoguel (as cited by Schultz, Abdulla, Ansari, Canlı, et al., 2018) who wrote of "institutions appropriated by Eurocentred modernity" (p. 90). Through my research position as an outsider-within, using Global Southern ways of being through a *sentipensante* ontology, this research shifts between Global Northern and Global Southern contexts, geographically and metaphorically, ways of knowing through epistemologies of the

Global South, and proposes an analysis approach through *corazonar* metaphor and textiles, concepts elaborated in the following section.

3.5.1. Beyond multimodality, *patrones sentipensantes* and metaphors for sensing patterns and connecting threads

The nature of data collection through visual-digital-sensory ethnography has sensory-affective characteristics that encompass photography, video, collective posters, drawings, audio, and text. The diversity of multiple types of data adds a higher grade of complexity for analysis than of conventional qualitative research approaches, considering many of them rely on written text such as in narrative analysis (Labov & Waletzky, 1997; C. P. Smith, 2000), discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 1985; Weiss & Wodak, 2007), and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2011) for example. Similarly, conventional visual analysis mainly focuses on aesthetic, compository and semiotic data originating in Global Northern contexts, translating visuals into written text (Glaw, Inder, Kable, & Hazelton, 2017; Muratovski, 2015). This adds the researcher's interpretation rather than simply allowing the viewers to explore their own perceptions. Therefore, it is proposed to approach data using metaphor and textiles that look for the connecting thread within the data, instead of dissecting and classifying discrete parts. Using textiles as a metaphor, it is not possible to analyse a textile piece by breaking it into sections (patterns and materials for instance) without compromising the integrity of the piece, as relevant information about the process and technique may be lost. Similarly, context is key to understanding and interpreting textiles because the origin provides symbols, cultural significance, and meaning. At the same time, the use of the senses and emotive-sensible strategies allows the creation of alternatives to explore and influence social realities through creative activities (Rivera García, 2017b). This approach aligns with *sentipensar* and *corazonar* through the embodiment of creativity and metaphor for concept exploration and development.

According to Rivera García (2017b), ethnography as an anthropological approach has used creative and artistic activities to generate shared emotions among participants and entails the consolidation of collective identities. This creative exploration became a key component in the co-design workshops during the second field trip where the concept of *Lekil Kuxlejal* and *O´tan* were explored through the creation of collective posters and their interpretation. Rather than focussing on visual

composition, the intention was to identify patterns between the groups, and in relation to the rest of the data such as that from group conversations, photography, sketches, illustrations, and academic literature. The use of multiple sources of data or evidence in Global Northern research contexts is known as triangulation (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014; Guion, 2002; H. S. Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991). This cross-referencing approach helps to support the credibility, validity, and reliability of the research practice (Muratovski, 2015). The methodological triangulation of bringing a variety of data sources and methods together, relates to multimethod research (Brewer & Hunter, 1989), mixed method research (John & Creswell, 2000; R. B. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007) and multimodal research (Hurdley & Dicks, 2011; Jewitt, 2013; Leeuwen, 2011).

The use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis is more useful than a single method, allowing the exploration of new and emerging theories, and the combination of data in new and creative ways (Glaw et al., 2017). However, mixed methods are used for qualitative and quantitative data. On the other hand, multimodal analysis has the purpose of examining communication and on-site interactions through the diverse resources used to construct meaning by participants, in which meaning is an iterative connection between objects, a socio-cultural environment, and the knowledge, experiences, and resources in the interactions. The diversity of data units enables a deep understanding of situated experiences and interactions, surpassing other frameworks focusing on conscious communication and responses centred in spoken and written language (Jewitt, 2013).

Based on a multimodal approach, the diversity of the collected data allows for an analysis with interactions between embodied and material resources, adding validity in comparison to other approaches. Jewitt (as cited in Malinverni et al., 2015) permitted “concepts, methods and a framework for the collection and analysis of visual, aural, embodied and spatial aspects of interaction and environments” (p.55). For this reason, multimodal analysis has been used in PD research to approach the material resources and experiences manifested during workshops:

> …multimodal analysis constitutes an effective and coherent method to capture and analyse users’ contributions across a wide range of semiotic resources, thus extending the richness of insights that can be derived from a PD workshop and communicated to the rest of the team. (Malinverni et al., 2015)

Multimodality is based on a semiotic approach in which the senses operate integrally, and not in isolation (Leeuwen, 2011), and "knowledge production is premised on multiple analytic gaps – between modes and media, participants and materials, recording and representation" (Hurdley & Dicks, 2011, p. 277). While this approach seems to be aligned with the research, there is a disconnection between the parts, in which the analytic gap of participants and materials links back to the isolation of components, compromising the integrity of the data, as mentioned earlier, using textiles as metaphor. In this sense, a sensory approach in which "the sensuous, bodied person – participant, researcher and audience/reader – as the 'place' for intimate, affective forms of knowing" (Hurdley & Dicks, 2011, p. 277) allows an interconnected analysis linking an embodied *sentipensar* and affection through *corazonar*.

For Pink (2009), a sensory approach seeks experience-based ways of knowing, connecting the worlds from participants and researchers in an empathetic-affective way. She stated that "the experiencing, knowing and emplaced body is therefore central to the idea of a sensory ethnography" (p. 25). According to Downey (2007, 2010), embodied knowledge production and learning involves physiological, cognitive and affective components, our full corporeality. In this sense, analysis is a constant and additive process, joining things that are mutually meaningful, interweaving embodied experiences, memory, theory, societies, imagination, and power relations among others (Pink, 2009). The interwoven nature of the data links the use of textiles as a metaphor for analysis.

Metaphor has been fundamental for analysis and sense-making processes, as embodied notions that emerge from corporeal and social experiences, aptly articulated as the "physical experiences of the world, our spatial awareness, our bodily movement and the way we manipulate objects, through metaphors" (Hoshi, Öhberg, & Nyberg, 2011, p. 219). Nevertheless, metaphors are instrumental for reasoning and understanding, and are extensively used by philosophers to make sense of concepts and intuitive philosophical theories to the unconscious mind. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999), the use of "metaphors allows conventional mental imagery from sensimotor domains to be used for domains of subjective experience" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 45). In this, metaphor links to *sentipensar* as embodied experiences connecting textile practices with sense-making. Similarly, *Zapatistas* use metaphor in their stories, teachings and characterisations such as in

old *Antonio* and *Don Durito* (Esteva, 2005), and could be considered a knowledge creation resource from the Global South, making it an appropriate option for this research.

Textiles and weaving as research metaphors have been used by researchers before. For example, as mentioned earlier, Wilson (2013) proposed a *Tāniko*[23]-based metaphor for film analysis tool to explore the historical chapters in Māori film in her thesis *Whiripapa: Tāniko, whānau and kōrero-based film analysis*. Te Awekotuku (as cited in J. K. T. Wilson, 2013) wrote:

> Tāniko, however, is unique to the Māori world (…) I think, explains and manifests in a very elegant way the metaphor of knowledge, the metaphor of gathering strands, the metaphor of creating and lending and, ultimately, producing something of beauty, of colour, of impact. (p. 26)

Rivera García (2017b) used *urdimbre audiovisual* (audiovisual warp) weaving images in which the warp is an established affective link for recording, the weft is the story, and the threads are all the possible combinations of images to create sense and meaning from the audio-visual material. From a decolonising perspective, Sahagún Sánchez (2015) used Mexican vernacular textile traditions for an artistic self-study exploring her cultural identity to unhide the Indigenous legacies in her heritage and identity by combining visual and text symbols. H. Smith (2017) developed *whatuora* methodology based on woven Māori cloaks with feathers, *whatu kākahu*. This approach interweaves Māori creative practice, *mana wahine* (women of strength) theory and Māori and Indigenous methodologies. Therefore, this research echoes these ideas of textile metaphors to identify the connecting thread in the woven research data.

In summary, *patrones sentipensantes* as an embodied analysis refers to:

1) Using the senses, the heart, and intuition to interpret data;
2) *Sentipensar* in which the mind and the heart, reason and emotion are intimately connected;
3) Seeking patterns that emerge from data;

[23] *Tāniko* is a traditional Māori practice of weaving fine patterns with the fingers.

4) The symbolic analysis of textile patterns as a living entity, directly linked to the creators (artisans/designers/artists) in relation to their socio-cultural context and *cosmovision*;
5) Seeking the connecting thread without isolating the parts; and
6) Using metaphors to connect mental images for creative exploration.

3.5.2. *Sentipensar/corazonando* as embodied reflexivity

Originating from sociology, reflexivity is an established research practice in which the researcher reflects on his/her experience during the research journey (Attia & Edge, 2017). Mann (2016) defines reflexivity as "(f)ocused on the self and ongoing intersubjectivities. It recognises mutual shaping, reciprocality and bi-directionality, and that interaction is context-dependent and context renewing" (p. 28). This condition of ongoing action aligns with design's iterative nature as reflected in design theory and research. From this perspective, "reflexivity allows the researcher to reflexively engage with the experiential learning cycle of theorizing, action, observation and reflection and the dynamic cyclical relationship of cause and effect" (Crouch & Pearce, 2012, p. 49).

This approach has been particularly useful in ethnographic situations in which power relations and imbalance exist, as in decolonising, feminist, and Indigenous research. In these spaces, "political power relations infuse research and knowledge co-creation practices, and that we must therefore closely attend to relationships among ethnographers and research subjects, participants, and collaborators" (Culhane, 2016, p. 61).

As mentioned, decolonising practice requires the identification of how we have been classified according to the colonial matrix of power (*De-linking across indigeneity: Walter Mignolo and Linda Tuhiwai Smith*, 2019), and the conscious awareness and contestation of our power, privilege and positionalities, a constant reflection during and beyond the research. In this sense, embodiment supports the reflexive experience in a deeply intense, sensorial way. Conquergood (1991) mentioned that "ethnography is an embodied practice; it is an intensely sensuous way of knowing. The embodied researcher is the instrument" (p.180). In other words it cultivates "sensory embodied reflexivity." (Culhane, 2016, p. 60).

The mutual shaping of the research and the researcher through reflexivity has a transformational nature challenging the self. Tomaselli (2016) wrote of Indigenous ethnography: "You will be changed (…) Are you ready for this experience? Your view of the world won't be the same after the visit" (p. 348). Sandywell (1996) mentioned "reflexive action changes the form of the self: a reflexive practice never returns to the self to the point of origin" (p. xvi). These passages reflect the challenge and conversion of the self during decolonial thoughts and reflections.

Other researchers have written about the transformational nature of reflexivity and decolonising practices. Benton Zavala (2018) reflected that "I have found that writing this thesis has involved an important element of transformation and re-framing of my own personal identity, and a somewhat tumultuous personal reflective process" (p. 40). Similarly, Pérez Moreno and Ramos Martínez (2009) explained how research is not only about generating new knowledge, but "*encontrarse con uno mismo, rostro a rostro, frente a frente, corazón con corazón*" (to meet oneself, face to face, front to front, heart to heart) (p. 2). Embodied reflexivity from a decolonising perspective has made an everlasting impact on my world view, practice and self-identification, as reflected in my published essay "*When we forget": I am Indigenous and I didn't know* (Albarran Gonzalez, 2019) for example. This also supported the integration and transformation of the research in collaboration with *mis compañeras* of Malacate, and to integrate *Zapatista* teachings as research principles or action guidelines based on ongoing reflexive practice.

Based on my own research and reflexivity experience, *sentipensar* serves as a medium to reconnect our beings to the heart, to *corazonar* our thoughts, in other words, to feel with the head, and think with the heart. This heart-led approach had been consciously integrated in the reflexive practice and as a guiding principle after finding the importance of the heart in Mayan culture, to integrate findings from the first field trip for further exploration. López Intzín (2015) mentioned:

> *Empleamos tanto el corazón como la mente, el amor y la razón, y eso nos conduce a la sabiduría. Sentipensamos para sentisaber, por lo tanto, somos sentipensantes. La presencia del corazón-o'tan(il) como centro y matriz del pensamiento maya tseltal se puede encontrar no sólo en el habla cotidiana, también se dice que todo lo que existe tiene corazón.* (p. 184)

> (We use both the heart and the mind, love and reason, and that lead us to wisdom. Sense-thinking to sense-know, thus, we are sense-thinking beings. The presence of the heart-*o'tan(il)* as centre and matrix of Mayan Tseltal thought can be found not only on everyday talk, it is also told that everything that exist has a heart.)

In this sense, the heart leads a way to reconnect and re-find ourselves. According to Sjalel Kibeltik (as cited in Pérez Moreno, 2012), it requires "*desnudarse-autorrepresentarse personal-colectivamente (…) abrir el corazón y trabajar desde la co-razón para mostrar nuestra raíz, nuestro origen, el caminar de cada un@*[24] *de nosotr@s (…) reconocer la raíz y el corazón de cada quien*" (undress ourselves, self-representation personal-collectively (…) to open the heart and work from co-reason to show our roots, our origin, the walk of our each one of us (…) to recognise the root and the heart of each person) (pp. 19 & 20).

In summary, *sentipensar/corazonando* as embodied reflexivity connects the body, the mind, and the heart as a unity, in which a constant dialogue between the research, the researcher and research *compañeras* (co-creators, rather than participants) become a requirement, together with the constant questioning and challenging of our power and privilege, while at the same time, embracing the confrontation and transformation of the self.

This chapter presented the overview of the research from the Global South addressing the ontology, research paradigm, epistemology, theoretical framework, methodology and methods for data collection, analysis and creative exploration. It started discussing decolonial theory, *sentipensante* ontology as an embodied approach, epistemologies of the South as research paradigm, and *mandar obedeciendo* as research guidelines. Then, it unpacked *jolobil* as a new decolonial methodology giving a brief overview of backstrap loom weaving, and the component and characteristics through metaphors for a collective woven research. It followed elaborating on design research from the Global South using visual-digital-sensorial ethnography and co-design methods, finishing with *patrones sentipensantes* for sensing patterns and connecting threads, and *sentipensar/corazonando* as embodied reflexivity.

[24] Similar to x, @ is use in inclusive and gender-neutral language in Spanish. For example, latinx or latin@ instead of writing latino and latina.

Chapter 4: The research journey: Decolonisation as an ongoing action

Decolonisation is a constant questioning and action; it is not simply critiquing and theorising. Consequently, Chapters Four, Five, and Six approach research as a journey discussing the interwoven findings, reflexivity, analysis, creative exploration and discussion. As established in the methodology (Chapter Three), *patrones sentipensantes* allows for "sensing" patterns and identifying connecting threads in the data, integrating *sentirpensar* and *corazonar* as an embodied experience in which body, mind, and heart are one, and aligned with *sentipensar/corazonando* as a medium for embodied reflexivity. In this sense, both *patrones sentipensantes* and *sentirpensar/corazonando* are embodiments of creativity and metaphors for analysis, concept exploration, and development. Each findings chapter is structured as a cycle. with a distinct focus to each one. Chapter Four is focused on the visual, Chapter Five on the digital, and Chapter Six on the embodied-sensorial as corresponding to the ethnographic focus of different stages. However, they are not exclusively so, considering the interwoven nature of the research.

This research is potentially a decolonising alternative for doing design research, design from the Global South. Figure 26 is a visual representation of this thesis' research journey. It starts on the left from Global Northern ways towards Global Southern ways, to exemplify the decolonisation of design research through the collective lived experiences of *YOSOTROS* (*Yo* + *Nosotros* or I + We), a co-created interwoven research with *mis compañeras* of Malacate and other allies in the field.

Figure 26. The decolonising design-research journey. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Utilising *jolobil* as the context-based metaphor, *patrones sentipensantes* functions as the *urdimbre* (warp) or supportive threads of the loom as findings, and *sentirpensar/corazonando* becomes the *trama* (weft) or the interwoven threads to create a new textile piece as reflexivity and discussion. Therefore, weaving the *jolobil* research is a journey of analysis and creative exploration, where findings, reflexivity and discussion occur as a cyclical ongoing action (Figure 27). This approach has been particularly useful for qualitative research and inquiry with diverse data that have sensorial and affective characteristics.

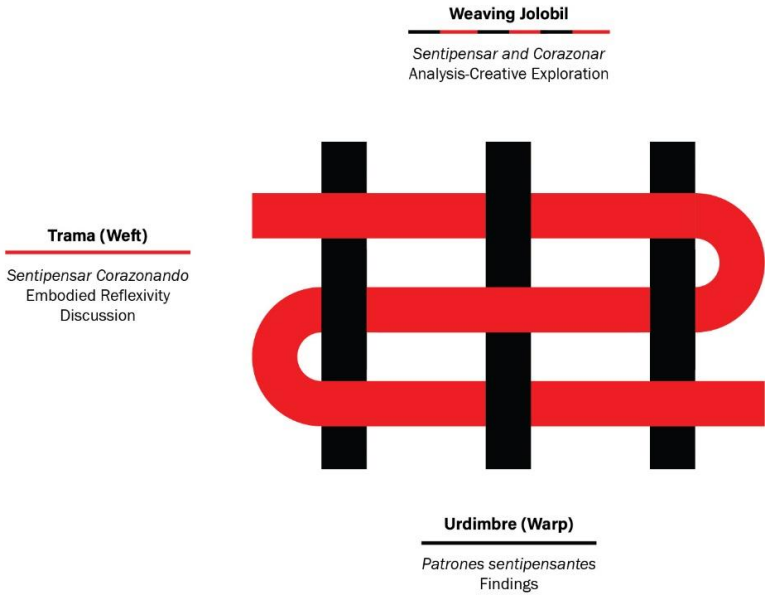

Figure 27. Jolobil, weaving an embodied research *corazonando* and *sentipensando*. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

This chapter, as the first cycle, discusses various aspects of design with a focus on the visual in *patrones sentipensantes* and *sentirpensar-corazonando*. *Patrones sentipensantes* starts with the analysis of the ambivalence of design as an enabler of positive and negative behaviours. It continues with expanding on *innovación como resistencia* (innovation as resistance) as Malacate's approach to design. Then, it touches on the importance of letting situations emerge and flow during research, and the understanding of the design field as connected threads to form a textile. The section concludes with other logics of trading towards *Buen Vivir*, a fair dignified life. The s*entirpensar-corazonando* section explains the influence of Indigenous concepts from Māori and Mayan ontologies. From the Māori perspective, it analyses *kanohi ki te kanohi*, a fundamental aspect of personal face to face connection, and

how *whānau* is an integrated part in Indigenous lives, ways of being and doing, important aspects in Māori and Mayan views. It ends with the integration of *yosotros* as a Mayan contribution of collectivity.

4.1 *Patrones sentipensantes*: Starting *jolobil's* first cycle

The first *patrones sentipensantes* cycle focuses on visual aspects during the research journey. It also emphasises the first field research as conducted under visual ethnography. This approach recognises a closer relationship and perception of design from the Global North, as aligned with the popularity of design as a visual output.

Directed by L. T. Smith's *Decolonizing* m*ethodologies* (2013), it was important to respect Malacate's *autonomía* for collaborative and co-created research. However, I had concerns about my inexperience as an ethnographer and role as a researcher, and fundamentals to be considered during visits as a native ethnographer (see Butz & Besio, 2009). It was necessary to be cautious and prevent the reproduction of power imbalances and colonising models of conventional research approaches.

In January 2018, the first encounter with Malacate in the community of Nachig, municipality of Zinacantán[25] (in Chiapas) took place. The beginning of a long-term relationship with Malacate started to develop as a *kaupapa whānau,* the acknowledgement as *compañeras* and walking alongside them on this ongoing research journey. During the visit, I met some of the founding members: Mary (host), Cristina, Petrona, Tere, Lucy, Juana, Pascuala and Mary, Mayan Tsotsil artist-designers-artisans from Zinacantán, and Karla, a mestiza ethnologist from México City. This meeting was the introduction to the research idea, and most importantly, opened a forum for the weavers about the aims, context, culture, methodologies and methods. In their response, Malacate used a collective embroidery to describe their land, language and customs (Figure 28).

[25] "Sots'leb" is the name of Zinacantán in the *Bats'i k'op* language, also known as Tsotsil, *palabra verdadera* in Spanish. *"Nachig"* means house of lambs.

Figure 28. Talking about the Nachig context in the first visit to Malacate Taller Experimental Textil. January, 2018. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The second visit had the integration of *whakapapa whānau* as I brought my mother and daughter to our session. These are points that are developed further on in the *sentirpensar-corazonando* section of this chapter.

During these trips, I was permitted to record and understand some of Malacate's design approaches and organisation. From a visual perspective, the idea generation and visual exploration was similar to Western design education with sketching, making, and testing as shown in Cristina's sketchbook that has a range of designs (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Design sketches from Malacate. January, 2018. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

The Global Northern perception of design from artisanal groups contrast with Malacate's approach. According to Cross (2011), craft-based societies have a different design process from Global Northern ways:

> The conception, or "designing", of artefacts is not really separated from making them; that is to say, there is usually no prior activity of drawing or modelling before the activity of making the artefact (…) In modern, industrial societies, however, the activities of designing and of making artefacts are usually quite separate. The process of making something does not normally start before the process of designing is complete. (p. 4)

Based on this perception of design, there is an evident distinction in the design process that finishes before the making. In this sense, it follows a W/GN notion of design and labour, establishing a hierarchy of value from ideation and production, putting manual labour in a lower position in the hierarchy. Nevertheless, this represents a capitalist view of division of labour that has affected the value perception of artisanal work (Banks, 2014; Browne & Dylan, 1981; Cook, 1993; Elbaum, Lazonick, Wilkinson, & Zeitlin, 1979; Littlefield, 1979). This Global Northern notion of design classifies Indigenous art-design-craft as "craft" from a colonising mindset, relegating to it a lower value.

4.1.1 "Enabling" design: The ambivalence of design practice

Design is central to the development of crafts from Global Northern and Global Southern perspectives. However, Global Northern design inputs have transformed local approaches to design in Global Southern contexts. Various strategies are used in the interaction of design and crafts such as designer-artisan collaboration or by training artisans in conventional design (Atalay, 2015; Lawson, 2009; K. Murray, 2010b; Tung, 2012). In these spaces, design enables the development of artisanal pieces to suit external markets and increase sales. However, Donahue (2003) mentioned that design practice and education should act in more depth and breadth through inquiry, and establish codes of ethics around practice, re-examining the role of design, in other words, to "enable design" (p.171), which has positive and negative connotations.

"Enable" has at least two meanings. On one hand, to enable is "to make able; provide with means, opportunity, power, or authority" and the other is problematic in that it is "to make possible or support the dysfunctional behavior of (someone)" ("Enable,"

n.d., para. 4). Design can enable improvements to artisanal pieces and design skills for artisans. However, design can also enable by permitting hegemonic design practices that emphasise commercial gains to culturally appropriate and sustain power imbalances, damaging artisans' *autonomía* and Indigenous knowledge protection, for example. To resolve this paradox is to give priority to Indigenous voices and knowledges in collaborative design process, in which improvement, development, and *autonomía* are central to the Indigenous perspective (Battiste, 2008; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Norman W. Sheehan, 2011; L. T. Smith, 2013; Walker et al., 2006). To prioritise Indigenous design in the search of balancing hegemonic design with vernacular forms in different contexts, is fundamental.

Indigenous design is a sphere of knowledge established in and disseminated into diverse contexts. For example, in Canada, fashion designer Dorothy Grant draws from her Haida heritage and in particular from cosmology, as inspiration for her collections (Jonaitis, 2006), and a specifically Lakota-based visual language was developed by designer-researcher Red Wing from the US (2016). Aboriginal educator and researcher Norman Sheehan (2010; 2011) approaches research in Australian Aboriginal contexts through design and visual techniques embodying evidence-based "respectful design." In Aotearoa, Māori designer Johnson Witehira (2013) has developed a Māori design language based on wood carvings and stories, and Zak Waipara (2013) has used transmedia through various types of comics and interactive game design to transmit Māori knowledge, culture, and language (Figure 30). Indigenous design is dynamic, and infiltrates many platforms; it acknowledges and celebrates culture, ancestry, and worldview, for example.

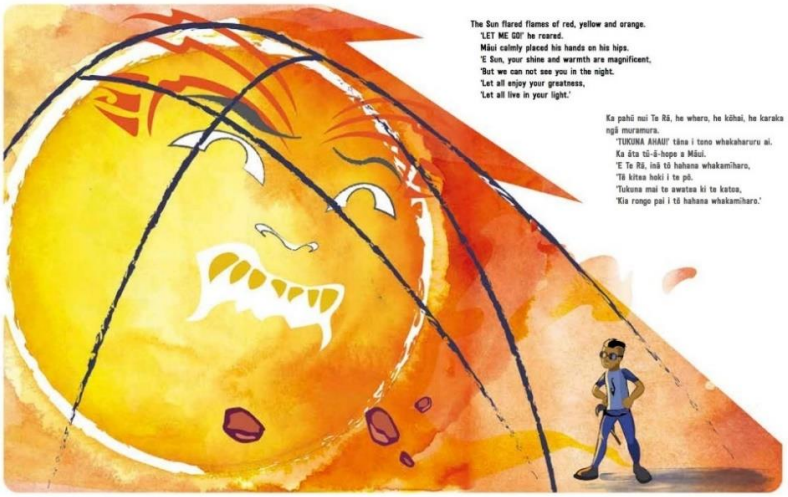

Figure 30 Zak Waipara's Indigenous design based on Māori culture and stories. Copyright 2016 by Zak Waipara. Reprinted with permission.

These Indigenous design frameworks are alternatives to hegemonic design from the Global North, created by drawing on Indigenous knowledges and ways of being. The cited Indigenous designers and researchers are connected with two common threads: 1) their countries are considered developed, with stable economies, and 2) English is their official national language. Global Northern characteristics such as these allow Indigenous designers to access formal education, enabling them to develop their proposals, and for researchers to be aware of these types of works. However, how does one access informal ways of design knowledge in these contexts?

Formal Indigenous design education is not as accessible and developed, at least from a conventional design point of view, primarily because in the Global Southern contexts countries are still progressing. In the case of Spanish speaking Abya Yala, Indigenous identity still carries a colonial-modern influence limiting access to formal education for many Indigenous peoples, raising some crucial questions, such as how Indigenous design processes are enabled, registered and well-established, whether designers are aware and familiar with local ways of design from the Indigenous communities they collaborate with, and how Indigenous design is performed, registered and transmitted inside artisanal groups in Abya Yala. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to recognise local and customary ways of design in Global Southern contexts and to acknowledge Indigenous design in Mexico. More distinctive to this study is the need to understand Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal design in the highlands of Chiapas with the collective work with *mis compañeras* of Malacate.

4.1.2. *Innovación como resistencia*: Malacate's approach to design

In comparison to other collectives in the region, Malacate has developed a different approach to design. Most collectives and cooperatives work with trained designers. Meanwhile, Malacate designs are based on their own worldview, knowledge and experience, or what is referred to as "*Innovación como Resistencia*[26]." This section unpacks a series of examples that illustrate this design approach through resistance.

According to Smeke de Zoanana (2000), Indigenous communities have multiple forms of *resistencia*, from operational or underground forms, to frontal resistance and physical fighting. Survival strategies such as these have resulted from continuous oppression and exclusion since colonisation, and are in constant ebb and flow. Symbolic resistance, which is generally underground, has allowed them to preserve culture, language, fashion, organisation forms, knowledges, symbols, and ways of communicating with others. Culture is the axis of resistance, the sustenance of Indigenous groups and necessary for their continuity (Millán, 1997; Puig, 1998; Quiroz Flores, 2018; Rivera García, 2017a; Smeke de Zonana, 2000). Consequently, Indigenous artisans have resisted external influences while adapting to contemporary life, as evident in the evolution of their traditional garments. Therefore, design forms part of this constant movement and negotiation between resistance and innovation.

4.1.2.1 Rescuing, reactivating and preserving textile techniques and patterns from the region

Considering cultures and their material manifestations as living entities, it is natural to expect they will change through time. Artisanal textiles are visual and technical manifestations of the evolution of traditional dress in the highlands of Chiapas. Some techniques and patterns have widely transformed, and are increasingly more elaborate, especially with the introduction of industrial sewing machines. Patterns have also been simplified, while others have either disappeared or are near extinction with, in some cases, one or two people in a community retaining the knowledge required, such as the shirt *Ts'i som* from Huixtán which I will now briefly explain.

Doña María Huacash is the guardian and creator of the *Ts'i som* shirt, in a technique she calls "*ts'um bil"* in Tsotsil. Three years ago, Doña María was the only person with the knowledge to create a particularly complex pleated and embroidered

[26] Mentioned by Karla Pérez Cánovas from Malacate in our presentation in the Colloquium "*Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial: Derechos y Propiedad de los Pueblos Originarios*" on November 8,9 and 10, 2018.

technique, so began teaching family members to (re)activate this design (Figure 31) (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2019). Pérez Cánovas (January 19, 2018) explained the finer nuances and details contained within the messages conveyed in the patterns embroidered into the shirt in the following passage:

> *Es una técnica que no se hacía para vender que nosotras estamos reactivando desde hace dos años, que es una técnica de plisado y bordado. Esta blusa la utilizan los hombres en época de carnaval únicamente y es para jóvenes, se supone. La representación es de la hojita de calabaza. Todo está confeccionado a mano, los hombros igual tienen esta confección de plisado. Normalmente lo hacen en negro y rojo, los colores…azul marino…y ahora nosotros lo estamos haciendo en otros colores y utilizando manta. Pero este es otro rescate importante de los que estamos haciendo.* (personal communication)
>
> (This is a technique that wasn't done for selling and we are reactivating since two years ago. It is a technique of pleating and embroidery. This blouse is used by men in carnival season only, and it is supposedly only for young men. The representation is a pumpkin flower. Everything is handmade, also the shoulders have been pleated. Normally this is done in black and red, the colours…navy blue…and now we are making it in other colours and using calico. This is another important rescue that we are doing.)

Figure 31. Ts'i som blouse and its creator Doña María Huacash and family. Photo by Karla Pérez Cánovas. From "Blusa tradicional Huixtan", by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018. (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1677391639060750). Adapted with permission.

Malacate currently offers the *Ts'i som* blouse on its Facebook page with good orders and reviews.

Another case that illustrates the rescue and reactivation of techniques is in the case of the *Panal* blouse, a high-demand model. This emerged from the design of an

embroidered blouse from the Mayan Tsotsil people of Zinacantán, presumably from the late 80s or early 90s[27]. Some elements of the original pattern have been reproduced in different models of blouses, *huipiles*[28] and dresses, in comparison to other garments produced, as Pérez Cánovas (January 19, 2018) mentioned:

> *Me he dedicado a trabajar como por dos partes con las compañeras. Esta que les digo que, de reactivar los diseños antiguos, pero haciendo piezas con patronaje distinto. Pero la intención no es que sobresalga el diseño como tal (corte), o sea, lo que nos interesa es que sobresalga el diseño de las compañeras (bordado). Simplemente, el ponerle otras telas…por ejemplo, aquí lo que hacemos es usar linos de muy buena calidad.* (personal communication)
>
> (I have worked with *las compañeras* in two parts. This one that I am telling you, to reactivate old designs, but making pieces with different pattern design. But the intention is not for the pattern to stand out. What we are interested in is the embroidered design of *mis compañeras* to stand out. Simply, we use other fabrics…for example, here we do it with high quality linen.)

The *panal* blouse was also underlined in one of the co-design workshops during the second field trip, represented in two drawings placed in the collective posters during the co-design session. Figure 32 shows the connecting thread of the original blouse, a range of the different embroidered applications, diverse fabrics (industrial and made by them in backstrap loom), pattern designs, and the drawings presented in the co-design session.

[27] Based on Malacate's research
[28] Traditional garment worn by indigenous women from central Mexico to central America.

Figure 32. Reactivation of *panal* blouse. A new design reproduced from a traditional blouse from Zinacantán in late 80s or early 90s. Bottom and side images by Karla Pérez Cánovas (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1501162633350319), top image by Diana Albarrán González. Central drawing by Malacate members in a co-design workshop. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

The last example in this section explains the preservation of relying on the human body for textile work instead of external tools. Traditionally, in Aguacatenango, body parts are used as tools of measurement, and to rip fabric manually rather than using scissors, as explained here:

> *Este es un trabajo de compañeras de Aguacatenango…y estas blusas, Yolanda debe saber, pero mucha gente que viene, como la venden en cada esquina, no saben cómo se hacen. Y en realidad, las compañeras desde el corte de tela lo hacen a mano, a rasgado, no utilizan tijeras. Se siguen utilizando las mismas medidas locales, que es a través de cuartas o brazos para sacar la medida, ya sea chica, mediana y grande. Y la confección y el bordado es toda a mano, todo está hecho a mano, ahí es la importancia de estos diseños que se malbaratan, los venden baratísimos cuando es*

> *un gran trabajo que hacen las compañeras.* (Karla Pérez Cánovas, personal communication, January 19, 2018)
>
> (This is work from *compañeras* of Aguacatenango…and these blouses, Yolanda must know, but many people that come, because they sell it in every corner, they don't know how are made. Actually, *las compañeras* from cutting the fabric is made by hand, by ripping, they do not use scissors. Local measurements are still used, sizes are taken through handspan or arms, whether small, medium or large. And the making and embroidery is all by hand, everything is handmade, there is the importance of these designs that are bargained away, they sell very cheap when it is a great job from *las compañeras*).

The body as a measuring and working tool shows the resistance to imposing W/GN tools, to avoid dependence on these. The use of the body allows artisans to preserve their *autonomía* because they do not need to rely on non-Indigenous resources to develop their textile work. Figure 33 shows María Elena Jiménez using her body to measure and to rip fabric.

Figure 33. María Elena Jiménez using the body as measuring tool and to rip fabric. From "María Elena Jiménez y familia elaborando las blusas de aguacatenango", by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018 (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1443457759120807). Adapted with permission.

Reactivating and preserving old designs and techniques exemplify how designs resist being forgotten and evolve to contemporary tastes with new fabrics and models.

4.1.2.2 Befitting traditional or ceremonial patterns based on their worldview

Distinctive design patterns continue to be used in ceremonial or traditional garments and objects after centuries in the Mayan region of Chiapas. Morris (2014) wrote that these patterns have evolved through time, from the classical period into the modern, as exemplified in Figure 34.

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Figure 34. Classic and modern Mayan patterns. From *Guía textile de Los Altos de Chiapas*, p. 9, Morris et al, 2014, Mexico: CONACULTA. Copyright 2014 by Walter F. Morris Jr.

Prior to colonisation, these adaptations were based on the Mayan weavers' views and customs. However, since colonisation, origins and influences impacting these changes have become uncertain. Since the establishment of artisanal design, the influence of external designers of these transformations through commission or collaboration have been documented (FONART, 2013; Perez Canovas, 2014; Treviño & Coautoras, 2018). Malacate based these transformations on their distinctive customs and worldview when adapting traditional and ceremonial pieces to contemporary garments. This is a respectful approach aimed towards preserving what is sacred for internal use, as opposed to the work of an external designer without knowledge. One example of this is evident in the *Xelak'uul* blouse, which I will briefly describe here.

Xelak'uul is the Mayan Tsotsil design named by Malacate, and roughly translates as "blouse worn by our grandmothers." The model is based on a ceremonial tablecloth used in Zinacantán to cover altars or working spaces for special occasions. Petrona, one of the founding members of Malacate, was the only weaver with the knowledge to make this traditional design, which she has transferred to other founding members in Nachig. Four different models are based on the tablecloth, although clients can customise the colour base and scheme. This example emerged in one of the co-design sessions, highlighting the piece's relevance. A picture of the original tablecloth, the four model variations, and sketches, are shown in Figure 35.

Xelak'uul Blouse.
Translation from Tsotsil weavers as "blouse with strippes or blouses that our grandmothers wore"

*Figure 35. Xelak'uu*l blouse, *design* based on a ceremonial tablecloth. Top pictures, four model designs, central sketches by Malacate members in a co-design workshop, original tablecloth picture by author. From "Blusas Xelak`uul", by Malacate Taller Experimental, 2014. (https://www.facebook.com/pg/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/photos/?tab=album&album_id=450137825119477). Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

4.1.2.3 Preserving, reactivating and adopting designs and materials before colonisation (pre-Columbian age)

Other forms of *innovación como resistencia* are related to the preservation, reactivation and adoption of designs and materials from Mesoamerican pre-Columbian cultures (before 1492). Some materials and designs are still utilised in Indigenous groups in certain regions. This section provides examples of preservation, reactivation and the adoption of pre-Columbian designs and materials currently used by Malacate.

Telar de cintura is a technique still used by Indigenous groups in various regions in Mexico. Pre-Columbian backstrap loom weaving was a fundamental part of education for women, instructed by family members, and particularly in the case of nobility, special teachers (Mastache, 2005; Rivera García, 2017b). Evidence of this

ancient technique is in the Mendocino codex and the Florentino Codex with visual representations of weavers, and remains in some Indigenous communities in Mexico (Figure 36).

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Figure 36. Telar de cintura de ayer y hoy. Backstrap loom illustrations from Mendocino Codex and Florentino Codex in contrast with current weavers in Oaxaca. From "El tejido en el México antiguo" by Mastache, 2005 *Arqueología Mexicana, Textiles de ayer y hoy*, p. 26. Copyright 2005 by Arqueología Mexicana.

Backstrap loom, or *jolobil* as referred to in Maya Tsotsil, is a living practice transmitted intergenerationally within communities. Malacate from across communities are skilful weavers who insist on preserving and creating traditional and contemporary designs on this ancient loom.

Malacate weavers sustain the preservation of the backstrap loom, and take their guardianship role seriously. An important part of their activities is the creation of garments made on the *jolobil*, to keep the tradition alive, and the strong link between *telar de cintura* and their well-being, primarily as a pathway to achieve a fair-dignified life, *Lekil Kuxlejal* (Figure 37).

Figure 37 Mary weaving in backstrap loom. Nachig, 2018. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

An example of reactivating pre-Columbian materials can be seen through the plantation, spinning, and use of *coyuche* cotton in Chiapas, also known as *coyoichcatl* in Náhuatl. A soft and exclusive material largely reserved for nobility, cotton is an important material in pre-Columbian textile creation, located in the hot regions in the South. The Mendocino codex illustrates a Mexica woman instructing how to spin cotton using a *malacate*[29] *(petet* in Maya Tsotsil) (Figure 38).

[29] The origin of the word "*malacate"* is from the Náhuatl *malácatl* that means "to spin in itself" which describes this instrument's function (Rivera García, 2017b).

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Figure 38. Mexica woman teaching her daughter to spin cotton in *malacate*. From El tejido en el México antiguo by Mastache, 2005 *Arqueología Mexicana, Textiles de ayer y hoy*, p. 26. Copyright 2005 by Arqueología Mexicana.

In the 1950s, Chiapas was in the top five Mexican states for cotton production (Perez Canovas, 2014). However, coffee has more recently occupied much of the agricultural space in the region, reducing cotton plantations. Malacate reactivated the use of cotton *coyuche* to keep the knowledge alive, as is explained in their Facebook post:

> *Desde hace ya algunos años trabajamos en el rescate del algodón coyuche en nuestra Región Altos. Comenzamos con el apoyo, gestión y acompañamiento de la Antropóloga Karla Pérez Cánovas y un colectivo de mujeres en Oaxaca comprandoles madejas de algodón y semillas hasta que pudimos sembrar y cosechar nuestro propio algodón. Con este proyecto a nivel local desde nuestras comunidades (Zinacantán y Pantelhó) deseamos que las prácticas tradicionales de nuestras abuelas y madres no se pierdan y sigamos reproduciendo nuestras culturas a través del hilado en Petet (malacate) y tejido en telar de cintura. Deseamos seguir contando nuestra historia. Para nosotras ha sido muy difícil y un gran reto a diferencia de otros estados como Oaxaca y Guerrero que mantienen esta producción de manera cotidiana por ello para nosotras es un gran logro ir poco a poco logrando revivir y hacer nacer de nuevo el algodón que anteriormente usaban nuestras antepasadas. En Malacate taller experimental textil tenemos la finalidad de que dichos diseños puedan seguir siendo transmitidos de generación en generación y las dueñas de dichos conocimientos tradicionales puedan seguir reproduciendo su cultura textil a través de ellos.*

> (Since a few years ago, we have been working to rescue *coyuche* cotton in our Los Altos region. We started with the support, management and accompaniment of the anthropologist Karla Pérez Cánovas and a women's collective from Oaxaca by buying cotton hanks and seeds until we were able to grow and harvest our own cotton. With this local project from our communities (Zinacantán and Pantelhó) we wish that the traditional practices from our grandmothers and mothers do not perish, and to keep our cultures through the spinning in *petet* (malacate) and backstrap loom weaving. We want to keep telling our stories. It has been difficult and a challenge for us, different to other states like Oaxaca and Guerrero that still preserve this production in their daily lives. Therefore, for us it has been a big accomplishment to slowly revive and make cotton rebirth, something our ancestors used. In Malacate Taller Experimental Texil, we have the aim that these designs can be transmitted through generations and the guardians of these traditional knowledge are able to transmit their textile culture through them.) (Malacate Facebook post, June 10, 2019)

This passage articulates the importance of rescuing and reviving techniques and materials for Malacate, challenging them to keep transmitting their culture through generations to come. The following images show Anastacia learning how to spin cotton in *petet* (Figure 39) (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2017).

Figure 39. Spinning *coyuche* cotton in *petet*. Images by Isaac Guzmán. From "Hace más de un año comenzó el camino para hacer realidad un sueño común" by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2017. (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1108897242576862). Reprinted with permission.

Another example of design from the pre-Columbian period as *innovación como resistencia* is exemplified by the adoption of *quexquémitl* or *quechquémitl*, made by two joint rectangles that fall at the front and back in a triangular shape. *Quexquémitl* representations have been found in archaeological evidence of the classic and post-classic Mesoamerican period, firstly in the Gulf coast and disseminating throughout central México (Rieff Anawalt, 2005) (Figure 40). This type of garment is currently used by different Indigenous groups in México such as Nahua, Otomí, Totonaco, Mazahua, Huichol and Purépecha ("Atlas de Texiles Indígenas," 2014).

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Figure 40. Quexquémitl in different Mesoamerican periods. From "Atuendos del México antiguo" by Rieff Anawalt, 2005, *Arqueología Mexicana, Textiles de ayer y hoy*, p. 17. Copyright 2005 by Arqueología Mexicana.

Malacate has adopted and developed *quexquémitl* designs adapting and trading in a contemporary context. Two Mayan Tsotsil communities continue the practice of *quexquémitl* based on backstrap loom techniques and local motifs. Figure 41 shows the difference in the *quexquémitl* made in Bartolomé de los Llanos (also known as Venustiano Carranza) above, and Nachig iteration below (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018a). Adopting the *quexquémitl* was discussed in one of the co-design sessions during the second field trip, visible in the hand drawn image between the two complete versions. This innovation is a recent adoption by collectives in the region, where *quexquémitl* were not common before.

Figure 41. *Quexquémitl*. Top pictures *quexquémitl* from San Bartolomé de los Llanos; centre sketches from *Malacate* members in a co-design workshop; bottom pictures *quexquémitl* from Nachig. From "De regreso nuestros ya clásicos quexquemetl tejidos en telar de cintura con hilos de algodón y brocado Y bordado a mano por compañeras del paraje Nachig" from Malacate Taller Experimental, 2018. (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1341152342684683). Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

4.1.2.4 Balancing market demands with their own productive capacities and under their views of fair trade.

The transformation of textiles in artisanal design has been driven by commercial purposes and following market demands (FONART, 2013; Gil Tejeda, 2002; Guzmán Donsel & García Quintero, 2010; Montalvo de Payes, 2009; Perez Canovas, 2014; UNESCO et al., 2005). However, the logic of capital and mass markets have

led to low wages, poor working conditions and exploitation to fulfil a fast-paced world with a focus on efficiency and short turnarounds, to satisfy corporations and brand reputation.

Before colonisation, transformations evolved according to Indigenous world views and customs. After colonisation, industrialisation and capitalism amplified, and consequently changes largely emerging from external influences that aimed to adapt to new markets, devalued the role of the weavers (Rivera García, 2017b). These have been well documented, particularly in Spanish speaking countries in Abya Yala and drawings from the Quechua chronicler Waman Puma de Ayala in the 17th century, shown in Figure 42.

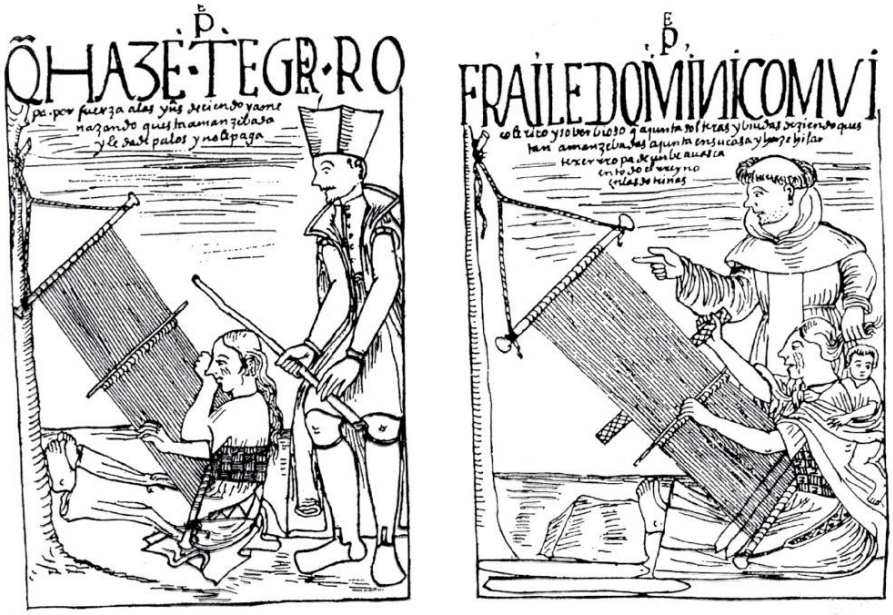

Figure 42 Weavers suffering abuse by colonisers. From *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores,* pp. 47-48, Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010, Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

Malacate is aware of the abuses suffered by weavers, some of which is the experience of current members. Thus, prioritising harmony and well-being within the group instead of market demands is central to the collective. At the same time, raising awareness of these issues in ethical markets is another motivation. An example of this is through carefully selecting exhibitions such as Fashion Revolution Day, which aims to denounce issues such as work exploitation, work violence, theft of designs, and the lack of trust, strongly reflected in Figure 43 (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2016).

Figure 43. Embroideries denouncing abuse in artisanal textile work presented at Fashion Revolution Day 2016. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Malacate has spoken publicly about the abusive environments including at various conferences. For example, Teresa discussed them during participation in the *Coloquio Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial: Derechos y propiedad intelectual de los pueblos originarios* (Inmaterial cultural heritage colloquim: Rights and intellectual property of Indigenous peoples) in San Cristóbal de las Casas in November, 2018. She shared about the lack of trust, exploitation, and work violence suffered by some members before joining Malacate (Figure 44) (Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018b).

Figure 44. Teresa presenting in the *Coloquio Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial: Derechos y propiedad intelectual de los pueblos originarios*. From "Nos sentimos muy contentas por la oportunidad que tuvimos el día de hoy de compartir nuestra palabra en colectivo.", by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018. (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1416420725157844) Reprinted with permission.

The logic of *Lekil Kuxlejal* is fair-dignified life, and attributing this to textile work illustrates the relevance of the weavers' well-being explored in Chapter Two.

Following the logic of capitalism disrupts the traditional-cultural processes of weaving. Therefore, it is important to underline that artisanal textile work is performed according to Malacate's own worldviews and *autonomía*, and not simply as manufacturers. Textile production must be performed in the full extension of the word "creation" in which creativity and design are fundamental for textile artisans. Research has shown the relationship of well-being to creativity (Hughes & Wilson, 2018; Humes, 2011), innovation (Dolan & Metcalfe, 2012), textile related crafts (Kaimal, Gonzaga, & Schwachter, 2017; Maidment & Macfarlane, 2011; Mayne, 2017; Riley, 2008) and arts (Gwinner, 2016). Hence, artisanal textile creativity is a fundamental part of *Buen Vivir*, which this thesis seeks to explore as an appropriate scaffolding for Indigenous design.

The perception of what is fair and ethical varies according to context, personal insights, and experiences. In Chapter Two, I discussed the difference in these perspectives in Global Northern and Global Southern contexts and how fair-trade certifications depend on access to funds and resources. Therefore, it is important that each artisanal group establishes its own guidelines to what is considered fairness and ethical, a value-driven operation system that respects its *autonomía* and worldviews.

To summarise, Malacate's *innovación como resistencia* is manifested in four different ways: 1) Rescuing, reactivating and preserving textile techniques and patterns from the region; 2) befitting traditional or ceremonial patterns based on its worldview; 3) preserving, reactivating and adopting designs and materials before colonisation (pre-Columbian age); and 4) balancing market demands with its own productive capacities and under the members' views of fair trade. These forms of resistance to modern, colonial and neoliberal economic oppression systems generate innovative alternatives to operate and adapt to contemporary life, in which design shifts between innovations and resistance in pursuit of a fair-dignified life.

4.1.3 Letting situations emerge and flow: Relevant experiences with stakeholders

Exploring textile artisanal design in *los Altos de Chiapas* is important for understanding its history and modes of operation. Therefore, it is necessary to have conversations with stakeholders and actors such as people in not-for-profit organisations in the area, other collectives, artisans, and designers. Textile artisanal design in the region is intricately connected in a network in which artisans

collaborate with different groups at the same time, and cooperation between organisations exists.

San Cristóbal de las Casas or *Jobel* (the Mayan name of the city), is where many textile related initiatives are based. This city is a central location in the highlands, an important touristic locale, and one of the first Spanish settlements in Chiapas. One of the NGO organisations is *Impacto*[30], which works with textile artisans and designers. *Impacto* has a strong social media presence on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter that promotes the use of artisanal textiles, fair trade and disseminating textile knowledge from Mexico.

Before arriving in Chiapas, I contacted *Impacto* to explain my research interest in knowing more about their work. The first meeting was with Adriana Aguerrebere, *Impacto*'s director and founder. She shared their central principles and methodology, then invited me to meet with reporters from *Animal Político*, a digital newspaper that was gathering information about Indigenous peoples and their textile artisanal work (Roldán, 2018). This was an opportunity to see how formally trained designers collaborate with Indigenous artisans in the region. During this field trip, I met Claudia Muñoz, a textile designer who worked with *Impacto*, and my contact with *Malacate* for a potential research collaboration in which I moved to discuss the tensions between hegemonic design education and collaborative work with artisans, which she had notably experienced as a co-founder of the collective Chamuchic ("Chamuchic," n.d.). Her contributions are focal, and are acknowledged in this thesis.

The field trip with *Impacto* gave me the opportunity to observe and document without interrupting the exchange with the reporter from *Animal Politico*, Nayeli Roldán. We visited two artisanal groups in the community of San Juan Cancuc, a Mayan Tseltal community, with two reporters, *Impacto*'s team, one designer, and the owner of a shop who commercialised pieces from the represented groups. These were important to gain a better understanding of the textile artisanal design environment, and to observe co-design methods with Indigenous artisans (Figure 45).

[30] For more information about *Impacto* see http://impacto.org.mx/en/.

Figure 45. Pictures from the field trip with *Impacto* and *Animal Politico*. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Soon after, I was contacted by telephone by Nayeli Roldan from *Animal Político* for an interview about plagiarism and the intellectual property of Indigenous artisanal textiles as part of a developing story. The article was published in *Animal Politico* and in *Newsweek* (in Spanish) showcasing a range of images[31]. The published newspaper article and images and related data are part of the findings and analysis of this research.

4.1.4 Beyond capitalism: Other logics of trading for a fair-dignified life

Due to modern-colonial hegemonic systems such as neoliberalism, capitalism, and patriarchy damage to nature-culture and life in general, we are facing a complex socio-ecological crisis of climate, energy, food, poverty, and meaning (De Sousa Santos, 2015; A. Escobar, 2018b). Activists around the world are claiming the need for radical change towards sustainable, collective, and fair living in the Global North and Global South. In Latin America, the contemporary crisis is related to a particular *modelo civilizatorio*, or civilisational model, that of patriarchal Western capitalist modernity (…) "what need to change is an entire way of life and a whole style of

[31] For more information about Animal Politico articles see https://www.animalpolitico.com/2018/01/comercio-etico-tzotziles-empresarias/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bfnQtItFCM

world making. It goes deeper than capitalism" (A. Escobar, 2018b, pp. ix–x). The logic of capitalism or *la hidra capitalista*, as named by the *Zapatistas* (Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, Campos, et al., 2015; W. D. Mignolo & Walsh, 2018) has impregnated many spheres of life and makes it "difficult to imagine the end of capitalism as it is difficult to imagine that capitalism has no end" (De Sousa Santos, 2009, p. 24). However, there are examples of communities resisting constant obstacles "to live with dignity—that is to say, to live well", and ultimately against capitalism (De Sousa Santos, 2015, p. 7), much like Malacate's efforts as explained earlier. Therefore, to operate in trading logics and spaces, beyond the logic of capitalism, is becoming increasingly urgent.

Responsible textile artisanal initiatives in Mexico emphasise approaches on "alternative" commercial spaces such as social economy, social and solidarity economy, and *economía política solidaria*. A social and solidarity economy aims for the construction of economic alternatives to mitigate poverty and community marginalisation. This strategy proposes new relationships for *convivialidad* (Illich et al., 1974), creativity, and the equitable distribution of goods. It also proposes space and time to be free and enjoy life as an important aspect of life balance. This approach is aligned to the central *Zapatista* proposals on *autonomía* and people's rights and conscious collective action. Thus, it is related to the appropriation of the territory, knowledges, understanding words as force, and overall, of our whole selves. These notions support *autonomía* practices as alternatives to transform the reality. According to Santiago (2017):

> *La economía solidaria está vinculada a la autonomía, la libertad, y a todo proceso emancipatorio; es la construcción de la resistencia, encontrar el sentido del universo, trabajar con la dinámica de la totalidad y no con la acumulación, despojo y destrucción.* (p. 44)
>
> (Solidarity economy is linked to *autonomía*, freedom and all emancipatory process. It is the construction of resistance, to find sense of the universe, to work with the dynamic of totality and not accumulation, dispossession and destruction.)

Opposite a neoliberal economy, a social and solidarity economy is used to support *Buen Vivir*, a collective well-being in which labour does not operate under capitalist models, as explained by Santiago (2017):

Table 5 Neoliberal economy versus solidarity economy.

Indicators	Neoliberal economy	Solidarity economy
1. Role of labour	Productivity	a) Satisfying needs b) Fulfilment as a person
2. Organisation of labour	Hierarchical. The owners are the bosses	a) Democratic b) Contribution to the group c) Decision-making in assembly d) As culture
3. Technology	Substitution for human labour	An instrument to labour
4. Land	a) Merchandise b) Individual property c) Enterprise	a) Sustenance b) Collective property or individual for collective use
5. Production	For the market	a) Self consumption b) Exchange c) Market
6. Products pricing	Depending on supply and demand	Based on labour and in relation to other products
7. Market	Controlled by big corporations and world banks	Controlled by producers and consumers according to their needs
8. Money	Merchandise, power	Medium of exchange
9. Relationships	Domination	Cooperation and construction of power
10. Space	Competition	Free

Note: Translated from *Economía Política Solidaria* p. 182, by Santiago Santiago, 2017, Mexico: Editorial Eón.

For textile artisanal initiatives seeking to achieve a fair-dignified life or to achieve *Lekil Kuxlejal*, it is crucial to resist neoliberal and capitalistic economies and to operate in a social and solidarity economy with a view towards the well-being of the collective. In this, cooperation, exchange, solidarity, dignity, and life are more important than profit and merchandise.

Summarising *patrones sentipensantes* in the first cycle, design has been approached from a Global Northern point of view using the visual as focus. It started with an exploration of the ambivalence of design as an enabler of positive and negative practices. Then, Malacate's approach to design as *innovación como resistencia* through four distinctive manifestation was developed; this was then followed by a discussion of the importance of flexibility during field research, and the engagement and experiences with stakeholders in the research context. The section concluded with other forms of trading away from the logic of capitalism, to other economies that allow the pursuit of a fair-dignified life.

4.2 *Sentipensar-corazonando* in *jolobil's* first cycle

This section approaches *sentirpensar-corazonando* as embodied reflexivity. It discusses the influence of Indigenous ontologies from Aotearoa and Abya Yala to design research from the Global South, and embodied practices of *sentirpensar* and *corazonar* for interwoven analysis and creative exploration. In particular, I explore how *te ao* Māori (the Māori world) influenced the research approach through lived experiences in Aotearoa with my Māori colleagues. It also approaches the impacts of Mayan ways of being and doing from Tsotsil and Tseltal weavers from *Malacate* as a "*whānau* of interest" (p. 4), as mentioned by Robertson and Bishop (1999a) in relation to *kaupapa Māori*, and which is developed further in this chapter.

4.2.1 *Kanohi ki te kanohi*, face to face and side by side

Kanohi ki te kanohi in *te reo* Māori literally translates as "face to face," to be personally present. Similarly, *kanohi kitea* is the "seen face" which recognises the importance of physical presence in building strong links with communities (Hoskins, 2010; O'Carroll, 2013). The *kanohi ki te kanohi* concept and practice is used widely in the *kaupapa* Māori research paradigm, referring to the importance of "being seen" when conducting community work (Pihama et al., 2002; Robertson & Bishop, 1999b; L. T. Smith, 1999a; Walker et al., 2006). According to O'Carroll (2013), *kanohi kitea* supports addressing status and power, helping to build honest relationships and credibility through face to face interactions, words, intentions and actions. This establishes that "researchers are accountable to the communities with whom they are researching with openness and honesty" (p. 232), important values I seek to embody during the research.

Kanohi kitea and *kanohi ki te kanohi* emphasise the importance of personal relationships in Māori society as "physical forms of interaction, engagement and communication and are foundational principles for the many processes of *tikanga* Māori." (O'Carroll, 2013, p. 232). *Tikanga* Māori, as cultural customs and protocols, encompasses the fundamental ethical practices in everyday interactions, which includes taking care of relationships with communities during research (Hoskins, 2010; Mead & Mead, 2003; J. K. T. Wilson, 2013), particularly when conducting research through and with Indigenous people.

Face to face interactions and Indigenous customs are present in Malacate's protocols for collaborations, although our initial communications were through email. Malacate preferred a face to face interview to know the research and researchers' interests, ideas and perception of collaboration. This parallels Smith's (2013) observation that researchers enter into a group discussion, in which the group decides if it found the research aligns to its interest, values, and -most importantly - if the researcher seems trustworthy. The importance of meeting in person resonates with my cultural values and beliefs as a researcher from the Global South. Through physical presence, it is possible to have a sensorial perception of the other person, to read body communication, and to perceive information. In Abya Yala, this belief is present in the language such as in the colloquial phrase *mal-vibrar* (bad vibes), signaling the unspoken language of presence as *sentipensante* beings, using intuition and the senses *para sentir la vibra de la otra persona* (to sense the vibe of the other person).

Another important aspect in this research approach is hierarchies. In our roles as researchers, there are intrinsic issues of power and hierarchal structures when working with historically vulnerable communities, and are crucial to address. These relate to the importance of staying humble (Cepeda H., 2017). In this context, collaboration needs to be side by side, in other words, in *horizontalidad* and with humility, and as mentioned by Wilson (2013) "this proves researchers are keeping themselves *whakaiti*, a most appealing quality in all people, not only researchers" (p. 51). This means the relationship between researcher and collaborators/co-creators is on the same level, where both parties are part of a dialogue to build knowledge. In this space, validating knowledge is not from academia but from dialogue and reciprocity. (Pérez Daniel & Sartorello, 2012). Therefore, horizontal research approaches are key to conducting research in the Global South where researcher and

co-creators collectively weave the threads of dialogue and knowledge through *sentirpensar* and *corazonar*.

4.2.2 *Whānau* and research: Family and community in the field

The concept of *whānau* is another Māori contribution to influence this research. The most common translation of "*whānau"* is "family," but this is a limited interpretation of the word. A *whānau* was the pre-colonial foundational social unit, remaining today as a way of living and structuring the social world. According to *Te Puni Kōkiri* (2003), as referenced by Wilson (2013), there are three types of groups: *whakapapa whānau* with shared ancestry, *kaupapa whānau* with common interests but not necessarily linked by ancestry, and statistical *whānau* living in the same household, and also not necessarily linked by ancestry.

In *kaupapa* Māori research (Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Robertson & Bishop, 1999b; L. T. Smith, 1999b), groups are formed as *whānau* with similar values and principles from a customary perspective aiming for close relationships, and going beyond W/GN perceptions of research participants. According to Smith (2013), *whānau* in research has:

> …become part of a methodology, a way of organizing a research group, a way of incorporating ethical procedures which report back to the community, a way of "giving voice" to the different sections of Māori communities, and a way of debating ideas and issues which impact on the research project. It also has a very pragmatic function, in that the whanau is a way of distributing tasks, of incorporating people with particular expertise, and of keeping Māori values central to the project. (p. 189)

In this research, *mis compañeras* of *Malacate* are *kaupapa whānau* with shared interests, values and skills. As explored in Chapter Three, Malacate is a group of recognised artists and designers with similar visual communication skills. Also, while we do not share ancestry, we are connected through the land of Chiapas as a shared place of birth. For Mayan people, the connection to the land by birth is as strong as blood connections (Morales Damián, 2010).

Another way of integrating *whānau* into this research was through *whakapapa whānau*, bringing my family to field research. For many researchers it may be unorthodox to bring family into the research environment, but it is not something new. Other scholars, particularly women, have taken their families to the field

(Canosa, 2018; Porter, 2018), for example, into Indigenous communities in Chiapas (Greenfield et al., 2010). I was consciously aware of how this might create a different dynamic with the group with my mother and daughter's presence, but was equally cautious about balancing my family's input with those from *Malacate* (Figure 46).

Figure 46 Research with *whānau*. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

My daughter's (typical) six-year-old behaviour and Malacate's reaction to it supported the understanding of some of their customs around *whānau*, where children are invited into the activities as opportunities for teaching and learning. Textile activities like embroidery and weaving are best started at an early age, as reflected in Greenfield's research in Zinacantán studying the creative evolution of Mayan weavers (Greenfield et al., 2010). During the session, my daughter was invited to learn how to do embroidery, underlining Malacate's fundamental views on family, and where women from different ages, mothers and children share working spaces, and crucial for the sense of community (Figure 47).

Another important lesson from bringing my *whakapapa whānau* was the respect Indigenous people have for elders. For example, Malacate members were particularly careful and affectionate with my mother. At a certain point, Cristina asked if my mother could be their grandmother as there were no longer elders of her age amongst them, which was a most honourable and humbling request.

Figure 47. Lucy teaching my daughter to do embroidery. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

4.2.2 *Yo* + *Nosotros* = *Yosotros*, a Mayan way of collectivity

The concept of *Yosotros* is a distinctively Mayan contribution to this research and is highlighted in the research approach. As exemplified in the decolonising design research diagram (Figure 4), the journey from Global Northern ways towards Global Southern ways encompassed the rejection of *Yo* (I – the researcher) as separated from *Ellas* (Them – research partners) as in traditional W/GN academia, and the transformation of *nosotros* (us) to *yosotros* (*yo+nosotros*). In this, the collective work is done with affective, embodied, creative and horizontal collaboration with Malacate while being in one heart, "*jun ko´tantik estar en un solo corazón"* (Ávila Romero, 2011, p. 3).

According to López Intzín (2015), there are different ways to talk about *nosotros* (us) in Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal languages. "*Jo'onjo'tik" (*or *"jo'otikon")* is an exclusive *nosotros* referring to "them" and" I." "*Jo'otik"* is an inclusive *nosotros* including them, I, and the person listening. It also refers to "*colectividad,"* all human beings or all inhabitants of a place. López Intzín (2015) generated "*yosotros"* as explained in the next quote:

> *A partir del Jo'on como "yo' y el Jo'tik como 'nosotros excluyente" he acuñado el "yosotros", pero también podríamos entender que es el yo y los otros nosotros. El Jo'otik-Jo'onjo'tik, nosotros-yosotros, tiene su propia complejidad y contradicción*

> *(...) Por otro lado, el yosotros nos permite un ir y venir entre el nosotros incluyente y el excluyente, entre un desligarme o apegarme, para dar un punto de vista desde adentro o un poco distante, pero ubicado y posicionado.* (p. 196)
>
> (From "*Jo'on"* as "I" and "*Jo'tik"* as "excluding us" I have minted *"yosotros"*, but we could also understand what is I and the other us. *Jo'otik-Jo'onjo'tik, nosotros-yosotros,* has its own complexity and contradiction. On the other hand, *yosotros* allow us a back and forth between the inclusive and exclusive *nosotros*, between disconnecting and attaching, to give a viewpoint from inside or a bit distant, but located and positioned.)

López Intzín also explained the importance of direct contact, work ,and walking alongside the other, *yan*, with *yosotros*, "*in-pensarnos para poder in-surgir con una in-versión de nuestro mundo*"[32] In this sense, to work from an exclusive *nosotros, jo'onjo'tik* , towards an inclusive *nosotros, jo'otik,* where the sense of belonging and collective brotherhood and sisterhood are fundamental.

Yosotros relates to the in-between nature of my researcher position as an outsider-within, and the consistent shifts between spaces. It is also linked to design-based research in which I assume the role of researcher *and* designer in collaboration with *mis compañeras* of Malacate, blending *yo* with *nosotros.*

To summarise this chapter, *jolobil* analysis and creative exploration of the first cycle focused on visual approaches to *patrones sentipensantes* as findings and *sentirpensar-corazonando* as reflexivity and discussion. It analysed Global Northern notions of design, contrasting with Malacate's case and how it can enable different perceptions based on Global Northern or Global Southern approaches.

Patrones sentipensantes in this first cycle, focused on Global Northern views to design, establishing the ambivalence of design within the context. It elaborated on Malacate's proposition of *innovación como resistencia* and their four distinctive approaches. It discussed the intricate connection in textile artisanal design in the highlands of Chiapas and the experiences with other stakeholders, closing with

[32] This passage plays with words in Spanish that are complex to translate literally without losing the intention. "*In-pensar"* could be used as an internal rethink. "*In-surgir*" refers to two meanings, "*surgir"* as arise and "*insurgir*" as insurge. "*In-versión"* suggests three meanings: *in-versión* as an internal version, and *inversión* as the action of reverse the position of something, or the action of invest time and effort to something. From this, we can translate this as to internally rethink to be able to insurge with an inversion of our world.

trading from alternative economies allowing fair trade and life towards collective well-being.

Sentirpensar-corazonando in the first cycle explored the connecting thread between Māori and Mayan world views impacting this research. It started with *kanohi ki te kanohi,* as a face to face and side by side collaboration, followed by doing research as/with *whānau*. The cycle, and this chapter, concluded with *yosotros* as a Mayan way of *colectividad.*

Chapter 5: Away but connected: Research in a digital era

This chapter represents the second cycle in the *jolobil* research approach, and focuses on digital/online aspects in *patrones sentipensantes* and *sentirpensar-corazonando*. *Patrones sentipensantes* starts with the use of Malacate's use of social media (Facebook), and other actors in artisanal design field in Mexico. It illustrates cases of digital activism against plagiarism and cultural appropriation in Mexico, and the transformation towards protection of Indigenous textiles. This closes with an untangling of Power, Privilege, Politics and Access, which are referred to as 3P-A, the embedded issues in artisanal design contexts. The *sentirpensar-corazonando* section discusses social media, a "double-edged sword" (Lopesi, 2018, p. 75) and a paradoxical space with "free" access. This is followed by an expansion on collaboration across distance and the use of digital communication and media. Finally, this chapter closes with a discussion about the influence of epistemologies of the heart as a central element of Mayan knowledge and language.

5.1 *Patrones sentipensantes* in *jolobil's* second cycle: A digital focus

The digital and online aspects of *jolobil* is a result of many findings in the earliest stages of this research. Integrating the experiential or doing of digital ethnography into the research approach enriches and deepens the reading of the artisanal design field as the operational and commercial space of many textile initiatives. After the first months of the research, it became evident that social media, particularly Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, were common channels to promote the use and trading of artisanal garments, and to denounce cases of plagiarism and cultural appropriation from Indigenous textiles. Malacate is no exception. Its Facebook page has been in operation since the beginning of its online trading in 2010. The findings from its online practices are imperative to providing a holistic view.

The pervasiveness of digital media has impacted on societies, research, methodologies, and, has paradigmatically transformed the ethnographic techniques and processes (Pink & Morgan, 2013; Postill & Pink, 2012; Zimmer & Kinder-Kurlanda, 2017). Much like the threads in woven textiles, ethnographic research methods, practices, and theoretical dimensions are interwoven. This raises important questions about how digital technologies in research enable us to share the world

with research participants and vice versa, and in my case, our collaborative research with *mis compañeras* of Malacate.

Ethnography for O'Reilly (as cited in Pink et al., 2016) is an "iterative–inductive research (that evolves in design through the study), drawing on a family of methods … that acknowledges the role of theory as well as the researcher's own role and that views humans as part object/part subject" (p. 21). Further, he considered the importance of direct and sustained contact with the research participants in the context of their everyday lives. Direct and sustained contact are mediated through digital media including online observations and presence on social media, even influencing communication channels (Bakardjieva, Svensson, & Skoric, 2012; Bromberg, 2013; Martin & Hanington, 2012; Postill & Pink, 2012; Zimmer & Kinder-Kurlanda, 2017). For example, a good proportion of the communication exchange with *mis compañeras* of Malacate has taken place while I have been in Aotearoa, and much was done through text and audio on the social media platforms of WhatsApp and Facebook messenger. These channels allowed personal and instantaneous communication, and easier access from a mobile device in comparison to email. Audio recordings in particular represented a more personal communication through embodied/sensorial expressions and stimuli.

Another impact on ethnography in the digital/online era is highlighted in the reporting and dissemination of research results. Ideally, conventional ethnographic writing would be substituted or complemented by video, photography, blogs or vlogs (Rivera García, 2017b). Disseminating research findings in such platforms helps to bring academic research to a wider audience, and a form of accountability and reciprocity with the communities where the research was conducted. Online access to galleries of raw data such as images and videos allows viewers from across the spectrum of interested parties to contribute to the discussion rather than having the findings diluted by the researcher's interpretation. The audience, therefore, is an important thread within the interwoven research, *sentipensando, corazonando* through an embodied engagement with the content.

5.1.1 The use of social media from Malacate and other textile collectives in Mexico

Digital media and technologies are increasingly relevant to much of W/GN daily activities for direct communication between people, recording life stories through

pictures and video, or for simply constructing an online presence (Bakardjieva et al., 2012; Luckman, 2013; Postill & Pink, 2012). People in the Global South also benefit from digital media for personal, collective and trading activities (Hanitra & Jean-Michel, 2014) which is reflected in Malacate's Facebook page.

Malacate frequently uses digital photography to document and disseminate content normally using smart phones, although not all members own one. This includes members' artisanal textile creations, textile processes and patterns, material and artefacts for textile production, families, context and visits to communities (landscapes, animals, food, spaces), collaborative efforts, and participation in events (conferences, exchange with other Indigenous groups). Similarly, digital video is central to recording textile artisanal processes such as backstrap loom weaving, wool threading, and ongoing collaborations. These practices have an array of purposes: to educate consumers about their cultural background, to tell their stories directly, to show transparency in their practices, and to create consciousness about the value behind textile pieces beyond monetary value in a modern/colonial world.

Orders are generally done through direct Facebook messages. Prices are not posted publicly, despite pricing inquiries through comments. This practice aims to invite consumers to make further enquiry, due to Malacate's interest in direct communication. The common reply in public comments questioning pricing is to send a private message for personal attention, as shown in the following post (Figure 48):

> *En Malacate Taller Experimental Textil nos gusta atenderte personalmente, por tal motivo si deseas consultar precios o tiene alguna duda le pedimos por favor nos mande mensaje privado ÚNICAMENTE de esta manera podremos darte información.* (Facebook post December 31, 2018)
>
> (In Malacate Taller Experimental Textil we like to personally attend you. For this reason, if you want to check prices or have a question, please send us a private message. This is the ONLY way we can give you information.)

Figure 48. Personal attention post from Malacate. Screenshot from "Malacate Taller Experimental Textil", by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil. (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1793791290754117). Reprinted with permission.

Consistent with the substance of the preceding quote, it is important for Malacate to have personal and close relationships with interested parties. Through online communications, it is possible to give information about artisanal textiles, and to know the name of the weaver, his or her community, and meanings in textile patterns. Such information adds context and value to the garments.

Online information raises awareness of the labour-intensity of producing a single piece, and that textile work happens as part of everyday life, as shown in Chapter Four. Works are primarily custom-made to a client's needs, but it is possible to find more general pieces on Facebook posts that are open to the public, which reduces issues of access to remote communities and allows constant communication and updates with online followers. Textile practices are an important part of Mayan life from early ages, and is part of one's identity (Greenfield et al., 2010; W. Morris et al., 2014), as with other Indigenous groups like Māori weavers (H. L. Smith, 2017). Sharing backstories of textiles therefore creates conscious awareness and understanding of labour and cultural capital. Likewise, followers are exposed to the appreciation of different rhythms of textile creations that are not comparable to mass-produced garments.

5.1.1.1 Understanding online textile communities in Mexico

My presence as a researcher on digital platforms was not limited to direct observations activities, events, or collaborations on Malacate's Facebook page. Social media channels allow better understandings of textile artisanal design in Chiapas, and in Mexico, while at distance. During my lifetime, crafts and artisanal design have been relevant and significant, a long time prior to starting this PhD.

Social media platforms have different policies regarding the content shared by their members and followers, and typically some have guidelines about the artisanal textiles. The inclusion of historical context, artisanal processes, materials, community of origin and - a recent development in some cases – the experience of the maker. These groups and pages are used by Indigenous artisans/designers/artists to showcase and trade their creations. The policies and recommendations help as filters to identify initiatives aligned with ethical trading and social solidarity economies, appealing to conscious consumers. At the same time, Facebook groups allow like-minded individuals to interact, starkly contrasting with organisations that only advertise/market their products.

Textile artisans benefit from social media platforms when users share digital content such as photography and videos, and re-share posts about artisanal textiles and Indigenous cultures like festivities, languages, and news. Many events related to crafts and artisanal textiles throughout Mexico are shared on digital/online platforms. There are cases in which the events are documented or transmitted live on social media, allowing interested people to participate across distance. However, social media spaces are complex systems with multiple challenges.

There are complexities regarding ethics in artisanal textile trading on online spaces (Chapter Two). Distinguishing the initiatives that operate under ethical principles, and those who only utilise commercial strategies is challenging. However, there are commonalities among some textile initiatives. For example, issues relating to consistency of stories and group members, who focus on artisans and their communities instead of products and lifestyle, and textile information beyond commercial purposes (size, material, price) are recurrent. Some do not share prices with the textile picture, but encourage interested parties to enquire further, such as in the case of Malacate.

Growth in offer and demand for textile experiences through workshops has increased since online platforms have been adopted by textile collectives. An emergence in learning traditional and contemporary textile skills is illustrated through an increase in availability of a variety of workshops available such as those for backstrap loom weaving, tapestry weaving, regional and technique specific embroidery, photo embroidery, demonstrating a revitalisation in interest. The increase in enthusiasm for Indigenous artisanal textiles and techniques shows a possible route to reconnect to our Indigenous roots and identities.

Live or recorded textile events and conferences allowed participation in Malacate's live events[33]. Karla Pérez Cánovas (2018) presented videos about the journey as an independent collective in a panel about innovation and tradition in textile art and design with the presentation *Nuestro camino, nuestra lucha* (Our path, our fight) (Figure 49). Speaking at such events, designers, artists, anthropologists and Indigenous artisans collaborated, which was highly uncommon in México. Thus, horizontality was particularly important for Malacate[34]. Videos showcasing members who share their experience as a collective voice is fundamental to Malacate's practices of solidarity to illustrate unity, and for role modelling. Nevertheless, listening to other artisanal textile experiences and collaborations helped to have a better understanding of various challenges. Furthermore, the strategies to operate, protect and promote textile work, and the difference in approaches according to each Indigenous culture and context.

[33] For example, Malacate members took part in *Foro de Diseño Textil Artesanal: creatividad, género e interculturalidad* (Textile Artisanal Design Forum: Creativity, Gender and Interculturality) organised by la *Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana campus Xochimilco* (UAM-X) in México City on May 30 and 31st, 2018.

[34] They normally present as a collective with two or more members sharing their voices but, on this occasion, it was not possible for other members to attend.

Figure 49. Malacate's presentation in *Foro de Diseño Textil Artesanal: Creatividad, Género e Interculturalidad*. From "Nuestra experiencia compartiendo nuestro camino en El Foro de Diseño y Artesania: creatividad, genero e interculturalidad en la UAM Xochimilco ha sido muy enriquecedora al conversar e intercambiar experiencias con otras compañeras artesanas y diseñadoras by Karla Pérez Cánovas, 2018. (https://www.facebook.com/karla.perezcanovas.1/posts/10155630386224157). Reprinted with permission.

5.1.2 Digital activism: Reactions against plagiarism and cultural appropriation

Social media and digital publications have quickly become a platform for engagement in environmental, social, cultural, and political issues online. According to Bakardjieva, Svensson and Skoric (2012), "digital infrastructures offer citizens new channels for speaking and acting together and thus lower the threshold for involvement in collective action and, eventually, politics. This, in turn, changes the power dynamics of participation" (p. ii). This collective online action denunciates and echoes the voices of people in the Global South for social change, and is known as digital activism (Bakardjieva et al., 2012; Bromberg, 2013; Joyce, 2010) or digital media resistance (Treré & Magallanes-Blanco, 2015).

"Digital activism" is defined as the usage of online digital technologies campaigning for political or social transformation (Joyce, 2010). Digital technologies and social media are directly used to create public awareness and expose plagiarism and cultural appropriation in Mexico. The NGO *Impacto* has documented different cases in the country through its social media channels in Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, as well as its blog and website. Recently, *Impacto* launched a useful interactive map

of Mexico showing affected communities and the named companies, and an online platform to report new cases to show awareness of plagiarism (Figure 50).

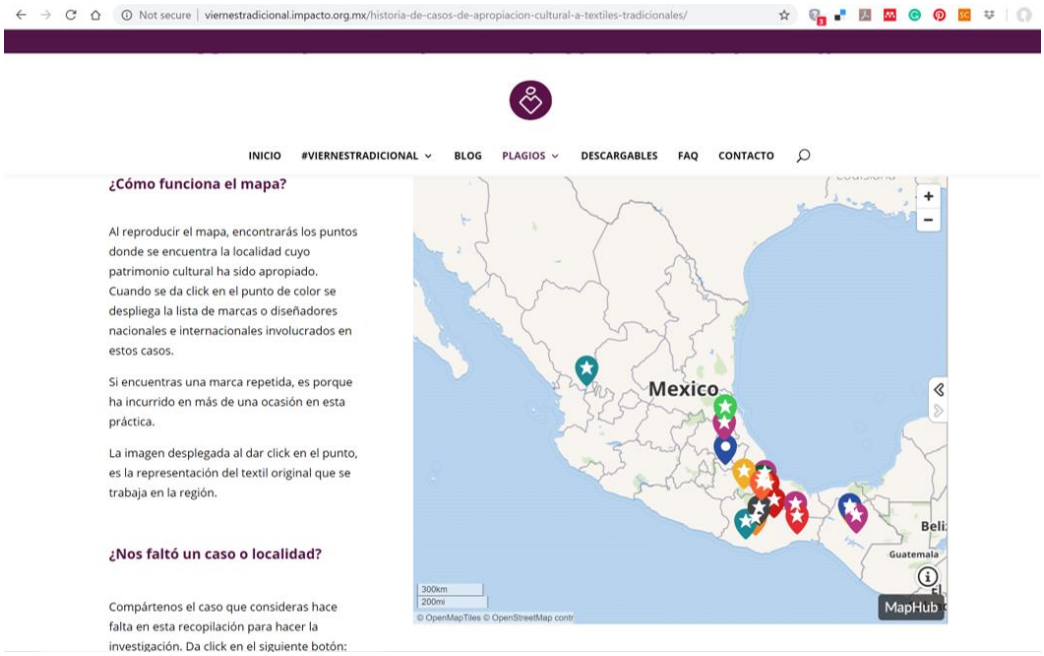

Figure 50. Interactive map showing communities affected by plagiarism. Screenshot from "Mapeo de casos de apropiación cultural de textiles tradicionales hechos en México", by Viernes Tradicional Impacto, 2019, (http://viernestradicional.impacto.org.mx/historia-de-casos-de-apropiacion-cultural-a-textiles-tradicionales/). Copyright 2019 by Viernes Tradicional. Reprinted with permission.

The first case of plagiarism recorded by *Impacto* was the French brand Hermes in 2008. This brand printed Indigenous motifs on silk scarfs without acknowledging the origin of the patterns. Cases have increased since 2014, and alarmingly more by 2019. It seems the growth of interest in Mexican culture reflected in the increased popularity of food, festivities and textiles, attracted the attention of fashion brands. The lack of regulation and legislation for textile protection in Mexico means plagiarism and cultural appropriation go unpunished.

One of the most famous cases to affect an artisanal community is Santa María Tlahuitoltepec in the State of Oaxaca. Singer and activist Susana Harp identified a *Mixe* blouse in the luxury shop Neiman Marcus in the US under the name of the French designer Isabel Marant, sharing images on social media to alert the community. The *Mixe* (*Ayuujkjä'äy*) community publicly denounced the theft of its design, garnering attention on social media and mainstream news nationally and

internationally (Figure 51). It is relevant to note this is also the first registered case of an Indigenous community addressing plagiarism in this way in México.

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Figure 51 Santa María Tlahuitoltepec plagiarism case in 2015. From "Creative solutions to cultural appropriation fashion industry", by House Marques Issue 066, (http://www.marques.org/Newsletters/Newsletter/Default.asp?NewsletterID=55&art=4#4). Copyright 2016 by House Marques.

An increasing number of plagiarism and cultural appropriation cases means the situation in Mexico has shifted more towards the protection of Indigenous artisanal work. Therefore, digital activism plays an important role in the denouncement of plagiarism in the mainstream media, which has been followed by action from politicians, having a direct impact on legislative reform. In November 28, 2019, la *Cámara de Diputados* (Chamber of Deputies) reported in *Boletín 2802*, reforms approval was gained to protect *obras de arte popular y artesanales* (folk art and artisanal pieces):

> *El documento establece la protección de obras colectivas y las derivadas de las culturas populares o de las expresiones de las culturas tradicionales, en las que se manifiesten elementos de la cultura e identidad de los pueblos y las comunidades originarias.* (Cámara de diputados, 2019, para. 3)
>
> (The document establishes the protection of collective pieces and derived from popular cultures or from expressions of traditional cultures manifesting elements of the culture and identity of original peoples and communities.)

Carolina Herrera's brand launch collection Resort 2020 used designs from Mexican communities, provoking discontent on social media (Figure 52). The garments used patterns from different communities such as Otomí from Tenango de Doria, Zapotec from Itsmo de Oaxaca, and the iconic Sarape de Saltillo.

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due to copyright issues

Figure 52. Carolina Herrera case of plagiarism on social media denounced with #GiveCredit. From "We ask Carolina Herrera to #GiveCredit and compensate the Mexican artisans from Tenango de Doria. Please share this campaign and help us to end up the cultural appropiation in fashion" by Give Credit Twitter, 2019 (https://twitter.com/givecredit_/status/1139302008232521730) Copyright 2019 by Give Credit.

In June 2019, the Cultural Secretary of Mexico, Alejandra Fausto, sent a letter to Carolina Herrera as the brand owner, and to the collection's creative director, Wes Gordon (Give Credit, 2018). She asked firstly for an explanation for the use of various distinctive Indigenous Mexican patterns and secondly, if these communities would benefit from the sales ("Mexican government accuses Carolina Herrera of cultural appropriation," 2019). Gordon responded about the collection:

> There's an undeniable Mexican presence in this collection (…) It's something that jumps out at you and I always intended it to be something latent as a way of showing my love for this country and for all the incredible work I've seen there (…) My admiration for the artisanal work has only grown as I have travelled to Mexico over the years. With this new collection, I have tried to highlight the importance of this magnificent cultural heritage (S. Jones, 2019, para. 9 - 11).

However, profiting from other cultures without recognising and benefiting the knowledge holders is strongly debatable, and reparations to the affected communities were not made.

This case is one example of the many cases documented by *Impacto* (Viernes Tradicional, 2019). Appendix C:a shows cases of plagiarism and cultural appropriation documented until July 2019. It is evident some communities have been more affected than others, and reactions to plagiarism have differed from community to community. For example, a group of artisans in Tenango de Doria registered the collective brand *Tenangos Bordados de Hidalgo* granting protection to the textiles ("Los Tenangos de Hidalgo: la magia de los hilos y los bordados en México," 2016) to prevent unauthorised reproductions. Although this strategy is useful from a legal perspective, the disadvantage is that it only includes a specific group, leaving the rest of the community out. This also represents the centralisation of power, privilege, politics, and access in a few members, breaking *colectividad* and *autonomía comunitaria* (communitary collectivity and autonomy).

Growth in the popularity of textiles has a range of consequences. For some artisans, the plagiarisation of textile patterns are in higher demand, and consequently, production and prices are increased. Handmade textiles (including freestyle sewing-machine embroidery) are restricted by time pressures and require more artisans to fulfil production (México a Colores, 2019). For this reason, artisans from one community can subdivide the workload making orders to communities nearby (Figure 53). For example, at times the Nahua community of Puebla, San Gabriel Chilac, commission embroidery to *Popoloca* (*Ngiva*) artisans in San Juan Atzingo. However, unfair wages reproduce inequalities among Indigenous communities that perpetuate abusive labour situations, similar to what they experience from merchants or *coyotes*[35] (Rodriguez, 2019, para. 1) selling to stores in big cities (Páez, 2019).

[35] "*Coyote"* (brush wolf) is the term artisans call the people, commonly men from the same community, who buy at very low price and sell many times higher (Rodriguez, 2019).

Figure 53. Handmade embroidery versus machine-made embroidery from San Gabriel Chilac. From "Identifica el bordado a mano de San Gabriel Chilac | México a Colores" by México a Colores, 2019, (https://youtu.be/CzPOKfhjUjE). Copyright 2019, México a colores. Reprinted with permission.

In the other cases, there has been a transformation in gender roles in textile artisanal work. Traditionally textiles have been an activity for women, but there has been an increase of men participating in artisanal textile labour such as in Tenango de Doria (Mota, 2018) (Figure 54).

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Figure 54. Bordador de Tenango de Doria. From "Bordar también es de hombres: la cuna de los Tenangos", by El Universal, 2018 (https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/estados/bordar-tambien-es-de-hombres-la-cuna-de-los-tenangos) Copyright 2018 by El Universal.

Identifying artisanal textiles as part of a specific community for protection against plagiarism is challenging. Some textiles were developed after colonisation and have external influences or techniques, which is the case for *los sarapes de Saltillo* in Coahuila, Northern Mexico (Figure 55). The exact origin of these textiles is uncertain and cannot be attributed to a particular *pueblo originario* as part of Indigenous peoples' rights. Nevertheless, despite being registered as *propiedad industrial* (industrial property) through which the processes have legal protection named "*sarape fino,"* the design is not protected as explained by the director of the *Instituto Municipal de Cultura de* Saltillo (Municipal Institute of Culture of Saltillo), Iván Márquez:

> *El problema a nivel global, así como sucede con la música, es que cuando haces cualquier arreglo de algo que ya está creado, pasa como que si fuera algo nuevo, por ello se deben tener mayores lineamientos para proteger las obras tanto en diseño artesanal como en música, así como en otras áreas de las bellas artes.* (Notimex, 2019, para. 5)
>
> (The problem is that at global level, similarly to what happens with music, when you do an arrangement to something already created, it is considered as something new. For this reason, more guidelines should be established to protect work, from artisanal design to music, as well as in other areas of the fine arts.)

This content has been removed by the author due to copyright issues

Figure 55. Sarapes de Saltillo. From "¡Gana Carolina Herrera!... podrá usar diseño del sarape de Saltillo", by Posta, 2019, (https://www.posta.com.mx/tendencias/gana-carolina-herrera-podra-usar-diseno-del-sarape-de-saltillo). Copyright, 2019 by Posta.

Indigenous communities have co-existed for many centuries, and some territories have been part of different Mesoamerican civilisations before colonisation. Currently, shared territories and the emergence of certain styles made popular, make it difficult to identify the exact origin of textiles. More recently, textiles created for trading have not always been identified to a particular community, which presents a generic aesthethic that has become popular and commonly referred to (for example) as "*blusa Chiapaneca"* or "*blusa Oaxaqueña"* (blouse from Chiapas or blouse from Oaxaca) (Figure 56).

Figure 56. "*Blusa Chiapaneca"* of unidentified origin. From "La blusa clasica negra pero esta vez con flores moradas, es una belleza" by Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/p/B2O1NsNAcGv/)

Social media platforms are common channels to incentivise the use of artisanal textiles from an informed, conscious, and respectful approach. Designer and consultant Claudia Muñoz (2014) of *Impacto Textil* proposed the initiative *Viernes Tradicional* (similar to Casual Friday) "*donde buscamos promover el conocimiento, apreciación, uso y consumo de prendas hechas por artesano(a)s mexicano(a)s*" (where we seek to promote the knowledge, appreciation, use and consumption of garments made by Mexican artisans) using the hashtag *#ViernesTradicional* on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (*Viernes Tradicional* website) (Figure 57). This initiative targets audiences (around 20s and 30s) who are commonly familiar with social media platforms and use of hashtags. By 2016, it had 25,000 active followers, creating an online community nationally and internationally (Museo Textil de Oaxaca, 2018). The use and appreciation of artisanal textiles generated connections among textile users, and a sense of belonging to Mexican cultural heritage.

Figure 57. #ViernesTradicional initiative from *Impacto*. From "¡GRACIAS!, cumplimos 2 años! #ViernesTradicional", by NGO Impacto Instagram, 2016, (https://www.instagram.com/p/BBaiVVtxk9x/). Copyright 2016, NGO Impacto. Reprinted with permission.

There are oppositional voices in regards to the use of Indigenous artisanal textiles in Mexico. Some non-Indigenous and indeed Indigenous critics consider artisanal creations to be worn exclusively by Indigenous people, lest it be considered cultural appropriation. However, as mentioned earlier, some pieces are not traditionally used by Indigenous peoples, despite being created by them. Many of these new garments are produced especially for trading outside the communities, for the weavers to achieve a fair-dignified life. However, it is important to consider various aspects that are harmful to Indigenous communities without informed and respectful use and trading. There are social inequalities, mostly racism and classism in Latin America, and thus, power, privilege, politics. and access, are important facets to consider.

Artisanal textiles under fair and ethical trade are not accessible for purchasing to a predominant proportion of the population due to their intensive labour, and frequently, they are placed in exclusive markets. As racism and classism are latent in Mexico, the avoidance of artisanal textiles turning into products for the elite is crucial to avoid perpetuating Indigenous knowledge appropriation by privileged sectors. There are cases where social media figures, also known as influencers, benefit by using and promoting ethnic textiles, without having the appropriate information. These practices do not benefit artisanal communities, and some are

harmful through misinformation. Online communities are against such practices and have accused them of *despojo* (dispossession), denouncing and mocking such profiles through memes[36] on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (Figure 58).

Memes are popular propagated ideas considered "cultural information (…) (and) shape the mindsets and significant forms of behaviour and actions of a social group" (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007, p. 199). For many social media users, memes are characterised for being anonymous, rapidly shared and frequently relying on humour (Bauckhage, 2011; De la Rosa-Carrillo, 2015). Anonymity enables meme producers to freely express ideas and "protects them from the regulation or punishment that peers or authorities might attempt to enact in response to such material" (De la Rosa-Carrillo, 2015, p. 132). In this situation, memes are used to denounce practices considered elitist, disconnecting textile creators from the garments, a manifestation of digital activism.

Figure 58. Meme mocking misinformed textile influencers. From "-¿Oye a qué te dedicas? - Soy #etnofashionblogger e #influencertextil", by Memes Textileros Facebook Page, 2018,

[36] "The term "internet meme" refers to the phenomenon of content or concepts that spread rapidly among internet users. It alludes to a theory by Dawkin (1976) who postulates memes as a cultural analogue on genes in order to explain how rumours, catch-phrases, melodies, or fashion trends replicate through a population" (Bauckhage, 2011, p. 42).

(https://www.facebook.com/memestextileros/posts/1921814814581633). Copyright 2018 by Memes Textileros. Reprinted with permission

A spectrum of positions about the use of artisanal textiles, especially Indigenous, is diverse and complex as evidently reflected in social media. Considering the importance of the pluriverse - as a world in which many worlds can fit - all of the voices contribute to a constant ebb and flow of textile practices transforming the field through time. In this sense, the diversity of opinions and perspectives function as diverse threads in a woven piece, creating rich and complex patterns in constant evolution, like weaving a *jolobil* with its necessary tension and flexibility.

5.1.3 Power, privilege, politics and access: Untangling the 3P-A threads in textile artisanal design

A wide range of textile artisanal design initiatives in San Cristóbal de las Casas (Jobel) has grown through the last decade. As explained in Chapter Two, there are various legal registration types of initiatives, funded or independent ways of operation, design and trading approaches, to mention a few. These differences influence important aspects to consider such as power, privilege, politics, and access, which I have denominated as 3P-A for the purposes of this research.

Due to the nature of decolonisation, power and privilege (status) are key elements to consider, and consequently, politics (3P) cannot be avoided because of the hierarchy evoked by identified levels of status. These aspects were contemplated at the beginning of this research and have been pivotal. However, access has been identified as relevant since it directly influences resource availability, allocation, and use. Few textile initiatives can access retail spaces, especially in premium locations like touristic and transited places, and museums. Based on the observations of Jobel**,** these retailers belong to the state, known designers, and cooperatives funded by established or international NGOs. Smaller initiatives primarily distribute through collective stores, and many rely primarily on online channels. For these, access to digital technologies relates to the capacity of accessing technology tools and internet, and the skills and knowledge required to utilise those resources, known as “digital equity” (Gorski, 2009; Katz & Levine, 2015; Resta & Laferrière, 2008, 2015).

Digital equity seeks to ensure that digital technology and the internet is accessible to all people, despite socio-economic divisions. However, the reality is that many

people are excluded from accessing online technologies due to poverty or location. This exclusion is called the “digital divide”, a phrase used since the mid 1990s by scholars and activists. (Hilbert, 2010; Julier, 2011; Resta & Laferrière, 2008, 2015; Tanner Hawkins & Hawkins, 2003). Light (as cited in Gorski, 2009) refers to the digital divide to address the “disparities in access to computers and the Internet based on race, socioeconomic status, gender, and other social and cultural identifiers” (p. 351). These disparities are noticable in Latin America (Galperin & Mariscal, 2007), are evident in the highlands of Chiapas impacting Indigenous artisanal initiatives, and displayed on their internet and social media presence. Appendix C:b illustrates that state and NGOs have more access to online platforms in comparison to independent collectives. Social media allows access to online markets at no cost to the consumer, albeit they are time consuming, while websites generate costs through hosting, development, and maintenance. Finding independent collectives then, is more challenging.

While 3P-A are aspects to have in mind as researchers, designers, allies, and consumers, they are hard to investigate and identify. Whereas social media activities can provide certain information, this is limited and hard to corroborate. It is complex to go beyond speculations and generic assumptions regarding the 3P-A of artisanal initiatives, considering the complexity of historical and current relationships, and changing governments. However, they can be useful for orientation to generate informed opinions as conscious consumers. At this point, 3P-A is in its early stages of development. The following diagram represents commercial or funding links of some textile initiatives in Jobel until late 2018 (Figure 59).

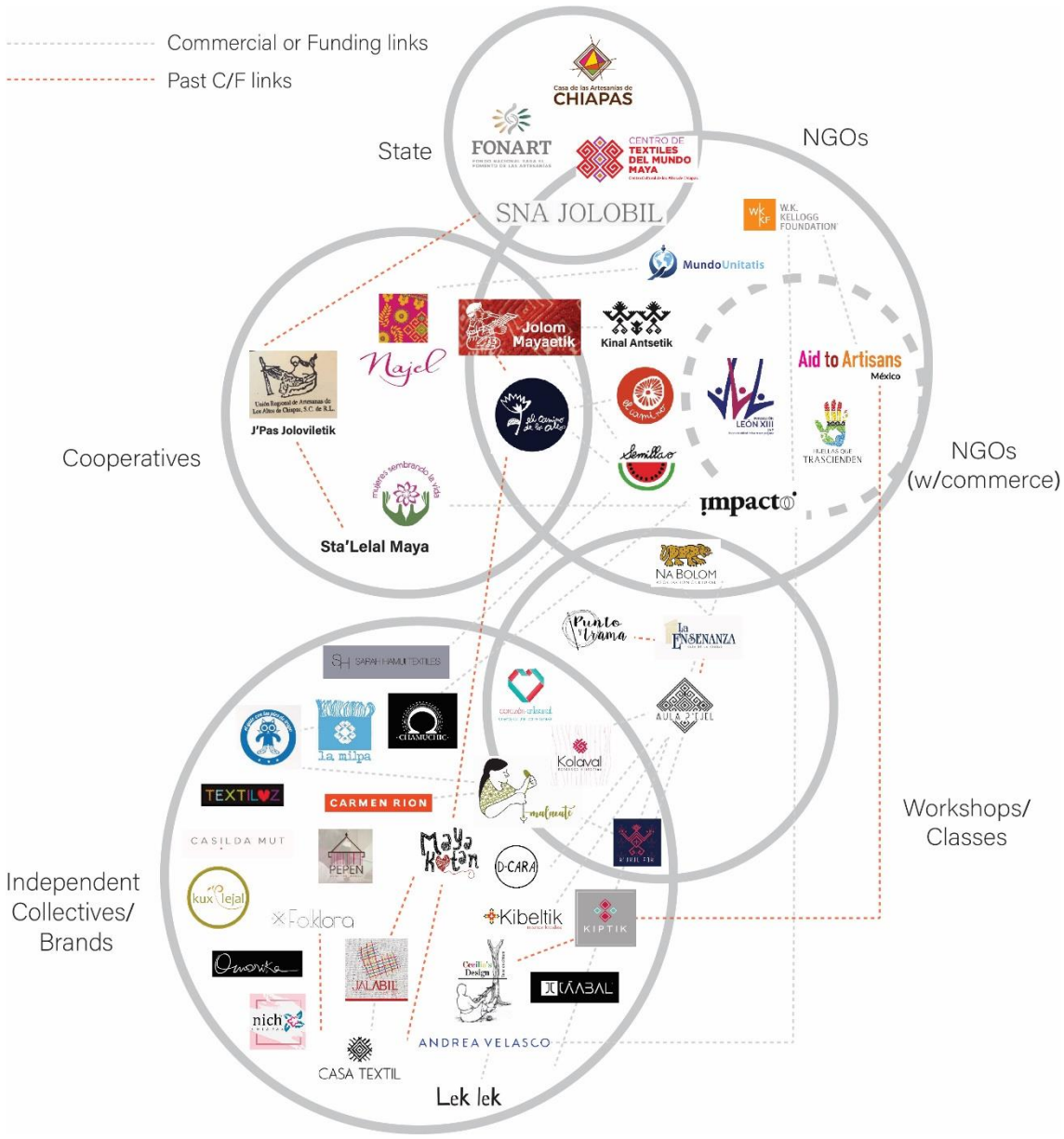

Figure 59. Links between textile initiatives in Jobel until late 2018. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The aim of this diagrammatic representation is to show different types of textile initiatives in the field and the connections between many personal and professional relationships. In relation to 3P-A, the state and established NGOs have access to funding, human resources, spaces, and strong commercial links. Local NGOs commonly compete for grants from big international NGOs such as the Kellogg Foundation and, in some cases, they fund competitor organisations, creating rivalry among them to increase their own profit. Competition also happens between cooperatives and collectives to access grants, events, and spaces. Some NGOs trade artisanal products as a source of funding for operations and to support artisans'

trading initiatives. Cooperatives are mostly connected and funded by NGOs and/or the state, allowing them to allocate staff and resources, and to provide stability in operations in comparison to independent collectives with less stability. Stability in operations allows organisations long term planning, training, and development. In contrast, independent organisations mostly depend on trading, reducing their capacity for long-term planning and development, so they frequently struggle to operate. Despite the competition and tension for resources generated in a neoliberal system, independent initiatives cooperate and organise themselves, sharing spaces, resources, and connections. For example, Aula P'ejel is a shared space for trading, workshops and exhibitions formed by *Kibeltik*, *Kolaval* and *K'uxul pok'*. Sharing, *colectividad*, solidarity, and reciprocity are manifestations of alternative ways of operating resisting rivalry and towards a fair-dignified life, *Buen Vivir*.

Historical relationships continue to play an important role in the evolution of the field, trading models and relationships, design practices and perceptions, and operations[37]. The following diagram shows historical relationships since 1970, when cooperatives were incentivised as a state initiative (Chapter Two). The influence of neoliberal and capitalist agendas towards private commercialisation have led to the proliferation of independent collectives. It has also disestablished cooperatives due to the intervention of hegemonic designers in the field, as explained by different actors during the field research.

In 1976, the first Indigenous weavers' organisation in the highlands of Chiapas, *Sna Jolobil* (*Casa del tejido*, House of weaving) was established as a cooperative society with the support of FONART. Walter Morris[38] was one of the founders and established that the organisation would trade and export textile art instead of *artesanías*. However, their operation as a true cooperative has been questioned, with some believing their operations function as a commercial enterprise in which the main partners (one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous) dedicated to the international diffusion of techniques, designs, the relationships of patterns with their dreams, and the artisan's way of living. (T. Ramos Maza, 2004; Vargas Cetina, 2002). Other types of cooperative, supported by the government for craft promotion,

[37] For more information about Mayan weavers' textile history, collaboration, and political participation in the highlands of Chiapas, see del Puerto, 2015; Martínez Loera, 2011; Millán, 1997; Ochoa, 2014; Perez Canovas, 2014; T. Ramos Maza, 2004, 2018; Vrijea, 1994.

[38] Walter "Chip" Morris is a US anthropologist recognised as one of the main people responsible for the development of textile research, preservation and promotion in the highlands of Chiapas. He died in Jobel in October, 2019 (Martín Pérez, 2019).

work under the legal form of *Sociedad de Solidaridad Social*. This type of organisation also aims to form and consolidate Indigenous leaders as intermediaries between government and local artisanal groups (T. Ramos Maza, 2004, p. 59). The first of this kind was *J'pas Joloviletik* (*las que hacen tejido*, those who make weaving) established in 1984 and supported by the now defunct *Instituto Nacional Indigenista* (INI - Indigenist National Institute). By 2011, it had more than 800 Indigenous artisans from 30 communities in the highlands of Chiapas This organisation provided funding and credits in raw material, and weavers were generally paid when the textile was submitted, not under consignment as with many other organisations (Martínez Loera, 2011; Perez Canovas, 2014). Currently, this model is used by most cooperatives in the region.

Indigenous artisanal organisations linked to government institutions have been surpassed by international and national NGOs. Olivera (as cited in T. Ramos Maza, 2004) mentioned that the aim of these is "*vincular los programas de desarrollo a la solución de necesidades inmediatas de las mujeres indígenas cuidando de preservar su cultura e identidad étnicas*" (p.59) (to link development programmes to solve immediate needs of Indigenous women and caring to preserve their ethnic identity and culture). An important cooperative to emerge from a not-for profit group (*asociación civil* in this case) was *Jolom Mayaetik* (*mujeres que tejen*, women who weave). This progressive women-led cooperative was founded in 1995 and "promotes sustainable economic development for Indigenous women, in a democratic structure run collectively by general assemblies and a popular vote" (C. Schuler, 2017, para. 2). Alongside textile creation and development, *Jolom Mayaetik* (as part of *K'inal Antsetik* A.C) run educational programmes to advance women, Indigenous and cultural rights, and political mobilisation. Some of its members have participated in discussion panels with government representatives and the EZLN. This is an example of the transition of Indigenous textile artisans in politics defending their rights as Indigenous and non-Indigenous women.

Cooperatives have engaged with international and national designers for the development of artisanal work, particularly textiles. ***Jolom Mayaetik*** collaborated with a French designer for more than 10 years, teaching Indigenous weavers W/GN design approaches. As mentioned in Chapter Two, W/GN hegemonic design clashes with Indigenous worldviews, underlined in the notion of intellectual property and royalties provoking tensions inside organisations, and even disband. After this

collaboration, the French designer founded the NGO "*El Camino*" and the linked cooperative, *El Camino de los Altos*, with Indigenous weavers who were part of the former cooperative. Similar events still occur when national and international designers and traders enter established NGOs as consultants or contractors for later initiate their own organisations or commercial initiatives as shown in Figure 60.

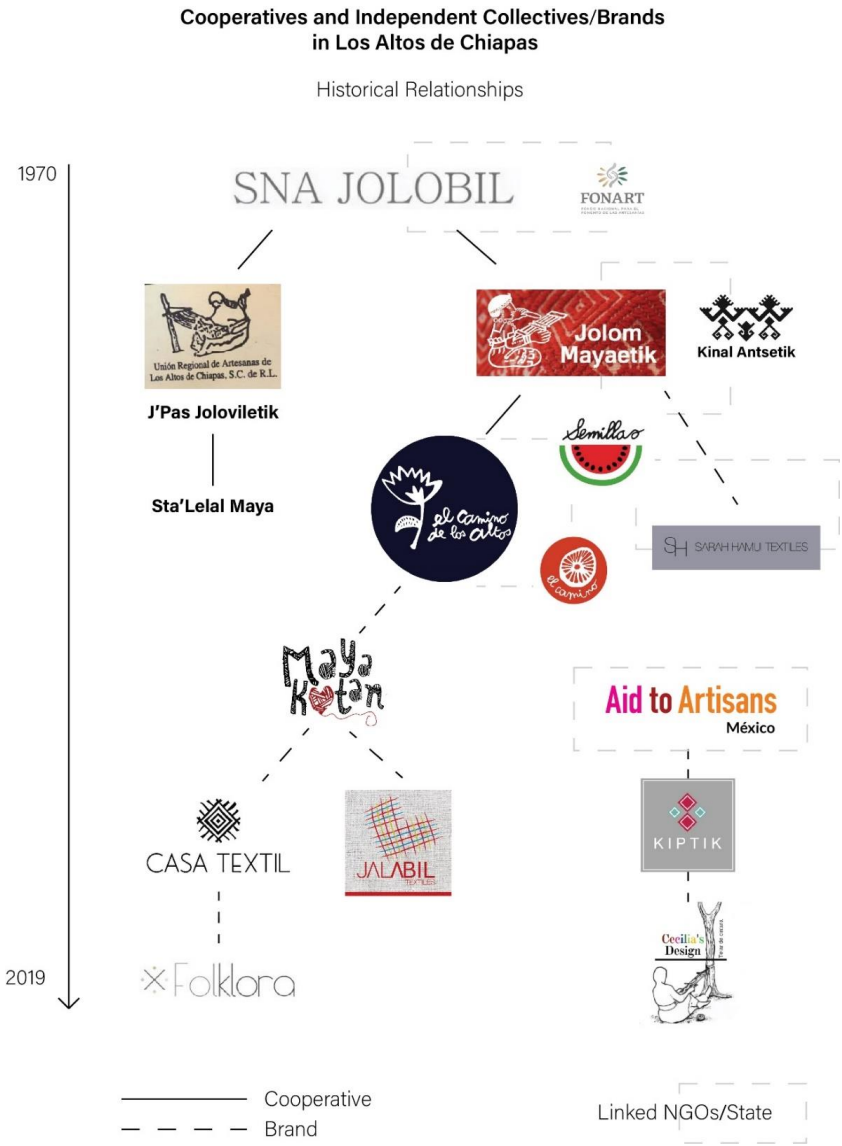

Figure 60. Cooperative and independent collectives' historical relationships in *los Altos de Chiapas*. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The historical links show the complexity of relations between organisations and the plurality of views of Indigenous weavers who influence their engagement with various types of organisations. The influence of design in a modern-colonial world, and the shift in practice and organisations towards independent collectives impacting

the field, reflect the tension and flexibility in cultural practices, as well as the importance of the awareness and constant balancing of the 3P-A.

Social media have influenced and transformed the artisanal design field, particularly in textiles, and whether for trading, informing, denouncing, or as a free platform, new channels have opened for textile initiatives, Indigenous-led or with external influence, private or public, dependant or independent. The field is in constant flux, a living entity like culture itself. In this sense, the complex links function as threads in a textile, creating the new fabric of an artisanal textiles field in Chiapas and Mexico.

To summarise *patrones sentipensantes* from the second cycle, the focus was on digital-online technologies and platforms impacting textile artisanal initiatives in the field. Malacate's social media use has been discussed and the understanding of online textile communities in Mexico. It continues with digital activism towards plagiarism and cultural appropriation, and notions of digital equity and divide. It closes with untangling power, privilege, politics and access, the 3P-A in the contexts of the highlands of Chiapas.

5.2 *Sentipensar-corazonando* in *jolobil's* second cycle: A digital focus

This section discusses the embodied reflexivity of *sentirpensar-corazonando* in the second cycle. It approaches social media as a double-edged sword (Lopesi, 2018) facilitating online access to textile initiatives, and the impact of digital-online platforms in collaboration across distance. It closes with the influence and guidance of the heart in Mayan culture and during this research, in what López Intzín denominates "epistemologies of the heart."

5.2.1 Social media, a double-edged sword

The use of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, have allowed people to share pictures, videos and written posts. An assumption is that social media technologies allow people to be heard. Other aspects to consider beyond social media however, is "global good" and easy access (Lopesi, 2018). In some instances, particularly in vulnerable and Global Southern communities, the internet and related technologies are limited or non-existent, primarily due to a lack of communication infrastructure, remoteness, and poverty.

Other important aspects to consider are the limitations and restrictions of the virtual space of social media platforms and their systems and infrastructures. For example, in the case of Facebook, there are issues of privacy and data security of users' content. Personal information, content, and activities of users have on numerous occasions been sold and used for marketing, commercial, and political purposes without users' consent (D. Lee, 2018). At the same time, social media platforms prosper in free-market capitalism, de-regulation and privatisation, all fundamental elements of neo-liberalism, in which personal data are used to consume specific information, products and services (Lopesi, 2018). Nevertheless, in recent years, governments and corporations have manipulated and censored online content for their benefit.

Rekhari (as cited in Lopesi, 2018) observed that "the growing empowerment that comes through digital-media platforms and technologies is a 'double-edged sword' which provides a way for Indigenous peoples 'to challenge and empower, while at the same time contain(s) and reinforce(s) cultural hegemony'" (p. 76). This expression shows the paradox that comes with the use of social media as a democratic and free online channel for everyone to use while at the same time operating inside systems of control, manipulation and a neoliberal economy.

5.2.2 Collaborating across distance

Collaboration is fundamental for this research, and equally so for artisanal design between Indigenous artisans and designers. Consequently, participation and collaboration in design research and design practice is central for researchers and practitioners changing methods of conventional and hegemonic approaches to co-design processes in which users or participants, designers, and researchers, collaborate and explore different topics.

Collaboration is also a pivotal aspect for Malacate, who takes into careful consideration who it engages with in projects (Chapter Two). Fundamentally then, my role with Malacate followed collaborative practices that go beyond simply field research trips, and replicating existing extractive research models, that oppose decolonial and decolonising design. As a consequence, horizontal collaboration and co-design are an important part of my design practice and in collective projects outside academia, and are enhanced by digital-online technologies and social media.

As a new field/community researcher, I was conscious of the importance of building respectful relationships as the basis of appropriate collaboration with Malacate and beyond this thesis. Pivotal to this was continuing ongoing dialogue in which everyone's voices were heard and acknowledged, centring on accountability and trust, like weaving the threads of collective research, *jolobil*. Guiding principles in the work of the Mexican sociologist Gutiérrez Aguilar (2012) and her concept of "*entramados comunitarios*" (communitarian entanglements) are fundamental. The guidelines, as cited in Escobar (2016) are:

> *Respeto, colaboración, dignidad, amor y reciprocidad y que no están completamente sometidos a la lógica de la acumulación de capital, aunque a menudo estén bajo ataque y abrumados por ella.* (p. 203)
>
> (Respect, collaboration, dignity, love and reciprocity and which are not completely subjected to logic of capital accumulation even if affected and sometimes overwhelmed by such logic.)

A good proportion of these values is considered important for the research and beyond. Nevertheless, love and dignity are key aspects for Mayan communities in Chiapas, for *Lekil Kuxlejal*. These aspects are intrinsic to the *Zapatista* ideology like *mandar obedeciendo*, serving as research guiding principles (Chapter Three). Collaboration across distance explored in depth in Chapter Three, was discussed showing horizontality, reciprocity and some principles of *Zapatista*'s "leading by obeying". Opposite conventional field research in which the researcher determines activities, *obedecer y no mandar* (obey, don't lead) determines that the researcher is guided by the interest of the community. If something is especially required, the principle of *proponer y no imponer* (propose, don't impose) establishes a dialogue between the researcher and the community to propose the idea instead of imposing the researcher's will. Nevertheless, *representar y no suplantar* (represent, don't replace) was particularly useful when I was contacted by a digital media platform for an interview, as I elaborate on next.

Cultura Colectiva is a digital media publisher based in Mexico City, targeting Latin American audiences through text and video content designed for social media channels (Mullin, 2017). In 2017, it ranked as the third most read digital native media and in the top 10 most important in Latin America (El Economista, 2017). *Cultura Colectiva* approached me through Facebook page *Ethical Consumer*

Enquiry, where I shared content related to my research and personal interests. They were working on an "episode of a series focusing on copyright and colonisation in Indigenous clothing and design" (personal communication, 2017) and requested a Skype interview. In the first session with the reporter, the collective nature of the research was underlined, as was the importance of direct contact with *Malacate*, to avoid replacing its work with my interaction. Eventually, the video was uploaded through *Cultura Colectiva's* YouTube channel (Figure 61).

Figure 61. Screenshots of Cultura Colectiva video. From "¿Por qué es tan fácil robar diseños artesanales? | EXPLAINERS" (pt. 1.44, pt.1.49), by Cultura Colectiva YouTube Channel, 2018, (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkLwEo8qX2Y). Copyright 2018 by Cultura Colectiva.

In this space, the interview addressed issues of plagiarism, copyright, and the intellectual property of Indigenous designs in digital media in México. After the presenter's introduction and brief about Malacate with images of its work (not the members'), a small fragment of my interview as an academic was presented. This represented a common practice in which academic voices are privileged and the makers of artisanal textiles are rendered invisible. The video concluded by discussing that issues on theft of Indigenous textiles is a matter of ethical values for consumers. However, Malacate claims the protection and defence of the *autonomía* and self-determination of *pueblos originarios* goes beyond ethics, and is part of their rights as Indigenous people, sharing their opinion in a Facebook post together with the video:

> *Agradecemos a Diana Albarran quien actualmente realiza su investigación de Doctorado con nosotras haciendo posible no solo*

reflexionar teóricamente sobre nuestro trabajo y camino sino busca en la realidad visibilizar temas importantes que viven las artesanas y artesanos en nuestro país. También a Cultura Colectiva por visibilizar nuestro trabajo.

Queremos compartir el vídeo que han hecho, pero antes nos gustaría dar nuestra opinión sobre el mismo, por una parte sabemos que los medios tienen sus formas de trabajar y difundir la información que hacen llegar a su audiencia, pero por otro lado en este caso se trabajó y proporcionó bastante información que desgraciadamente quedo fuera y nos hubiera gustado apareciera. Sin embargo, esto no fue no por falta de disposición o por difundir lo que Cultura Colectiva deseaba sino por cuestiones de tiempo y de lo breve del vídeo. Sin embargo, pueden encontrar en el video el Link de Malacate y nuestra historia si desean saber más. Entonces señalamos lo siguiente retroalimentando lo que se difunde.

Desde hace muchos años instituciones académicas, artesanas y artesanos, colectivos, ONGs, Cooperativas y personas de a pie trabajan con el tema de lo urgente y necesario que es hacer que la ley apruebe legalmente la protección de los conocimientos tradicionales de los pueblos originarios y que esto sea una realidad.

Hoy el tema está presente de forma latente pues cada vez el plagio y apropiación de elementos culturales ajenos para ganar dinero por parte de trasnacionales y marcas extranjeras es más descarado.

Pero también en nuestro país las relaciones desleales con las comunidades en la arena textil es una realidad, el NO reconocimiento de los pueblos originarios y sus derechos colectivos y comunitarios es históricamente un problema que tenemos como país y esto tiene que cambiar.

Por ello nosotras tomando las experiencias de lucha de quien nos anteceden estamos desde hace un tiempo trabajamos desde lo local en un proceso de concientización para comprender porque esta situación debe cambiar y estamos buscando transformar la realidad que se vive y que viven las mujeres en sus comunidades y fuera de ellas.

SI podemos cambiar el rumbo de nuestras historias y dejar de reproducir un sistema que legitima el poder sobre quienes tienen menos a causa de un sistema que se niega a reconocer que no existe una sola cultura nacional, sino que nuestro país está conformado por una diversidad de culturas.

*Proteger y defender la Autonomía y Autodeterminación de los Pueblos Originarios no solo es cuestión de Ética es UN DERECHO que les corresponde. (*Malacate Facebook post, August 8, 2017)

(We thank Diana Albarran who is currently doing her PhD research with us making possible not only theorising about our work and path but she seeks to make visible important topics and lived experiences by artisans in our country. We also thank *Cultura Colectiva* for making our work visible.

We want to share their video but first, we would like to express our opinion of it. On one hand, we know that media have their own ways of working and spreading information to reach their audience. But, on the other hand and in this case, we worked hard to provide much information that, unfortunately, was not included and we would like to see there. However, this was not due to lack of disposition or because *Cultura Colectiva* only included what they wanted. It was due to timing and the short duration of the video. Nonetheless, you can find in the video the link to Malacate, our story if you want to know more. So, we want to point out the following, feeding back what is shared.

Since many years ago, academic institutions, artisans, collectives, NGOs, cooperatives and standing people have worked on the urgent and necessary topic to elaborate a law that gives legal protection to traditional knowledge from Indigenous people, and make it a reality. The topic is latent today because every time, plagiarism and appropriation of cultural elements for profit by transnationals and foreign brands is more blatant. But also, in our country, unfair relationships with communities in the textile scene is a reality. NOT acknowledging the collective and community rights from Indigenous people has been historically a problem we have as a country and this must change. That is why we take the experiences of struggles from those who precede us. For some time, we have been working from the local in an awareness process to understand why this situation has to change, and we are looking to transform the realities that women live inside and outside their communities.

WE CAN change the pathway of our story and stop reproducing a system that legitimises the power over those who have less due to a system that refuses to recognise that there is not one single national culture, that our country is formed by a diversity of cultures. Protecting and defending *autonomía* and self-determination of Indigenous people is not only a matter of ethics but a RIGHT.)

This post is an example of how Malacate uses social media to speak with its own voice and to share their views on plagiarism, cultural appropriation, and Indigenous people's rights. Thus, posting in such a way enables groups such as Malacate to speak their truth.

Reciprocity and collaborative research involve consultation before the presentation of co-design projects, in a similar manner to Indigenous and decolonising research (Brereton et al., 2014; Huambachano, 2016; Pérez Daniel & Sartorello, 2012; Robertson & Bishop, 1999b; L. T. Smith, 2013; Walker et al., 2006). Early results from the field research was presented at various conferences. Therefore, consultation with Malacate and other parties as contributors was important before proceeding, eventually becoming a regular practice. Pictorial and audio reflections on each presentation were, and continue to be, shared with Malacate, and concurrently they posted information about the event and their reflections on their Facebook page. These practices weave accountability, acknowledgement, and reciprocity to followers about our collective research, strengthening our relationships despite the distance. It is important to prioritise personal relationships with research partners, *kaupapa whānau*, by taking the time to communicate, update, be accountable, and to feed the connections for reciprocity. Nevertheless, it is important to consider that conventional research does not consider these practices as professional or necessary, and many times, they are not supported. However, it is fundamental to resist W/GN academic practices putting reciprocity and care to the fore, and aligned with decolonising methodologies (L. T. Smith, 2013).

5.2.3 Epistemologies from the heart: Letting *O'tan* be the guidance

The heart played an important role in pre-colonial Mesoamerican civilisations, and remains so in *pueblos originarios* cultures. The heart is pivotal to this research's methodology (Chapter Three), *corazonar* as *sentipensantes.* Fundamental to Mayan culture, this aspect is an important finding and guide.

The Mayan Tseltal scholar and activist Xuno López Intzín developed a context-approach called "*epistemologías del corazón"* (epistemologies of the heart). Literature availability around this topic is limited, but online videos of authors elaborating on this are available, particularly on alternative-activist YouTube channels. This was underlined in *jolobil'*s second cycle to reflect digital ethnography.

The importance of the heart is present in the vast diversity of Indigenous languages in the highlands of Chiapas. Academic literature mentioning the heart from a Mayan perspective uses the terms "*O'tan"* and "*O'tanil"* in Tseltal. However, there is a variety of denominations to the heart in different communities. Mayan Tsotsil

communities have diverse terms such as *"coón"* in Nachig, and "*ko'onton"* in Magdalenas Aldama, as evidenced in a co-design session (Figure 62).

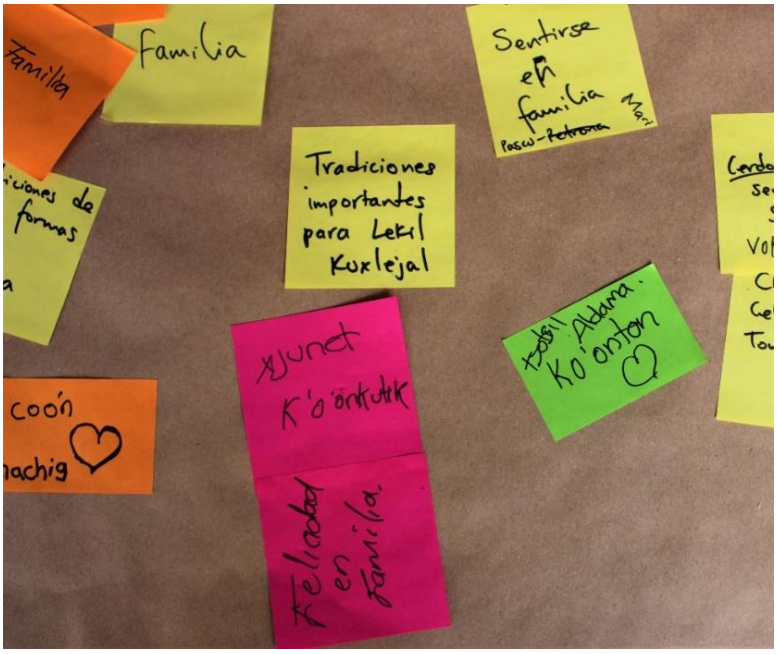

Figure 62. Heart in tsotsil from Nachig and Madgalenas Aldama. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

María Patricia Pérez Moreno, a Mayan Tseltal scholar, explored the heart as central in Mayan Tseltal language (2012)**.** Through Mayan ways of being, expression, doing and thinking (*stalel)* (Pérez López, 2014), *O'tan or O'tanil* is the focus of reflection in the research with her community in Bachajón. This community believes thought does not exist in the head but in the heart, an approach that starkly contrasts with W/GN thought. Everything that exists on Earth and the cosmos is considered to have a heart, and consequently, is alive (Pérez Moreno, 2012). In *O'tan* thinking, plants, animals, the guardians of the mountains, and water, can feel, are beings that need dialogue, acknowledgement and appreciation, and considered sacred (Mead & Mead, 2003; Pérez Moreno, 2012). In this approach, appreciation and gratefulness are languages of the heart and its life force called *pat'otan* (literally behind the heart) (Despojo Territorio y Resistencias, 2017).

A main pillar of "epistemologies of the heart" is *Ch'ulel*, an entity shared by human beings with all beings in the earth. It is most commonly translated as spirit, consciousness, soul, and as shared vital energy with the existing beings in the cosmos. It also connotes the process of language acquisition and awakening. In this sense, *Ch'ulel* is related to historic consciousness, memory, to fight and resistance.

Further, *ich'el ta muk'* recognises the greatness and importance of everything that exists, with dignity, that is an intrinsic element of *Buen Vivir*. From this perspective, epistemologies of the heart are interpellations of Mother Earth, nature, and women, for example. Meanwhile, it challenges the state, patriarchy, the hegemonic academy that subjugates Indigenous knowledge and *los saberes del corazón* (knowledges of the heart) (*Rediscovering the Sacred and the End of Hydra Capitalism*, n.d.).

Similar to Mayan's *Ch'ulel, wairua* is commonly translated as soul or spirit for Māori. Mead (2003) mentioned that the universe is full of *wairua*, and that "they roam in space, in forests, on mountains, and are believed to be human souls. They are all around us but we cannot see them" (p. 55). Another Māori term aligned with *Ch'ulel* is *mauri*, the spark or essence of life; the active life force that shows a person is alive. After death, when the body stops functioning, it is perceived that the *mauri* abandons the body, which ceases to exist, contrary to *wairua*, which is immortal[39] (Mead & Mead, 2003). These Indigenous worldviews resonate with the perceptions of spirit, life-force and the interconnectedness and relationality of human beings with nature-culture, Mother Earth and the cosmos.

"Kokoro" is a term related to the heart and the interconnection in nature. This Japanese term is frequently translated as heart or "heart and mind" but this English translation has limitations (Chapter One). Using Shinto philosophy, Kasulis (as cited in Akama, 2017) exemplified the interconnectedness, resonance and weaving between the *kokoro* of beings:

> The poet's *kokoro* resonates with the *kokoro* of the actual mountain mist and the *kokoro* of the Japanese words … the poet alone does not write a poem about the mountain mist. More precisely, the mountain mist, the Japanese words, and the poet write the poem together. (p. 84)

These Non-Western/Global Northern examples show the importance of the heart and spirit, our whole selves in relational connection to the nature-culture and creative arts, decolonial ways of being and doing.

The heart, spirit or life-force are central to transformation, resistance, growth, connection, respect, and gratitude. *El corazón* is active in past and present *cosmovisión* Maya and knowledges, and consequently in *Zapatista* ideology and

[39] For more information about Māori views of the sacred and the spirit see Mead and Mead (2003)

ways of being and doing, *stalel* (ways of being) (Pérez López, 2014). This is also a pathway to decolonise ways of seeing, feeling, sensing, thinking, expressing, and being, inside and outside academia, professionally and personally, while remaining our whole selves. This transformational force has been experienced personally, collectively, and transcendentally through this research, learnings towards weaving the threads of the heart, the mind, the body, and the spirit, in a horizontal, reciprocal, collective, embodied way.

To summarise this chapter, *jolobil* analysis and creative exploration of the second cycle focused on visual approaches to *patrones sentipensantes* as findings and *sentirpensar-corazonando* as reflexivity and discussion. It approached the use and impact of online-digital platforms influencing the research methodology, and in the artisanal textile field in Mexico.

Patrones sentipensantes in the second cycle, discussed Malacate's social media use and online textile communities in Mexico. Then, it approached digital activism as a pathway to denounce plagiarism and cultural appropriation. The section concluded with what I denominated 3P-A and the importance of the awareness and balance of power, privilege, politics, and access in the field.

Sentirpensar-corazonando in the second cycle discussed social media as a double-edged sword, a space where many textile initiatives exist. It continued with the use of digital-online platforms for collaboration, despite distance. It closed with a discussion of the importance of the heart-spirit, our whole selves, and letting the heart guide the research and life.

Chapter 6: Sensorial-embodied exploration of *O'tan* and *Lekil Kuxlejal*

This chapter is the third and final cycle in the *jolobil* research approach that focuses on sensorial-embodied aspects in *patrones sentipensantes* and *sentirpensar-corazonando*. *Patrones sentipensantes* discusses textiles as a source of knowledge actively resisting colonisation, embedding meanings and *cosmovisión*[40], strongly influenced by the Mayan movement towards Collective Intellectual Property. The chapter also explores co-design workshops through *corazonar* for *Lekil Kuxlejal*, and closes with consultation and *horizontalidad*, the important aspects of decolonising design research and to balance the 3P-A**.** The *sentirpensar-corazonando* section approaches my apprenticeship in the practice of backstrap loom weaving as an embodied learning with the body, mind, heart, and spirit. Finally, it elaborates on the exploration of *jolobil* as a proposed decolonial framework using backstrap loom as a metaphor.

6.1 *Patrones sentipensantes* in jolobil's third cycle: A sensorial-embodied focus

The senses, emotions, and embodiment, became the drivers of this study's exploration and analysis through sensory ethnography, which supported experimentation to complement visual ethnographic methods used in emplacement, connecting the body with place (Pink, 2009, 2011). Sensorial ethnography became particularly necessary on the second research trip to Chiapas, through both my learning of *jolobil*, and birth and bodily connection to the location. Therefore, the bodily connection with place in the following field research became fundamental.

Embodiment plays a key role in field research. According to Coffey (1999), physicality is the company of others negotiating spaces in the field, provoking awareness and consciousness of our embodied self. However, the body and mind relationship does not consider the complete environment with the material and sensorial experiences. Therefore, the relationships with place and land are important aspects to reinforce. Howes (as cited in Pink, 2009) stated that "while the paradigm

[40] *Cosmovisión* is translated into English as worldview or cosmology. However, in Spanish the word is composed by two words *cosmos* and *vision* (view of the cosmos) transcending worldview. *La Real Academia Española* defined *cosmovisión* as *visión o concepción global del universo* (RAE, 2019), linking directly with the notion of universe, as in Mayan textiles. Therefore, the Spanish version is used.

of “embodiment” implies an integration of mind and body, the emergent paradigm of emplacement suggests the sensuous interrelationship of body–mind–environment” (p. 7). This approach allows for deeper connections to the senses and environment in ethnographic work. Pink (2009) referred to this as “emplaced ethnography that attends to the question of experience by accounting for the relationships between bodies, minds and the materiality and sensoriality of the environment” (p. 25). During the *jolobil* workshop with *Malacate*, body-mind-environment became the frame for learning the artisanal textile process, especially backstrap loom weaving, or *jolobil*. It is also a way for beginning weavers to connect with ancestors and their Indigenous cultural heritage, commonly left aside or undervalued as “modern” people and *mestizos*.

6.1.1 The books the colony could not burn: Textiles and resistance as source of knowledge

Textiles are material evidence of memories and knowledges that resist colonisation and modernity. Mayan textiles have long been objects of study, and of attempts to unveil the messages “*del textil textual al texto textil”* (from textual textile to textile text) (Turok, 1987), as well as live memory for Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal weavers. In this context, textiles are an important part of identity, distinguishing communities, status, gender, and political status, amongst others. According to Kolpakova (2017), textiles from the highlands of Chiapas have scientific value because they are linked to pre-Colombian Mayans and are therefore not strongly influenced by European traditions. Using the premise “*los tejidos son los libros que no pudo quemar la colonia”* (textiles are the books that the colony could not burn), the Mayan Women’s Association for Development of Sacatepequez[41] from Guatemala led a movement for legislative reform towards collective intellectual property through the 5247 Bill. The bill attempted to denounce the protection of textile creations, sought to recognise centuries of Mayan philosophy and knowledges (Picq, 2017), and contribute to the *autonomía* and self-determination of Mayan communities. Echoing this initiative, this research considers textiles as sources of deep knowledge, like decolonial “books” that document and preserve Indigenous knowledge and memories. Textile garments and practices are the embodiment of other ways of being, doing and knowing, a place-based *yosotros* dialogue with and through the body, mind, heart, and spirit, and mapping the representation of the research journey (Figure 63).

[41] Known in its Spanish acronym as AFEDES.

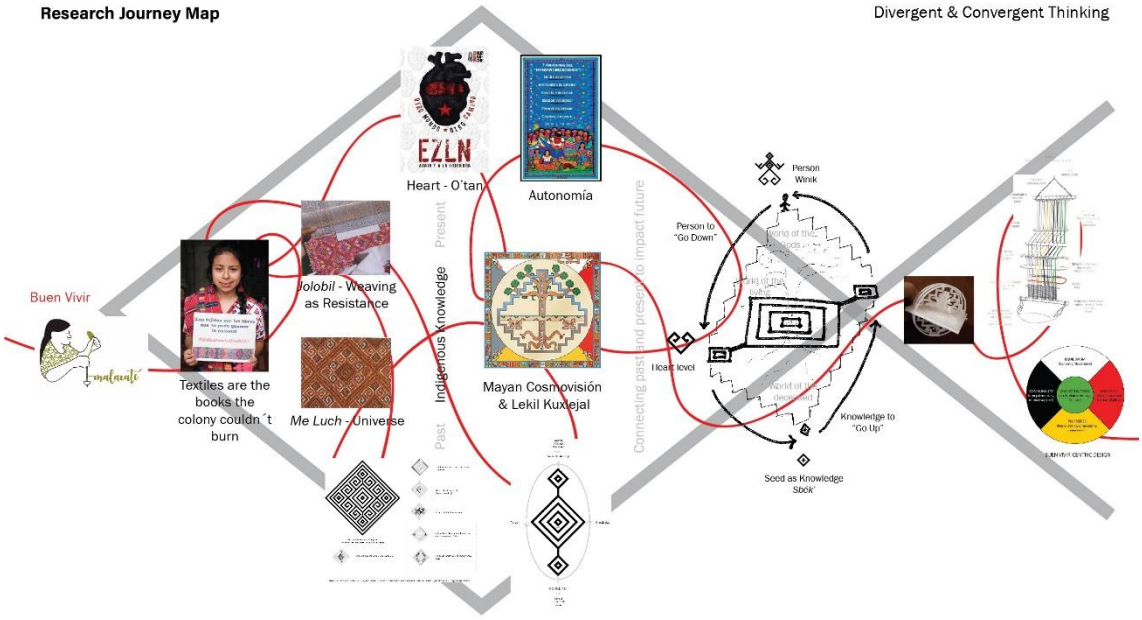

Figure 63. Research journey mapping overlaying the Double Diamond model with the connecting threads of *Lekil Kuxlejal* and *Buen Vivir*. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

In Figure 63, the red thread represents a *Buen Vivir* or *Lekil Kuxlejal* journey, seeking the connecting threads in the plethora of data, whilst in close collaboration with *Malacate*. Adopting a double diamond model as a base, the diagram shows how data gathering and exploration have similarities with the creative process, and with divergent and convergent thinking (Chermahini & Hommel, 2010; Dolan & Metcalfe, 2012; Humes, 2011). Researchers acknowledge the importance of divergent and convergent thinking as a cyclical process of creativity shifting between analysis and intuition (Goldschmidt, 2016), and present in different design process models (Cross, 1995, 2006; Hollins & Hollins, 1991). Aligned with the in-betweeness (Akama, 2015) of the researcher and my positioning as an outsider-within, the visualisation represents an overlaying and co-existence of design research from the Global North with designs from the Global South, a decolonising approach to artisanal design and textiles.

Textiles have various domains of interpretation and significance that are fundamental to this research. According to Ramírez Garayzar (2014), there are at least four levels:

1) Making or manufacturing: what makes sense to the creator-makers in a specific context based on their skills and learned tradition. This could be inspiration from ancestors and the divine, creating analogies between textile activities and the life cycle, while linking past, present, and future.

2) Analytic: relates to the social and political signification of giving and exchange. In this context, textiles support the connection of two or more groups and/or generations.
3) Leadership and vest ceremonies: when the textile piece transmits authority and power from the previous bearer, establishing legitimacy.
4) Garment: encompasses textile manipulation for dressing or adornment, masking values and identities.

These domains were present in some findings in Mayan communities connecting textiles as sources of information, knowledge, meaning, and representation.

Reframing textiles as books or items of literature led to the exploration of two main interwoven threads, the first being *jolobil* textiles as resistance. The second relates to the meanings in Mayan patterns such as *Me Luch*, the textile representation of the universe in Mayan *cosmovision* (Figure 64), which represents the pathways that emerge in a linear way for simplification and clarity.

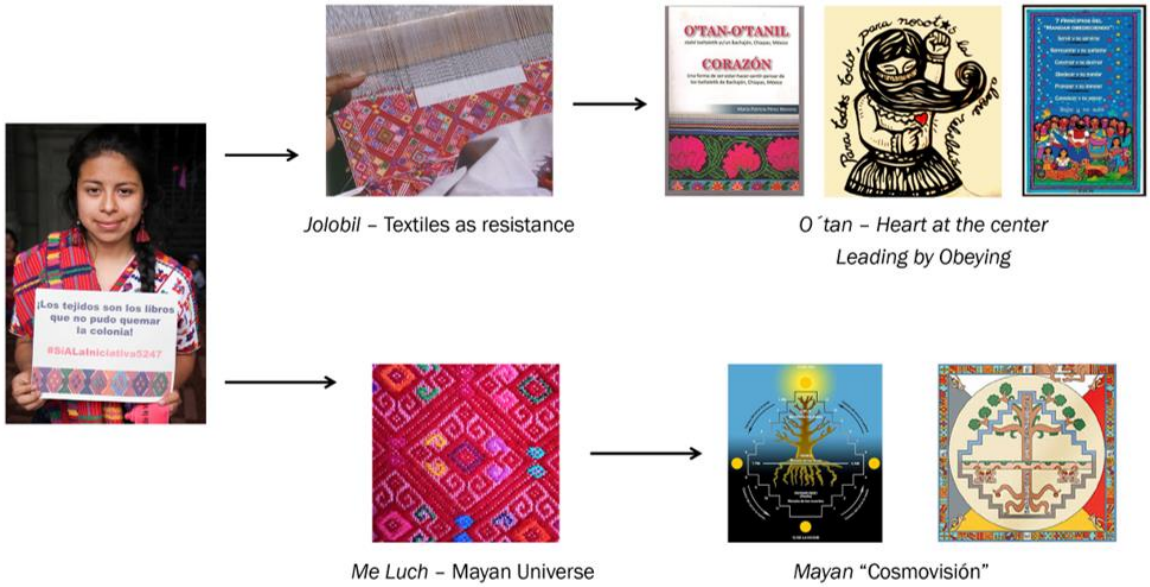

Figure 64. Two main interwoven threads in textile artisanal design research. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

"*El lenguaje de los hilos"* (the language of the threads) (Rivera García, 2017b, p. 30), however, is more intricate and complex than linear models, following the "will" of the threads. The will of the threads co-exist with Sanders' (2008) "fuzzy front end". She wrote that "the front end is often referred to as 'fuzzy' because of the

ambiguity and chaotic nature that characterise it" (p. 9) (Figure 65), which is also referenced in design research and crafts (Garduño García, 2017; Tung, 2012). In this, both strands interweave with the methodology, findings, creative exploration, discussion and *remate* or finishing (conclusions). *Sentipensar* and *corazonar* thread through collective and horizontal embodiment and sensorial exploration, and are fundamental to understanding connections, interpretation, meanings, significance, and metaphors, in textiles.

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Figure 65. The fuzzy front end in design process. From "Co-creation and the new landscapes of design", Sanders and Stappers, 2008, *CoDesign, 4*(1), p. 11. Copyright 2008 by Taylor & Francis.

Textiles as a thread of resistance were explored in Chapter Four through what Malacate calls *Innovación como Resistencia,* in which the concept of resistance was elaborated in relation to culture in Indigenous communities, and further reflected in textile practices and creations. This is also linked to *O'tan* (Chapters Three and Five), and *mandar obedeciendo* (leading by obeying) (Chapter Three).

The second thread is the knowledge embedded in Mayan patterns, and in particular, in the representation of *Me Luch*, the Mayan universe, the pattern the next section concentrates on.

6.1.1.1 *Me Luch*, the Mayan *cosmovisión*

Shapes are present in the iconography and imagery of global cultures (Kolpakova, 2017). According to Best Maugard (as cited in Kolpakova, 2017), there are at least seven basic elements in contemporary Indigenous art worldwide: spiral, circle, half

circle, “S” line, weave line, zigzag line and straight line (Figure 66). In Mayan *huipiles*, diamond shapes are predominant in past and present garments, particularly in Chiapas. Researchers have explored the meanings in textiles from this region extensively (see Kolpakova, 2017; W. Morris et al., 2014; Quiroz Flores, 2018; Turok, 1974) with similar findings regarding the square and diamond shape. For example, the diamond shapes represent the Earth and the cardinal points, and a seed. According to Miller and Taube (2004), “the Earth was also regarded as a flat four-sides field, with the four directions corresponding to each of the sides. For the Maya, this model is metaphorically compared to the quadrangular maize field” (pp. 83 - 84). Similarly, for Mayans from Yucatán and San Juan Cancuc in Chiapas, the diamond also refers to the four corners of Earth-world, including the centre and the cardinal points (Figuerola Pujol, 2010; Marianne, 2013). From a general Mayan perspective, the Earth includes plants, animals and every living thing, as well as the inanimate. Therefore, this concept evolved into “*milpa-tierra-mundo*” (maize-earth-world) (Kolpakova, 2017, p. 41), representative of the universe, a cosmic diagram.

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Figure 66. Seven basic elements in contemporary Indigenous art. From *Diseños Mágicos,* (p. 20) by Kolpakova, 2017, México: Samsara. Copyright 2017 by Alla Kolpakova.

There are many interpretations of the universe through diamonds. For weavers from the *Sta’ Lelal* Maya cooperative from Aldama, “*este rombito (señalando al Me Luch de su luch ku’u’il*[42]*) habla cómo a través de nuestra madre Tierra, son cuatro horizontales los puntos del universe*” (this little diamond (pointing to the *Me Luch* in her *luch ku’u’il*) talks through our Mother Earth, that is four horizons, the points of

[42] “*K’u’il”, “luch k’u’il”* or *“chilili”* are three ways to name the *huipil* in Mayan Tsotsil, and “*luch ku’iletik”* is the plural of “*luch k’u’il”*. The *huipil* (Náhuatl) is a traditional garment worn by indigenous women from central Mexico to Central America.

the universe) (Quiroz Flores, 2018, p. 14). Kolpakova (2017) stated that the "*rombo con diseño 'complejo'*" (diamond with complex design) (p.52) is composed of a small diamond in the centre with two or four curls on each side, and four inner diamonds on each corner (Figure 67). For her, the four small diamonds in the corners are the four *Waxak*-men for the Tsotsiles, the four *Chahks* or *Bacabs* for the Yucatecans, and the four Aztec *Tlaloques*, who are holding the Earth or the sky (p.53).

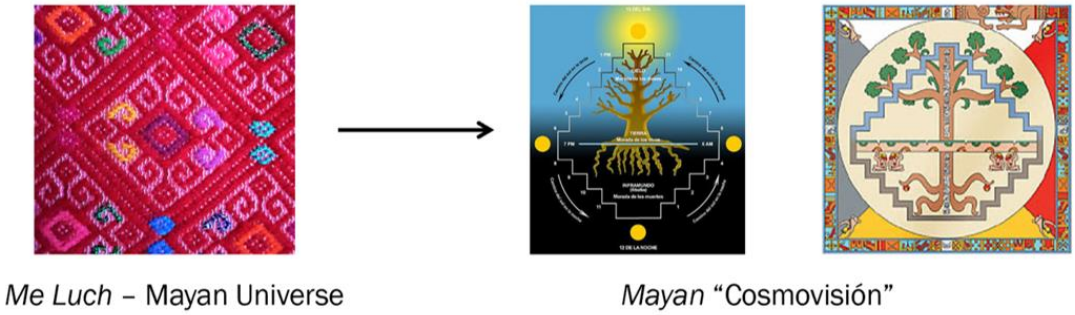

Figure 67. Me Luch, the Mayan universe and cosmovisión Maya. Left image from author, centre image from "A-BAK' MATEMÁTICA MAYA: COSMOGÓNIA PREHISPÁNICA", by A-Bak´2013. El sol del nuevo b´aktun, 2013, (http://abakmatematicamaya.blogspot.com/2011/08/bak-matematica-maya-cosmogonia.html), right image from "Los Bacabs", by Los Suspiros de canela, 2011, (http://vocesdecanela.blogspot.com/2011/02/los-bacabs.html). CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

In *Me Luch*, the top and the bottom diamonds are connected to the central diamond by a line that represents the pathway of the sun rising in the east and setting in the west. The curls emerging from the inner diamond represent wings called *pepen* (butterfly). Morris and Karasik (2015) noted that:

> The weaver maps the notion of the sun through the heavens and the underworld, through time and space. With the repetition of the "universe" design, the lordly sun is prompted to continue his journey. A Mayan woman weaves the cosmos as it awakens. (p. 19)

In Mayan philosophy, the east and west are important locations because they are related to sunrise and sunset, the pathway of the sun from the world of the gods (sky) and the world of the deceased (underworld). For the weavers, the butterfly represents the sun. A metaphorical *pepen* inhabits the day and the underworld at night. In a similar way to that of bats, and dwellings around caves, these are portals to the underworld (W. F. Morris & Karasik, 2015).

Other interpretations related to the pathway of the sun rotates the diamond from horizontal to vertical, relative to the Earth. Holland (1962) explains that the daily movement of the sun in the sky is considered a diamond with vertical steps (*montaña de la tierra*) representing the various stages of the sun. A ceiba[43] is at the centre, which connects the living to the underworld, the world of the living to the world of the gods, and is sometimes substituted by a maize plant. Another common representation of the sky in Mayan philosophy is a half-circle or as an inverted "U", sometimes depicted as a bicephalous with a crocodile body, or as *Itzamna*[44] a bird (Figure 68). Each cardinal point is presented with specific colours: east is red, west is black, south is yellow, and north is white (Romero Sandoval, 2012).

In *Me Luch,* the cardinal points are rotated. Red east is above, representing the emergence of the sun, black west is below, marking the end of the day, white North is on the left, and yellow South on the right (Romero Sandoval, 2012). Located in Mayan land in Cemanáhuac**,** the sun passes through the oceans, starting in the Caribbean Sea in the east and finishing in the Pacific Ocean in the west. These boundaries of water in *Me Luch* are represented through indigo (W. F. Morris & Karasik, 2015). The knowledge present in *Me Luch* has been used in design research as a source for creative exploration, interpretation and metaphor to develop new approaches to design originating in Mayan knowledge.

[43] The ceiba is a sacred tree for past and present Mayans (Romero Sandoval, 2012). It belongs to the Malvaceae family, native to the American continent in tropical and subtropical areas from Mexico, the Caribbean to Argentina. Also present in tropical West Africa (Gibbs & Semir, 2003).
[44] *Itzamná* is a pre-Columbian Mayan deity, ruler of heaven, day and night.

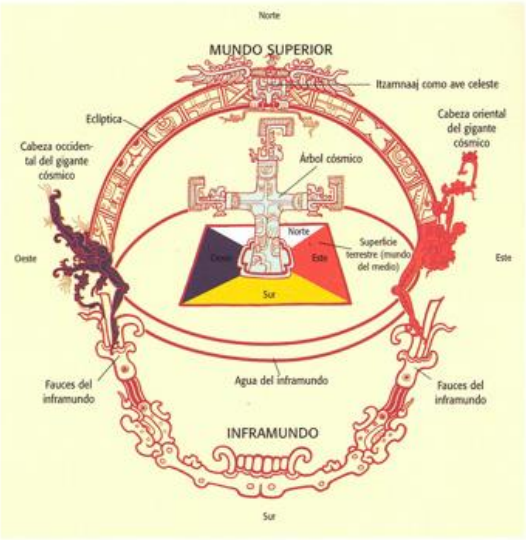

Figure 68. Cosmovisión Maya with a snake in the sky and a jaw in the underworld. From "El devenir en el mundo subterráneo", by Romero Sandoval, 2012, (http://www.revista.unam.mx/vol.13/num11/art108/) Copyright 2012 by Coordinación de Acervos Digitales. Dirección General de Cómputo y de Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación -UNAM. Reprinted with permission.

The use of Mayan textiles and their embedded knowledge has been approached by other researchers using design knowledge and skills for visualisation and new interpretations (Quiroz Flores, 2018). In this, design from a decolonial perspective supports the development of alternatives to research approaches from the Global North in combination with Indigenous knowledge from the Global South. According to Morris and Karasik (2015):

> When a Mayan woman puts on her huipil, she emerges, symbolically, in the axis of the world. The designs of the universe radiate around her head, extending over the sleeves and bodice of the huipil to form an open cross with the woman in the middle. Here the supernatural and the ordinary meet. Here, in the very center of a world woven from dreams and myths, she stands between heaven and the Underworld (p. 22).

In this description, Quiroz Flores (2018) articulated the woman as the axis of the universe, and the evolution of new alternatives to interpret specific symbols of the *huipil* belonging to Magdalenas Aldama, a Mayan Tsotsil community from *los Altos de Chiapas* (Figure 69), which differs from previous approaches (W. F. Morris & Karasik, 2015; W. Morris et al., 2014; Turok, 1974, 1987).

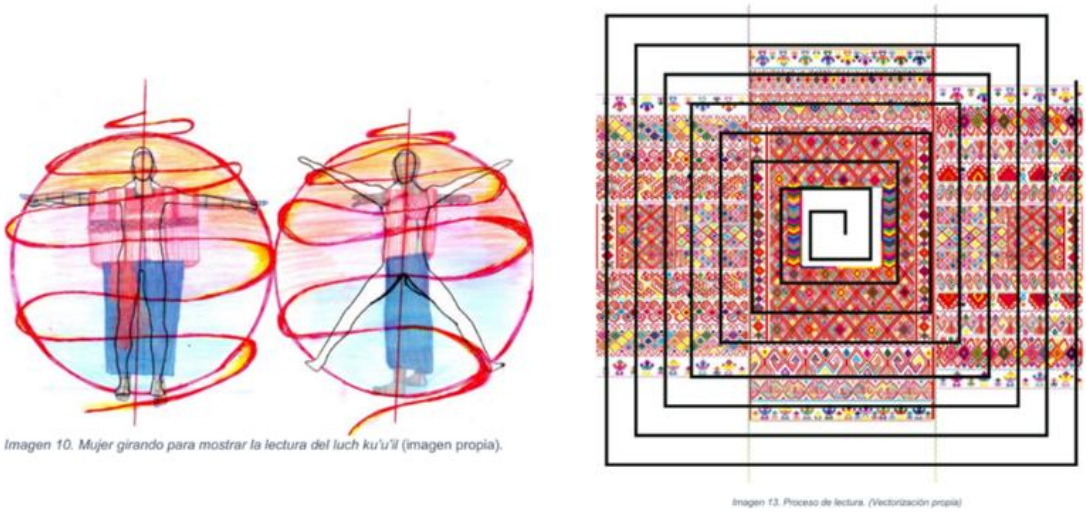

Figure 69. Mayan textiles research through design by Quiroz Flores, 2018. From *El textile de una cultura en Resistencia: Magdalenas, Chiapas* p. 45, 50 (Unpublished master´s thesis). UAM-Xochimilco, México. Copyright 2018 by Quiroz Flores. Reprinted with permission.

The figures on the left represent a woman turning to show the reading order of the *luch ku'u'il*, and the figure on the right shows the reading process of the ceremonial *huipil* of Madgalenas Aldama.

As design researchers from the Global South, design formation, even from a Global North perspective, necessitates flexibility, openness, and creativity, a different way of thinking and communicating through creative exploration, visualisation and (re)interpretation of Indigenous textiles. Design goes far beyond the written word, dissimilar to other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and archaeology, to mention a few. However, when approaching decolonised design research, it is important to make efforts not to be market-driven, individualistic, and follow other practices that appropriate and strip away Indigenous peoples' rights (personal communication with Quiroz Flores, 2019). Therefore, decolonial thought contributes to the generation of alternatives to re-position Indigenous knowledge systems as crucial and valuable in comparison to those originating in the Global North. The next section explores a research proposal for the (re)interpretation and (re)conceptualisation of textile artisanal design field, generating design alternatives from/ for the Global South as decolonising actions.

6.1.1.2 Applying textile knowledge: *Me Luch* as textile artisanal design metaphor, and intersection with *cosmovisión* with cyclical time

This section explores the symbolism in *Me Luch* in depth, with the aim of moving towards generating new and informed perceptions of textile artisanal design and to (re)conceptualise the field for a decolonising alternative. It interprets *Me Luch* utilising a decolonial lens and, in particular, following a three dimensional (3D) process analysis through a horizontal axis (x), with the vertical axis (y) and the pathway of the sun as cyclical time (z), forming a three-dimensional model using an original design constructed specifically for this study (Figures 70 - 73). With this new proposal, I aim to contribute to the decolonisation of design from the Global North through Indigenous knowledge from the Global South.

Me Luch symbolises the Earth/world of the living, and represents the vertical axis as a stepped diamond and/or half circle of the pathway of the sun in the sky, and in the underworld where the sun goes at night, and the universe. The sacred ceiba connects the world of the living with the sky/world of the gods and underworld/world of the deceased. In this manner, the worlds mirror above what is below. There is day and night, feminine and masculine, life and death, sky and underworld, everything and nothing, a complementary duality where one cannot exist without the other. For Mayans, this *cosmovisión* represents a complementary duality, which opposes W/GN binaries that position one or the other, and with less complementarity. A Mayan dual deity that has both feminine and masculine energy, giving life and death, is *Hunab Ku* for Mayans (Ferrera-Balanquet, 2017), and *Ometeotl* for Aztecs (Leyva Contreras, 2010; Rendon, 2009). She is known as the origin of existence, the life-force. The Indigenous Mesoamerican worldviews aligns with the existence of many worlds considered to exist in the universe. These worlds are in complementary coexistence in harmonic equilibrium through movement, and are even paradoxical, points further develop in Chapter Seven. Complementarity is important in the development of the intersected axes of *Me Luch*, which aims to influence design from the Global South.

The universe in *Me Luch* is used as a metaphor of textile artisanal design in *los Altos de Chiapas*, and is useful for the (re)conceptualisation and decolonisation of the field. Using the significations found in the literature, conversations with Mayan Tsotsil weavers and creative interpretations, several components inside the *rombo con diseño "complejo"* were represented as actors in the field. Figure 70 illustrates

the current meanings and my interpretation of the new proposed meanings of actors in the field that are connected to or disconnected from Mayan knowledge (inside the bottom right square). This portrays the field and its components in relation to Mayan wisdom, and in particular, the pathway of the sun, that leads to the three-dimensional model previously described. The journey of the sun through the dimensions is a cyclical representation of time, rhythm, and movement.

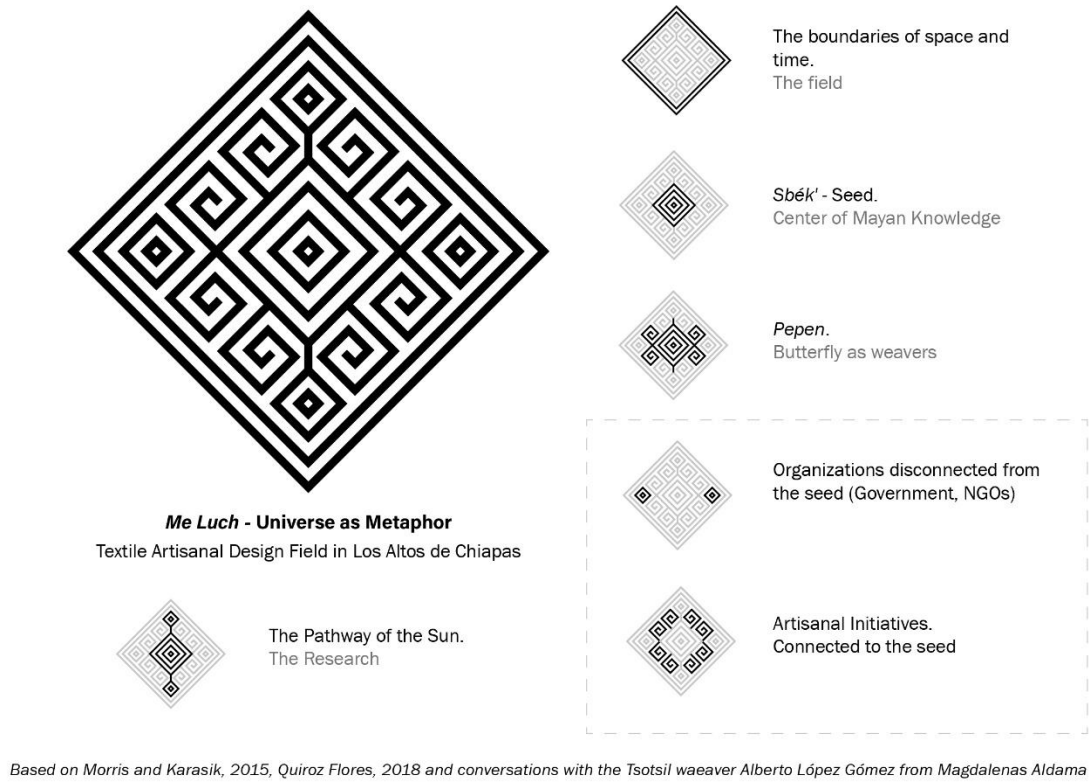

Figure 70. Me luch universe as metaphor of textile artisanal design field in *los Altos de Chiapas*. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The pathway of the sun is the base of the early research explorations, methodology generation, and field research planning for this project. Considering decolonising methodologies, co-design and ethnography from a decolonial perspective, the function of the first field trip was primarily for the establishment of connections, building trust, and listening and learning, in the knowledge that the Malacate weavers are the experts in their own reality and practices. In this sense, it would require the researcher to start from a place of uncertainty (Pink, Akama, & Participants, 2015), from the darkness like the Underworld, to start from the roots. At the same time, this would allow the knowledge to emerge, to go into the light. The second field trip integrated the learnings and findings from the first for collective

exploration and generation of alternatives (Figure 71). Although this was the initial intention, it is important to mention there was a third field trip for consultation that was not planned in early stages, but was crucial for the consultation of diagrams and frameworks with Malacate and other Mayan scholars. The number of field trips could be integrated into the same logic of the pathway of the sun as the *jolobil* cycles established in this thesis.

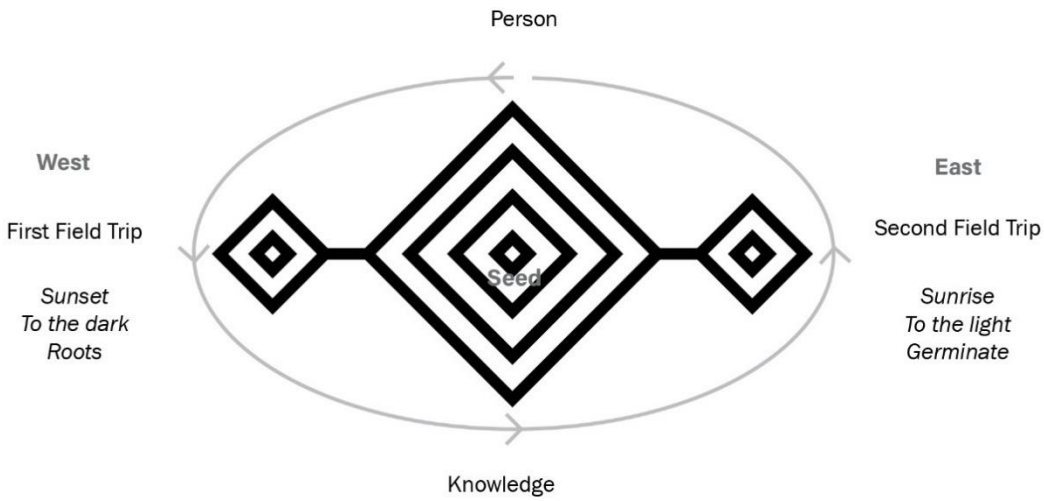

Figure 71. The pathway of the sun as method and field research conceptualisation. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The following diagram (Figure 72) explores the pathway of the sun inside *Me Luch* as Earth/the world of the living (x axis), with the vertical stepped diamond (y axis) and cycles (time). In a similar way to Figure 71, it integrates the complementarity, darkness and light, and the researcher (person) and knowledge (seed). Here, the integration of the concept of the person, *winik*, allows the embodiment and emplacement of the researcher/designer in the *Me Luch* model in textile artisanal design:

> The embodiment of time and space in a field of diamond-shaped designs has been a sacred concept since the Classic Maya period. Lady Xook of Yaxchilán wore this same motif in A.D. 709 when she performed the bloodletting ritual depicted on Lintel 24. Although the ritual and the gods have been suppressed for the last thirteen hundred years, the image of the universe has remained unchanged (W. F. Morris & Karasik, 2015, p. 22).

The pathway of the sun's 90° rotation permits a better understanding of the three worlds, as well as the integration of three new aspects. Firstly, one of the principles

of *mandar obedeciendo, bajar, no subir;* secondly, *O'tan*, the heart dimension at the Earth level through *corazonar*; and thirdly, the use of symbols present in Mayan textiles, which are developed further in the next section. However, this two-dimensional representation has the limitation of perceiving time as a cyclical action. Therefore, it required the development of a three-dimensional model to visualise time as a continuous action, a spiral movement[45].

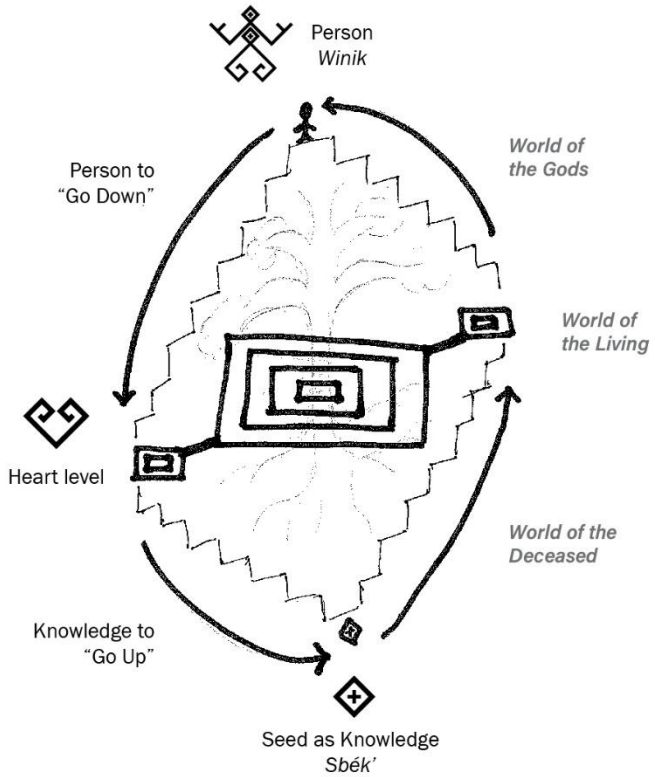

Figure 72. Intersecting the pathway of the sun with the stepped diamond. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The use and development of 3D models are helpful media for concept exploration. In this research, 3D models served two purposes: Firstly, for sensorial/embodied analysis using industrial design skills, thinking while making with the hands; and secondly, to physically support a sensorial/embodied 3D visualisation and communication of the *Me Luch* intersection of textile patterns, *cosmovisión* Maya and the process as cyclical/spiral time (Figure 73). These models have been useful for discussing the research with supervisors, research partners, colleagues and in conference presentations. Based on Mayan worldviews, this new alternative suggests

[45] Based on conversations with Indigenous peoples from Abya Yala and *Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa* (the Pacific Ocean), time is perceived as a spiral in constant movement and with different rhythms.

an *O'tan*-led approach, to be aligned with the heart, with *corazonar*. It also proposes a *Lekil Kuxlejal*-centric process, focussing on a fair-dignified life for the people involved. This proposal aims to (re)conceptualise design from a Global Southern perspective by: 1) generating a decolonising alternative to Global Northern design; 2) using Indigenous knowledge systems from Abya Yala; 3) focusing on design research as a journey through cycles and movement; 4) using *sentipensando* and *corazonando*, letting *O'tan*/heart be the guidance; and 5) having a *Lekil Kuxlejal*-centric (*Buen Vivir*-centric) approach and stepping away from individualistic, market-driven and colonising practices.

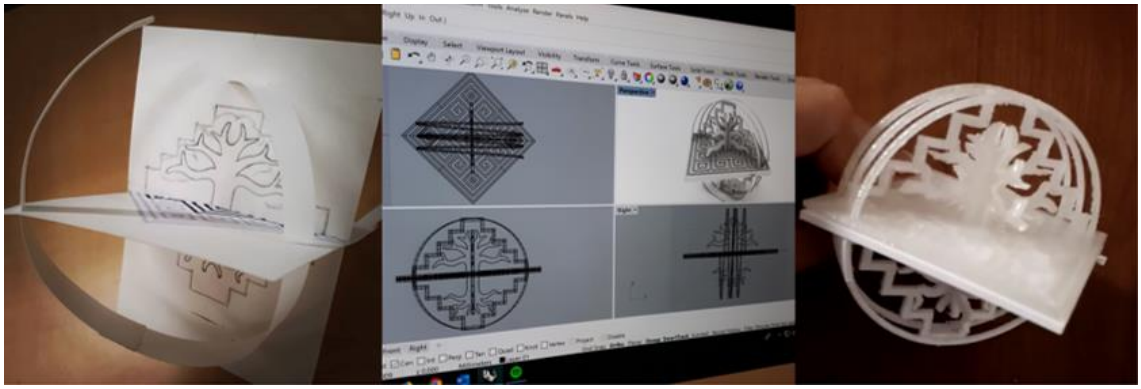

Figure 73. 3D models of *Me luch* as textile pattern, cosmovisión and process as cycles. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The following section elaborates on the integration of Mayan symbols Magdalenas Aldama's huipil for the development of the *O'tan*-led and *Lekil Kuxlejal*-centric approach.

6.1.1.3 Weaving an *O'tan*-led and *Lekil Kuxlejal*-centric approach

The proposed *jolobil* methodology weaves theories, methods, and data through *patrones sentipensantes* and *sentipensante/corazonando* approaches, as analysis and creative exploration specifically developed for the generation of decolonising alternatives from the Global South. This integrates Indigenous knowledge and practices as fundamental components, much like woven textiles, and knowledge through symbols, meanings, and practices widely used throughout this research. This section discusses the use of some of the symbolism in the *O'tan*-led and *Lekil Kuxlejal*-centric approach, illustrating the vast knowledge embedded in Mayan textiles, and the interwoven relationship of textiles with Mayan and *Lekil Kuxlejal* communities in particular.

The 3D *Me Luch* model conveys symbols in Mayan textiles to represent a variety of components. An example is presented in Figure 74, which shows patterns in the *luch k'u'il* from Magdalenas Aldama, one of the communities that maintains close links to pre-Columbian Mayan symbols. In her thesis, Quiroz Flores (2018) analysed the proportion of symbols in Magdalenas' *huipil*. *Me Luch* is a predominant pattern covering 26.5% of the surface, almost a quarter of the complete *huipil*. As pointed out by the Tsotsil weaver Alberto López Gómez (personal communication, 2018), other symbols used include *O´tan* (*corazón*, heart) with *sbék'*[46] (*semilla*, seed). The last symbol is of *señor de la tierra* or earthlord as *winik*[47] (persona, person) on 12.24% of the surface (Quiroz Flores, 2018). The *Me Luch* symbolism model supports the representation of the various fundamental components, as well as the integration of Mayan textile/visual knowledge.

Figure 74 Luch k'u'il (huipil) from Magdalenas Aldama, Chiapas, made by Alberto López Gómez from K´úxul Pok´ collective. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

[46] *Sbék'* has different representations such as a simple diamond, diamond with a point, diamond with cross or diamond(s) within diamond (Kolpakova, 2017), many of which are present in this *huipil*.
[47] There are different representations of the Earthlord, *señor de la tierra*. This research is based on the *luch k'u'il* made by the Tsotsil weaver Alberto López Gómez from the *K'úxul Pok'* collective as author/expert and informant.

From the case study of *Me Luch*, it is possible to identify the interwoven nature of Mayan knowledge as living principles and practices, and importantly, to underline the context of Chiapas. This model aims to challenge the 3P-A (Chapter Five) of hegemonic design from the W/GN view by using Mayan textiles, representations of their ways of being and doing. Beyond this, Figure 75 shows connections and principles present in the context of Chiapas and the *Zapatista* experience with Mayan textiles. It encompasses *winik* as researcher/designer, and *sbék'* as Mayan knowledge interwoven with *O'tan* and *Lekil Kuxlejal*. The creation of decolonial alternative models is key to have context-based approaches respecting the *autonomía* of Indigenous peoples, and towards *Buen Vivir*, instead of reproducing decontextualised W/GN models of design.

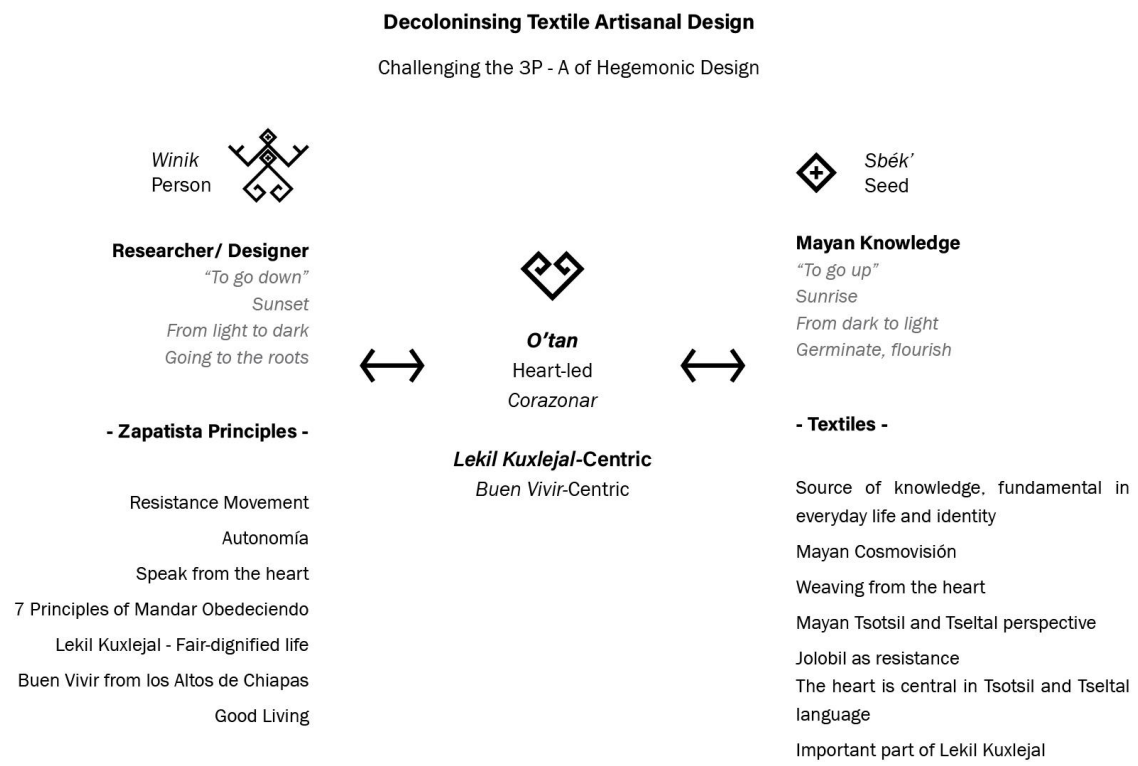

Figure 75. Connections of Mayan knowledge with *Zapatista* experience to decolonise textile artisanal design research. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Figure 75 exemplifies that *winik* requires one to be humble (to go down), to step down from the expert mindset and descend towards openness while embracing uncertainty (from light to dark or sunset), to go to the source of knowledge (going to the roots). It also involves using guiding principles from Mayan knowledge and the *Zapatista* experience such as *autonomía*, to speak from the heart (*O'tan*-led), the

seven principles of *mandar obedeciendo*, centered on *Buen Vivir*, a fair-dignified life or simply good living while resisting oppressive systems. At the same time, *sbék'* gives priority to Indigenous knowledge and experience: to go up, to emerge (from dark to light, sunrise), to germinate and flourish. In this, textiles are an important source of knowledge showing Mayan *cosmovisión*, everyday life and identity; to literally and metaphorically weave the language of the heart, including trading (*O'tan*-led), as important parts of a fair-dignified life (*Lekil Kuxlejal*-centric). Part of this involves resisting modern-colonial systems such as capitalism while rescuing and reactivating textile knowledge such as patterns, techniques and materials (*innovación como resistencia*, see Chapter Four). Textiles, Mayan knowledge, *O'tan* and *Lekil Kuxlejal* were the focus of the collective exploration in the co-design workshops. The next section elaborates on how Mayan principles of letting the heart lead (*corazonar*) through sensorial/embodied exploration of *Lekil Kuxlejal* are fundamental to co-design.

6.1.2 Co-design workshops, *corazonando* to explore *Lekil Kuxlejal*

In co-design research collaborations, participants support each other as an important aspect of knowledge exchange (D. Schuler & Namioka, 1993). In this research from the Global South, *mis compañeras* of Malacate can be considered *kaupapa whānau* (Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Robertson & Bishop, 1999a; L. T. Smith, 1999c; J. K. T. Wilson, 2013) integrating *colectividad, horizontalidad* (Pérez Daniel & Sartorello, 2012), and shared values and skills. Topics are explored widely through collective embodied creativity, sensorial activities, and the all-important exchange of dialogue following a design-by-doing reflection of *Lekil Kuxlejal*, and using the heart as guidance. This aligns with Akama and Prendiville's (2013) approach to co-design which invited interested parties to "design our world, and ourselves, with others" (p. 31), a *yosotros* co-design.

This section discusses co-design actions that closely follow Smith's (2013) decolonising methodologies principles, integrating customary practices and protocols from Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal communities, and sensorial ethnographic methods (Pink, 2009, 2011). The protocol for the co-design sessions proceeded as follows:

1. Greetings.
2. Setting up the space and materials for the workshop.
3. Words for blessing the session.

4. Personal presentations, speaking from *O´tan.*
5. Workshop introduction: exploring *Lekil Kuxlejal.*
6. Collective dialogue and creation of the visual-sensorial board.
7. Presentation of the final piece.
8. Conclusions.
9. Closing session with acknowledgments/gifts.
10. Sharing food (Figure 76).

Figure 76. Tamales Chiapanecos shared as part of the research protocol. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Indigenous communities around the world have similar practices when practising decolonial methodologies. For example, group dialogues are an important part of Indigenous ways of doing, such as *talanoa* throughout the Pacific (Prescott, 2008; Vaioleti, 2006), *hui* for Māori (Robinson & Robinson, 2005), Ole talk and liming from the Caribbean (Nakhid-Chatoor, Nakhid, Wilson, & Santana, 2018), and African oral traditions and storytelling (Barbara Nussbaum, 2003; Wa Thiong'o, 1987) to mention a few. Nevertheless, principles such as reciprocity and cooperation, and actions like food sharing are important elements of Indigenous research connections (Brereton et al., 2014; Freire, 1975; Hau'ofa, 1993; Huambachano, 2016; Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, De Sousa Santos, et al., 2015; Pérez Daniel & Sartorello, 2012; Sulvarán López & Sánchez Álvarez, n.d.; Walsh, 2013). Māori customary practices and principles influencing this research are *karakia* (blessings), *whanaungatanga* (introduction, relations), *koha* (gift), and *kai* (food) (Hoskins, 2010; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; O'Carroll, 2013; Pihama

et al., 2002; Robertson & Bishop, 1999a; Scrimgeour & Iremonger, 2011; H. L. Smith, 2017; L. T. Smith, 1999a; J. K. T. Wilson, 2013), as previously indicated (see points 3, 4, 6, 9, and 10 of the co-design protocol).

Protocols are fundamental during research for the protection of the participants and cultural customs, but it is equally relevant to be flexible and adapt to the context. For example, I assumed the blessings would be done by a member of Malacate, however, they asked my mother to say some words as the elder of the group. This demonstrates the respect Mayan communities have for elders, and the trust developed in the relationship as *kaupapa whānau*, allowing the co-creative sessions to flow.

Primarily, the co-design sessions were multisensorial explorations of *Lekil Kuxlejal* and *Buen Vivir* of *los Altos de Chiapas*, to collectively envision what constitutes a fair and dignified life for Mayan artisans, to solidify key elements for external collaborators, and respect for ethical and responsible collaboration. In particular, they explored the importance of *O'tan* as guidance, an important aspect of *Lekil Kuxlejal*, and fundamental facets of *sentipensar* and *corazonar*.

The co-design sessions followed a multisensorial approach involving the body, mind, heart, and spirit, through colours, drawings, patterns, objects and photography as modes of expression, functioning as ecosomaesthetic dialogues for creative and collective exploration (Payne et al., 2018). This was based on the acknowledgement of the shared language among designers and artisans through visual representation. Through multisensorial exploration, the senses manifested responses beyond sight. For example, Lucy represented *Lekil Kuxlejal* with a sketch of a flower from the region, with a physical sample; a flower stimulates the senses causing embodied ways of knowing and understanding (Figure 77).

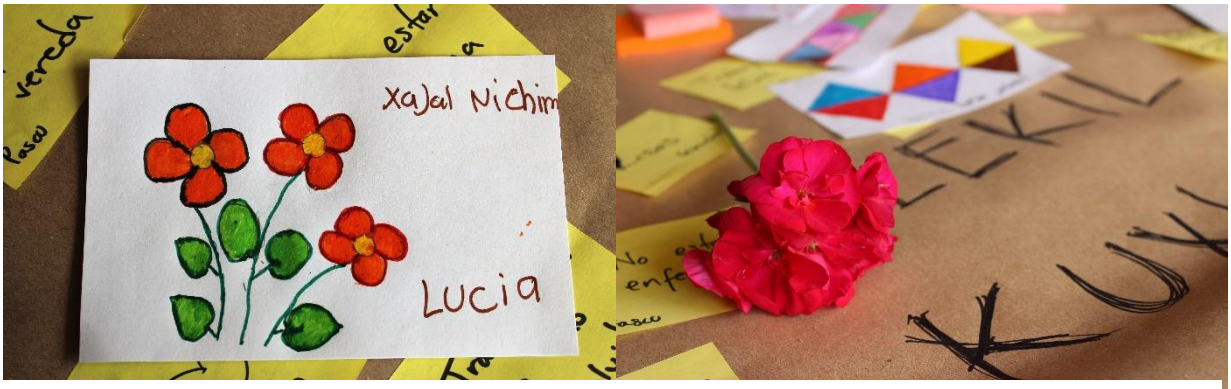

Figure 77. Lucia's representation of *Lekil Kuxlejal*. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Photographs have long been useful in qualitative research (Collier & Collier, 1986; Glaw et al., 2017; Pink, 2001; Prosser, 1998; Schwartz, 1989) and research in native-Indigenous communities is no exception (Bignante, 2019; Blinn & Harrist, 1991; Rosales-Mendoza & Campos-Flores, 2019). In this project, photography was used as part of the research methodology and for documentation. Hinthorne (2014) defined "research method" as the engagement of the researcher with participants, written before, during, or after the fieldwork, and research documentation as the evidence to preserve the research encounter. While I photographed our encounters, Malacate simultaneously documented our collaboration with digital photography and members shared on their Facebook page (Chapter Five) for accountability and transparency. Nonetheless, instant film photography was used during the co-design sessions for real-time photographic printing. While digital photography is widely used, instant film photography is not widely used as a tool in qualitative research (Hinthorne, 2014).

Instant film photography is a useful tool in fieldwork to be used in real time. This medium allows visual representation of textiles, people, or nature, that cannot be included directly as samples, complementing the multisensorial exploration (Figure 78). It also complements, reinforces, and gives alternatives to drawings in co-design. Instant film increases "the interest of participants and enhanced rapport" (Hinthorne, 2014, p. 516), reflected in different events during the co-design session (Figure 79). For example, while instant film was intended to be used exclusively in the posters, many *compañeras* kept the images as mementos, as in Hinthorne's (2014) important study.

Figure 78. Instant film photographs used in a team's visual board. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Taking a visual memory home had an unexpected meaning for one of the weavers[48]. After asking to have her picture taken with me, she mentioned this would be good evidence for her husband, proof she attended the session. She then shared a story of domestic violence experienced when she started to work more actively with Malacate and other designers some years ago. While this meant more income to her family, it also brought challenges to her relationship and community because she was travelling outside the community more. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated story, and similar narratives are reported in research and official reports (del Puerto, 2015; Hernández Santos, n.d.; Ochoa, 2014; Vrijea, 1994). For this woman and others who shared this kind of narrative, *jolobil* is significant in that it supports personal *autonomía*, resilience, and economic growth. More positively, artisans in the region have mentioned a feeling of empowerment through having the capacity to support their families and communities. Some women-led cooperatives such as Malacate are transforming the way organisations function, and seek to improve living conditions: *Buen Vivir* and *Lekil Kuxlejal* exemplified.

Figure 79. Anastacia taking instant film photographs of textiles. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Instant photography was initially considered as a tool during the co-design session. However, this resource can be explored and developed further as a method by itself. Based on the shared experience with Malacate (Figure 80), the visual-sensorial representations supporting the discussions in the co-design sessions are useful in various ways:

[48] For ethical and safety purposes, the name of this weaver is not published.

1. A tool beyond oral expression.
2. A common method in co-design processes.
3. A shared media artisans-designers-artists felt comfortable using.
4. Aligned with visual-sensorial ethnography.
5. Visual-sensorial representations as research data.
6. A bridge for the language barrier between Spanish, Tsotsil and Tseltal.

Figure 80. Co-design session exploring *Lekil Kuxlejal.* Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The embodied sensorial approach to co-design allows a rich and diverse exploration through the senses and emotions while maintaining the overarching research nexus. However, central to a consciously decolonising mindset is the underlining of voices, experiences, and creations, of Indigenous communities, the respect and honour for *autonomía*, protocols, creations, and stories, and to have horizontal and collective actions led by the heart and seeking *Buen Vivir* for all.

6.1.3 Consultation and *horizontalidad*

Consultation is a key component in decolonial-Indigenous research (Mikahere-Hall, 2017; O'Carroll, 2013; Rix, Wilson, Sheehan, & Tujague, 2018; Robinson & Robinson, 2005; L. T. Smith, 1999b; Walker et al., 2006). Similarly, co-design integrates consultation in different stages seeking collaborative process and outcomes (Akama et al., 2019; Crouch & Pearce, 2012; DiSalvo, Clement, & Pipek, 2012; Fuad-Luke, 2009; Kennedy, Kelly, Greenway, & Martin, 2018; Te Morenga et al.,

2018). Consequently, consultation played an important role in this research, manifested in different ways:

1. The findings in each cycle influenced the subsequent activities in the field. These activities were consulted with by Malacate for accountability, feedback, and development (Figure 81).
2. Outcomes such as conference presentations and articles were produced before the final dissemination of results.
3. Analysis, results and proposed frameworks were presented on a third field trip to Malacate. These were also discussed with Mayan Tsotsil scholars[49] as agreed in the second field trip (Figure 82).

Figure 81. Consultation with Malacate. From "Damos seguimiento al área de investigación dentro de Malacate y deseamos compartir un poco de la visita de la compañera Diana Albarran quien actualmente realiza su investigación de Doctorado de forma colectiva con nosotras" by Malacate Taller Experimental, 2018, (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1549935061806409). Reprinted with permission.

[49] Malacate and I met some Mayan scholars during our presentation in the *Coloquio Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial: Derechos y Propiedad Intelectual de los Pueblos Originarios* and we agreed to present part of our research outcomes with them for feedback.

Figure 82. Consultation with Mayan Tsotsil scholar of *jolobil* framework in the third field trip. From "Damos seguimiento al área de investigación dentro de Malacate y deseamos compartir un poco de la visita de la compañera Diana Albarran quien actualmente realiza su investigación de Doctorado de forma colectiva con nosotras" by Malacate Taller Experimental, 2018, (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1549935061806409). Reprinted with permission.

Consultation was crucial to the research particularly in terms of including communities through "mutual learning, openness and the breaking of the tradition of top-down responses" (Torres Castanedo, 2015, p. 25). Consultation disrupts long held hierarchies by integrating *horizontalidad* as a fundamental part of the methodology (Pérez Daniel & Sartorello, 2012; Schlittler, 2012; Walsh, 2017). Here, the relationship between the researcher and the subject is transformed, as all parties are part of dialogues that build knowledge. This relates to the relationship with *mis compañeras* as *kaupapa whānau* (Chapter Four) with shared values and interests, or in *horizontalidad.*

An example of *horizontalidad* in this research is palpable in the collective presentation during the second field research trip to Chiapas. Alongside Karla and Teresa from Malacate, we presented our research as a textile collective, including *innovación como resistencia* in the *Coloquio Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial: Derechos y Propiedad Intelectual de los Pueblos Originarios* (Intangible Cultural Heritage: Rights and Intelectual Property from Indigenous Peoples). Teresa

discussed the challenges of Mayan weavers in her mother tongue, *Bats'i k'op*[50]. In this context, academic voices are prioritised over artisans-designers-artists, Spanish more than Indigenous languages, and the presence of weavers is uncommon. Significantly, the presentation exemplified a paradigmatic shift in hierarchy where Indigenous voices and experiences occupied an exclusive space, resetting a united front by presenting side by side as a decolonial practice (Figure 83). Further, the collaboration also demonstrated *mandar obedeciendo* as a research guideline, *representar y no suplantar* (Represent, not replace) (see Chapter Three).

Figure 83. *Horizontalidad* in the collective presentation with Malacate. From "Nos sentimos muy contentas por la oportunidad que tuvimos el día de hoy de compartir nuestra palabra en colectivo.", by Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, 2018. (https://www.facebook.com/MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil/posts/1416420725157844) Reprinted with permission.

Consultation and *horizontalidad* relate to balancing power, privilege, politics and access, 3P-A (Chapter Five). While it is complex to have horizontal collaboration and consultation due to modern colonial systems, consciousness, reflexivity, and willingness to balance the 3P-A are necessary for the creation of decolonial alternatives to design research and practice. This contributes to social justice and respect for the *autonomía* of Indigenous peoples.

In summary, *patrones sentipensantes* from the third and final *jolobil* cycle started with the premise of textiles as books or literature, and the vast knowledge embedded in them. Using the universe of *Me Luch* as a base, meanings and applications of textile knowledge were proposed by weaving *cosmovisión* Maya, cyclical time,

[50] *Bats'i k'op* is the local name in the Mayan Tsotsil language.

O'tan and *Lekil Kuxlejal*. Then, it followed the development of co-design workshops through *corazonar*, and closed with *horizontalidad* and consultation as crucial activities of decolonial research approaches.

6.2 *Sentipensar-corazonando* in *jolobil's* third cycle: A sensorial focus

This section explains *sentirpensar-corazonando* as the embodied reflexivity, and is the third cycle in this research. It discusses my own *jolobil* apprenticeship as a process of embodied learning through the body, mind, heart, and spirit, an important pathway of knowledge generation, reflection, alternative ways of being, doing, and understanding from/in the Global South.

6.2.1 Embodied learning with the body, mind, heart and spirit: *Jolobil* apprenticeship

Learning *jolobil* is a fundamental part of sensory ethnography in this research. The embodied and emplaced multisensorial experience allows learning, understanding and knowing with the body, mind, heart, and spirit (Rivera García, 2017b). The method of apprenticeship, or in this case knowing through making, has been used by researchers of crafts (Vega, 2018) and textiles (Quiroz Flores, 2018; Rivera García, 2017b). Rivera Garcia (2017b) considered the body as a pathway of knowledge and comprehension, possible through the experience of learning backstrap loom, and to understand what she called "*el lenguaje de los hilos"* (p. 9) (the language of the threads). This also serves as a medium to (re)connect with Indigenous heritage and ancestry (Sahagún Sánchez, 2015).

My *jolobil* instructor was María, who conducted the session in her house, in the community of Nachig. Weaving is a collective activity, and María´s mother, niece and nephew, and my mother, were present in our session. The recording process focused on my body and heart experience. A video camera was placed in my chest serving as "the eyes of the heart," recording the hands, body motion, context, interactions, and personal commentary about emotions in real time (Figure 84). The senses played an important role as information receptors through sight, hear, touch, smell, and taste (Figure 85).

Figure 84. Location of the camera at the heart level. Preparing the threads. (Image by Francisco, Maria's nephew). CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Figure 85. Screen of "the eyes of the heart", the chest camera video. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Jolobil encompasses various processes requiring time, concentration, and patience[51]. Based on conversations with Malacate, I understood that *jolobil* connects to the emotional state of the weaver and the heart, *si el corazón no está contento, el tejido no sale* (if the heart is not happy, the weaving fails). The connection of *telar de cintura* with the heart has been expressed by weavers from other communities:

[51] For a detailed description of the steps, read Rivera Garcia´s appendix (Rivera García, 2017b).

> *Cuando aprendes a tejer, no solo estas aprendiendo a relacionarte con los hilos, con los instrumentos, sino que también estás dejando tu corazón. Cuando haces una figura, mezclas colores, cuando tú lo haces con alegría, y tejes con el corazón.* (Margarita Francisco as cited in Rivera García, 2017b, p. 191)
>
> (When you learn to weave, you are not only learning to relate with the threads, with the instruments, but you are also giving your heart. When you are making a figure you combine colours, when you make it with joy and weave with the heart.)

The heart connection reflects the well-being of the weaver, a direct link with *Lekil Kuxlejal.* López Intzín (2015) documented this connection with a weaver from Tenejapa, when she finished a *huipil* for a deity from a lagoon:

> *Al ver su trabajo concluido porque ha alcanzado un estado de vida en ese momento: su corazón siente armonía. En este caso la tejedora se expresa según cómo siente su corazón y la felicidad que experimenta le permite percibir cómo el medio ambiente, el universo se entregan para ella. Éste es un aspecto del Lekil-kuxlejal.* (p. 185)
>
> (When seeing her finished work, she has reached a state in life in that moment: her heart is in harmony. In this case, the weaver expresses according the feelings of her heart, and the happiness she experiences allows to perceive how the environment and the universe give themselves to her. This is an aspect of *Lekil Kuxlejal.*)

The heart, emotions, and well-being are experienced as an apprentice, and not just as an experienced weaver. Rivera García (2017b) reflected on her learning process, which was similar to my own:

> *Se teje con las manos, pero también con el corazón. Se teje con las manos, pero también con la cabeza, con los sentimientos, con libertad; eres tú contigo misma frente al reto existencial de mantener vivo tu telar, el telar es como un ser vivo, hay que alimentarlo, procurarlo, tenerle paciencia y ponerle corazón.* (p. 302)
>
> (You weave with the hands but also with the heart. You weave with the hands but also with the head, with the feelings, with freedom. You are yourself with the existential challenge of keeping your *telar* alive. The *telar* is like a living being, you must feed it, look after it, to have patience with it and to put your heart in it.)

New weavers require patience and concentration to let the heart and threads flow, to nurture and guide the process. The happiness in the heart through *jolobil* is an intrinsic part of *Lekil Kuxlejal*, and important reflections during and after my apprenticeship. I had a sense of harmony and well-being, a feeling of belonging as though surrounded by *whānau*. Here, the emplaced experience of *jolobil* through the body, mind, heart, and spirit allowed an embodied understanding of *Lekil Kuxlejal*, a learning *corazonando.*

To summarise this chapter, the third cycle of *jolobil* analysis and creative exploration centred on sensorial approaches to *patrones sentipensantes* as findings and *sentirpensar-corazonando* as reflexivity and discussion. It metaphorically unravelled the textiles as books or literature resisting colonisations and the knowledge embedded in *jolobil* and its development as a decolonial framework and practice.

Patrones sentipensantes in the third and final cycle approached textiles as literature, and valuable sources of knowledge despite colonisation. It then analysed the Mayan universe of *Me Luch* and the application of textile knowledge in the exploration and development of decolonial co-design using the heart as guidance, *corazonar*, and the importance of consultation and *horizontalidad* for respectful collaborations. It closed with *sentirpensar-corazonando* as the embodied-multisensorial apprenticeship of *jolobil*, sense-making with the body, mind, heart, and spirit.

Chapter 7: *Empuntando*, finishing the collective weaving cycle

The *rebozo* is a feminine garment used for many centuries in the Mexican territory, becoming an iconographic element of Mexican identity (Ramírez Garayzar, 2013). It has remained identifiable since colonial times, surpassing ethnic and social classes, and is currently worn by Mexican women (and some men): Indigenous, *mestizxs*, Afromexicans. This last chapter represents the final step of the weaving process, the *empuntar* where the fabric is cast off and unmounted from the loom. *Empuntado* consists of knotting, twisting or braiding of the loose threads at the ending of the textile, to the fringe or ending known as *rapacejo, empalme o puntas. Empuntar* in Mexican textiles is sometimes considered a separated textile process, sometimes requiring specialised weavers dedicated to finishing textiles, particularly in *rebozos.*

Las puntas (the fringe) is a characteristic section of *rebozos* contributing to the aesthetic and movement of the garment, normally executed by using threads from the warp already utilised throughout the textile. However, some communities integrate new threads or introduce materials such as feathers. P'urhépecha communities from Michoacán have long been experimental and innovative, particularly in the *puntas* creating new designs and enriching the *rebozos* (Ramírez Garayzar, 2006). The ending or the casting off process becomes an opportunity for creativity and continuity, in an important step that is normally not considered central. However, it allows to build on an existing final product. It also enables the integration of new components and collaborators to enhance the artisanal textile in terms of collectivity (Figure 86).

Figure 86. Doña Cecila Bautista of the community of Ahuirán, Michoacán. From "Creadores del Arte Popular Mexicano en La Región del Lago de Pátzcuaro", by Mansion Iturbide, n.d., (https://mansioniturbe.blogspot.com/2014/11/creadores-del-arte-popular-mexicano-en.html). Copyright by Hotel Mansion Iturbide.

The aim of these last two chapters, Chapters Seven and Eight, is to align with the decolonial effort of shifting W/GN conventional research. It is less about writing limitations, considerations and recommendations to highlight findings, and more about the closure of the collective weaving research. In this approach, *las puntas* of the *jolobil* are an important part of the research, allowing the addition of new threads, as well as the contribution of other weavers-artisans-designers-artists-researchers, to test, transform, and adapt the research to their distinct contexts. It also intends to show the body of the new fabric, a *Buen Vivir*-centric design model proposal, by proffering a summary of the research journey as a woven piece, where the threads of the chapters are intertwined through a non-linear narrative. Therefore, this chapter does not follow the structure of previous chapters (Four, Five, and Six), as the threads are grouped into *patrones sentipensantes* as findings, and *sentirpensar-corazonando* as reflexivity and discussion. Here, *el empuntado* creates the "base mesh" mainly utilising the same threads but having in mind that new material will be integrated, adding richness and depth from new weavers. The next chapter closes the weaving process by looking back to move forward, and for planting the seeds of the heart as final words.

The *Buen Vivir*-centric design model seeks to address the research questions established in Chapter One:

- How might decolonised design function for/by Indigenous artisans in Mexico?
- How might decolonised textile artisanal design work for/by Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal weavers in the highlands of Chiapas?
- What are the ethical characteristics of a decolonised design process in collaborative projects between Indigenous artisans and "hegemonic" designers?

This chapter explains the *Buen Vivir*-centric design model and details its five components of *uno con el todo*, *colectividad*, resource(ful), pluriversal, and equilibrium, as a result of this research. In this, *sentirpensar* emphasises *pensar*

(thinking) in approaching texts through academic literature and narrative, connecting to previous chapters showing the rationale behind the model.

7.1 Towards a *Buen Vivir*-centric design: A decolonising alternative to textile artisanal design

Buen vivir-centric design weaves a number of distinctive threads. These include decolonial theory, design research and co-design literature and practice, visual-digital-sensorial ethnography, Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies such as *Buen Vivir* and *Zapatismo*, *cosmovisión* Maya and *jolobil* (backstrap loom) in a collective *yosotros* research through embodiment, *sentirpensar*, and *corazonar*. *Buen Vivir*-centricity sets the foundations for a context-based, non-Western/Indigenous design from the Global South. It requires the adaptation of the various components and principles according to each Indigenous group or community and its interpretations of *Buen Vivir* (see Table 3) to embrace different perspectives. This requires rethinking notions of development in which:

> "Non-Western philosophies", explicitly reflecting on experiences of development, have always emphasized to take into account, first, a plurality of ontologies, and second the possibility to perceive and structure life not merely around Foucauldian notions of power, principles of inclusion/exclusion and individual and collective growth, but rather in terms of "balancing", "guarding", "caring", "mutual connectedness" and primordial "completeness". (Waldmueller, 2014, p. 2)

The principles Waldmueller identifies are present in *Buen Vivir* philosophies in Abya Yala, integrated into the *Buen Vivir*-centric design model. Nevertheless, it is important to mention this model is not a recipe but rather a seed to be planted in different lands, and adaptable to each environment and conditions. *Buen Vivir*-centric design (Figure 87) aims to contribute towards *el giro decolonial* (decolonial turn) (Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel, 2007) for the creation of alternatives to design from the Global North, and to set the groundwork for a decolonising design ethic from the Global South, ultimately moving towards a *Buen Vivir*, good living, fair-dignified life. Thus, it requires anticolonial, antipatriarchal, anticapitalistic outlooks to operate, as established by the many decolonial and Indigenous scholars and activists (see Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel, 2007; De Sousa Santos, 2018a; Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, De Sousa Santos, et al., 2015;

Paredes, Guzmán, & Comunidad, 2014; Rendon, 2009; Rigney, 2016; Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010; Walsh, 2009, 2017).

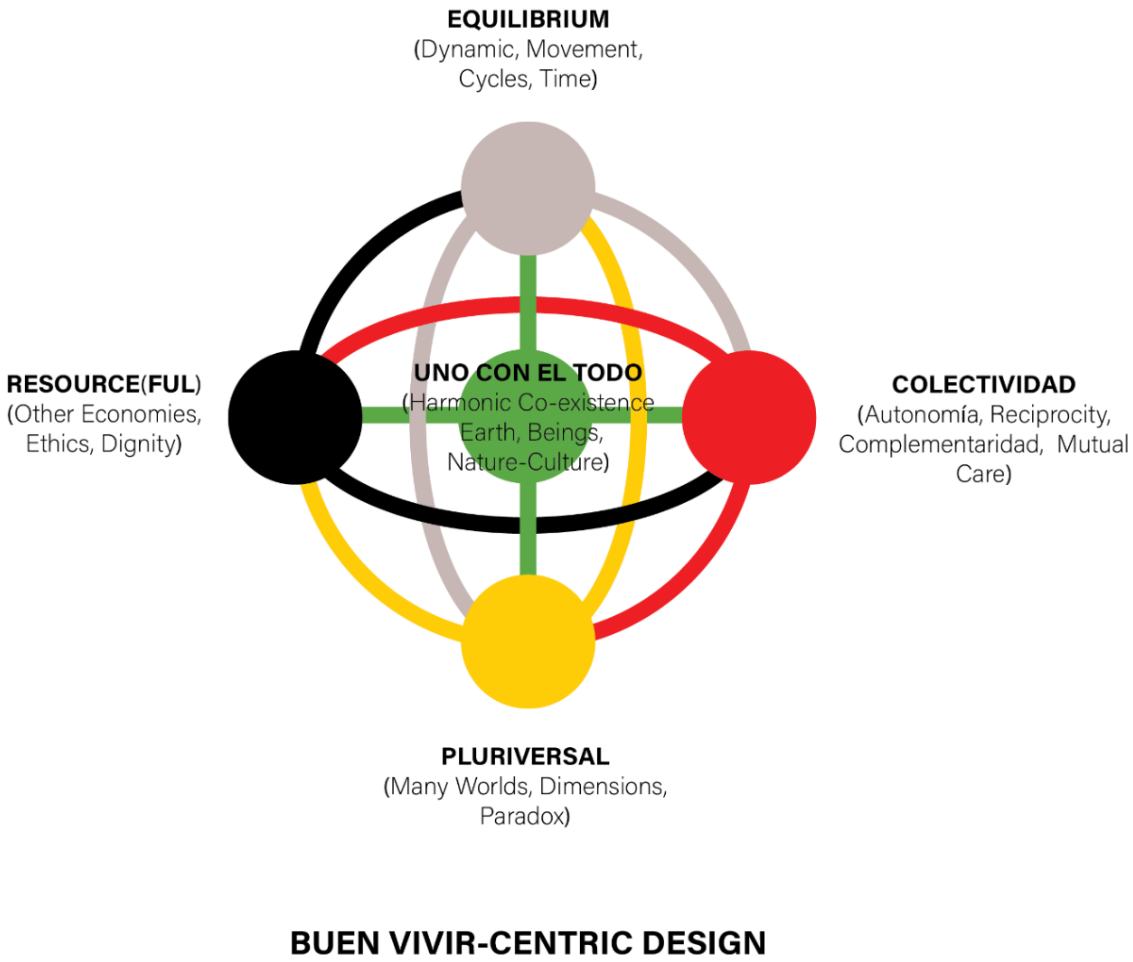

Figure 87. *Buen Vivir*-centric design and five key components. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

This place-based proposal is deeply rooted in Mayan knowledges and *cosmovisión*, and directly linked to *Lekil Kuxlejal*, the *Buen Vivir* of Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal peoples. Hence, the Mayan *cosmovisión* is equally present in textiles, literature, and oral traditions. The *Me Luch* symbol analysed in Chapter Six for example, represents the universe, with the Earth's cardinal points in various and specific colours. This representation of the Mayan *cosmovisión* is the pivotal source for this project's methodology and the development of the *Buen Vivir*-centric design model (Table 6).

Table 6 Mayan *cosmovisión* in *Me Luch* as a metaphor for the *Buen Vivir*-centric Design model. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

					
Earth	**Colour**	**Me Luch**	***Buen Vivir* -centric design**	**Characteristics**	**Focus**
Centre	Green	Seed, Sacred tree	Uno con el todo	Mother Earth	Grounding
East	Red	Sunrise	Colectividad	Enlightenment, Warmth	Relationships
West	Black	Sunset	Resource(ful)	Bring darkness, potential conflict	
South	Yellow		Pluriversal	Diverse, many worlds	Balancing
North	White		Equilibrium	Dynamic movement	

As illustrated in Chapter Six, the pathway of the sun from East to West has particular relevance for Mayans, as these points are known to focus on relationships between humans and on humans with nature-culture. Symbolically, the *colectividad*-East and its principles mediate relationships, bringing warmth and light to the heart. The resource(ful)-West relates to the distribution of resources (funds, space, time,) potentially bringing conflict when other areas are not considered, and in darkness. South and North are used as lenses to balance the East and West. The pluriversal-South relates to the Global South as spaces that have been subjugated and marginalised, and are not part of the hegemony. The equilibrium-North refers to a dynamic balance among all of the components, in constant ebb and flow, and never static.

Mayan *cosmovisión* is also present in oral traditions, as explained by Álvarez Medrano (2006):

> *Para la cosmovisión maya no hay femenino sin masculino, no hay día sin noche,* ***no hay unidad sin colectividad****, no hay Madre Tierra sin Padre Sol, de tal manera que hombres y mujeres fueron creados para* ***complementarse o ser interdependientes*** *y no para oprimirse unos a otros, por eso las actitudes y prácticas de supremacía y superioridad sobre otras y otros nos dañan a nosotros y a nosotras mismas, porque en la visión maya hombres y mujeres guardan su* ***integridad*** *y su* ***propia especificidad*** *y como* ***seres humanos*** *guardan su* ***relación con la naturaleza, con los otros seres*** *que la habitan y con el* ***cosmos****, de allí que el* ***bienestar*** *de cualquier* ***ser viviente*** *es indispensable para el* ***equilibrio*** *universal.* (p. 123, ***bolded italics***, my emphasis)
>
> (For Mayan *cosmovisión* there is no feminine without masculine, no day without light, **no unity without collectivity**, no Mother Earth without Father Sun. Thus, women and men were created to **complement or be interdependent** and not to oppress one another, for this reason, the attitudes and practices of supremacy and superiority over others harm ourselves. Because in Mayan vision men and women maintain their **integrity** and **own specificity**, and as **human beings** they keep a **relationship with nature**, **with other beings** that inhabit it and with the **cosmos.** Therefore, the **well-being** of each **living being** is essential for universal **equilibrium.**)

Here, the link between principles from *Buen Vivir*, and therefore, with the *Buen Vivir*-centric design model, is noticeable. Consequently, the five key elements are closely connected where changes in one dimension impact the others. Interconnectedness such as this requires a constant balancing in all of the areas in a collective embodied reflection and operating in *sentipensar* and *corazonar*. Each section touches on principles in other parts of the model and is more useful when interrelated with the others. Due to its connected nature, the first sections touch on all others, reducing the proportion of the last sections, but with evident traces in the previous.

7.1.1 *Uno con el todo* (One with the whole)

***"Uno con el todo,* the harmonious co-existence of diverse beings, nature-culture with Mother Earth"**

"Uno con el todo" refers to the interconnectedness of beings, humans and non-humans, living and spiritual/intangible, with Mother Earth (*Tonantzin, Pachamama*,

Papatūānuku[52]), a co-existence. In this view, notions of harmony and co-existence are fundamental, as nature and culture are inseparable, a complementary co-existence and manifestation. The nature-culture alignment to Indigenous worldviews in differing contexts conceives them as a unity/wholeness, where one exists with the other, and all are in constant balance moving towards synchronicity. Harmonious wholeness directly relates to the collective and individual well-being and quality of life, in which individuals are in *yosotros* interconnected to each other, to nature-culture, and to their communities. The close connection between the components in the *Buen Vivir* model have collective impacts, hence, single inputs in one area influence the complete system. As in weaving, pulling one thread will mark, transform, and even deform the piece tension affecting balance and movement.

The direction in this section diverts from W/GN philosophy and commonly utilised dualist ontologies that establish strong dividable dichotomies. In this case, they are nature and culture, individual and collective embodied mind, reason, and emotion, subject and object, immanent and transcendent (De Sousa Santos, 2018b; Waldmueller, 2014). Similarly, notions of power and its manifestations such as inclusion and exclusion, and individual and collective growth, are also contested. These concepts complement each other as unities, and are interconnected. As mentioned earlier, the concept of nature-culture echoes "non-Western" and Indigenous belief systems, entering academic spaces (A. Escobar, 2010; Payne et al., 2018). Latour (1993) mentions:

> We (moderns) are the only ones who differentiate absolutely between Nature and Culture whereas in our eyes all the others – whether they are Chinese or Amerindians, Azande or Barouya – cannot really separate what is knowledge from what is society, what is sign from what is thing, what comes from Nature as it is from what their cultures require. (p. 99)

The division of nature and culture disconnects humans from the natural environment, divorcing people from the responsibility of environmental care and well-being. For this reason, *uno con el todo* gives priority to Mother Earth, the central component of the model, literally and metaphorically. It underlines the importance of prioritising the Earth's well-being through ecological thought and diverting from logics of

[52] In very simplistic terms, *Papatūānuku* is who Māori refer to as the 'Earth mother'. Similarly, *Tonantzin* is the Náhuatl name from Aztecs and current Nahuas in México, and *Pachamama* originates from Andean people in South America.

capitalism (Chapter Four). As explained by Boehnert (2019) on the *Ecocene*, this approach is aligned to feminism and decolonial theory:

> The hostility directed towards attempts to bring ecologically engaged ideas into spaces governed by capitalist logic will be recognized by many feminist and race activists as the similar to the anger provoked when we challenge patriarchy or white supremacy. This is one of the reasons why feminist and anti-racist struggles are linked to the struggle to normalize and integrate ecological thought and ways of living into a historically anti-ecological culture. (p. 7)

Patriarchy, capitalistic, and racist structures echo interconnectedness and relations, where struggles turn into the same fight. *Zapatistas*, Malacate and other activists assert that "*la lucha es por la vida"* (the fight is for the life) (re)uniting all of the struggles into a united cause. The focus on interconnection then ruptures modern-dualist ontologies and shifts towards a plurality of ontologies, particularly relational. Escobar (2010) asserts:

> The dualist ontology contrasts with other cultural constructions, particularly those that emphasize relationality and reciprocity; the continuity between the natural, the human and the supernatural (and between being, knowing and doing; Maturana & Varela 1987); the embeddedness of the economy in social life and the restricted character of the market; and a deeply relational worldview that shapes the notions of personhood, community, economy, and politics. (p. 9)

A shift towards space between relational ontologies is proposed in which all subjects are relational and interconnected, being *uno con el todo.*

7.1.2 Colectividad

***"Autonomía*, reciprocity, *complementaridad*, mutual care"**

Colectividad as a component in *Buen Vivir*-centric design encompasses principles such as *autonomía*, reciprocity, complementarity, and mutual care, all of which function as guidelines in collaboration. In this, human relations are strongly considered, although they are not exclusive. This means these aspects also parallel humans and the environment as interconnected parts of a whole.

Colectividad is a link to community formed by the contribution of many people or "*yos*". Therefore, community is a plural concept formed by the members in the community (Giasson, 2000). Similarly, it considers different aspects of humans as

collective beings formed by biologic, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions (Rebelo, 2019), the interwoven threads of our wholeness. Both aspects of *colectividad*, the individual-collective being as a unit, and the relations, are related to *yosotros*, where being of one heart is fundamental (Chapter Four).

Autonomía is aligned with a Global Southern perspective, recognising the communal and relational dimensions of the concept[53] (Aparicio Wilhelmi, 2008; Botero et al., 2018; Engels-Schwarzpaul & Refiti, 2018; A. Escobar, 2016; Paoli, 2003; Schlittler, 2012). Escobar (2016) defined it as "*proceso cultural, ecológico y político. Implica formas autónomas de existencia y toma de decisiones* (p.198) (cultural, ecological and political process that involves autonomous forms of existence and decision making). Nevertheless, *autonomía* is strongly present in Indigenous worldviews. For Mayan Tseltal, there are five levels of *autonomía*: individuals, families, communities, communities inside communities, and as Indigenous peoples (Paoli, 2003), reflected in the following quote:

> *Bueno en mi manera de entender una autonomía es una actividad nueva de la forma de Vivir, tiene una forma de Vivir como una comunidad, como un pueblo. Porque no es decir que nos mandan y que tenemos que obedecer, no, sino que tiene que formar su autonomía él personal, cada hombre y cada mujer, cada decisión como puede resolver, cómo puede caminar, Vivir sólo libremente, nadie los puede obligar, nadie los puede reprimir, nadie los puede castigar. No por medio de un acaparador sino que se tiene que ser libremente. Mismo de la gente, mismo de la comunidad, hombres y mujeres él toma la decisión, dice ansí se va a hacer, él decide, ellos tienen la mayor autoridad, cada hombre y cada mujer, cada persona ellos pueden organizar.* (Don Joel, as cited in Schlittler, 2012, p. 125)
>
> (Well, my way to understand *autonomía* is a new activity of way of living, way of living as a community, as a *pueblo.* Because is not saying that we are commanded and we have to obey, no, but that he has to form his *autonomía*, he, personal, every man and every woman, every decision, how to solve, how to walk, to live freely, no one can force them, no one can repress them, no one can punish them. Not through a profiteer but it has to be freely. Same for the people, same for the community, men and women make their decision. It says this is how it is going to be, he/she decides, they have the major authority, every man and every woman, they can organise).

[53] In English, autonomous relates to acting independently, as individual entities, the opposite of *autonomía* in Spanish that recognises free determination as a collective.

The message that communities have the ability to make decisions regarding their norms and the capacity to change traditions traditionally, is underlined, as is driving for the (re)generation of spaces, cultures, communities and the reclamation of commons (Esteva, 2005, 2015). Nonetheless, *autonomía* "is another name for people's dignity and conviviality; at its best, *autonomía* is a theory and practice of inter-existence and inter-being (A. Escobar, 2018a, p. 144). This requires the redefinition of political power and democracy from counterhegemonic awareness, as Indigenous peoples and pivotal movements such as *Zapatista* are seeking to transform (Schlittler, 2012). *Autonomía* aims to improve community living conditions towards a fair-dignified life that is respectful and harmonious with nature-culture, *Lekil Kuxlejal* (Chapter Two).

Reciprocity, in simple terms, is a bond formed by giving and receiving, going beyond transactions. It encompasses human relationships and with Mother Earth, nature-culture, the divine and the universe as *cosmovisión* (Corral Maldonado, 2017). Reciprocity is a fundamental principle in Indigenous communities around the world such as with Māori (Cram, Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002; Hoskins, 2010; Mikahere-Hall, 2017; O'Carroll, 2013; Robertson & Bishop, 1999a; H. L. Smith, 2017; L. T. Smith, 1999a; Walker et al., 2006; J. K. T. Wilson, 2013), Aboriginal peoples (Brereton et al., 2014), Oceanic-Pacific peoples (Hau'ofa, 1993; Robinson & Robinson, 2005), Andean peoples (Corral Maldonado, 2017; Huambachano, 2016; Rivera Cusicanqui, n.d., 2010; Vanhulst & Beling, 2014; Waldmueller, 2014) , Mayans (Lenkersdorf, 2005; López Intzín & Setet Sian, 2003; Pérez Moreno, 2012; Prage, 2015; Schlittler, 2012; Treviño & Coautoras, 2018), Nahua (Benton Zavala, 2018), P úrepecha (Garrido Izaguirre, 2015) and Mapuche (Rojas Pedemonte & Soto Gómez, 2016). It is also an important part of decolonial research social science and humanities, (Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, De Sousa Santos, et al., 2015; Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, Speed, et al., 2015; Walsh, 2013, 2017) (Chapters Three and Five), feminism from Abya Yala (Paredes et al., 2014; Solón, 2017; Vuorisalo-tiitinen, 2011), *Buen Vivir* (Ávila Romero, 2011; Cubillo Guevara & Hidalgo Capitán, 2016; Díaz Muñoz et al., 2017; Rojas Pedemonte & Soto Gómez, 2016; Vanhulst & Beling, 2014; Villalba, 2013) (Chapter Two), co-design (Akama et al., 2019; Garduño García, 2017; Te Morenga et al., 2018) (Chapter Six), and the social solidary

economy (Santiago Santiago, 2017; Vannini & Deux Marzi, 2016) (Chapter Four), like the threads of a reciprocal *jolobil*.

While social sciences, the humanities, Indigenous studies and co-design from the Global South are frequently integrating reciprocity as their core, it is not the case for economics. Hau'ofa (1993) explains:

> Economists do not take account of the social centrality of the ancient practice of reciprocity, the core of all Oceanic cultures. They overlook the fact that for everything homelands relatives receive they reciprocate with goods they themselves produce, and they maintain ancestral roots and lands for everyone, homes with warm hearts for travellers to return at the end of the day, or to re-strengthen their bonds, their souls and their identities before they move on again. This is not dependence but interdependence, which is purportedly the essence of the global system. To say that it is something else and less is not only erroneous, it denies people their dignity. (pp. 12-13)

Conventional economy, following the logic of capitalism, does not take reciprocity into consideration. Therefore, "other" economies are necessary such as the social solidarity economy (Chapter Four). Hau'ofa then suggested principles that relate to *Buen Vivir*-centric design such as reciprocity, dignity and especially, *uno con el todo* through interconnection and relations – all this despite centring his ideas in the Pacific region. The strong link with nature-culture is an important part of reciprocity:

> Embedded within a reciprocity of people, land, plants, animals, water, rocks, weather systems, spirituality, and more. Reciprocity premised upon interrelatedness also means a commitment to sovereign relationships, which strengthen our co-flourishing and honoring of dwelling places inhabited by many beings and non-beings. (Akama et al., 2019, p. 11)

Sovereignty links to *autonomía*, a guiding principle of *colectividad* in *Buen Vivir*-centric design as mentioned earlier. Nevertheless, reciprocity is linked to the manifestation of gratitude, acknowledgement, and honouring relationships, actions, and places in which words of gratitude through *karakia*, actions of thank you, and other messages to the heart (Chapter Five).

Complementaridad encompasses the integration of different parts to form a whole, complementing each other, neither opposed nor exclusive. Rather, they are in harmonious co-existence (Corral Maldonado, 2017), and non-hierarchical and

horizontal relationships (Chapter Six). Here, the elements have forces that are opposed and complementary at the same time (Rojas Pedemonte & Soto Gómez, 2016). This also closely links to reciprocity in which every act has a reciprocal action complementing the other, helping towards the balance in cosmos, nature-culture, and beings (Walsh, 2017), developed in the equilibrium part of the *Buen Vivir*-centric design model. *Complementaridad* further relates to the pluriversal dimension in the model:

> *Complementarse es completarse. Es buscar construir un todo diverso. Es dialogar entre diferentes. Es aprender del otro y contribuir al otro. Es reconocer las fortalezas y debilidades de uno mismo para así integrarse y transformarse en la interacción con el otro. Complementarse es combinar fuerzas y optimizar las potencialidades de cada uno para ir abrazando el todo en sus múltiples dimensiones.* (Solón, 2017, p. 189)
>
> (Complement is to complete. It is seeking the construction of a diverse whole. It is dialogue among different. It is to learn from the other and to contribute to the other. It is to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of ourselves so we can integrate and transform through the interaction with the other. To complement is to combine forces and optimise the potentialities of each one of us towards embracing the whole in its multiple dimensions.)

Here, c*omplementaridad* mentions diversity and multiple dimensions. Diversity, in this sense, is related to the spectrum and shades in between opposites complementing each other as part of a whole. Dimensions aree explained in the Pluriversal component.

Mutual care encompasses relational-affective actions that go beyond simply functional support. It establishes relationships in which parties care for each other, relationships from the heart. For Māori, care is a most fundamental aspect of relationships and collaboration as described by Akama, Hagen and Whaanga-Schollum (2019). They wrote that “central is manaakitanga: the value of hosting, taking care of and upholding the mana (authority, influence, status) of those present” (p.17). *Manaakitanga* is significant in the Māori worldview, everyday life and research, in which the authority of the other person is taken into consideration, and respecting *autonomía.*

7.1.3 Resource(ful)ness

"Other economies, ethics, dignity"

Resource(ful), as the name suggests, is related to resources and more importantly, being resourceful[54]. Resources, or the lack of them, whether funds, land, people, or time, potentially cause conflict inside groups and communities. Therefore, it is important to prioritise ethics and the dignity of human and nature-culture before the collective distribution of resources. It also considers the avoidance of dependency on external resources to operate. Here, *autonomía* strongly relates to resource(ful)ness allowing communities *autogestión* (self-management, self-governance), independence and sovereignty, relying on their own resources, capacities and the power of *colectividad* in the ways of many Indigenous and artisanal communities[55] (Benton Zavala, 2018; A. Escobar, 2016; Leyva, Alonso, Hernández, Escobar, Kohler, Cumes, Sandoval, Speed, et al., 2015; Riley, Corkhill, & Morris, 2013; Vuletich, 2015).

Resource(ful)ness requires operation in economies other than capitalism. Many artisanal initiatives trade under a social, solidarity economy (Chapter Four), and do not follow capitalism, deviating from dominant modern-colonial practices. Escobar (2010) stated:

> With the modern ontology, certain constructs and practices, such as the primacy of humans over non-humans (separation of nature and culture) and of some humans over others (the colonial divide between us and them); the idea of the autonomous individual separated from community; the belief in objective knowledge, reason, and science as the only valid modes of knowing; and the cultural construction of "the economy" as an independent realm of social practice, with "the market" as a self-regulating entity outside of social relations - all of these ontological assumptions became prominent. The worlds and knowledges constructed on the basis of these ontological commitments became "a universe." This universe

[54] According to Barraket et al. (2019), the concept of resourcefulness has roots in different disciplines such as psychology, sociology and entrepreneurship, and related to community development and social capital. At this point, this research has not considered this concept as one of the components of the *Buen Vivir*-centric design model due to time constraints. However, further research will explore the possibility of integrating resourcefulness into some aspect of it.

[55] For example, some textile initiatives organise raffles of their textile pieces to raise funds for a member and her family in case of emergencies like health or natural disasters. I followed their example of being resourceful and raising funds through raffles of textile pieces to cover some expenses for the second field trip.

> has acquired certain coherence in socio-natural forms such as capitalism, the state, the individual, industrial agriculture, and so forth. (p. 9)

Artisanal initiatives such as Malacate consider their communities as paramount over logics of capital and market (Chapter Four) where trading becomes a pathway to achieve *Lekil Kuxlejal*, a fair-dignified life. Quality of life and well-being is the focus of *Buen Vivir*-centric design; these are harmonious relationships, *autonomía*, with mutual care and dignity. Nevertheless, it is important to underline that mutual care is different from help. The latter could be done from a position of superiority, while the former is from a genuine position as an equal human being. For example, in terms of ethical trading, mutual care would manifest through a solidarity economy, a reciprocal exchange in which the artisanal piece is both valued holistically, and purchased to support the initiative and labour-creativity-skill of the maker. Contrastingly, help suggests charity from a position of privilege without consideration for the makers, yet potentially creates dependency, and is largely free of solidarity. Supporting causes for solidarity and charity might appear similar, however the mindset in terms of aid among equals versus "saviour" in the latter, differs. Therefore, the focus on ethics and dignity keeps the *mana* (authority, influence, status) in alignment with *autonomía.*

7.1.4 Pluriversality

"Many worlds, dimensions, paradox"

The concept of *pluriverso*, pluriverse, is reflected in the *Zapatista* phrase "*un mundo en que quepan muchos mundos*" (A. Escobar, 2014, p. 59) (a world in which many worlds can fit) as opposed to a "universe", a single hegemonic viewpoint. For Escobar (2012, 2016, 2018b), the pluriverse recognises, integrates, and acknowledges the interconnection between humans and non-humans, and humans with nature. At the same time, a pluriverse encompasses different ways to perceive the world while embracing a diversity of onto-epistemologies or those many worlds are in constant adaptation, transformation, balancing and negotiation rather than sharing a commonality (Waldmueller, 2014). In many ways, this perspective is also decoloniality, or as Mignolo and Walsh (2018) established, "pluriversal decoloniality and decolonial pluriversality" (p.2), "a multipolar world order (de-Westernisation)

and epistemic and ontological pluriversality" (p.228), in which *Buen Vivir*-centric design seeks to contribute.

The notion of multi-dimensionality is aligned with the co-existence of the seen and the unseen, the material and the spiritual, fundamental to non-Western and Indigenous worldviews (Corral Maldonado, 2017; D'Alessando & Gonzalez, 2017; Huambachano, 2016; López Intzín, 2015; Macleod, 2013; Martínez Loera, 2011; Rebelo, 2019; Rojas Pedemonte & Soto Gómez, 2016; Sachit & Tulchin, 2014; Tlostanova, 2017). According to Battiste (2008):

> Indigenous people's epistemology is derived from the immediate ecology; from peoples' experiences, perceptions, thoughts, and memory, including experiences shared with others; and from the spiritual world discovered in dreams, visions, inspirations, and signs interpreted with the guidance of healers or elders. (p. 497)

The spiritual dimension is also an integral part of embodied creativity, arts production, and well-being (Gwinner, 2016; Klamer, 2012; Paz, 1988; Riley, 2008), embracing human wholeness, experience, body, mind, heart, and spirit (Chapter Four). Nevertheless, well-being is related to interconnection with and within community, nature-culture and Mother-Earth, *uno con el todo*, a *yosotros* good living and indeed, *Buen Vivir*.

Paradoxes encompass the pluriverse, as do contradictions between beliefs, statements or opposites, considered logically unsuitable. Considering the co-existence of many worlds, it is expected that a diversity of views and opinions exists, as explained by Solón (2017):

> *siempre existen desigualdades y diferencias. La clave no es anular las diferencias sino convivir con ellas, evitar que las desigualdades se agraven y polaricen hasta desestabilizar "el todo". En el marco de esta visión, lo fundamental es aprender o reaprender a vivir en comunidad respetando la multipolaridad del todo.* (p. 23)
>
> (Inequalities and differences always exist. The key is not to annul the differences but to live together with them, to avoid that inequalities aggravate and polarise until destabilise "the whole". In this frame, the fundamental is to learn and relearn to live in community respecting the multipolarity of the whole.)

Although paradoxical for some, it is possible to transition and transform approaches and practices that enable the "subjects" to perform their own "other research" as in

decolonising methodologies. Even inside academic contexts considered colonial-colonising systems, if the focus goes towards the creation of alternatives for decolonisation, to "*construir, no destruir*" (construct, don't destroy) as the *mandar obedeciendo* principle establishes, the generation of alternatives in a particular time and context benefits communities, and could be considered a new seed to plant, care for, and grow (Chapter Three). The creation of alternatives as seeds contributes to the pluriverse recognising the specificity of conditions, time, and land within a community, adapting and transforming according to "new soil" towards good living.

7.1.5 Equilibrium

"Dynamic, movement, time, cycles"

Equilibrium relates to the dynamic balance between all of the components in a *Buen Vivir*-centric design model as they are present in Indigenous *cosmovisiones* worldwide. For example, Andean communities have *yanantin* (equilibrium), an intrinsic tension and levelling within existence that shifts between opposites bringing harmonious balance, manifested in ecological cycles and processes (Huambachano, 2016). According to Sólon (2017):

> *Este equilibrio no se asemeja a la estabilidad que el capitalismo promete alcanzar a través del crecimiento continuo. La estabilidad, al igual que el crecimiento permanente, son quimeras (...) El equilibrio siempre es dinámico. El objetivo no es llegar a un equilibrio perfecto sin contradicciones, aquello no existe. Todo se mueve en ciclos, es un punto de llegada y salida para los nuevos desequilibrios, para nuevas y más complejas contradicciones y complementariedades.* (p. 23)
>
> (This equilibrium is not like the stability that capitalism promises through continuous growth. The stability, as well as the permanent growth are chimeras (…) The equilibrium is always dynamic. The objective is not to reach a perfect equilibrium without contradictions, that does not exist. Everything moves in cycles, is an ending and starting point for new disequilibrium, for new and more complex contradictions and complementarities.)

The connection with *complementaridad* and *uno con el todo* is underlined where movement and dynamic balance are embraced, as explained in previous sections. Time and cycles differ from the W/GN perception of linear time (Corral Maldonado, 2017; De Sousa Santos, 2015; H. L. Smith, 2017). This translates into cyclical processes and plans that require constant checks and balances with all the other

components in the model, that is, following iterative processes to reconnect and continue relations, mutual care, discuss the next cycle and move towards the future. The Andean perception of time, according to Corral Maldonado (2017), is opposite W/GN notions in which "front" in space is equivalent to "past" in time. Similarly, "future" in time is equivalent to "behind" in space. This perception invalidates the concept of Western progress as something in the future. In contrast, Indigenous perspectives look forward through the lens of the past, to learn of ancestry and previous experiences to navigate towards the future, the unseen that is continuously pending.

7.2 Overarching recommendations and insights

This research has discussed issues around textile artisanal design, the colonisation and appropriation of Indigenous knowledge and design, textiles as resistance and ethical trading as a means of decolonising textile artisanal design in Chiapas. Through online and offline research with Malacate, actors and allies in the field, these 11 points are summarised in the light of problems of (un)fair trade and ethical certifications[56] (Chapter Two). These recommendations emerged as an alternative, local, and collective certification of textile initiatives that operates under ethical, horizontal, and respectful collaborations. These points are aligned to *Buen Vivir*-centric design as overarching principles and recommendations:

1. Creativity as a right. Artisans to be creative, not only makers.
2. Acknowledgment of design (process, patterns, and techniques) as part of the rights of Indigenous communities.
3. Trade or brand name not under the designer's name (Indigenous and non-Indigenous).
4. Horizontality, no hierarchy. Artisans to be considered as designers/artists at the same level as Western-Global Northern educated designers.
5. Personal relationships. Face to face, not only online contact and transactions.
6. *Colectivo autónomo* (Autonomous collective). Independent and *autogestionado.* Not dependant on external funding or transparent about their external support.

[56] These points where developed in collaboration with Karla Pérez Cánovas from Malacate and Claudia Muñoz from Chamuchic during the second field trip.

7. Working together in a long-term respectful and committed way, beyond project-based.
8. Indigenous knowledge and principles at the centre. Rescue and revival of techniques, community-based innovation.
9. Informing and educating consumers about context, processes with transparency (community, artisans, hours, techniques)
10. Using original Indigenous names. For example, *huipil* instead of kaftan.
11. Operate under alternative economies such as a social and solidarity economy.

All recommendations emanating from this research are grounded in the experience and discussions about ethical characteristics of collaboration in the context of the highlands of Chiapas, and across Mexico. This is an important trajectory to develop in the future, by involving Indigenous weavers, past and current organisations, and NGOs with experience in the field and who carefully prioritise the autonomous voices of the collective rather than the institutional. A particular challenge is to address issues on trading in alternative economies, as organisations still operate under systems that have tax and legal barriers. This would need exploration by specialists in a wide range of backgrounds such as legislation, economy, trade, community research, education, and gender studies to name a few. Also, it requires the organisation of assemblies and workshops with Indigenous artisanal communities interacting with specialist in *horizontalidad* towards *Buen Vivir*.

In summary, this chapter started the process of *empuntado*, the finishing of this collective weaving as a decolonising alternative to textile artisanal design. This *Buen Vivir*-centric design proposal – the crest of this study - summarised the research journey as a woven piece weaving the threads of previous chapters through a non-linear narrative, and the creation of the "base mesh" to add new threads or materials by other weavers. Here, the five central components of *Buen Vivir*-centric design model were metaphorically unravelled: *Uno con el todo*, *Colectividad*, Resource(ful)ness, Pluriversality, and Equilibrium, the initial conclusions of the research or casting off of *jolobil*. It concluded with overarching recommendations for context-based, collective and alternative certifications for textile artisanal groups.

The next section concludes the thesis working on *las puntas* (fringe) by planting the seeds of the heart to be grown in different lands.

Chapter 8: Last words for planting the *sbék'* from the *O´tan*: Looking back to move forward

I conclude this research journey through reflecting back on the learnings, limitations and implications, and moving forward towards future journeys by *corazonar*, emphasising *sentir* (feeling) in *sentipensar*. This concluding chapter writes *las palabras del corazón* (the words from the heart) locating myself in the research, and embodying decolonisation through action and reflexivity, a *sentirpensar-corazonando* to plant the seeds *(sbék')* from the heart *(O´tan)* (Figure 88). Consequently, the narrative changes to first person, a symbolic decolonial act to close the thesis as a person from the Global South. At the same time, knowing that despite arriving at the end of this research journey, it is only the beginning of more cycles *caminando junto* (walking alongside) *a mis compañeras* of Malacate and my *kaupapa whānau* in *Tāmaki Makaurau* (Auckland), Aotearoa.

Figure 88. O'tan and sbék', heart and seed. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

8.1 Looking back

I recognise various limitations in this research. Some concepts have been explored superficially due to the nature and time limitations of a doctoral study. Textiles are made by weaving many threads, in a similar way to in this research, limiting the time spent in each one of the components. However, the diversity and richness in the threads enables the creation of the original work and new fabrics, opening opportunities to other weavers to contribute to the development of parts - I could not delve into – in depth, or to deviate from the scope or area of application. Another challenge was the distant locations from my place of residency and my chosen field,

my home in Chiapas. Funding (or lack of it) limited travel and time spent doing fieldwork. While familiar with the context and culture of Chiapas by birth was crucial, and that my parents live in Jobel, spending longer periods of time there would be beneficial to have more collective sessions at the different stages of the research.

Buen Vivir-centric design is a first approximation, a beta model that is yet to be tested. This proposal envisions the adoption of the model into different Indigenous communities taking it as overarching guiding principles that are reinterpreted in their own Indigenous cultures and languages. There are principles that cannot be translated in other languages but there are likely equivalents. From a Māori perspective, for example, dignity is related to *mana*, reciprocity to *koha*, and *autonomía* to *tino rangatiratanga*, although they are not entirely the same. For this reason, it is important to locate and ground the principles according to each cultural context and let the Indigenous communities own, adapt and develop the model accordingly.

One of the findings that could not be explored and developed is related to collective spirituality. While this dimension is considered in the *Buen Vivir*-centric design model, it has neither been sufficiently explored in the *Lekil Kuxlejal*-centric framework, nor in the field. For Mayan Tsotsiles and Tseltales, the *Ch´ulel* as spirit, consciousness, soul, or vital energy, is an integral part of existence (Chapter Five) and is closely related to *Lekil Kuxlejal*. However, exploring the collective spiritual dimension as a *kaxlana* (not from the community) from my point of view was not appropriate. The guidance by members of the community would be invaluable for this, especially elders, as spiritual leaders, and leaders of the land are in a privileged position for informing the *Ch´ulel* trajectory, and because this study focused primarily on the decolonisation of artisanal design through *Buen Vivir*. Nevertheless, some of my personal spiritual practices changed over time, yet were not explored in depth here, not being considered relevant to integrate as findings.

Regarding the design research process, I would have liked to collaborate closer with *mis compañeras* of Malacate in the complete co-design process, that is, including analysis and framework development. However, my location, time constraints, family, and work commitments did not allow this. Constant consultation through

online platforms was utilised, as discussed in Chapter Five. Levels of access and literacy allowed few members to be consulted, and consultation time was sporadic.

Important learnings emerged from letting situations flow, in trusting life paths, being instinctive, and being my whole self (Chapter Four). For example, integrating my family into the field research was a decision that emerged without planning in the first meeting with Malacate, and naturally occurred in our sessions thereafter. These experiences allowed me to learn about intergenerational perceptions and interactions, and the intertwining of family and work. Most importantly, the flexible, family integrated sessions, workshops and such, facilitated the creation of stronger bonds amongst us, as women, as *whānau*, which extend beyond the research. While W/GN academia considers objectivity fundamental largely by limiting the researchers' connection with their subjects, this is the opposite of *Buen Vivir*, in which relationships, mutual care and *colectividad* are key.

Another example relates to unexpected networks, events, and situations that took place during my field trips. I was fortunate to be invited to witness the interview with *Impacto* about the collaboration of designers and textile artisans during the first field trip. Similarly, it was a coincidence that my second field trip dates matched those of the colloquium in San Cristóbal de las Casas where I presented alongside *mis compañeras* of Malacate (Appendix C:d), as well as being able to attend the first *Zapatista* film festival in Oventik just a few days earlier. The emergence of an unplanned third trip updating and consulting with *mis compañeras* about the research results and *jolobil* methodological framework allowed the necessary feedback on important aspects of the central proposals. These statements may be considered coincidences, some irrelevant to design academic research, however, they were sufficiently important to integrate into *Buen Vivir*, and certainly relevant to a novice researcher such as myself. The synchronicity of these events enabled me to have a deeper view of the field and a richer contribution to this research despite how these unplanned yet pivotal moments came to be. At the same time, purely depending on potentially emergent situations can result in not having a structure and plan for exploration, development and testing of the research. It is important to balance both aspects, to have an idea and overall plan to follow but also to follow our instincts and let opportunities emerge and integrate, to enrich the project.

As mentioned in Chapter Six, instant photography played a relevant role during the co-design sessions, and was initially considered a tool. Consistent with Hinthorne's conclusion (2014), I believe that "instant film photography can contribute to methodic, reliable, multimodal documentation of fast- paced research processes where meaning is produced through a combination of visual and spoken communication" (p. 517), particularly for co-design workshops, multilingual sessions or with language barriers, to foster relationships, and to create memories. However, it is important to consider the access requirements to funding, equipment, and film, potentially limiting its use in Global Southern spaces.

The use of craft-art as a methodological approach to rescue, apply and develop knowledge from Indigenous people gives *mana* to communities. As stated by Smith (2017) "methodology does not belong solely to the academic realm. Māori and indigenous people have always engaged in research, employing methods and methodologies to solve problems, advance technologies and test theories" (p.212). In her case, and as in this study, weaving helps to theorise, develop new methodologies, and to analyse. Most importantly, it serves as a point of connection between the weavers of the research, literally and metaphorically, and to connect with our ways of being and doing, our cultural heritage. Nevertheless, craft-art could be used as a structural base to do research. Echoing Wilson's (2013) conclusions, "*mahi-toi*[57] gives the theoretical structure" (p. 230) to the study, in this research, using *jolobil* as metaphor for methodology development, analysis and creative exploration, doing research in/by/from/for the Global South.

8.2 Moving forward

In this subsection, I elaborate on different possibilities beyond the research and thesis, to continue the work alongside my *kaupapa whānau* of Malacate. Despite the four-year period of this project, there are many aspects that could not be developed due to time constraints. Here, I touch on some ideas for emerging design researchers who may also seek to decolonise their specific disciplines as they move forward.

As an important part of reciprocity, to honour *mis compañeras* of Malacate and the textile artisanal community in the highlands of Chiapas, I will develop a visual memory-report with the main results of our collective research in three languages:

[57] 'Doing art', cultural arts and crafts (J. K. T. Wilson, 2013).

Tsotsil, Spanish and English. The purpose of this document is to give back and share insights that could be useful for Indigenous weavers and independent textile collectives, especially around *Lekil Kuxlejal*-centric and *O'tan*-led approaches towards a fair-dignified life.

A planned research output is a collective exhibition in collaboration with *mis compañeras* of Malacate in Aotearoa, showcasing *jolobil* stories through photography, film, textiles talks, and workshops conducted by two members of Malacate and myself. The intention is to occupy spaces that have been exclusive for artists from a hegemonic Global Northern perspective and give voice to art and design from the Global South. Their presence will also allow the connection and exchange of knowledges between Indigenous peoples from Mexico and Aotearoa, a "delinking" (W. Mignolo, 2007a) in which *otros mundos* directly connect.

Considering the relevance of visual components and the non-linear narrative in this research, it is intended to create an online platform (website or app) with virtual galleries showcasing photographic memories from both perspectives (Malacate's and mine). The narrative will be selected by the users following different options such as the chronological order of field trips, research cycles aligned with this thesis's chapters etc., selecting only one perspective or combining several, as well as using keywords such as "*Lekil Kuxlejal*," "co-design," "textiles," to mention a few. Similarly, in collaboration with digital artists, it is planned to create a short animation to present *jolobil*-textile stories and *Me Luch*, the Mayan *cosmovisión*, through a visual narrative.

Finally, as I mentioned in the previous section on looking back, *Buen Vivir*-centric design has not been tested. Therefore, I would like to collectively test the model in the context of the highlands of Chiapas alongside *mis compañeras* of Malacate, as well as the alternative collective certification. Likewise, I have an interest in collaborating with other Indigenous communities in Abya Yala to explore how the grounding process could potentially work. However, transferability is an important factor to take into consideration that this study does not explore fully or point towards definitive answers. It is crucial to situate, contextualise and adapt this research, which is required to give priority to the culture and protocols of the Indigenous community in the new context.

8.3 Planting the seeds of the heart

The tenure of this research has been transformational both professionally and personally, although I understand the years are but a short cycle within a life-long journey. In some ways, I consider this the formal approach to a topic centring on my heritage in which culture through art-design-crafts, particularly textiles has been pivotal, so I am fortunate and grateful that this could be formalised into PhD research.

This collective research alongside *mis compañeras* of Malacate marks a before and after in my career as a designer. Here, I share the main takeaways that influence the work, an interwoven reflection, and seeds from the heart, hoping they will flourish in other soils, on other terms, as implications to consider.

Sbék' 1: Other designs DO exist. Design[58] is predominantly identified and studied from a W/GN perspective establishing a false hierarchy considering Eastern/Global Southern approaches lesser so (Chapters Two and Four). Whether academic or Global Northern spaces acknowledge design from "other" spaces (or not), design has existed through the history of humanity in its distinctive context-based manifestations, in which giving the deserved recognition is considered a decolonial act in a modern-colonial world.

Sbék' 2: *Colectividad vs. individualismo* (collectivity vs. individualism). *Colectividad* (Chapter Seven) requires people to work as a collective in which individuals are an important part of the whole. Here, individuals maintain their *autonomía,* the free will to think, act and express. *Indivualismo*[59], however, prioritises the individual over the collective without taking into consideration others' opinions and breaking with code of conducts that regulate relationships. Sometimes, individuals within collectives talk about being in a *colectividad,* but their actions show *indivisualismo* as they expect to obtain their desires through the group. This behaviour has created divisions affecting organisations in their desire for *colectividad* (Chapter Five). While personal ideas and desires are normal aspects of the human condition, these cannot be imposed on to a group.

[58] Here, design is defined from a Global Southern perspective, where there is no distinction between craft, design, and art.
[59] In Spanish, *individualismo* is the trend to think and act under their own will, without taking into consideration the opinions of other members of the group and not following the code of conduct that regulates relationships. ("Individualismo," n.d.).

Sbék' 3: Being heart-led (*el corazón como guía*). The heart has been pivotal throughout this research, impacting the methodology, findings, embodiment, and research and personal practice (Chapters Three and Five). The Mayan ways of being and doing centred on the heart have been relevant, giving a sense of direction to the study, as well as personal experiences parallel to this research. Letting the heart be the guide has been particularly important in times of uncertainty, and even despair, when this phrase became the guiding light in darkness: "*lo que diga el corazón es lo que tienes que hacer*"[60] (what the heart tells you, that is what you have to do).

Sbék' 4: *Buen Vivir* (Good living and its diverse Indigenous equivalents). *Buen Vivir* as a life philosophy has also been pivotal to this research, becoming the centre of exploration, and applied in frameworks and models. However, more than theories and discourses, *Buen Vivir* is, and must be, translated into actions in the search of a fair-dignified life for all (Chapters Two, Six, and Seven).

Sbék' 5: Creativity and well-being. An important aspect of *Buen Vivir* relates to collective-individual well-being, and this directly links to creativity (Chapter Four). Creative manifestations through design, music, dance, performance and writing, among others, as well as in everyday activities, are pathways to expression, healing, and reconnection with our inner selves, and to the life-force, activities that should be prioritised in our lives, despite being considered a waste of time in a modern-colonial world.

Sbék' 6: Gratitude, an important aspect of reciprocity. Reciprocity is an important component in *colectividad*, and gratitude is a direct manifestation and result of reciprocity. As mentioned earlier, reciprocity is a mutual agreement from a place of support and care, not for power or monetary interest. Therefore, it is key not to approach reciprocity as a transaction, in which giving is motivated by getting. Agreements and actions should be accompanied by manifestations of gratitude, acknowledging, and caring for relationships and people, *manaakitanga* (Chapter Seven).

Finally, for closing this section with the words from my heart (Figure 89), I want to honour *mis compañeras* of Malacate and their teachings by sharing with the readers, the *yosotros* seeds of transformation, resistance, and hope towards the construction of

[60] I heard this phrase in different variations throughout the research journey from many sources. For an example, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1HLskhTmRY&t=57s.

new worlds, because as our *compañerxs Zapatistas* say: "*Otro mundo es posible"* (Another world is possible).

Figure 89 The photo-embroidery I made for mis compañeras of Malacate to say thank you in Tsotsil, Kolaval. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

Epilogue: Después de la tempestad viene la calma (After the storm comes the calm)

I write these words as a *mirada retrospectiva* (retrospective look) in a different place from where I started. In this last stage of this thesis' cycle, after a deep transformative journey professionally and personally, I am at a place of satisfaction and ease. These words are from a heart, full of gratitude, forgiveness and hope.

I want to close with some reflections on my personal experience in the hope that you – especially if you are a conventionally trained designer – connect with my story. I hope you start connecting with your familial roots and stories, understanding that the more that is known about our personal, family, ancestry and community narratives, the more rooted we become. Like a tree with robust roots, a storm may come yet we will still stand strong.

Doing this research alongside *mis compañeras de* Malacate Taller Experimental Textil and my Māori *whānau* lead me to question my origin, identities, values and practices, aspects that are not easy to address, especially in challenging times. Acknowledging and addressing my privilege, power, politics and access in my different positions played an important role, whether in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, citizenship, migratory condition and marital status among others, all issues that generated pain, anxiety, anger and guilt. However, in understanding that the privilege and oppression experienced was not because of who I am, but a result of systems designed to benefit only a small group of people, I learned to forgive myself. Identifying these issues was key. It was crucial to move forward towards balancing and transforming the 3P-A and these systems, to fight for social change, justice, human and environmental rights. I also learned that one's own sense of dislocation denies belonging; that locating ourselves from an individual perspective and from familiar, ancestral and collective views, enables us to connect to a larger whole and belong.

At this point, I assume you might have experienced different emotions while reading this thesis, and whether they were positive or negative, whether you agree or disagree with my words, I invite you to reflect on why those emotions came to be, and why they are speaking to you.

The economic, climate and humans rights crisis, emphasised by the global pandemic, forced us to rethink the way we exist in our world. It made us slow down, see with a new gaze, connect with our families and wider society in different ways, emphasize our relationality, and adapt to ever changing realities. We realised we need to question our previous beliefs and certainties, that life is a never-ending cycle of learning, unlearning and relearning. I consider this an invitation to look inside ourselves, to reform and transform towards a better life, a good living, *una vida buena, una vida digna y justa*, towards a Buen Vivir.

Buen Vivir helps to ground us, it provides the roots and foundations of a fair-dignified life, balancing our body, mind, heart and spirit, to take care of YO (I) and NOSOTROS (us), to become YOSOTROS, where our hearts can flourish.

Nichimaj no'ox li ko'ontone, mi corazón florece, my heart flourishes.

Figure 90 Embroidered Buen Vivir wishes to myself for New Year's Eve 2019. Diana Albarrán González, 2020. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

I consider Buen Vivir-centric design as an invitation to unity and solidarity, embracing the pluralities of the pluriverse and *ser uno con el todo.*

Finally, I want to close this thesis with the first waiata (song) I learned in Aotearoa, and until now, my favourite. A composition that symbolizes a message of hope…

Te aroha (Love)
Te whakapono (Faith)
Me te rangimārie (And peace)
Tātou tātou e (Be amongst us all)

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Glossary

Term	Language	Meaning
Abya Yala	Kuna	Indigenous name to the Americas from the Guna (Kuna) people from Colombia and Panamá. It has been widely used to name the American Continent instead of the coloniser's-imposed name of America.
Alzador	Spanish	Bar in the backstrap loom for pulling threads to change direction from back to forth.
Artesanía	Spanish	Craft
Artist-manus	Latin	Art with the hands
Autogestión	Spanish	Self-management, self-governance
Autonomía	Spanish	"Cultural, ecological and political process that involves autonomous forms of existence and decision making" (Escobar, 2016)
Bajar y no subir	Spanish	Go down, don't go up
Blusa	Spanish	Blouse or shirt
Buen gobierno	Spanish	Good government
Buen Vivir	Spanish	Concept and philosophy from various indigenous peoples from *Abya Yala*, addressing harmonious relations with natural-cultural environments and harmonious coexistence between human beings and the earth.
Caminando junto	Spanish	Walking alongside
Caracoles	Spanish	Snails
Cemanáhuac	Náhuatl	Indigenous name to the Americas from ancient Aztecs in Mexico
Ch'ulel		Life force, spirit, consciousness, soul
Ch´unel maltal	Tseltal	Obeying a mandate
Colectividad	Spanish	Collectivity
Compañero	Spanish	Comrade
Conocimientos	Spanish	Knowledge
Construir y no destruir	Spanish	Construct, don't destroy
Convencer y no vencer	Spanish	Convince, don't defeat
Convivialidad	Spanish	Conviviality
Corazonar	Spanish	Reasoning and feeling with the heart, co-razón or co-reason. To understand with the heart.
Cosmovisión	Spanish	Cosmology. In Spanish, it stands for the vision of the cosmos.
Coyotaje	Spanish	Act done by coyote.
Coyote	Spanish	A person who buys from artisans at very low prices and re-sell for higher in other contexts. Term commonly used in the textile field in Mexico.
Coyuche	Spanish	Pre-Columbian cotton
Culturas populares tradicionales	Spanish	Traditional folk or popular culture

Term	Language	Meaning
Despojo		Dispossession
Diseño artesanal	Spanish	Field where artisans and designers collaborate for the development of artisanal products.
Diseño del Sur	Spanish	Design of the Global South
Diseños otros	Spanish	Design, or design with other names
El golpe del corazón	Spanish	The strike of the heart
Empuntado	Spanish	Casting off textiles, finishing fringes
Empuntar	Spanish	Act of casting off textiles, finishing fringes
Entramados comunitarios	Spanish	Communitarian entanglements
FONART	Spanish	Fondo Nacional para el Fomento de las Artesanías
Giro decolonial	Spanish	Decolonial turn
Hapu	Māori	Tribe
Horizontalidad	Spanish	Horizontality
Hui	Māori	Meeting, discussion
Huipil	Náhuatl	Traditional garment worn by indigenous women from central Mexico to central America
Huipiles	Spanish	Plural of huipil
Hunab Ku	Mayan	Mayan dual deity that has both feminine and masculine energy, gives life and death. Complementary balance.
Hunab Ku	Mayan	Mayan dual deity of masculine and feminine energy
Ilegítima, espuria y violenta	Spanish	Illegitimate, spurious and violent
Individualismo	Spanish	Thinking and acting as an individual, without taking into consideration the opinions of group members
Interculturalidad	Spanish	Interculturality
Investigación activista	Spanish	Activist research
Itzamná	Mayan	Itzamná is a pre-Columbian Mayan deity, ruler of heaven, day and night
Ixchebel Yax	Mayan	Mayan goddess of teaching, childbirth, the moon, sexual relations, storms and water. Partner of Itzamná.
Ixchel	Mayan	Mayan goddess of the moon, daughter of *Ixchebel Yax* and *Itzamná*, patroness of weaving, medicine, birth, flooding and protector of the arts.
Jobel	Mayan	Mayan name of San Cristóbal de las Casas.
Jolobil		*Telar de cintura* or backstrap loom.
Jun ko´tantik		To be in one heart
Kai	Māori	Food
Kanohi ea o kanohi	Māori	Face to face, to be personally present. Concept used in Kaupapa Māori
Kanohi kitea	Māori	Seen face, to be personally present. Concept used in Kaupapa Māori
Karakia	Māori	Blessings
Kaupapa		
Kaupapa whānau	Māori	Group with common interests. Could be

Term	Language	Meaning
		linked or not by ancestry. Family-like.
Kaxlana		Not from the community
Khipu	Quéchua	Andean oral record-keeping device or talking knots
Koha	Māori	Gift
Kokoro	Japanese	Heart and mind
Koltomba	Tseltal	Mutual aid
Komon u´ntik	Tseltal	Common good
La lanzadera	Spanish	Bobbin
La lucha es por la vida	Spanish	The fight is for the life
La raza cósmica	Spanish	The Cosmic Race
Las que hacen tejido	Spanish	Those who make weaving
Lekil Kuxlejal	Tsotsil, Tseltal	*Lekil* is good, *Kuxlejal* is life. Recognised as fair-dignified life. *Buen vivir* from Mayan Tsotsil and Tseltal people from Chiapas.
Los altos de Chiapas	Spanish	The highlands of Chiapas
Los conocimientos indígenas	Spanish	Indigenous knowledge
Ma	Japanese	Between-ness
Mahi-toi	Māori	Doing art
Mal-vibrar	Spanish	Bad vibes
Malacate	Spanish	Tool used to rotate the yarn of cotton in weaving
Malacate taller experimiental textil	Spanish	Independent textile collective and research partners.
Mana	Māori	Authority, influence, status.
Mana wahine	Māori	Woman of strength. Theoretical and methodological approach that explicitly examines the intersection of being Māori and female.
Manaaki	Māori	Hosting, taking care of, upholding the mana. Manaakitanga
Manaakitanga	Māori	Care for others, hospitality
Mandar obedeciendo	Spanish	Leading by obeying
Manualidad	Spanish	Craft
Māori	Māori	Indigenous people of Aotearoa-New Zealand.
Mauri	Māori	Essence of life, the soul
Me luch		Symbol of the Earth / cosmos
Mestizo(a)	Spanish	People with indigenous and Spanish ancestry in México.
Milpa-tierra-mundo	Spanish	Maize-earth-world
Mis compañeras	Spanish	Friends, comrade, partner
Muchos mundos	Spanish	Pluriverse
NGO	English	Non-profit organisation independent from the government.
Global North	English	Global Global North. Term that shifts from a central focus on development or cultural difference toward an emphasis on geopolitical relations of power, based on Dados, 2012.
Nosotros	Spanish	Us

Term	Language	Meaning
O’tan	Tseltal	Heart
Obedecer y no mandar	Spanish	Obey, don’t lead
Obras de arte popular y artesanales	Spanish	Folk art and artisanal pieces
Ometeotl or Ōmeteōtl	Náhuatl	Aztec dual deity that has both feminine and masculine energy, gives life and death. Complementary balance.
Otro mundo	Spanish	Other world
Pachamama	Quéchua	Mother Earth in the Andean worldview
Palabra verdadera	Spanish	True word
Papatūānuku	Māori	Mother Earth in the Māori worldview
Pasar por el cuerpo y el corazón	Spanish	Go through the body and the heart
Pat’otan		Life force, literally, behind the heart
Patrones	Spanish	Patterns
Pensar	Spanish	Thinking
Pepen	Tsotsil	Butterfly
Plantar las semillas del corazón	Spanish	To plant the seeds of the heart
Propiedad industrial	Spanish	Industrial property
Proponer y no imponer	Spanish	Propose, don’t impose
Pueblos originarios	Spanish	Indigenous people
Puntas	Spanish	Fringe
Remate	Spanish	Finishing, conclusions
Representar y no suplantar	Spanish	Represent, don’t replace
Rebozo	Spanish	Mexican garment
Saberes	Spanish	Indigenous knowledge, group of beliefs that are useful to everyday life and for the development of human collectives.
Sarape fino	Spanish	Mexican garment
Sbék’	Tsotsil	Semilla
Sentipensar	Spanish	Feeling-thinking or sensing-thinking. Concept linked to Fals-Borda.
Servir y no servirse	Spanish	Serve, don’t serve yourself
Sjalel	Tsotsil	Weaving
Sna´el yayel a´yej	Tseltal	knowing how to listen
Global South	English	Global Global South. Term that shifts from a central focus on development or cultural difference toward an emphasis on geopolitical relations of power. Metaphor for underdevelopment, based on Dados, 2012.
Stalel	Tsotsil	Way of being
Sudaca	Spanish	Perjorative term for Global South Americans
Talanoa	Tongan	Meeting, discussion
Tangata taketake	Māori	Native from a country different to Aotearoa
Tangata Tiriti	Māori	People of the Treaty
Tangata whenua	Māori	People of the land
ea o Māori	Māori	Māori world
Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa	Māori	Pacific Ocean
Te reo Māori	Māori	Māori language

Term	Language	Meaning
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	Māori	The Treaty of Waitangi
Tejer con el corazón	Spanish	Weave with the heart
Telar	Spanish	Loom
Telar de cintura	Spanish	Backstrap loom, also, biocultural knowledge
Tikanga Māori	Māori	Māori protocols and customs
Tino rangatiratanga	Māori	Sovereignty
Tonantzin	Náhuatl	Mother Earth in the Aztec worldview
Trama	Spanish	Weft
Tseltal	Tseltal	Mayan people from Chiapas
Tsotsil	Tsotsil	Mayan people from Chiapas
Tzotzopaztli	Náhuatl	Machete or sword
Uno con el todo	Spanish	Interconnectedness
Urdimbre	Spanish	Warp
Vida digna y justa	Spanish	Fair-dignified life
Wahine	Māori	Woman, female.
Wairua	Māori	Soul or spirit
Whakaiti	Māori	Small, humble, minimal
Whakapapa	Māori	Ancestry
Whānau	Māori	Māori pre-colonial foundational social unit, remaining today as way of living and structuring the social world.
Whanaungatanga	Māori	Introduction, relations
Whatu kākahu	Māori	Māori cloak.
Whatu tāniko	Māori	Finger weaving process and technique
Whatuora	Māori	'New' *kaupapa* Māori methodology emerged from the 'old' practice of *whatu* as a theorised decolonising methodology.
Whiripapa	Māori	Flat three strand cord or rope
Winik	Tsotsil	Person
Yanantin	Quéchua	Equilibrium
Yosotros	Spanish	Yo plus nosotros, I plus us
Yupana	Quéchua	Indigenous innovation counting device developed by the Incas.
Zapatismo	Spanish	Armed movement identified with the ideas of Emiliano Zapata, leader of the Mexican Revolution, reflected mainly in the Plan de Ayala term 1911. The members of the Liberation Army of the Global South led by Zapata were known as "Zapatistas".

Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics approval

AUTEC Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, WU406 Level 4 WU Building City Campus
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

22 November 2017

Thomas Mical
Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies

Dear Thomas

Ethics Application: 17/380 Decolonising design with indigenous artisans in Mexico for ethical consumption

Thank you for submitting your application for ethical review. I am pleased to advise that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) approved your ethics application at their meeting on 20 November 2017, subject to the following conditions:

1. Provision of a protocol for obtaining the video consent;
2. Due to the potential literacy needs of the participants, please reconsider providing access to the thesis. Would a video-recorded summary be more appropriate?
3. Amendment of the Information Sheet as follows:
   a. In the costs of time please be more precise about the time involved (e.g. Every day for two weeks between 9am and 5 pm);
   b. In all places where photographs are mentioned please revise to video/photographs.

Please provide me with a response to the points raised in these conditions, indicating either how you have satisfied these points or proposing an alternative approach. AUTEC also requires copies of any altered documents, such as Information Sheets, surveys etc. You are not required to resubmit the application form again. Any changes to responses in the form required by the committee in their conditions may be included in a supporting memorandum.

Please note that the Committee is always willing to discuss with applicants the points that have been made. There may be information that has not been made available to the Committee, or aspects of the research may not have been fully understood.

Once your response is received and confirmed as satisfying the Committee's points, you will be notified of the full approval of your ethics application. Full approval is not effective until all the conditions have been met. Data collection may not commence until full approval has been confirmed. If these conditions are not met within six months, your application may be closed and a new application will be required if you wish to continue with this research.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, we ask that you use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at ethics@aut.ac.nz.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely

Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: diana.albarran@aut.ac.nz; Johnson Witehira

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

8 October 2018

Thomas Mical
Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies

Dear Thomas

Re: Ethics Application: **17/380 Decolonising design with indigenous artisans in Mexico for ethical consumption**

Thank you for your request for ethics approval of the next phase of your research project.

Phase 11 of the data collection (workshops) is approved.

Non-Standard Conditions of Approval

I remind you of the **Standard Conditions of Approval**.

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation then you are responsible for obtaining it. If the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all locality legal and ethical obligations and requirements.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: diana.albarran@aut.ac.nz; Johnson Witehira

Appendix B

Appendix B:b: Participant Information Sheets

Participant Information Sheet

AUT
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

Date Information Sheet Produced:

30 October 2017

Project Title

Decolonising design with indigenous artisans in Mexico for ethical consumption.

An Invitation

Hello and "kia ora", as it is said in New Zealand or Aotearoa, name that is given by the Maori community, the indigenous people of this land. My name is Diana Albarrán González, a designer and researcher born in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas. I currently live with my 6-year-old daughter in Auckland, New Zealand, where I work as a design lecturer and I'm taking a PhD in design from a decolonised perspective.

Since I was a child, I've been interested in crafts, especially Chiapanecan textile for its beauty and significance. At the same time, being born in this state and being familiar with the textiles through traditional and reinterpreted pieces make me feel connected to my roots. My parents live in San Cristóbal de las Casas, I go back almost every year not only to visit family but to keep enriching with culture, food, visual beauty and textiles from my beloved land. The textile work from Zinacantán is one of my favourites and every time I get a piece it makes me reconnect with Chiapas.

Through the years I have noticed the emergence of initiatives where artisans and designers collaborate in the creation of artisanal pieces and commercialization initiatives. My perception is that just a few organizations have respectful approaches to artisanal communities and their work. They end up appropriating knowledges that do not belong to them and take advantage from initiatives like fair trade when they are not.

For this reason, I believe it is necessary to study and generate models of work and collaboration where indigenous artisanal groups and their knowledges are placed in the centre and are the motor for development beyond what designers want. The work you do in Malacate Taller Experimental is one of the few that I know have equitable collaborations and indigenous knowledge and wishes are listen and respected. You could be considered an example, and due to this reason, I would like to approach you to learn and lend my experience in the joint creation of possibilities and shared goals. My interest in your group is not only to obtain a PhD degree but to spread the word about your example. Foremost, to make designers aware of hegemonic practices that could be considered coloniser and disrespectful and analyse their own agendas before approaching indigenous artisanal groups.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to give voice to artisans regarding ethical and respectful collaborations and to understand how decolonised design would work beyond replicating western design models, as taught by many design schools. The idea is to put indigenous perspective at the centre to develop own definitions of community well-being instead of putting you as passive receptors. Respect and autonomy should be crucial in the approaches intended by designers. These approaches are commonly not questioned or revised.

Other communities could benefit from having mechanism to identify design initiatives that do not respect the community's autonomy and place designer's knowledge and influence on top of indigenous artisanal groups interests. This research could contribute to the creation of an ethics decalogue for artisanal design in Mexico, to reform design education programs to be shifted from hegemonic design practices, and promote initiatives with approaches that truly seek to benefit artisanal communities beyond commercialisation.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

As I mentioned earlier, the work you do in Malacate Taller Experimental is one of the few that I know has equitable collaborations and indigenous knowledge and wishes are listened and respected. You could be considered an example to follow. For this reason, I approach to you as experience artisans and members of Malacate, to be part of this study.

The idea is to explain through this video the objectives of the research and to know if you are interested in participating in it. The study has two stages, in the first stage, I will visit you during a 2 weeks period between 9am and 5pm in January 2018, to start the dialogue. I would be present in your conversations about the work you do in Malacate, and sometimes I will ask questions related to your activities.

27 November 2017 page 1 of 3 This version was edited in July 2016

I will also be taking pictures and videos of the artisanal processes, interactions and work spaces to understand how do you organise and work in collaboration. At the end of this period, I would like to discuss with the group how could I collaborate towards projects that are interesting and beneficial for your group within my experience and capacity.

The second stage of the study would be several months later, where I would go back to your community for a longer period of time to be able to jointly develop the project or projects previously defined in stage one.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

In our first meeting, I will read the consent form to inform again about the requirements this research needs. Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

The idea is that I could observe and collect information about the creative and collaborative process of the textiles your group make. Where the ideas and inspiration come from in the creation of the artisanal pieces for self-consumption and for commercialization, as well as the conversations between you as members of Malacate towards yours and your families' well-being. This information will be collected through three main streams, photographs, video, and audio recording group conversations. I would like to also speak with some individually to know your different visions of how do you use traditional knowledge in the creation of textile pieces, as well as your opinions about collaborating with other designers.

All this information will be seen only by me as researcher and my research supervisors. No image and video will be published on social media and for academic purposes unless it has been approved by the person in the picture and the group. I will give copies of all the photographs and videos taken during the research and you will be able to use them for commercial purposes if you discuss it with me first and giving me credit as the author.

What are the discomforts and risks and how these will be alleviated?

It is not my intention to put you in discomfort situations at any stage of the research. You will have the freedom to indicate what can and cannot be video recorded or photographed, as well as not answering questions if you want. If you wish to share something personal that you would like not to be mentioned in the research, you can indicate it and I will not share it at any point. After a period interacting with me, you wish to finish our session, you have absolute freedom to tell me and we can reschedule another visit.

What are the benefits?

The benefits that you might have as participants are the promotion of your work in international platforms, as well as echo your voices and opinions about ethical and respectful collaborations. At the same time and if it is in your interest, you could be pioneers in the development of decolonised design processes that do not replicate western creative and design models. You could develop models where you feel comfortable and your voices are the leading role and not the designers' like happen in many cases. Putting your voices at the centre helps towards having new perspectives about the relation between community and personal well-being and artisanal creation beyond commercial processes.

As mentioned earlier, other groups and cooperatives could benefit from your example by putting indigenous perspectives as the main voice in artisanal development processes and do not place designers as the central role and respect the autonomy of the indigenous group in artisanal design initiatives in Mexico and Latin America.

For me, as researcher, this research will help me to obtain a PhD degree in design. But, beyond the degree, this field research with a relevant artisanal group is like a dream come true, specially being from the same land. This topic has been interesting for many years but only from theory and academia without knowing the voices behind the amazing work. It would be an honour for me to collaborate with you and figure out ways in which I can contribute to your interests.

How will my privacy be protected?

Due to the nature of photographic and video work, your identity could be recognised through the pictures. For this reason, only people who feel comfortable above with this issue, being 18 years-old and above, and that voluntary accept to be in the images and video can participate in the research. However, no images or videos will be used or published without the consent of the person in the photograph and the group. Your names can be omitted if that is your wish.

All the personal information of the participants who accept to take part of this study will be highly confidential. Your data will be stored on an encrypted, password-protected hard drive in the researcher's office in New Zealand and it will be destroyed after six years.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

All the research will take place in your community; therefore, it will not generate transportation expenses to you. I will respect your rhythms, activities and places, thus I will adequate the session according to your needs. Feel free to adjust the length of the sessions without repercussion.

I intent to visit you during a two weeks period time between 9 am to 5pm. The length of the group sessions will last the regular time you use for meetings. Individual discussions will be planned to last between one and two hours, and will be adjusted based on your availability. If after a period interacting with me, you wish to finish our session, you have absolute freedom to tell me and we can reschedule another visit.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You could consider your participation in this research from the moment you see this video and discussed it with your group. In our first meeting, you will be able to inform me who are interested in participating and those who are not. Remember that you can withdraw from this study at any time even though you have initially said yes.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

I will provide a copy of my thesis as result of my PhD as established by your group, as well as any publication or presentation that emerge as a result from this research. You will have copies of all the pictures and videos taken during the process. I can also provide a video summary of the results if required.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Thomas Mical, thomas.mical@aut.ac.nz, +64 921 9999 #7100.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , +64 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Diana Albarrán González, diana.albarran@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Thomas Mical, thomas.mical@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 #7100.

Dr Johnson Witehira, johnson.witehira@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 #8063

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *type the date final ethics approval was granted*, AUTEC Reference number *type the reference number*.

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

01 October 2018

Project Title

Decolonising artisanal design with indigenous artisans in Mexico for ethical consumption: Second Stage.

An Invitation

Hello and "kia ora", as it is said in New Zealand or Aotearoa, name that is given by the Maori community, the indigenous people of this land. My name is Diana Albarrán González, a designer and researcher born in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas. I currently live with my 6-year-old daughter in Auckland, New Zealand, where I work as a design lecturer and I'm taking a PhD in design from a decolonised perspective.

Since I was a child, I've been interested in crafts, especially Chiapanecan textile for its beauty and significance. At the same time, being born in this state and being familiar with the textiles through traditional and reinterpreted pieces make me feel connected to my roots. My parents live in San Cristóbal de las Casas, I go back almost every year not only to visit family but to keep enriching with culture, food, visual beauty and textiles from my beloved land. The textile work from Zinacantán is one of my favourites and every time I get a piece it makes me reconnect with Chiapas.

Through the years I have noticed the emergence of initiatives where artisans and designers collaborate in the creation of artisanal pieces and commercialization initiatives. My perception is that just a few organizations have respectful approaches to artisanal communities and their work. They end up appropriating knowledges that do not belong to them and take advantage from initiatives like fair trade when they are not.

For this reason, I believe it is necessary to study and generate models of work and collaboration where indigenous artisanal groups and their knowledges are placed in the centre and are the motor for development beyond what designers want. The work you do in Malacate Taller Experimental is one of the few that I know have equitable collaborations and indigenous knowledge and wishes are listen and respected. You could be considered an example, and due to this reason, I would like to approach you to learn and lend my experience in the joint creation of possibilities and shared goals. My interest in your group is not only to obtain a PhD degree but to spread the word about your example. Foremost, to make designers aware of hegemonic practices that could be considered coloniser and disrespectful and analyse their own agendas before approaching indigenous artisanal groups.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to give voice to artisans regarding ethical and respectful collaborations and to understand how decolonised design would work beyond replicating western design models, as taught by many design schools. The idea is to put indigenous perspective at the centre to develop own definitions of community well-being instead of putting you as passive receptors. In this research stage we are going to have workshops to explore the concept of Lekil Kuxlejal as a guideline to respect the autonomy and to inform intended approaches of designers. These approaches are commonly not questioned or revised.

Other communities could benefit from having mechanism to identify design initiatives that do not respect the community's autonomy and place designer's knowledge and influence on top of indigenous artisanal groups interests. This research could contribute to the creation of an ethics decalogue for artisanal design in Los Altos de Chiapas, to reform design education programs to be shifted from hegemonic design practices and promote initiatives with approaches that truly seek to benefit artisanal communities beyond commercialisation.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

As I mentioned earlier, the work you do in Malacate Taller Experimental is one of the few that I know has equitable collaborations and indigenous knowledge and wishes are listened and respected. You could be considered an example to follow. For this reason, I approach to you as experience artisans and members of Malacate, to be part of this study.

The idea is to explain through this video the objectives of the research and to know if you are interested in participating in it. In this second research trip, I will facilitate 3 workshops to explore the concept of Lekil Kuxlejal

as guideline to define respectful and horizontal collaborations with designers and other organisations. I would also like to take lessons of backstrap weaving on days and times you are available.

I will be taking pictures and videos of the workshops, material creations, processes and the backstrap weave lessons. At the end of this period, I would like to discuss with the group how could I further collaborate towards projects that are interesting and beneficial for your group within my experience and capacity.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Before the workshop, I will read the consent form to inform again about the requirements this research needs. Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

The idea is that we can work together to create collective mood boards exploring the concept Lekil Kuxlejal through different sense. How does it feel being in Lekil Kuxlejal? How does Lekil Kuxlejal smell? To mention some examples. Our collective process will be documented through three main streams: photographs, video, and audio recording group conversations.

I will also be an apprentice to learn backstrap weaving as knowledge that has being limited through colonisation and as a way to reconnect with my Indigenous roots.

All this information will be seen only by me as researcher and my research supervisors. No image and video will be published on social media and for academic purposes unless it has been approved by the person in the picture and the group. I will give copies of all the photographs and videos taken during the research and you will be able to use them for commercial purposes if you discuss it with me first and giving me credit as the author.

What are the discomforts and risks and how these will be alleviated?

It is not my intention to put you in discomfort situations at any stage of the research. You will have the freedom to indicate what can and cannot be video recorded or photographed, as well as not answering questions if you want. If you wish to share something personal that you would like not to be mentioned in the research, you can indicate it and I will not share it at any point. After a period interacting with me, you wish to finish our session, you have absolute freedom to tell me and we can reschedule another visit.

What are the benefits?

The benefits that you might have as participants are the promotion of your work in international platforms, as well as echo your voices and opinions about ethical and respectful collaborations. At the same time and if it is in your interest, you could be pioneers in the development of decolonised design processes using Lekil Kuxlejal as a framework. You could develop models where you feel comfortable and your voices are the leading role and not the designers' like happen in many cases. Putting your voices at the centre helps towards having new perspectives about the relation between community and personal well-being and artisanal creation beyond commercial processes.

As mentioned earlier, other groups and cooperatives could benefit from your example by putting indigenous perspectives as the main voice in artisanal development processes and do not place designers as the central role and respect the autonomy of the indigenous group in artisanal design initiatives in Mexico and Latin America.

For me, as researcher, this research will help me to obtain a PhD degree in design. But, beyond the degree, this field research with a relevant artisanal group is like a dream come true, specially being from the same land. This topic has been interesting for many years but only from theory and academia without knowing the voices behind the amazing work. It would be an honour for me to collaborate with you and figure out ways in which I can contribute to your interests.

How will my privacy be protected?

Due to the nature of photographic and video work, your identity could be recognised through the pictures. For this reason, only people who feel comfortable above with this issue, being 18 years-old and above, and that voluntary accept to be in the images and video can participate in the research. However, no images or videos will be used or published without the consent of the person in the photograph and the group. Your names can be omitted if that is your wish.

All the personal information of the participants who accept to take part of this study will be highly confidential. Your data will be stored on an encrypted, password-protected hard drive in the researcher's office in New Zealand and it will be destroyed after six years.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

In the case you need to travel to San Cristóbal de las Casas or other location for workshops, you travel expenses will be covered. I will also cover the costs of materials and backstrap weaving teaching lessons. I will respect your rhythms, activities and places, thus I will adequate the session according to your needs. Feel free to adjust the length of the sessions without repercussion.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You could consider your participation in this research from the moment you see this video and discussed it with your group. In our first meeting, you will be able to inform me who are interested in participating and those who are not. Remember that you can withdraw from this study at any time even though you have initially said yes.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

I will provide a copy of my thesis as result of my PhD as established by your group, as well as any publication or presentation that emerge as a result from this research. You will have copies of all the pictures and videos taken during the process. I can also provide a video summary of the results.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Thomas Mical, thomas.mical@aut.ac.nz, +64 921 9999 #7100.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , +64 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Diana Albarrán González, diana.albarran@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Thomas Mical, thomas.mical@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 #7100.

Dr Jani Wilson, jani.wilson@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 9219999 ext 8601

Dr Amabel Hunting, amabel.hunting@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 # 8762

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *type the date final ethics approval was granted*, **AUTEC Reference number** *type the reference number*.

Appendix B:c: Consent forms

Consent and Release Form

AUT
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

Project title: ***Decolonising Design with indigenous artisans in Mexico for ethical consumption***

Project Supervisor: ***Dr. Thomas Mical***

Researcher: ***Diana Albarrán González***

- ○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 30 October 2017.
- ○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ○ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ○ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ○ I permit the researcher | artist to use the photographs/videos that are part of this project and/or any drawings from them and any other reproductions or adaptations from them, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wording and/or drawings solely and exclusively for (a) the researcher's | artist's portfolio; and (b) educational exhibition and examination purposes and related design works.
- ○ I understand that the photographs/videos will be used for academic purposes only and will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.
- ○ I understand that any copyright material created by the photographic/video sessions is deemed to be owned by the researcher | artist and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs/videos.
- ○ I agree to take part in this research.
- ○ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes○ No○

Participant's signature: .....

Participant's name: .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

.....

.....

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *type the date on which the final approval was granted* ***AUTEC Reference number*** *type the AUTEC reference number*

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form

2 July 2015 page 1 of 1 This version was last edited in June 2016

Consent and Release Form

Project title: ***Decolonising Artisanal Design with indigenous artisans in Mexico for ethical consumption: Second Stage***

Project Supervisor: ***Dr. Thomas Mical***

Researcher: ***Diana Albarrán González***

- ○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 01 October 2018.
- ○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ○ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ○ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ○ I permit the researcher | artist to use the photographs/videos that are part of this project and/or any drawings and material creation from them and any other reproductions or adaptations from them, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wording and/or drawings solely and exclusively for (a) the researcher's | artist's portfolio; and (b) educational exhibition and examination purposes and related design works; and (c) all forms and media for advertising, trade and any other lawful purposes as stated on the Information Sheet.
- ○ I understand that the photographs will not be published in any form outside of this project without my written permission.
- ○ I understand that any copyright material created by the researcher in the photographic sessions is deemed to be owned by the researcher | artist and that I do not own copyright of any of the photographs/videos.
- ○ I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature: .....

Participant's name: .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

.....

.....

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on ***type the date on which the final approval was granted*** ***AUTEC Reference number*** ***type the AUTEC reference number***

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form

Appendix C: Supporting material

Appendix C:a: Cases of plagiarism between 2008 and 2019 in Mexico

Year	Affected community	Indigenous group	Company involved

Year	Affected community	Indigenous group	Company involved
2008	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Hermes
2014	Itsmo de Tehuantepec, Oaxaca	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	Pineda Covalin
2014	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Mara Hoffman
2015	Santa María Tlahuitoltepec, Oaxaca	Mixe (***Ayuujkjä'äy)***	Isabel Marant
2015	Itsmo de Tehuantepec, Oaxaca	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	M Missoni
2015	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Nestlé
2016	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Pottery Barn
2016	Nayarit, Jalisco, Zacatecas, and Durango	Huichol (***Wixáritari)***	Nike
2016	San Antonino Castillo de Velasco, Oaxaca	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	Rapsodia
2016	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Draco Textil
2016	Itsmo de Tehuantepec, Oaxaca	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	Draco Textil
2016	San Gabriel Chilac, Puebla	Nahua	Mango
2017	San Juan Bautista Tlacoatzintepec, Oaxaca	Chinanteco (***Tsa ju jmí')***	Intropia
2017	San Andrés Larrainzar, Chiapas	**Maya Tsotsil *(****Batsil Winik' Otik)*	Madewell
2017	Aguacatenango, Chiapas	Maya Tseltal (***Winik atel)***	Zara
2017	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Mango
2017	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Yuya
2018	San Juan Chamula, Chiapas	Maya Tsotsil ***(Batsil Winik' Otik)***	Dior
2018	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	That's it
2017	Chicontepec, Veracruz	Nahua	Zara
2018	Aguacatenango, Chiapas	Maya Tseltal (***Winik atel)***	Zara
2018	San Gabriel Chilac, Puebla	Nahua	Forever 21
2018	Juchitán de Zaragoza, Oaxaca	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	Batik Amarillis
2018	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	Batik Amarillis
2018	Santiago Yaitepec, Oaxaca	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Batik Amarillis
2018	Aguacatenango, Chiapas	Maya Tseltal (***Winik atel)***	Star Mela
2018	San Juan Chamula, Chiapas	Maya Tsotsil ***(Batsil Winik' Otik)***	Star Mela
2018	San Juan Bautista Valle Nacional, Oaxaca	Chinanteco (***Tsa ju jmí')***	Star Mela
2018	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	Marks and Spencer
2019	Santa María Tlahuitoltepec,	Mixe (***Ayuujkjä'äy)***	Somya

Year	Affected community	Indigenous group	Company involved
	Oaxaca		
2019	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	Desigual
2019	San Antonino Castillo de Velasco, Oaxaca	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	J Marie Collections
2019	San Felipe Jalapa de Díaz, Oaxaca	Mazateco (***Ha shuta enima)***	J Marie Collections
2019	San Vicente Coatlan, Oaxaca	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	J Marie Collections
2019	San Miguel Soyaltepec, Oaxaca	Mazateco (***Ha shuta enima)***	J Marie Collections
2019	San Juan Bautista Tlacoatzintepec, Oaxaca	Chinanteco (***Tsa ju jmí')***	Know México M.R. Original,
2019	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	, Louis Vouitton
2019	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Carolina Herrera
2019	Itsmo de Tehuantepec, Oaxaca	Zapoteca (***Binnizá***)	Carolina Herrera
2019	Saltillo, Coahuila		Carolina Herrera
2019	Aguacatenango, Chiapas	Maya Tseltal (***Winik atel)***	Zara
2019	Saltillo, Coahuila		Speedo
2019	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	Olive-Ave
2019	Tenango de Doria, Hidalgo	Otomí (***Hñähñu***)	United Colors of Benetton

Appendix C:b: Textile artisanal initiatives online platforms from San Cristóbal de las Casas

Textile initiatives	Type	Retail	Website	Facebook Page	Twitter	Instagram
Aid for Artisans	NGO	SC	http://mexico.creativelearning.org/	AidtoArtisansMexico	aidtoartisansmx	ata_mexico
Andrea Velasco	Independent		andreavelasco.mx (not active)			andreavelasco_mx
Carmen Rion	Independent	SC/CDMX	https://www.carmenrion.com/	CarmenRionModa	carmenrionmoda	carmenrion
Casa de las Artesanías de Chiapas	State		https://www.casadelasartesaniaschiapas.gob.mx/	InstitutoCasadelasArtesaniasdeChiapas	Artesania_Chis	casadelasartesaniaschiapas
Casa Textil	Independent	SC	https://casatextil.mx/	CasaTextilChiapas		casatextil
Casilda Mut	Independent	SC	https://www.casildamut.com.mx/	CasildaMut	CasildaMut	casildamut
Cecilia's Design	Independent			Cecilias-Design-588177064724263		ceciliasdesign2019
Centro de Textiles del Mundo Maya	State/NGO	SC	http://centrotextilesmayas.org/	centrodetextilesmm	CentroTextiles	centrodetextilesmm
Chamuchic	Independent		http://www.chamuchic.com/	Chamuchic-172224312798345	chamuchula	chamuchula
Corazon Artesanal	Independent	SC	http://www.corazonartesanal.com/	CorazonArtesanalMexico		corazonartesanal
D'Cara	Independent			d.cara.ar		d.ca.ra
El Camino de los Altos	Cooperative	SC/FR	http://www.el-camino.fr/	elcaminodelosaltosAC	elcaminodelosaltos	elcaminodelosaltos

El Gato con los Pies de Trapo	Independent			ElGatoConLosPiesDeTrapo		elgatoconlospiesdetrapo
Folklora	Independent	SC		FolkloraMX		folkloramx
Fundacion Leon XIII	NGO	CDMX	https://www.fundacionleontrece.org/	FundacionLeonXIII	leontreceorg	fundacionleontrece
Huellas que trascienden	NGO	SC	https://www.chqt.org/	huellasquetrascienden		huellasqt
Impacto	NGO		http://impacto.org.mx/	NGOimpacto	NGOimpacto	ngoimpacto
Jalabil	Independent	SC		jalabiltextil	JalabilTextiles	jalabiltextiles (Private)
Jolom Mayaetik	Cooperative	SC/CDMX	https://cooperativajolom.wordpress.com/	jolommayaetik / olonal	OlonalChiapas	olonal.mx
J'Pas Joloviletik	Cooperative	SC		Jpas-Joloviletik		
Kibeltik	Independent	SC		kibeltikchiapas		kibeltik
Kiptik	Independent		http://www.kiptik.mx/	kiptikmexico		kiptik
Kolaval	Independent	SC		Bordadosdechiapas		kolaval_bordados
Kux Lejal	Independent	SC		kuxlejalmx		kux_lejal
K'uxul Pok	Independent	SC		Kuxul-Pok-314013012645327		kuxul_pok
La Milpa	Independent	SC	https://lamilpatextil.wordpress.com/	lamilpatextil		
Lek Lek	Independent	SC		Leklekmodamexicana		leklekmodamexicana
Malacate Taller Experimental Textil	Independent			MalacateTallerExperimentalTextil		malacate_taller

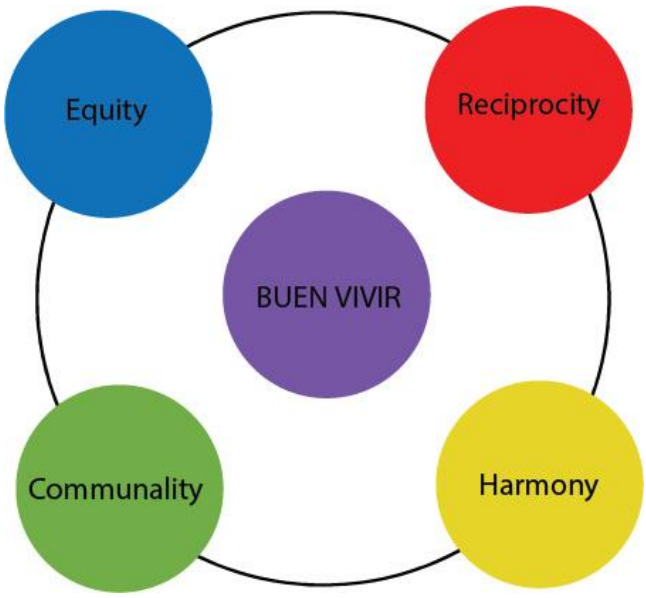
Maya Kotan	Independent	SC	http://www.mayakotan.com.mx/	MayaKotan	mayakotan	mayakotan
Mujeres Sembrando la vida	Cooperative	Zin		MSV.Textil		mujeres_sembrando_la_vida
Najel	Cooperative		http://www.najel.com.mx/ (not active)	artenajel	ArteNajel	
Nich	Independent	Zin	https://www.nichchiapas.com	NichChiapas	NichChiapas	nich_chiapas
Omorika (Margarita Cantu Elleby)	Independent		http://omorika.com.mx/			margaritacantue
Pepen	Independent			pepentextil		pepentextil
Sarah Hamui Textiles	Independent	CDMX	shtextiles	shtextiles		sh_textiles
Sna jolobil	Cooperative	SC		Snajolobil		sna_jolobil
Sta' lelal Maya	Cooperative	SC		Sta-Lelal-Maya-250049085197134		
Taabal	Independent	SC	https://taabal.com/	taabal	Taabal_Native	taabal
Textil Luz	Independent		http://www.textiluz.mx/ (not active)	textiluz	Textiluz	textiluzmx

Appendix C:c: Exhibition material

Material for the exhibition "Threads of Buen Vivir: Woven identities and experiences with Mayan weavers from the highlands of Chiapas and Latin American women in Aotearoa" as part of Glances of Diversity organised by ALAC Inc. November, 2019

Buen Vivir

Buen Vivir is a concept and philosophy from various Indigenous peoples from Abya Yala[61] addressing harmonious relations with natural-cultural environments and harmonious coexistence between human beings and the earth. First originated from *Sumak Kawsay* for Quechua, and *Suma Qamaña* for Aymara, Buen Vivir refers to a system of knowledges and practices from Indigenous peoples in the Andean region under principles of equity, communality, reciprocity and harmony, where we are one with *Pachamama*, Mother Earth.



Source: Based on the PhD Research from Diana Albarrán González "Towards a Buen Vivir-centric Design: Decolonising Textile Artisanal Design with Mayan Weavers from the Highland of Chiapas".

Los Hilos del Buen Vivir: Identidades y experiencias tejidas con tejedoras Mayas de los Altos de Chiapas y mujeres latinoamericanas en Aotearoa

La exhibición muestra las experiencias tejidas alrededor del Buen Vivir entre tejedoras Mayas en México y mujeres latinoamericanas en Nueva Zelanda. El Buen Vivir es una

[61] Abya Yala is the given name to the American Continent from the Guna people (formerly Kuna) from Colombia and Panamá. This term means land in full maturity or land in bloom.

filosofía de vida de varios pueblos originarios de Abya Yala que trata sobre el bienestar colectivo y las relaciones armónicas con el entorno natural-cultural, en dónde las actividades textiles juegan un papel relevante. A partir de la investigación colaborativa con el colectivo Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, se busca (re)crear espacios para la (re)conexión con la herencia cultural y entre grupos de mujeres Indígenas y migrantes.

The Threads of Buen Vivir: Woven identities and experiences with Mayan weavers from the highlands of Chiapas and Latin American women in Aotearoa.

The exhibition shows the weaved experiences around Buen Vivir with Mayan weavers in Mexico and Latin American women in New Zealand. Buen Vivir is a philosophy from various Indigenous peoples from Abya Yala addressing collective well-being and harmonious relations with natural-cultural environments, where textiles activities play a relevant role. Based in the collaborative research with the collective Malacate Taller Experimental Textil, it is intended to (re)create spaces for the (re)connection with cultural heritage and among groups of Indigenous and migrant women.

Figure 91 Colectividad. Nachig, Chiapas. 2018. Collectivity

Figure 92 Huipiles Pictóricos, Nachig, Chiapas, 2018. Pictorial huipiles

Figure 93 My teacher Mary, Nachig, Chiapas, 2018. My teacher Mary

Figure 94. Huipil ceremonial (Luch k'u'i) de Magdalenas Aldama, Chiapas. Maya Tsotsil. Telar de cintura. Colectivo K'uxul Pok'. Ceremonial Huipil from Magdalenas Aldama, Chiapas. Backstrap loom.

Figure 95 Huipil de Oxchuc, Chiapas. Maya Tseltal. Telar de cintura. Oxchuc huipil, Chiapas. Backstrap loom.

Figure 96 Huipil de San Juan Cancuc, Chiapas. Maya Tseltal. Telar de cintura. Colectivo Malacate Taller Experimental Textil. San Juan Cancuc huipil, Chiapas. Backstrap loom.

Figure 97 Tejiendo sueños para el Buen Vivir. Bordado colectivo dentro del 3er. Foro Femenino "Creciendo en Sororidad" organizado por ALAC Inc. Marzo, 2018. Weaving dreams for Buen Vivir. Collective weaved part of the 3rd Women´s forum organised by ALAC Inc. March, 2018

Figure 98 Rooted in Tonantzin. Fotobordado, 2019.

Appendix C:c: Posters

Posters for the itinerant exhibition *Present Tense: Wāhine Toi Aotearoa*. This exhibition was organised to record the current landscape of women in design and give visibility to the unsung diversity of Aotearoa design. The poster plus the description was used in a public feminist demonstration against Patriarchy in Auckland.

NI UNA MAS, Not one more, 2019.


NI UNA
Diana Albarran Gonzalez, 2019
NI UNA MAS, NOT ONE MORE
Present Tense : Wāhine Toi Aotearoa
Designers Speak (Up)
Directory of Women Designers
Aotearoa New Zealand

NI UNA MAS, NOT ONE MORE

In 1995, the activist Susana Chávez wrote in a poem "Ni una mujer menos, ni una muerta más" (Not one women less, not one more dead woman) denouncing women killing in Ciudad Juárez in the Northern border in México. She became a victim of femicide in 2011.

Based in her poem, **#NiUnaMas #NiUnaMenos** have become the legends for the Latin American movement against gender-based violence.

According to the United Nation statistics, around **64,000** women and girls are killed annually.

Furthermore, **14** of the **25** countries with the **highest rates of femicides** resides in **Latin America and the Caribbean.**

Women are killed at alarming rates:
Argentina, 1 woman every 30 hours
Guatemala, 2 women each day
Honduras, 2 woman every 16 hours
Mexico, 7 to 9 women every 24 hours

Whether online or on the streets, we must take action, we say
NI UNA MAS!

Appendix C:d: Pronoucement of the Colloquium Intangible Cultural Heritage: Rights and Intellectual Property of Indigenous Peoples (My translation)

Colloquium Intangible Cutural Heritage
Rights and Intellectual Property of Pueblos Originarios
November 8, 9, and 10, 2018
San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico

PRONOUCEMENT

To the public opinion, media, institutions and the three orders of the government. We, the participants of the Colloquium Intangible Cultural Heritage, pronounce the need to create legal frameworks for the acknowledgment to the rights and collective intellectual property of "pueblos originarios" (Indigenous peoples) and their traditional knowledge, considering:

- The current laws regarding intellectual property are considered inadequate to recognise and protect traditional knowledges and the Intangible Cultural Heritage, since "western" notions of intellectual property are different from the beliefs of Indigenous communities. Thus, while the applicable legal framework maintains the classic vision of intellectual property, the traditional knowledges are in risk of being considered as free from all intellectual property.
- There is a communitarian tradition of a communal form of collective intellectual property of the artefacts, in the sense that the ownership is not focused in an individual but to the group and their community.
- Pueblos originarios and the fact of their existence have the right to live freely in their own territories, the tight relationship Indigenous groups have with the land must be recognised and comprehended as the fundamental basis of their cultures, spiritual life, integrity and economic survival.

- The legislation of collective intellectual property rights is not enough, it must be accompanied with activities of promotion, diffusion and preservation, especially with the participation of members of the community to safeguard the Intangiblel Cultural Heritage.
- The States must take into consideration that the rights and intellectual property of Indigenous peoples encompass a wider and different concept that is related to the collective right of livelihood as organized community, with the control of their habitat and its practice as a necessary condition for the reproduction of their culture and its *lekil kuxlejal* (Buen Vivir, Good Living).

For the mentioned reasons, the participants in the Colloquium:

ACKNOWLEDGE that

- The connexion of Indigenous peoples and communities with their environment originate knowledges, wisdoms and practices that constitute an inherent element of their alive culture and they are part of day to day social and economic activities and customs. In this way, traditional knowledges constitute an inherent element of their identity, and poses cultural, historical and social values "provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity".
- The topic of rights and intellectual property of Indigenous peoples arises from the absence of precision in terms and processes involved exacerbating by an enormous legal hole. Speaking about law and culture at the same time.
- It is necessary to take certain considerations that aim to the reassessment of the revised problematic to collectively find suitable and effective solutions restoring communities to their cultural rights from their own perspective.

- By expressing the term intellectual property and collective rights we found a complication of meaning, since modes of comprehension appear not only distant between them, but many times reduced to practices of knowledge about individual property. We believe this route of understanding not only holds as utilitarian and pragmatic complication of the current capitalistic system, but also hides a central matter to inquire the named meaning: an ontologic condition of human beings and their multiple relations with the spiritual and nature that are permanently recreated in its history, this is, the way in which women and men constitute themselves in relation to the world we are creating from this first double dimension: biologic-cultural.

In this sense,

WE DENOUCE the stealing and commercialization of wisdom and traditional knowledges (seeds, medicinal plants, artefacts and cultural symbols) without the previous, informed and free consent of Indigenous peoples and communities, as well as the use of cultural and environmental heritage of Indigenous peoples for lucrative purposes without ensuring the participation of our peoples and communities.

WE STRONGLY REJECT the looting, stealing and plagiarism of symbols, artefacts, oral knowledge and cultural practices for lucrative purposes by people, national and international businesses, as well as the progressive privatization, dispossession of our knowledges and the expropriation of our natural resources.

WE DEMAND that any regulatory tool is built to suit our social and economic context, incorporating an inclusive vision of cultural intellectual property that includes at least eight principles of traditional knowledges: (i) respect, (ii) directo control from the community, (iii) communication, consultation and consent, (iv) interpretation, integrity

and authenticity, (v) privacy and confidentiality, (vi) attribution, (vii) fair remuneration, and (viii) collective property.

WE DEMAND to authorities in different levels, taking into consideration the example of Panama, stipulate that cultural heritage cannot be object of "any form of exclusivity by unauthorized third parties through intellectual property systems", assuming for those matters is necessary to considerate: 1) The creation of and institutional structure in state and national sectors in charge of watching for collective rights and cultural communitarian expressions, 2) The rights do not expire, 3) The regulatory and normative proposals have to be solicitated to traditional authorities or congress, 4) The use or commercialization has to be governed under the regulations of each community, 5) There must exist specific normativity for the case of commercialization and work with foreigners.

WE DEMAND to the State the acknowledgment and total respect to the cultural makers and carriers that are the legitimate creators and designers of their arts and culture, particularly, Intangible Cultural Heritage, especially aligned with the sense of human beings with history, wisdom and identity that invigorate, recreate and re-symbolize the elements and cultural practices from their contexts.

WE DEMAND to governments in local, state and national level the recognition and appreciation of cultural practices in Indigenous communities as Intangible Cultural Heritage to promote activities of dissemination and promotion with dignified budgets that guarantee the viability for next generations.

WE DEMAND to the Mexican State the fulfilment of San Andrés Larrainzar Accords (about right and culture) every time these recognise and defend our cultural

“autonomía” as Indigenous peoples of Chiapas and Mexico, as well as formulating laws for the protection of collective intellectual property and rights.

WE RECOMMEND to the States, international and regional organizations: To strengthen the capacities for the monitoring of international processes for the defence of collective rights and the integral development from the perspective of our communities. Likewise, based on previous, informed and free consent (in the wider sense of the word) of affected Indigenous groups, to design a National Policy for the managing, use, conservation and administration of their knowledges and natural resources in lands and territories of Indigenous peoples.

WE REQUEST civil society the urgent need to join forces from institutions, promotors, cultural makers, academics and artists to impulse a legislative initiative for the legal recognition and protection of the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indigenous peoples.

To summarize, we pronounce and elevate our claim to institutions of debate and national decision about the urgent need to design, elaborate, approve and promulgate a constitutional legal framework for the effective protection, recognition and execution of the rights of intellectual property of traditional knowledges of Indigenous peoples of Mexico.

Yes to the free circulation of culture and knowledges, NO to commercial exploitation without the fair and equitable participation of the communities.

Zinacantán, Chiapas, November 10, 2018