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# Components of spirituality to safeguard life for the development of an integral design management approach

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## Abstract

The present article is the initial result of fieldwork on design and spirituality in the scope of ongoing doctoral research in design. The research has been developed with Lusophone 'quilombolas', Afro-Brazilian and traditional family farming groups and communities from Brazil and Portugal, which present implicit spiritually driven design management approaches. The project proposes that a spiritual dimension should be a fundamental component of a design management strategy that is intended to be integral. The first learning case was carried out in ethnographic format with the Association of Women Farmers of Castelões (Associação das Mulheres Agricultoras de Castelões) in Portugal. The chosen methodology was the decomposition of the design and spirituality concept from the thoughts of Papanek (1971, 1995), Schumacher (1974), Walker (2011), Margolin (2014) and Escobar (2018). Components of spirituality were identified to guide field data collection. Subsequently, these components were identified from the participatory experience and participant observation with the artisans and analysed. In conclusion, it was possible to conceive 'components' of a reinvented spirituality for today, 'Spirituality to Safeguard Life'. These may support the development of a spiritually driven design management approach with a Lusophone reference, entitled 'Integral Design Management'. It is planned to apply this approach in academic, business, governmental, non-governmental and civil society environments. Through its practice, it is intended to promote the implementation of transformative systems with values and paradigm shifts for the recovery, flourishing and continuity of life.

**Keywords:** Design and spirituality, Linen ancestral tradition, Transformative social innovation, Components of spirituality

## Introduction

This study addresses the theme of design and spirituality. It is based on different theoretical lenses, with a special focus on the thought of the anthropologist Arturo Escobar (2018). The aims of the study are: 1) to present the identification and translation of spirituality components from the thoughts of Papanek (1971, 1995), Schumacher (1974), Walker (2011), Margolin (2014) and Escobar (2018) to serve as indicators for fieldwork guidance, 2) to identify and analyse the components of spirituality through participative experience and participant observation with the artisans of the Association of Women Farmers of Castelões and 3) to present components of a spirituality recreated for today, called 'Spirituality to Safeguard Life', which can support the development of an 'Integral Design Management' approach.

The case study is on the Association of Women Farmers of Castelões, which was established 20 years ago by a group of women whom we call 'linen ladies'. They are now in their 80s and come together to keep alive the ancestral tradition of the linen cycle – from sowing to weaving – in the village of Castelões, Tondela in Portugal.

Since the beginning of the Association's project implementation, the artisans aimed to preserve local production with linen, as well as to produce new artefacts, keeping alive the ancestral traditional techniques and the ways of being, knowing and doing of this territory. The ladies are retired; they do not depend on linen production for their financial survival, i.e. they do not work according to a subsistence logic. Through manual and agricultural activities with linen, the artisans relate interdependently with presence, care, love and affection, among themselves and with the village, their ancestors, nature and the divine. They meet every Tuesday to spin, weave, embroider and crochet the linen and to produce the artefacts that guarantee the continuity of the ancestral knowledge embodied in their lives.

The present paper is the initial outcome of ongoing PhD research in design. The fieldwork with the linen ladies was and is being conducted in an ethnographic format through participatory experience and participant observation with the artisans (Angrosino, 2012; Martin & Hanington, 2019; Pink, 2009). The field study is also being conducted through an online ethnographic approach (Ardévol & Gómez-Cruz, 2013; Pink, 2006) with three 'quilombolas' (the descendants and remainders of communities formed by runaway slaves) and Afro-Brazilian groups and communities in Brazil that present implicit spiritually driven design management approaches.

The focus of the PhD research is design management, an area that does not currently include dimensions of spirituality. The project proposes that a spiritual dimension should be a fundamental component of a design management strategy that is intended to be integral: that is, multidimensional, encompassing spirituality in collaborative, collective, social, design, management and empathy aspects in a design management approach. This is a research gap in that, to date, the present study has not identified the existence of an 'Integral Design Management' approach with a Lusophone reference.

It is believed that, due to humanitarian and civilisational crisis, it is vital to develop and implement strategic actions of design for transitions through transformative social innovation principles (Escobar, 2018). Therefore, it is essential to think about design guided by spirituality, and as a means, a facilitator of transformative systems that make socioeconomic, environmental, cultural and human rights transformations for recovery, flourishing and continuity of life.

To promote such systems, the intention is to propose an 'Integral Design Management' approach with a Lusophone reference, guided by the spiritualities of Political, Gaia, Self-Awareness and Divine/Sacred. It is intended to develop and implement the 'Integral Design Management' approach based on the ancestral traditional knowledge of 'quilombolas', Afro-Brazilian and family farming groups and communities from Brazil and Portugal that collaborate with the development of the PhD research in design.

### **Literature review: The dialogue between design and spirituality**

The subject of design and spirituality was dissected from the thoughts of the authors Papanek (1971; 1995), Schumacher (1974), Walker (2011), Margolin (2014) and Escobar (2018). We give special focus to Escobar's thought that advises us on the importance of the 'ontological and spiritual look to the project' (Escobar, 2018). Components of spirituality were identified and translated from the thoughts of the referenced authors. Such components are common in their thoughts, as well as proven and interpreted from each's thought (Table 1).

Author	Components of spirituality only from the author	Components of spirituality in common among all authors
<b>Victor Papanek</b> (1971, 1995)	Connection with the inner and spiritual self/being/light; Caring for the planet/Ecological consciousness; Social and ecological responsibility; Development of self-awareness; Creativity; Dignity; Confidence; Peace; Non-violence; Sense of social justice; Sense of immanence; Morals and ethics.	Connection with the inner and spiritual self/being/light; Caring for the planet/ecological consciousness; Social and ecological responsibility; Development of self-awareness; Creativity; Dignity; Confidence; Peace; Non-violence; Sense of social justice; Sense of immanence; Morals and Ethics.
<b>Components of spirituality in common among authors except Papanek</b>		
<b>Ernst Friedrich Schumacher</b> (1974)	Economy; Fraternity; Solidarity; Dignified and necessary work; Encouragement to creation; Livelihood and right action; Respect for living things; Service to others; Determination; Full attention.	
<b>Stuart Walker</b> (2011)	Right thinking; Right being; Right doing; Right action; Living well according to divine law; Contemplative life and practices; Knowledge of spiritual wisdom; Virtue; Charity; Compassion; Devotion and the inner life; The esoteric spiritual path; Active and reflective life; Creativity as love; Selfless service.	
<b>Victor Margolin</b> (2014)	Connection with the divine as a force for personal/interior evolution; Struggle; Resistance; Defence; Affirmation; Opposition; Connection with ancestry/ancestral wisdom; Gaia theory: The earth as a living system; Interdependence with all that exists; Ecological and communal feminism; Economy, fraternity and solidarity; Non-violation of nature; Engagement and freedom; Symbiosis; Synergy; Relationality.	Presence (in the essence of the present and the sense/the feeling); Cosmos, whole, infinity, Sense of unity, Stardust; Connection with the divine/the sacred; Divinity with nature/sacred nature; Health; Well-being; Good living; Present (the here and now); Sense of belonging/identity/rooting; Sense of transcendence; The divine/the sacred; Collectivity/collective; Sense of immanence; Fluidity/the flow; Community life/communality; Contemplation; Responsibility; Collaboration; Participation; Celebration; Detachment; Autonomy; Donation; Affection; Intuition; Spirit(s); Care; Love; Faith.
<b>Arturo Escobar</b> (2018)	Communal Feminism/Re-communalisation of social life from communal feminism, communality; Cosmovisions of indigenous and Afro-descendants from Latin America; Interdependence on all that exists/radical interdependence; Political participation, Social movements, Public policies; Struggle; Resistance; Defence; Affirmation; Opposition; Diversity/diverse worlds; Connection with ancestry/ancestral wisdom; Life, Earth as living being/the living system; Right, equality, engagement; Freedom; Horizontal and collective leadership;	

Economy, fraternity and solidarity;  
Relationality/relational ontology; De-  
patriarchisation of societies; De-  
rationalisation of societies; Territoriality,  
re-localisation; Decolonization of  
societies; Reiteration with the Earth;  
Spiritualities of the Earth; Weft work,  
Webwork; Symbiosis and synergy;  
Democracy.

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*Table 1: Components of spirituality identified and translated from the authors' thought, created by the researchers.*

### **Victor Papanek (1923–1998)**

Austrian designer who emigrated to the USA at the age of 15. He mentions the importance of spiritual values in design for sustainability, which can be decoded in the designer's intention when designing (Papanek, 1995). His ideas were based on the designer's moral and social responsibility, and his unique approach to design pedagogy dramatically inspired the design movements in the 60s and 70s. He also influenced the designer's look in front of a systemic design amplitude in favour of sustainability, in defence of design as a political tool and in favour of democracy (Papanek, 1971; 1995).

### **Ernst Friedrich Schumacher (1911–1977)**

German economist and founder of the Intermediate Technology Group - Practical Action. Before the Second World War, he went to live in England. He was a precursor thinker about economic, environmental and cultural causes. His thinking became widespread in the 70s, and he relied on spirituality by promoting the debate on the practice of local production for better environmental and social outcomes through the 'Buddhist economy', in favour of simplicity and non-violence, the importance of community and dignified work (Schumacher, 1974). He was inspired by his life experience when he was an economic advisor to the Burmese government from 1955. This experience deeply inspired him, and in opposition to Western economies, he fostered the implementation of appropriate, decentralised, human and local technologies. He also encouraged preservation of the environment and care of life and people on the planet (<https://www.schumacherinstitute.org.uk/>).

### **Stuart Walker (1955–)**

Stuart Walker is an English designer, currently Professor of Design for Sustainability and Co-director of the Imagination Research Centre at Lancaster University, UK. His research focuses on the aesthetics of sustainable product design and on 'sustainable aesthetics' of the product and their resignification from the presentation of his 'contemplative propositional designs' (Pantaleão & Pinheiro, 2018). The author holds the conviction that the environment has been and is being devastated by apathy, disdain and scarcity of meaning due to the materialist-naturalist process introduced in Western thought. Walker fosters conceptions and practices on the importance of spirituality and preservation of the environment as a current and future worldview. Through his thought, the author directs the design and the creative process grounded in cultural, spiritual and religious principles, both Eastern and Western, to influence ethical and moral foundations and consequently promote sustainability (Walker, 2013). Walker believes that the legitimate relationship between design projects and sustainability is inherent in the spiritual values of design and in the intrinsic properties of product design (Walker, 2011).

### **Victor Margolin (1941–2019)**

Margolin is an American educator and filmmaker with a PhD in Design History and Professor Emeritus at the School of Art and Art History at the University of Illinois, Chicago, USA. His work has always been interdisciplinary across the fields of history, research and design studies. The author investigated and fostered responsible design, and with his wife Sylvia Margolin, experimented and proposed a social model of design practice in opposition to the dominant market model (Margolin & Margolin, 2002). Margolin emphasises that spirituality needs to be reintroduced into philosophical debates and positioned more centrally in contemporary thinking to support reflections on the artificial, design and technology. In this way, it can support the self-development of designers and ground them to support social welfare. The author mentions the importance of 'spirituality as a metanarrative for design and technology', from the practices of connecting with the divine through sacred nature and 'the divinity with the nature' with inspiration in the intellectuality and cooperative activities of ecofeminists and the Gaia hypothesis (Margolin, 2014).

### **Arturo Escobar (1952–)**

Escobar is a Colombian American, an anthropologist and Kenan Professor of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA. Spirituality is translated in his thought as the ability to redesign the world starting from the ways of being, knowing and doing that happen in collective, collaborative, participative, autonomous and local ways in tune with justice, with the reiteration with the Earth and the understanding of the planet as a living being. This redesign must be guided by the 'Earth Spiritualities', identified by the author as '[...] the work that requires a radical shift in our understanding of and in connection with the Earth, with non-humans and with each other' (Escobar, 2020, as cited in Carley, 2020). This work implies reconnection with the spiritual world based on the practices of traditional communities, such as indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant communities from Latin America and based on the practices and thoughts of communal feminism. It is guided primarily by political participation in the face of 'relationality', 'interdependence on all that exists', territoriality, autonomy, affection, love, care, fight, resistance, 'our work in a weave, in a web', to provide the 'flourishing of the plot of life' (Escobar, 2018).

### **Methodology and research**

The chosen methodology was first the breakdown of the topic design and spirituality from the different theoretical lenses mentioned by the authors and researchers above. From this exercise, the components of spirituality identified and translated in the thoughts of the authors were identified (Table 1). These components of spirituality were defined as indicators to guide the data collection and the analysis of the participatory experience and participant observation with the linen ladies.

The field research started in September 2020, when the researchers met the four ladies from the Association of Women Farmers of Castelões. From this first contact with the group, it was agreed with the artisans that the researchers would return to the Association's head office to start to learn about the practices related to the linen cycle. Since then, we started working together. The field methodology was qualitative and based on an ethnographic approach through participant observation and open and non-systematic conversations and interviews with the artisans (Angrosino, 2012; Martin & Hanington, 2019; Pink, 2009). Between September 2020 and August 2021, 15 meetings were held with the artisans. It was possible to learn how to weave, spin, embroider, crochet, sew, grind and scutch the linen and observe the linen ladies with a focus on the approach of design management guided by spirituality.

Following the definition of the indicators to guide the fieldwork, spirituality components were identified from the participatory experience with the artisans (Table 2). It was then possible to analyse the components identified in the field, as will be presented in the case study. Finally, it was possible to conceive a preliminary proposal of the 'Components of Spirituality to Safeguard Life'.

**Case study: The participatory experience and learning from the the linen cycle’s ancestral knowledge and doings**

From the participatory experience and learning with the linen ladies, it was possible to recognise an implicit spiritually driven design management process in the group. It was also identified that the agricultural and craft activities, as well as the social and political participation of these ladies, are recognised as principles of transformative social innovation. Therefore, that can facilitate the implementation of strategic actions of design for transitions.

Based on the components of spirituality identified and translated from the thoughts of the referenced authors, three main components were confirmed that act as an umbrella to the others recognised in the artisans’ activities: presence (in the present and the essence of the sense/the feeling), relationality and interdependence on all that exists. These are anchored by three others: love, affection and care. And they are interdependent on other spiritual components, as can be verified in Table 2.

Presence	Relationality	Interdependence on all that exists
Love, affection and care		
Connection with: The divine/the sacred, the divine and spiritual light, intuition and ancestral wisdom; Collectivity; Collaboration; Participation; Engagement; Freedom; Autonomy; Creativity; Traditions; Dignity; Sense of transcendence; Faith; Spirit; Celebration; Communality/community life; Territoriality; Sense of social justice; Ecological awareness; Sense of belonging/identity/rooting; Horizontal and collective leadership; Reliability; Solidarity; No violence; The present/the here and now; Development of self-awareness; Donation; Detachment; Synergy; Well-being; Good living; Health; The divine/the sacred; Weave work/webwork; Fluidity/the flow; Struggle; Resistance.		

*Table 2: Components of spirituality identified through the participative experience with the linen ladies, created by the researchers.*

**Conceptual interpretation**

We will briefly interpret the components of the spirituality concepts that were identified through the participative experience with the linen ladies in the field (Table 2).

Relationality/relational ontology; Interdependence on all that exists/Radical interdependence; Synergy  
 Escobar presents the concept of relationality or relational ontology as follows:

“[...] all of this dense web of interrelationships and materiality [...] A whole world that is updated minute by minute, day by day, through an infinity of practices that link a multiplicity of humans and non-humans. [...] That in which nothing (neither humans nor non-humans) pre-exists the relations that constitute us. We all exist because everything exists”. (Escobar, 2016)

The author expounds on the concept of interdependence on all that exists or radical interdependence linked with relationality: 'inter-humans and beyond human relations' depend on each other and are

interconnected with everything. Faced with the principle of relational ontology they are interdependent on all that exists, that is, radically interdependent (Escobar, 2018).

Connection with: Ancestrality/Ancestral wisdom, the divine/the sacred, the divine and spiritual light, the intuition; Fluidity/the flow; Faith; Spirit; Sense of social justice; Ecological awareness; Non-violence; Development of self-awareness; The divine/The sacred; Sense of transcendence

It is argued that in mystical-religious significations, it is possible to connect with the invisible considered the ancestors (entities known as spirits and/or energies) and the divine/the sacred as God, gods, goddesses, saints, angels, archangels, cherubim, seraphim and orixás, which are related to religious traditions, beliefs and philosophies as well as to cosmovisions and spiritual sciences.

It is asserted that the religious practices, such as divinity as sacred nature and/or the simple act of worship, feeling the vital energy and witnessing life, promote faith and peace of mind. Through these practices, it is possible to connect with what is called the inner self, the self, the core and the heart as well as with the soul, the spiritual self and the spiritual, inner, divine light. It is stated that this connection usually promotes feelings related to morals and ethics, such as a sense of social justice, ecological awareness and non-violence. In addition, it provides reiteration with the Earth, connection with the Cosmos and perception of the sense of unity, of the whole, the assimilation of infinity and the understanding that humans are stardust (Sagan, 2003). It also provides intuition and self-development, [i.e. the development of self-awareness of the human being (Chandra, 2009, 2014).

Within the scope of the spiritual science anthroposophy, in 1962, Steiner presented the spirit as the body energy I (ego) and the astral body of a human being. For the author, the astral body is the set of forces known as the soul. The astral body is the body of feelings, sensations and consciousness. The I body (ego) "is the individualized and simple spiritual element which constitutes the centre of the being". The human being has four bodies: the physical, the vital (etheric), the astral and the I (ego). When the human being dies, only the spiritual energy of the I (ego) and astral bodies remains (Lanz, 1983). In the psychology sphere, it is considered a person's personality. In the scope of some religions and spiritual cosmovisions, theories and sciences, it is considered the energy and/or the ancestor that manifests itself in various ways in materials and dimensions (Bispo dos Santos, 2015; Blavatsky, 1980; Cohn-Sherbok, 1999; Elias, 1999; Hawkins, 1999; Kopenawa & Albert, 2015; Krenak, 2019, 2020; Lanz, 1983; Lovelock, 2014, 2020; Moreira Costa, 2002; Sagan, 2003; Shattuck, 1999; Margulis, 2014; Wilson, 1999).

Through religious practices and esoteric experiences, it is argued that some can experience the sense of transcendence. In religions, philosophies, cosmovisions and spiritual sciences, transcendence as experienced is verified in physical and mental states that occur outside the material world, where the divine/the sacred is identified as being outside the mundane environment (Bispo dos Santos, 2015; Blavatsky, 1980; Cohn-Sherbok, 1999; Elias, 1999; Hawkins, 1999; Kopenawa & Albert, 2015; Krenak, 2019, 2020; Lanz, 1983; Moreira Costa, 2002; Shattuck, 1999; Wilson, 1999).

Communality/community life; Collectivity; Participation; Collaboration; Engagement; Solidarity; Traditions; Creativity; Sense of belonging/rooting/identity; Dignity; Struggle; Resistance; Participation; Donation; Detachment; Horizontal and collective leadership; Territoriality, Re-localisation; Freedom; Autonomy; Well-being; Good living; Health; Celebration; Webwork/weave work

It is asserted that feminine and matriarchal care for a community recovers and preserves life and life flourishes. This can be noticed by attitudes of engagement, detachment and respect for oneself, for the



other, for nature and for the planet as well as by actions that take responsibility, participation, collectivity, donation and communality in a solid matriarchal format. It is stated that this matriarchal care is genuine and has affection, love and robustness. It also strengthens and encourages fraternal economies, culture, art, traditions, creativity and equal rights. It promotes feelings of community and territory rooting, pride, dignity and identity and also identification with the communal way of life. It is argued that it takes place in defence of the territory, that it ensures that the local prevails and that it resists individualism. Moreover, this way of life is democratic, since it dialogues, understands, believes, encourages, cares for and protects social, environmental, human and non-human relationships as well as diversity. It also operates in the mode where leadership is horizontal and collective, i.e. the collective acts and dialogues horizontally. There are no hierarchies, and everyone has the knowledge that supports, builds with, complements and is interdependent on the other.

Escobar signals the importance of "re-localization as an active role of inhabiting, eating, education and health" (Escobar, 2018). This can be understood by the defence of local life, land and territory, known as territoriality, and the safeguarding of local freedom and autonomy that defend and promote health, housing, education, healthy food for living well and well-being.

Groups and communities that work according to the principles of communal feminism, territoriality, autonomy, freedom, creativity and celebration of life, are those that care for, love, witness and de-rationalise life. They experience relationality and radical interdependence, in opposition to the dualistic ontology of the globalised world. They "work in a web, in a weave" and provide the "flourishing of the plot of life" (Escobar, 2018). The weaving work, i.e. the web work, is exercised in a collective, matriarchal, communal life. Together, and interdependent on humans and non-humans, respect, care, love, affection, struggle and resistance occur for the recovery, flourishing and continuity of life.

Love; Care; Affection; Presence (in the essence of the present and the sense/the feeling); Present (the here and now)

In 1995, Comte-Sponville translated love into various feelings and meanings: joy, fulfilment, warmth, cosiness, passion, devotion, donation, desire, pleasure, energy, potency, enjoyment of presence and existence, happiness, hope, gratitude, generosity, kindness, friendship, benevolence, sadness, anguish, grief, failure, greed, selfishness, misery, absence and madness (Comte-Sponville, 2004).

It is attested that love and care coexist in the presence of one another, and that affection emerges from the existence of care. Ergo, love, care and affection are mutually interdependent and complementary. In addition, affection is tenderness and dedication which turns into friendship and love, completing a full circle. As Boff wrote:

*"Caring is more than an act, it is an attitude. Therefore, it encompasses more than a moment and attention of zeal and diligence. It represents an attitude of occupation, concern, liability and affective engagement with the other". (Boff, 1999)*

It is noticed that presence exists where there is a manifestation of love, care and affection. The authentic presence is understood as attendance and perceived through the existence of a life of being that is genuine and occurs in the present.

## **Analysis of the components of spirituality identified in the field**

In this section, we briefly analyse the components of spirituality that were identified in the field.

### The divine and its relationship with some spiritual components

The divine was identified by the researchers through the participant experience and observation in a common and collective ritual of a religious nature. The linen ladies always pray while they are working at their handicraft activities. It could be observed that the prayers and handicraft activities are performed through altruistic love, detachment, donation and synergy among the artisans, in tune with nature and the divine. These practices are interconnected with the sense of transcendence, social justice and ecological awareness through affection and care for themselves, for others, for nature, for the land, for the community and for the village. The researchers also identified that these practices are interdependent on the faith and the intuition that the ladies possess.

### Connection with ancestors interdependent on other components of spirituality

Ancestry was observed from spontaneous conversations and unsystematic interviews of the artisans with the researchers. The linen ladies always mention with honour the value of their ancestors. It could be observed that their ancestors are their references and that ancestral wisdom is passed on by their presence through the lived life they had with them and through the invisible life they have with them. The experience with their ancestors provides pride of identity for the territory of ancestral tradition based on agriculture and the production of textiles and embroidery work made of linen. One perceives the rootedness, the identity and the feeling of belonging to the local as well as the feeling of dignity for the valuable and noble linen work that has soul, spirit and life. The researchers also observed that the relationship with their ancestors, between them and with the community, works as a web and promotes care, affection, love, communality (community life) as well as the feeling of harmony, well-being, good living, health and meaning of life.

### Struggle, resistance and creativity: Relationality and interdependence for conservation and continuity of the linen life cycle

The researchers identified that the linen ladies struggle and resist to preserve and keep alive the ancestral tradition of the linen cycle in the village of Castelões. This happens with affection, love and care in synergy and non-violence with themselves, with each other, with their neighbours and relatives, with the land, with the planet, with the animals and with the village. The linen ladies' presence and creativity could be observed through the implementation and management of the Association as well as through the artisans' ideas for new projects. This commitment was also identified when the artisans call attention to the importance of work on the land and of the continuity of Portuguese agriculture, not only of linen but of the family agriculture of organic/biological vegetables, greenery and fruits; the significance of caring for the animals and the family production of food for subsistence; and the dignified and noble handicraft work that cares and beautifies. It was noticed that they practise everything they talk about, and through their actions it was possible to recognise their connection with the forces of life, with the energies of nature, the sacred and the cosmos, which are interconnected with the health and the well-being that they have. One could observe their autonomy, freedom, fluidity, ecological awareness, sense of social justice and communal conviviality in this territory.

### Celebration, collaboration and solidarity interconnected with some spiritual components

Every Tuesday evening, the ladies joyfully celebrate the end of the working day. With coffee, tea, 'jeropiga' (traditional Portuguese alcoholic drink made from grapes), Portuguese chestnuts from the

village, cheeses, 'rabanadas' (traditional butter-fried Portuguese bread soaked in milk, eggs, cinnamon and sugar) and delicious cakes they made, they celebrate their life, friendship and love. In addition, it could be observed that the ladies' work is carried out in a dignified, simple, collaborative and participative way, with commitment, presence, solidarity and mutual trust. Each lady has a function, and they all have their value. It was noticed that there is no hierarchy, since their leadership is horizontal and collective. One supports and complements the other, and they are interdependent. They always act intuitively, with affection and care for themselves, for each other and the community. They always think of each other, there is no selfishness and their heart is open.

#### Relational ontology and radical interdependence on the scene

The principle of relationality and the interdependence of all that exists were observed in a scene often witnessed by the researchers. A lady is spinning linen and working with the spinner in her hands while another lady weaves on the loom. At the same time, two other ladies embroider linen cloths spun and woven by the artisans.

When one looks at this scene with other eyes, that is, with the eyes of relational ontology and radical interdependence, it is possible to see a world, indeed several worlds, since the linen transformed into thread and cloth has passed through a process of visible and invisible interrelations before reaching the artisans' hands, mouths and fingers.

First is the preparation of the land, and then there is the sowing, the watering, the weeding, the grubbing up, the ripping, the tanning in the river, the drying, the grinding, the scutching and the threshing of the linen. Afterwards comes the spinning, which then goes on to the 'sarilhar' (forming the skeins), then making the 'barrela' (a kind of broth made from the ashes from burning the linen plant), the boiling, the washing, the colouring, the drying of the skeins and the warping to 'impeirar' (placed on the loom). Once the thread has been 'impeirado' (placed on the loom), it is woven and finally embroidered (Veiga de Oliveira et al., 1991).

The preparation of the land, the sowing, the watering, the weeding and the grubbing up involves the compost, the humus, which is interrelated with minerals, microorganisms, fungi and animals such as insects, birds and those who produce manure (cows, for instance) to strengthen the soil. It could be noticed that this knowledge, added to that of the rest of the process as well as the use of tools to work with the linen, involves ways of being, doing and knowledge learned through the ancestors of these ladies and the community of this territory.

There is also the interrelation with other invisible worlds, such as the beings who protect and bless the plantation, the work, the animals, the neighbours and the community life. It could be observed that those invisible relations refer to these ladies' relationships with the divine, whom the artisans believe guide and bless them, as well as their connection with the cosmos, with the moon and the sun that guide planting and also protect the farming.

#### **Conclusion**

The components of spirituality identified in the field, analysed and described in the last part of this article, can be integrated into a more extensive inventory that is in progress and prospective and which will be finalised in the future. From the analysis of the participative experience with the linen ladies and the identification and translation of the components of spirituality through the thought of the referenced authors, it was possible to develop a preliminary proposal of this list, the 'components' of a spirituality

recreated for today, called 'Spirituality to Safeguard Life'. This reinvented spirituality has four sub-nominations of spiritualities: political spirituality, spirituality of self-awareness, gaia spirituality and divine/sacred spirituality.

The 'Components of Spirituality to Safeguard Life' are associated with peace of mind, joy, well-being, a sense of transcendence, the divine/the sacred, a sense of immanence, connection with the spiritual self and the intuition, a sense of unity and development of self-awareness. They are correlated to social justice, ecological awareness, human rights, political participation from communal feminism and matriarchy in defence of health, education, housing, land, diversity, autonomy, local, well-being, good living, relations and life. They are inspired by the cosmovisions of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities from Latin America and secular religiosity. They are related to care, affection, love and presence (in the essence of the present and the sense/the feeling). They are also linked to the relationality and radical interdependence between humans and non-humans as well as to the reiteration with the Earth.

The 'Components of Spirituality to Safeguard Life' are interconnected and occur as a web and a weave. They are interrelated with one another and are interdependent (Figure 1).

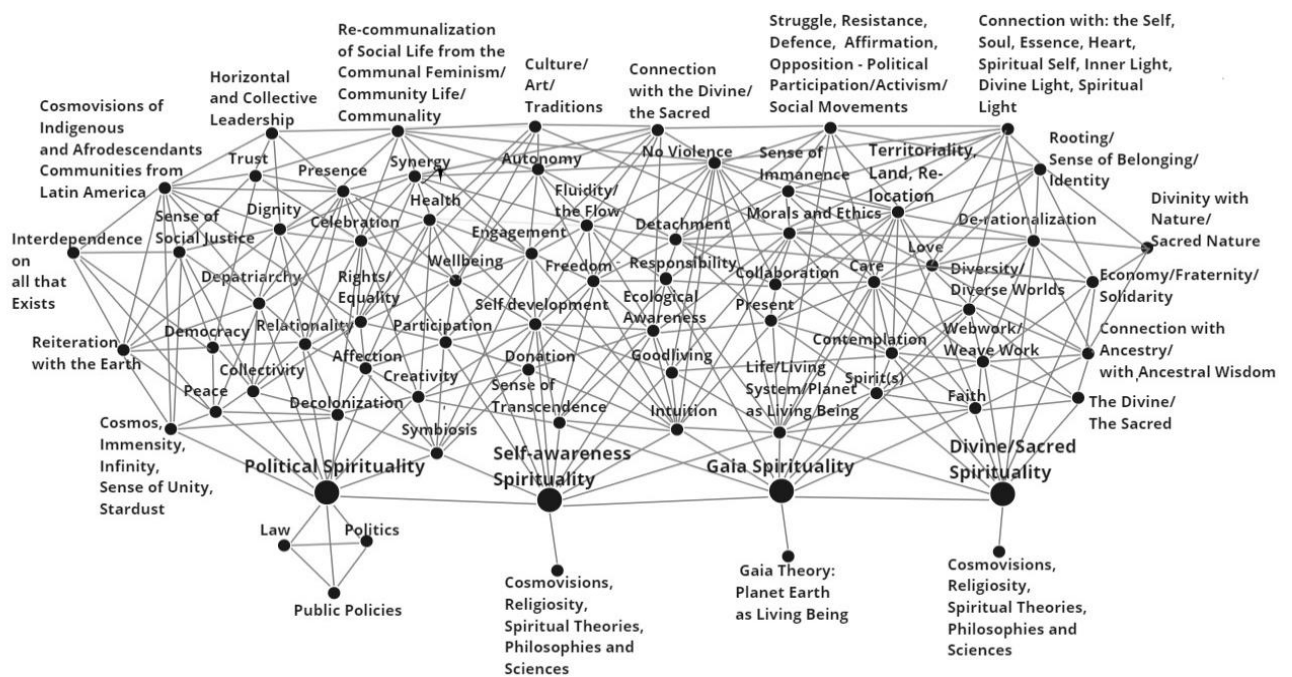


Figure 1: Web of the 'Components of Spirituality to Safeguard Life', created by the researchers.

It is intended to dissect and integrate the 'Components of Spirituality to Safeguard Life' in the fieldwork with the other 'quilombolas' and Afro-Brazilian case studies from Brazil that collaborate with the development of the PhD research in design and identify further components in this field and integrate them into the more extensive inventory that is under way.

We believe that it is essential to promote dialogue between design and spirituality, especially in contexts of humanitarian and civilisation crisis on a large scale, as in the current one with the Covid-19 pandemic. It is essential to think of spirituality-oriented design and as a means to facilitate transformative systems that bring about socio-economic, environmental, cultural and human rights transformations. The design for

transitions based on principles of transformative social innovation is vital so that one can recover, flourish and continue life.

The intention is to carry out the final design of the 'Components of Spirituality to Safeguard Life' based on the ancestral traditional knowledge of the 'quilombolas', Afro-Brazilian and family farming learning references from Brazil and Portugal. It is believed that these 'components' can support the development of a spiritually driven design management approach with Lusophone reference, entitled 'Integral Design Management'. It is planned to apply this approach in academic, business, governmental, non-governmental and civil society environments. Through its practice, it is intended to promote the implementation of transformative systems with values and paradigm shifts for the recovery, flourishing and continuity of life.

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