

FORGET EVERYTHING YOU ALREADY KNOW

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... THEN BURY ME

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**“THE ACTIONS WE PURSUE ARE LARGELY DEFINED BY THE
MINDSET WE CULTIVATE IN ADVANCE OF THE DOING”¹**

¹ Figueres, Christiana , and Rivett-Carnac, Tom. Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis. S.I.: MANILLA, 2021. 37

Silvia Solís is a Latin American Architect and Sustainable Designer. Interested in design as a social practice. Yet concerned about its general aesthetic academic perception that undermines its research value.

Born in Costa Rica, Silvia has been drawn toward naturally inspired design. Additionally, she comes from a family of business administrators, a school that has been taught in her daily life. This combination of professional career, plus social and environmental factors, has given her the ability to question opposed learning approaches perceived as a dichotomic structure (correct-incorrect, academic-unacademic, research – non-research, creative – non-creative)

Accordingly, with research through design (RTD), she defies the ongoing fight between climate change and universal economic development. Portraying, then, the current comprehension of sustainability as unsustainable.

For it, she tackles and re-examines the academic structure, which exposes a single absolute truth way to create valuable knowledge and growth.

Hence, her position on sustainable design seeks to de-normalize unperceived hierarchal structures and lead active citizens as economic creators* within their contexts. Aimed to reduce personal, social, and environmental inequalities

“Forget Everything You Already Know” is her master’s outcome, where she applies design as an academic learning method that features the direct and indirect, seen, and unseen repercussions design has in building our pluriversal reality and what it entails.

With it, she approaches two main overarching questions:

- How does our perception and reasoning of our immediate environment can reframe our way of thinking and acting toward the active creation of economic models?
- How can de-normalizing hierarchical social structures help embrace the pluriverse and reframe the definition of equality and sustainability?

Accordingly, this book is addressed to active citizens. Yet, primarily, those reading/written learners and visual ones that search to create a pluriversal system of knowledge.

Moreover, as a design artefact, this book is interpreted as a vehicle to defy how economic structures of power are being managed and extended by an academic world that is attached to the past and universally imposed.

Executing this by proposing The Oikos RTD Model as a pluriversal design strategy. Where research through design is employed as a mode of being and applied as a daily exploration practice that encounters opportunities between immediate surroundings. Highlighting commonalities and defying the status quo.

Moreover, the modes of thought of Arturo Escobar, Bruno Latour, Naomi Klein, Carolina Benedet, and Luciana Ciliento represent the theoretical framework between Ontological Design, Pluriversal Design, Environment, Sentipensamiento, and Performativity.

Furthermore, Chef Magnus Nilsson and his approach to Locavorism, plus Willows’s Children’s books and its use within the same material as a learning method, were identified as key comparators.

As the relevance of this outcome aims to foster different modes of learning as creators of pluriversal design strategies that strengthen matriarchal economies, this book will pursue participation in the RSD11 (Relating Systems Thinking and Design) Symposium Exhibition** as a striving measure of success and dissemination strategy.

Finally, this investigation sustains the value of morality and research through design applied in academia that drives economic movements and its impact on pluriversal resources.

*NOTE: this outcome is not an economy perse, but it is the preconception that forms one.

**NOTE: “RSD started at AHO in Oslo in 2012. The series has the intention to promote and foster the emerging practices for and theory development of systemic design for service systems, social systems, policy development, and complex contexts.”¹

1 May, Cheryl. “About the Symposia and Repository.” RSD Symposium, July 31, 2022. <https://rsdsymposium.org/rsd-systemic-design-resources/>.

**“PAY ATTENTION
TO “NOTHING”
BECAUSE IT
REALLY IS WORTH
SOMETHING”¹**

¹ Kirk, Andy. “The Design of Nothing: Null, Zero, Blank.” YouTube. YouTube, May 28, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqzAuqNPYVM>.

Eco-friendly, Eco-coins, Eco-Romería*, Eco-ride...

These and many more are words used to describe sustainability, yet this leads to its current perception as an empty signifier. Becoming a term that has become a trend and has lost its meaning around recycling.

For this reason, this book merges sustainability with design and displays it as a research method that challenges universal academic hierarchies and economic beliefs—thinking differently to act toward a pluriversal design agenda that starts now: as Covid-19 has reformed preconceptions like the value of value. What's more, it has remarked global resource differences and highlighted the current unbalanced way climate change and other universal socio-environmental concerns affect us all.

Consequently, we must engage to live according to each country's resources, as sustainability is not a universal term.

For it, this study challenges the status quo by seeing opportunities between our commonalities and looking into our daily surroundings from another perspective—de-normalizing structures of power.

This work unravels decision-making and approaches sustainability from joy rather than fear. Developing critical thinking and corresponding with different learning methods that vary depending on the surrounding circumstances. Therefore, creating inclusion and pluriversal justice that embraces the world's differences as a possibility for growth.

This photo-illustrated book dares universal truths as a single way to create valuable knowledge. Invoking an informative and recreative narrative with emotion, a narrative that stands alone. Approach chosen as it frees the linear structure that a sentence must have, synthesizing its complex ideas. Besides, it supports people with language barriers.

Hence it provides an inclusive and engaging way of learning out of curiosity, highlighting exploration and innovation in social practice. Furthermore, it is an active way to balance universal truths of scientific and social knowledge with their consecutive ways of learning and researching.

If possible, read the photo illustration narrative as blueprints, which takes 3-Dimensional space. See between their ruptures as a white canvas – exploring possible realities.

This volume is meant to be read and buried. We are disrupting materialism and consumption imposed by the current economic and academic standards of “development.” Where the value of learning must first be written—then conserved, untouched, and unharmed, we are disturbing the literary structure of power where books must be preserved, and academia must be unquestioned.

I invite you to ask, de-normalize and act.

When you finish reading... destroy this book, rip it apart, and bury it.*

*NOTE: Romería: consists of a pilgrimage to the Basílica de los Ángeles celebrated on August 2 in honor of the Virgen de los Ángeles, patron saint of Costa Rica. Accordingly, *“The Eco-Romería is an environmental strategy that contributes to an activity as large as the Pilgrimage where hundreds of people participate, which should be used to educate about the proper management of waste and the importance of recycling.”*¹

*Note: If you read an online version... don't bury your computer or electronic device. Explore how you use it (amount of time spent, places where you take it, modes of transportation, financial demand, and social demand, among other aspects). Ask about your artefact, de-normalize your use and act on it with a personal, social, and environmental purpose.

1 Ministerio de Salud. “X Edición Eco Romería 2022.” Ministerio de Salud. Accessed August 6, 2022. <https://www.ministeriodesalud.go.cr/index.php/prensa/52-noticias-2022/1359-x-edicion-eco-romeria-2022>



Image 1. Ripped Academia

It must be acknowledged this attitude is a result of testing the Oikos RTD Model during the exploration phase. Where “nature thriving” was highlighted as a tangential method that manifests design as active research and a mode of being.

Accordingly, exploring a tropical country where nature is lively, it was decided to make this book out of seed paper. Material implemented as an unlearning economic process for adults.

After all, this process is used as a vehicle to help support the main inquiry line that tackles the complexities between interlinked theoretical backgrounds. It is a way to explore with design and investigate participating in building a system of sustainable economies intrinsically linked with each country’s resources .

Consciously this vehicle understands design as a data collector and acting renaissance.

“THINK
GLOBALLY,
ACT LOCALLY.”¹

¹ Kothari, Ashish; Salleh, Ariel; Escobar, Arturo; Demaria, Federico; Acosta, Alberto (2019-06-01T22:58:59.000). Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary . AuthorsUpFront | Tulika Books, New Delhi. Kindle Edition. 285

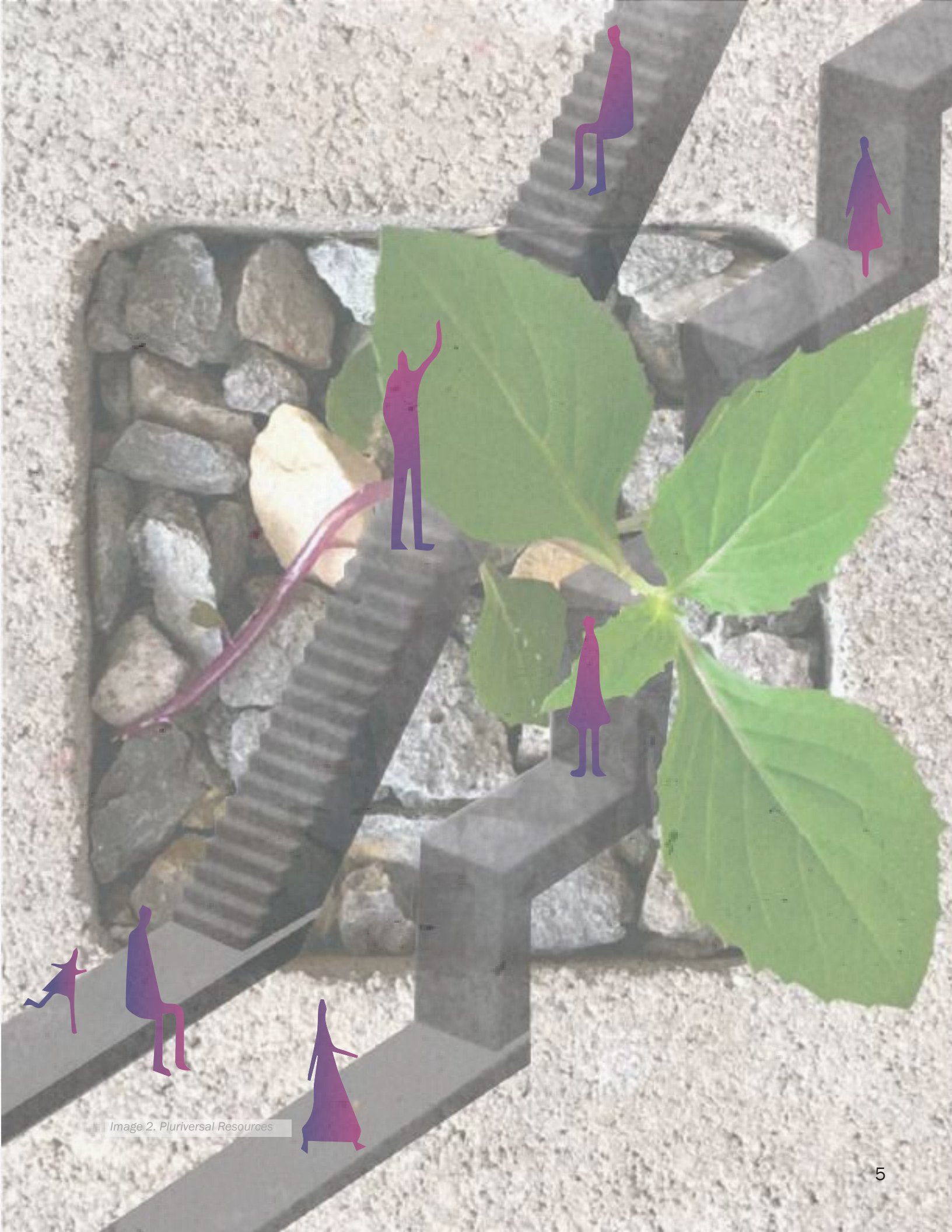


Image 2. Pluriversal Resources

REALITY IS NOT A UNIVERSAL MODEL

We tend to address what we have been taught in academia as a norm. $1+1=2$, there is no doubt about it. Yet 12 years ago, while I was in high school, every book still affirmed that water was an inexhaustible resource. Why should I question it? Academic standards were and still are undeniable absolute truths that we are educated not to raise doubt.

Nonetheless, now we know we live in a world of limited resources. Hence, currently (worldwide), we are taught to be afraid and sustainable.

Accordingly, sustainability is associated with phrases such as: “There would not be a future if we don’t act, at least not a future we can live in.”

So, this discovery of exhaustive resources has presented sustainability as a danger. A “*Permanent crisis-response model*,”¹ “An existential anxiety.” If we don’t act now, then... There will be no future.

“To express it in Lacanian terms, sustainability has been undermined at the level of the imaginary (the ability to imagine the future)”²

Forget all that. Historically it has been said that humans are selfish by nature, as even altruism has been defined as a mode to make yourself feel better by helping others. So, environmental sustainability and its parameters should not be addressed as a coming catastrophe or a threat. What if you refer to climate change as an opportunity? Consequently, adopt it as a mode of being to prosper immediately... stop declaring that sustainability is for the future. It is now.

However, then... what is to prosper? ...“Recycle,” “Preserve the environment.” “Detain economic growth.”

How could we restrain ourselves as there is only one meal per day for some? Keep in mind, *“What one group calls “sustainable” might be highly inimical to the interests of other groups .”³*

As written in “This Changes Everything, Capitalism vs. the Climate,”: *“the future is something that is not relevant at the moment for some people because they’re surviving for the present”* Dimitra Spatharidou.⁴

Yet, sustainability has become such a brought concept that it has lost its value. Explaining everything and nothing at the same time. It is aspirational and utopian. As Trent Brown said, it has become an empty signifier among social justice and the public good.

Consequently, this book recalls its meaning and the value of language as a dictator. Specifying sustainability as a research method that questions common beliefs stated as the norm.

It must be acknowledged that research also goes away from its “general” understanding. It is not a hypothesis where you must follow exact steps and then describe them for others to adhere to and compare. It is seen as a social practice that explores current movements—acting to create and accept ways of understanding and communication within the world. No similar outcomes will be presented as it is directly related to your surroundings and experiences.

For it, this book values research employed through design as a daily exploration practice that encounters opportunities between immediate surroundings.

1 Brown, Trent. “Sustainability as Empty Signifier: Its Rise, Fall, and Radical Potential.” *Antipode* 48, no. 1 (2015): 115–33. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12164>. 130

2 Brown, Trent. 130

3 Brown, Trent. 116

4 Klein, Naomi. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. Vancouver, B.C.: Langara College, 2021, 134



Image 3. Someone's Daily Day

DESING AS A CREATOR OF ECONOMIC PLURIVERSAL AGENDAS

What is your first related design memory? Mine goes back to my childhood when I was around 4-5 years. My mother was working, and I was misbehaving. So, she gave me some colored pencils and paper, and I went into a zen zone (I think I was drawing a teddy bear with a house as a background)

The following example that popped up was during my high school years. We were painting on canvas, and I was working on a yellow rose. I was proud of it, so I showed it to the art professor, and she started tweaking it... I was furious.

Then my brain jumped to my Architectural career, where design was achieved by blueprints, 3d models, zonification analysis, tropical climate factors, etc. Design was addressed as a social career.

Now I present it as an economic creator—a pillar for a sustainable system.

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First, it must be indicated that the core of economic models is guided by values and moralities that then direct social domains.

Additionally, a financial structure is a social way of thinking created by determinate time beliefs. It is a mindset, power, and culture.

For instance. Capitalism was created during the Industrial Revolution, which dictated liberty and the pursuit of individualism—putting economic acquisition as a power structure.

Accordingly,

“Value is not necessarily constant but specific to time and situation.”¹

Yet, this structure has erased the general concept of freedom and equality. We have become restricted to one “correct” way of knowing and guided by “experts” to one kind of “development.”

Building imaginary boundaries of hierarchical dichotomies and moral preconceptions. Dictated by a universal economy with an intrinsic attachment to the past, merge and teach by one academic mode of learning. Seen as the only truthful approach to development.

As Mark Carney mentioned:

“The market is one thing: self-interested. The market is humanity distilled.”²

Additionally, Naomi Klein said:

“Our economic system and our planetary system are now at war. Or, more accurately, our economy is at war with many life forms on earth, including human life.”³

Accordingly, modern societies have fallen into an aesthetic loop of growth determined by each country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which measures human progress quite inhumanly. Furthermore, it is used to compare living standards between nations and their “contribution.” yet, it does not even include an index of happiness as a standard human measurement,

As mentioned by Christoph Hinske and Harry Lehmann:

“Perhaps the biggest challenge is that we can’t see what’s possible because we are trapped inside ONE idea of operating world.”⁴

1 Carney, Mark. Value(s) . PublicAffairs. Kindle Edition, 287.

2 Carney, Mark. Value(s) . 108

3 Klein, Naomi. This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate. Vancouver, B.C.: Langara College, 2021, 21

4 Hinske, Christoph, and Harry Lehmann. “The Impossibilities of the Circular Economy.” 360Dialogues. Accessed June 13, 2022. <https://360dialogues.com/360portfolios/ce-impossibilities>



Image 4. Social Domains

Plus

"A model for an ecologically sustainable society is of little use if it ultimately cannot be sustained for social, cultural, or economic reasons. Likewise, an apparently socially and economically sustainable system cannot be regarded as truly sustainable if it undermines its ecological base".¹

So... how the economy is being managed is an outcome of the hierarchical academic norms that have become a universal filter. An assembly line that has created universal decision-making strategies.

Accordingly, it is unsustainable to globally measure with the same standards and be based on a concept such as development, when development can have many interpretations depending on social needs. It is not an impartial industry.

Now... as a paradigm changer, Design has the power to unsettle normative understanding, dictating those moral values between economies. And portraying a human-nature relation, leading ways of knowing as economic creators.

It can de-normalize social complexities created if one tries to solve everything with the same strategy (making structures impossible to grasp or maintain.) Here is explored concerning the conflict between climate change and economic development, applied as a universal economic model to pluriversal resources.

This conflict comes from a universal and generic understanding of materialism and consumption as dictators of individual progress.

Consequently, this book highlights Design research value. As it raises questions, defies how moral beliefs construct economies and displays theoretical political manifestations that modify our personal and social behaviors. Moreover, it questions crossing forces of privilege and oppression at work in society.

Yet, Design is falsely perceived as a tool and rarely seen as a data creator between your strengths, words, stories, colors, sounds, etc. Collected, organized, and analyzed.

Design is a cultural exploration – a learning process – that merges generational efforts and human creativity—working toward collective cultural changes. It is a social domain guided by values and moralities. (Equal center of economic structures)

Consequently, design questions power beyond conquers, unveiling, and perceiving absolute knowledge as myths (a commonly kept but false principle or idea). Then, it builds interpretations of what makes the world and envisions systems that don't exist yet.

That is why this book aims to disrupt the current dichotomic academic structure: science vs. art. It goes away from hierarchal academic preconceptions, understanding research and design as fields of exploration, ways of thinking, and learning. Both are ways to assemble and integrate new knowledge.

That line of thought presents and justifies design as a creator of economic pluriversal agendas, highlighting valuable results of human creativity, which become our way of living —. Then interpreted as a structure of cultural manifestos and paradigms (an economic system)

Yet, for Design to become a creator of economic agendas, it must be directly linked with performativity^{*}. Opening a domain that can be used to eliminate collective anxiety and employed as a guide to caring for and of nature.

Therefore,

As my reality is not your reality, my sustainable strategy is not your sustainable strategy; therefore... my economic model is not your economic model.

"A model can be words, images, or combinations of the two; however, it is usually in schematic form (Verbrugge, n.d.). Models, as the economist Raworth (2017) suggests, have the potential to 'stick in the mind's eye and wordlessly reshape [some part of] our view of the world'"²

^{*}NOTE: "how we talk about things affects behaviour and how we theorize things"³

1 Brown, Trent. "Sustainability as Empty Signifier: Its Rise, Fall, and Radical Potential." 121

2 Snow, Tom. 2020. "Ecosystem Metabolisms and Functions: An Eco-Literacy Framework and Model for Designers". FormAkademisk - Research Journal of Design and Design Education 13 (4):Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.7577/formakademisk>, 2.

3 Nacamulli, Mia. "The Benefits of a Bilingual Brain - ." YouTube. TEDEducation, June 23, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMmOLN5zBLY>.



Image 5. Ways of Knowing

DEFYING THE STATUS QUO

So far, this book has spoken about sustainability, research, design, and the economy.

As stated, economies follow morality, and design can create economic agendas. This is the base for research through design to defy economic structures of power attached to the past.

Now, let's reframe financial systems by directly interpreting them with the theoretical structure of Arturo Escobar and his concept of "Sentipensamiento."

Sentipensar is a shareable model that rethinks the known knowns and creates an unlearning process with a domino effect. It is *"a way of knowing that does not separate thinking from feeling, reason from emotion, knowledge from caring."*¹

Sentipensar can structure social values to drive the economy instead of being driven. Creating a system of economies that are fundamental to being human.

As mentioned in "Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary." *"words – 'economy' and 'ecology' shared the one Greek root, Oikos, meaning 'our home.'"*²

Hence, consider an economic system that unleashes our binary thinking, making us unlearn patriarchal concepts and reconsider hierarchies on different ways of knowing. Furthermore, one that re-interprets materialism and consumption as human experiences, realities, and values fundamentally linked to nature.

One that teaches a direct approach to immediate and finite resources, searching for a balance between industry and nature. Conformed by systems of economies that do not stop developments rather than rethink their application.

A system based on the philosophy that a general solution is not practical.

That economic system is proposed as the result of detecting unperceived hierarchies as minorities. It is the first step toward this study outcome. And it is suggested as the Matriarchal Economy*—a way to reimagine the past, present, and future.

Accordingly, The Matriarchal Economy contemplates:

- A social way of communication that accepts the pluriversity of the world and emulates fairly without imposing—raising people's quality of life.
- *"A past where the dichotomies of hierarchies are left behind, a present where we encourage a network in which our ways of communication create a pluriversal world and imitates fairly without imposing—a future where nature-inspired design is concerned for the human experience, realities, and values ."*³

It must be said this system does not go against globalization. It does critique the understanding of words commonly used with it to describe sustainability. Referred to as a stop line to development. Where climate change is seen as its antithesis, where nature must be preserved, maintained, and conserved is its current projection on understanding equality as a universal strategy.

Hence, the Matriarchal Economy has globalized (yet not universal) agendas with decentralization power. (*"Global" reflects the nuance of culture and language, "Universal" assumes that one size fits all*)⁴

*Note: this book connotes the matriarchal economy using performativity. Consequently, it leaves behind the notion that is intrinsically interpreted with Mother Earth (like sustainability with recycling)

1 Escobar, Arturo (2020-04-23T22:58:59). Pluriversal Politics (Latin America in Translation) . Duke University Press. Kindle Edition, 603.

2 Kothari, Ashish; et al Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary . Kindle Edition. 628

3 Solís, Silvia "The Value of Language, the Resistance Towards a Matriarchal Economy" 2022, 24-25

4 Draffan, E.A. International symbol dictionary for AAC, May 25, 2018 <https://access.ecs.soton.ac.uk/blog/symboldictionary/global-versus-universal/>



Image 6. Cow Traffic

Plus, development is consciously linked to natural, social, political, and financial resources. Furthermore, it redirects the zero-sum games theory insight. As Christiana Figueres point out:

*"So, my "loss" can actually became my "gain." In fact, "My loss - your gain" can actually become our gain.... It is all about the mindset"*¹

As a result,

...competition is no longer the ruler,
but collaboration is high among economic principles.

Finally, it adopts a globalized system of economies that accepts and embraces the pluriverse as fundamental to being human.

¹Figueres, Christiana, and Tom Rivett-Carnac. The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis. Firsted. Alfred A. Knoff, 2021. 56



Image 7. Socio Economic Worlds

THE DANCE WITHIN LIFE

As a Latina feminist, I understand complexity as a dance across hierarchies and their minorities. And as previously stated, sustainable design as a research method that does not take social standards or stereotypical remarks for granted.

From personal experience, I recognize design as a subjective learning process of exploration. It is the world you can imagine and devote practice, energy, and resources to.

Accordingly, it relates to systemic change as *“a deeply personal endeavor. Our social and economic structures are a product of our way of thinking.”*¹

So, this dance is the design language that marks the subconscious.

This dance...

...speaks about the unspoken.

...questions facts as myths.

...unwrap generational realities.

...denormalized structural inequalities.

...cutback economies in the hands of experts.

...understand hierarchies as generalized social entities.

This dance

...invites you to look between your commonalities and disrupt your perspectives.

...permeates sustainability.

...lets us go beyond power structures to thrive.

...is the way we can start acting.

This dance embodies you as an economic ruler.

¹ Figueres, Christiana; Figueres, Christiana; Rivett-Carnac, Tom; Rivett-Carnac, Tom. *The Future We Choose*. Bonnier Publishing Fiction. Kindle Edition. 50



Image 8. Nature as a Hierarchy

IT IS ALL A JOURNEY

Take a break and read these words as a journey.

...As wagons of a train, these chapters are constructed and presented independently, yet as the train, they connect in one direction and aim for one destiny.

They are constructed on research, design, hierarchy, language, economy, and pluriverse and framed by ontological design as the creator of the context and guide of the project. A frame that will direct you into sustainable design practice and leads you as an active citizen to embrace morality as a matriarchal economic creator.

So, throughout, you are approaching complexities of hierarchies, the value of language, dichotomies on sustainability, graphic narratives, and a research position.

Accordingly, the wagons present a critique of a universal power structure between the vague concept of sustainability and development: two universal policy keepers.

This wagon pursues to disrupt current academic paradigms and sustain different ways of knowing as research strategies. Combining research through design as an exemplified standpoint for a sustainable design proposition where sustainability is a research approach that challenges commonalities as an opportunity.

Overall, it directs us to be creators and active participants of an economic system that lets go of preconceived notions and re-learn what it is to be part of nature. For “a world where many worlds fit.”¹

As mentioned by Carolina Benedet, and Luciana Ciliento

“...el calentamiento global un elemento importante de la inestabilidad social. El cambio climático es hoy uno de los principales factores de pobreza, carestía, guerra y migración”²

(“...global warming is an important element of social instability. Climate change is today one of the main factors of poverty, famine, war, and migration.”)

Additionally, Naomi Klein stated,

“health care, education, food, and clean water. Indeed, fighting inequality on every front and through multiple means must be understood as a central strategy in the battle against climate change.”³

Although this outcome refers to morality, social perceptions, beliefs, and modes of being, it does not address a psychological area. Its main objective is to see design as a social career and economic changer.

To be a creator of matriarchal economies, you will discover to adopt sustainability between the parameters of a pluriversal world.

...This train has an overarching theme toward the perception of equality.

Enjoy your journey, explore between, and find your seat.

¹ Kothari, Ashish; Salleh, Ariel; Escobar, Arturo; Demaria, Federico; Acosta, Alberto (2019-06-01T22:58:59.000). Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary. AuthorsUpFront | Tulika Books, New Delhi. Kindle Edition.557

² Benedetto, Carola, Roberta Maddalena Bireau, Luciana Ciliento, and Guillem Medina. Cuentos Para Niños y niñas Que Quieren Salvar El Mundo. Barcelona: B de Blok, 2019.

³ Klein, Naomi. This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate. Vancouver, B.C.: Langara College, 2021, 94



Image 9. Micro Realities

DISRUPTING THE COMFORT ZONE

“Acá nacimos, acá crecimos, acá hemos conocido qué es el mundo”¹

(“Here we were born, here we grew up, here we have known what the world is”)

The combination of design, economy, and sustainability builds an interpretation of what makes the world, how design plays a role, and how people behave. Yet their implementation varies on the nation that is applied and its history.

For instance, I went with my family to the UK this year. As I had previously been there for 4-5 months, I was already familiar with the cultural differences; my swift mode was automatic. Yet their adaptation process was slower.

My father almost went into the driver’s seat of several Ubers. Then one day, my mother asked me, “so we walk on the left side” ... I just said: “just do everything you know the other way around.”

I went to that phase the first time I arrived and must admit that a simple perception of direction and orientation is not easy to disrupt. Crossing the streets, taking a bus, or walking the sideway takes you out of your comfort zone. Yet those unperceived small actions facilitate integration, understanding, and appreciation of other cultures.

There is no “correct or incorrect” way to walk on the street. Yet culturally, there is. Furthermore, there is no correct or incorrect way of development, yet universally there is. Those are examples of unperceived and normalized hierarchies that become generalized social entities.

Accordingly, theories’ perceptions and miss perceptions vary according to background, native country, language, opportunities, and ways of learning. Hence, *“in order to cooperate across boundaries, we need shared values and cultural understanding.”²*

Let me start...

I am a woman, a researcher, an architect, and a sustainable designer.

I am Latin; I speak Spanish as my mother tongue.

I am westernized and live in a third-world country. A country some known as the backyard of the United States.

Yet I am American, not as some might perceive it. I wasn’t born in the United States or have a residential visa.

I am American, as I was born in Central America

This grasping of cultures where one takes what is already learned and consciously applies it with different eyes is how this research embodies sustainable design and innovation pursued in the Oikos RTD Model, used to strengthen the Matriarchal Economy.

It is about de-normalizing beyond daily imposed hierarchies yet doesn’t underestimate tactics. Rather questioning and embracing them as possibilities. Developing critical stances on ruptures between socioeconomic dichotomies.

Its practice will identify solutions in places where hierarchies see difficulties. It is a matter of personal action rather than a universal one.

Yet, as described, this exploration is easy to grasp in an unfamiliar place. That is why this model challenges you to disrupt your comfort zone (location-wise.)

¹ Escobar, Arturo. “Sentipensar Con La Tierra : Nuevas Lecturas Sobre Desarrollo, Territorio y Diferencia.” Universidad Autónoma Latinoamericana UNAULA. Accessed June 13, 2022. <http://ciidu.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Escobar-Arturo-2014.pdf>.

² Hinske, Christoph, and Harry Lehmann. “The Impossibilities of the Circular Economy.” 360Dialogues. Accessed June 13, 2022. <https://360dialogues.com/360portfolios/ce-impossibilities>.



Image 10. Cultural Perspectives

LOOKING TO THE UNSEEN

You have read about... research, design, language, economy, pluriverse, and hierarchies. additionally, how this inquiry line has been encompassed by a framework between ontological design, pluriverse, and the value of values.

Following this study has created an intrinsic link between this framework and sustainability. Presented as the Oikos RTD Model.

As mentioned, “words – ‘economy’ and ‘ecology’ shared the one Greek root, *Oikos*, meaning ‘our home.’”¹

Additionally, RTD is the abbreviation used for Research Through Design.

Moreover,

A framework is understood as the relations between topics of a research

A model represents its mechanism.

“...Models...suggests, have the potential to ‘stick in the mind’s eye and wordlessly reshape [some part of] our view of the world’”²

A methodology is a series of steps between the model framework essential to problem-solving.

That is the core of the name and explanation of why his RTD outcome has been established as a model, as its foundation is based on a process rather than an outcome. (Keeping this research away from a methodology yet a possibility for future scope , where workshops or a Ph.D. project can be done in relation to its creation)

This outcome is the exploration of a universal economic structure with intrinsic attachment to the past, linked and reproduced to academia and seen as the only truthful approach to development. A structure that has built imaginary boundaries of hierarchical dichotomies and moral preconceptions.

Yet, as my reality is not your reality, my sustainable strategy is not your sustainable strategy; therefore... my economic model is not your economic model.

Accordingly, The Oikos Model is a way to design and investigate intrinsically linked with each country’s natural, social, political, and financial resources participating in building a system of sustainable economies towards developing their first needs.

By looking to the unseen, it unfolds pluriversal strategies to overcome universal thinking boundaries, such as absolute, obsessive, obsolete truths, and vague ones like “plastic-free” as the unique identity of sustainability.

For example, a bottle you carry daily to work could represent the first sip of water to others. The garbage on the street you hate to see every day may have another intention that you haven’t discovered. Even where you work or rest place might help you figure out how to see opportunities between your commonalities....

... defined as everything that surrounds you that you see as a given. Everything, tangible or intangible, that makes your environment. Furthermore, recognized as an opportunity to create active research as a mode of being.

Due to this reason, the model highlights commonalities as a pluriversal design strategy. (A structure of cultural manifestos and paradigms: a matriarchal economic system.) Going beyond the general aesthetic academic perception that undermines design research value.

Plus, it reveals false intellectual hierarchies that segregate society between academic people (intelligent people) and non-academic (non-smart people)

Accordingly, this model invites you to defy academic paradigms and look at the unnoticed in your daily day. Those aspects you are so used to that have lost their meaning.

¹ Kothari, Ashish; et al Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary . Kindle Edition.628

² Snow, Tom. 2020. “Ecosystem Metabolisms and Functions: An Eco-Literacy Framework and Model for Designers”. *FormAkademisk - Research Journal of Design and Design Education* 13 (4):Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.7577/formakademisk>, 2.



Image 11. Volcanoe Sign - Seen the Useen

What is more,

- Part of the model recognizes design as a wicked problem: *“A process of research and discovery without clear boundaries nor a rigid formulation or structure to follow. Understood as a human trait (embracing perfection as unhuman), the outcomes can constantly be improved. Furthermore, it was no universal solution. Accordingly, it assumes the pluriverse.”*¹
- Another one understands that an economic system is conformed by a series of practices.

Yet, the problem is that sustainability, design, and economics currently speak a universal communication that leads to an anti-democratic tactic. Leading to a universal normalization of hierarchical academic structures that shape our understanding of economic development into an unsustainable strategy toward the individual, society, and surroundings.

Accordingly, sustainability is what we, as active citizens, aim with each country's national resources to reach a balance between a viable way of living and economic development.

For instance, Haiti, Norway, and Canada were mentioned in “Graphic Narratives for Active Citizens” they contemplate the diverse meaning of sustainability in a pluriversal world:

- *“... what is sustainable for Haiti isn't to conserve green areas; what is sustainable for them is to eat.”*²
- *“... additionally, Norway and Canada are globally perceived among the top sustainable countries. However, a big part of their economy is based on gas, petroleum, and mineral extraction. ... it does not make sense to be “sustainable” and have electric cars in these countries. The electricity needed will be provided by burning co2 and ending in a higher environmental contamination rate”.*³

So, combining these two parts with the practice of exploring the unseen develops an opportunity to see sustainable design as a pluriversal language. And for it to emerge as a socio-economic model, political manifestation, and cultural transformation.

This model aims for Matriarchal economies to be addressed towards a definition of equality as pluriversal. It is evident that each country has different natural and socioeconomic resources. Therefore, equality cannot be measured with the same parameters.

That is why this is an approach to strengthening an existing system. Yet, with the possibility of becoming a system perse.

For it to thrive, sustainability demands disrupting current universal power paradigms that cannot grasp every reality as subjective.

It is not a final answer or solution to reaching environmental sustainability. It is all a process that can change according to demanding circumstances—a step on the ladder.

Therefore, the outcomes will depend on the country, even another city. It will depend on your current location and previous influences. For me, San José, CR, is the city where I grow up and live. And in this research, it was the place where I explored my commonalities. However, another example is the plane, the airport, and the baggage use might be understood if you travel a lot.

Accordingly, within my commonalities, the approach found as an understanding of sustainable design as active research and a mode of being was nature thriving. Yet as flippanant as it might be to speak about nature thrives as an alternative way of thinking, it is not “what” but rather “how” it's perceived and understood—recapturing the awe of your encounters.

Yet, this exploration could be related to oceans, infrastructure, modes of transportation, medical equipment, and heat waves. Just raise your head; the first place, object, sound, etc., you notice can be interpreted as an approach that defies commonalities as an opportunity to research.

1 Solís, Silvia “Graphic Narratives for Active Citizens” 2022, 2

2 Solís, 35

3 Solís, 35



Image 12. Development vs Nature

1+1 = INFINITY

In The Oikos RTD Model, 1+1 does not equal sustainability. It is a matter of personal action rather than universal, correlated with Ontological Design.

*"Ontological design is the discipline concerned with designing human experience. It does so by operating under one essential assumption: that by designing objects, spaces, tools, and experiences, we are, in fact designing the human being itself"*¹

Furthermore,

*"Victor Papanek positions design as a universal practice in human communities: "All [people] are designers. designers. ... Design is the conscious effort to impose a meaningful order."*²

Accordingly, it pursuits to strengthen the matriarchal economy by conceptualizing that:

- Sustainability is not a universal term, less it is an imitable strategy.
- Active ways of knowledge should not be treated as an assembly line.
- Active citizens are the creator of economic structure
- Design has the power to construct the core of economic models
- Certain time beliefs create commonalities, myths, etc.
- Design is a mindset, power, and culture.

So, following the words of Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset, *"Soy yo y mis circunstancias"*³ (*"It's me and my circumstances"*), The Oikos RTD Model personifies a theoretical standpoint that directs you to:

1. Reform universal preconceptions
2. Disrupt academic standardization
3. Understand value as subjective
4. Foster different modes of learning as ontological creators
5. Perceive sustainability as a pluriversal concept
6. Disrupt your commonalities
7. Practice finding between the unseen
8. Apply the discovery to your reality
9. Be a designer of your sustainable strategy

Yet how?

- Go around your routine.
- Look at the things that you are used to from another perspective
- Photography them, write about them, drawing, etc.
- Encounter something that concerns you during the exploration phase.
- Find a common link with your interest
- Link your interest with the problem and your surroundings.

For instance, I had previously opted to do a photo-illustrated book to communicate the outcome to two types of learners.

During my exploration phase, nature thrive was an encounter; the photos support this statement.

Furthermore, I am used to working in an office full of books. They have been there all my life; I have read some, others not. Most are just standing covered by dust and letting time pass by.

Additionally, I rather read physical books than online versions. As for me, they don't provide the same learning experience. That is why my commonalities also contemplate going to the bookstore.

Again, I saw infinite books displayed, standing. But then what?

1 Fraga, Daniel. "The Manifesto of Ontological Design." Medium. DataDrivenInvestor, November 27, 2020. <https://medium.datadriveninvestor.com/the-manifesto-of-ontological-design-7fdb19169107>.

2 Costanza-Chock, Sasha (2020-03-02T22:58:59.000). Design Justice (Information Policy) . MIT Press. Kindle Edition.43

3 Gasset José Ortega y, and Julián Marías. Meditaciones Del Quijote. Madrid: Cátedra, 1990.



Image 13. My Commonalities

This is where I linked Sentipensamiento with Ontological Design, my consumption and materialism towards books, and a Matriarchal Economic system. Where my exploration led to a way of communication.

That is why the book is many out of paper seed. (a material that can last over three years untouched) It must be stated that this approach is not to be linked with recycling, reusing, etc.

It was the opportunity found within my reality and my experiences, where books are an affordable way to learn. But what about... well internet? For it you must own a computer or cellphone, additionally have reception. Those are not universal options.

This topic was highly discussed in Costa Rica by its Ministry of Education during the Covid-19 Pandemic, as not all families can afford them. Not all families live in a place with reception; moreover, some children attend school to afford a meal per day.

Yet keeping track of the testing phase of this model, then how to disrupt this materialized way of learning?

- Learning something else within the experience. The act of destruction is stress liberating, plus seeing nature grow from your seeding provides a feeling of joy and connection.
- Thinking and action now of the future whereabouts of design creations.
- Draw attention to an unperceived hierarchy: design.

Beyond, let's recall some previous phrases to reinforce why design is a guide toward an economic model.

"values and moralities guide the core of economic models; moreover, they are direct social domains.

Additionally, a financial structure is a social way of thinking created by determinate time beliefs. It is a mindset, power, and culture.

For instance. Capitalism was created during the Industrial Revolution, which dictated liberty and the pursuit of individualism—putting economic acquisition as a power structure."

Consequently, this model puts equality and pluriversal resources as a power structure. Plus:

"Now... as a paradigm changer, Design has the power to unsettle normative understanding. Dictating those moral values between economies. And portraying a human-nature relation, leading ways of knowing as economic creators."

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Use these parameters to guide your thoughts and actions to remake the world—de-normalizing hierarchical social structures and rethinking the definition of equality and sustainability. Terms reframed to embrace pluriversality.

The Oikos RTD Model seeks to sustain sustainability towards stabilizing a pluriversal world. Stopping its existing reach for balance in an unbalanced and only truthful way.

Ask, de-normalize and act.

The Oikos RTD Model is presented to disrupt.



Image 14. De-normalized

ECONOMICAL CANVASES

The Oikos RTD Model is in a theoretical phase, yet this exercise is to sense its purpose in time and space. This is how it can be manifested.

Accordingly, my exploration phase celebrates and promotes a revised Costa Rican culture – searching for its correlations between design and sustainability, discovering that this country possesses and displays an environmentally sustainable DNA as a national moral identity. Yet, under it, an economy has become our way of living as we sell what we have: nature.

So, it is a country proud of its environmental care and renewable resources use. However, as capitalism, it has an unperceived moral mindset set for financial reasons.

Costa Rica was the location where this research model of sustainable design as a pluriversal language that transforms opportunities for economic balance was explored.

A place where nature intrinsically thrives (some even call it a jungle). Consequently, as said in business areas, its application “has a tropicalized stamp” (expression also used to describe capitalism in Latin American environments)

So, as our environment participates in creating our attitudes; (“we design our world, while our world acts back on us and designs us.”¹) . Then, a sustainable DNA that adopted Costa Rica’s economic structure was featured as a research outcome.

Furthermore, the concept of micro-realities was recognized during the exploration phase, compared to Costa Rican micro-climates. Where sometimes, one can see when the rain starts as if a knife cut the cloud

Accordingly, we live in one world understood as a universe. Yet its natural behavior is a pluriverse. However, between that pluriverse, there are also “micro realities.” One can zoom in and out as much as the thought wants.

We, as active citizens, are participants of those micro realities as combined with each country’s national resources, we can aim to reach a balance between a viable way of living and economic development.

After all, the micro and macro realities of the pluriverse behave with different and uncommonly measured parameters. Sustaining sustainability – should aim for balance. Yet currently, it promotes rising inequalities. So:

- Sustainability must have a different definition in every culture, based on its resources, and applied among countries depending on the first necessity of their citizens. A sustainable economy must be a sustainable culture for it to work.
- Additionally, it must dislocate current paradigms that foment a universal definition of equality. As equality signifies an infinite and multidimensional cultural process that varies depending on its surrounding circumstances .

These insights are an ontological representation of design as a creator of economic pluriversal agendas.

Putting The Oikos RTD Model as defiant an educational structure that presents one alternative as an absolute route and its repercussions. It is enough. Every brain is an entity, everyone perceives reality differently, and everyone learns and grows in different ways. Yet the system is one.

1 D'Ignazio, Catherine; Klein, Lauren F. (2020-03-31). Data Feminism (Strong Ideas) . MIT Press. Kindle Edition. 423-425



Image 15. Tropical Fruits

CONCLUSIONS

Coming to an end, this is a confined explanation of the OIKOS RTD Model

Firstly, this book is a vehicle of communication that criticizes normalization as a universal hierarchical structure.

Where the value of language is vital for the reaction in a problem-solving situation, it matters what we say about how we act. It matters that sustainability has lost meaning within an unbalance terminology of equality.

Understanding that our surroundings, past experiences, and what we design... design us back.

Accordingly, every reality is different.

This leads to the understanding of pluriversal strategies. Yet why is mix up with the economy?

Because it is a false hierarchical understanding that academic experts lead this field, regrettably, this shapes our understanding of economic development into an unsustainable strategy toward the individual, society, and surroundings.

Yet, the economic systems are created by values and moralities; they are a social way of thinking developed by certain time beliefs—a mindset, power, and culture.

Therefore, this is linked with design; if you read them on their own, they have the same approach: created by values and moralities...a social way of thinking developed by certain time beliefs...A mindset, power, and culture.

Finally, this line of thought closes and opens with research, as referred to in the statement of intent: design is a way of research, a creator of economic models, and a hierarchical structure. It is a social practice, yet academic perceptions still undermine its value.

Simply put, a model defies economic values taught in a universal educational structure that presents one alternative as an absolute route.

Finally, it aims to embrace pluriversal realities as an opportunity to reach a sustainable balance within realities, linking each country's natural, social, political, and financial resources to develop their first needs.

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If, after reading this book, you have more questions than answers. Then my job was done; you are questioning beyond sustainability as recycling. Now embrace your doubts with this model.

1. Why me?
2. How?
3. What is it?
4. What for?
5. How to?
6. Would it matter?

1. Because you can
2. By questioning structural dichotomies
3. Research through design as an economic model
4. To sustain and develop your reality into a matriarchal economy that embraces pluriversal equality

5. Taking your strengths (reading, writing, drawing, talking, dancing, etc.) out of your comfort zone and seeing within the unseen.

6. Yes, your actions are part of the system

Now, forget everything you already know, and start again.



Image 16. Barva Volcano Lagoon

**DESTROY THIS
BOOK,
RIP IT APART,
TEAR IT OFF,
SOAK ITS SHEETS,
BURY IT.
ACT NOW,
SEE IT THRIVING.**



Image 17. Act Now

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ASK
DENORMALIZED
ACT