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Abstract

A project around the loss and the absence. Searching to evoke an emotion through ordinary materials.

This work is a reflection on tradition, mourning and the importance to remember, departing from fiber works engaging with symbolic materials that participate in rituals around death and commemoration in Mexico. Delving into specific repetitive actions in the making, together with the unique physical qualities of onion, beeswax, corn husks and paper.

Recalling the forgotten in the remains of silent traces of memories

Keywords

Mourning
Ritual
Loss
Absence
Sorrow
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Gaze
Senses
Materials language
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Introduction

“Hay pueblos que saben a desdicha. Se les conoce con sorber un poco de su aire viejo y entumido, pobre y flaco como todo lo viejo” (“Some villages have the smell of misfortune. You know them after one whiff of their stagnant air, stale and thin like everything old.”) ¹

My project revolves around loss, absence, and memory. My research questions is: **how can textiles trigger an emotion by finding mournful qualities in materials themselves and in the act of making?**

In doing so I will explore how I can find those qualities in an ordinary material. I am searching for a point of convergence between the spiritual, the emotional and the ordinary of an everyday good by using textiles capacity to communicate through its texture and materials. Understanding mourning as an external manifestation of sorrow or grief.

**Mourning** mass noun
1. *The expression of sorrow for someone's death. 'She's still in mourning after the death of her husband'* ²

**Mourn** verb
1. *Feel or show sorrow for the death of (someone), typically by following conventions such as the wearing of black clothes.*

1.1 *Feel regret or sadness about (the loss or disappearance of something)* ³

**Sorrow** mass noun
1. *A feeling of deep distress caused by loss, disappointment, or other misfortune suffered by oneself or others.* ⁴

**Grief** mass noun
1. *Intense sorrow, especially caused by someone’s death.* ⁵

**Mystical** Adjective
2. *Inspiring a sense of spiritual mystery, awe, and fascination.* ⁶

For me an ordinary material is a common material that we use in a regular situation and that we are familiar with. In my material research I work with everyday natural materials such as sugar, onion, wax and corn husks, which have a symbolic value within traditions around death in my home.

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³ Ibis
⁴ Ibis
⁵ Ibis
⁶ Ibis
country, Mexico. Exploring into their metaphorical potentiality in connection to mourning and their unique physical language and textile qualities.

By working with them using a textile expression, I want to make use of our proximity to textiles. We handle textiles everyday with actions such as folding, hanging, covering, squeezing, laying, etc. Textiles are so close to our human experience that could create an intimate encounter with the viewer even without a direct physical contact. We are wrapped in textiles from the moment we are born until we are wrapped in them when we die.

My intention is to transfer the material’s and tradition’s poetic language into new forms through my making, evoking a sorrowful mental landscape through textiles. The aim of my work is not therapeutic. It is about the importance to grieve, to remember and to dignify the loss in a world where we are rushing to forget.

**Background**

I have a design background with a focus on textiles crafts. Throughout my practice I have participated in various collaboration projects: in Mexico, I have worked with artisan women in different indigenous communities and in rural areas, with inmates at a Social Re-insertion Center (fig. 01), and with artisan men in other fields outside textiles.
These situations have given me the opportunity of experiencing many ways in which craft relates to society, how it is a tool to communicate with others and to speak of both the mundane and the divine. In diverse cultures around the globe, textiles are connected to the creation of the world and its degradation.

From the Paracas monumental funerary textiles to the covering of the mirrors and portraits with crepe in the Victorian Era. Involving numerous myths and symbols, textiles accompany you from your birth to the grave and after.

*Aroma de luto (Mourning aroma)* is a herbal and floral infused death shroud woven in the city of Tenancingo, Mexico. This was traditionally used to wrap the deceased and also for mourning. It’s a complicated piece to elaborate, since it is one hundred percent black, a difficult color difficult to obtain in natural dyes, to obtain this garment, treated water and iron, rotten fruit shells and pieces of metal remains at rest in a clay pot that is buried for a period thirty days or more. You dip the cotton in this fetid dye. After this process you prepare another mixture, this time using aromatic herbs, seeds and flowers and boil the cotton yarn in this. Hence its name and the belief that it never loses its flower aroma which keeps you company in your journey to the afterlife.  

Crafted objects involved in traditions around death were, and some still are, full of symbolism and magic; not only in the form, but in the act of making and in the materials themselves. These objects are meant to participate in the care of the dead and the ones left behind.

What these objects have in common is that one way or another, they are the materialisation of a belief. Therefore sometimes they have a long and complex making process in which many of the steps or choices are not linked to a practical task.

In the words of cultural critic Ashley Crawford regarding the exhibition *Ceremonial* in 2016 at Craft Victoria in Australia: “Accoutrements make ritual concrete they make the irreal real, they allow us to see and feel our beliefs.”

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7 Extracted from different sources and anecdotes.
I am interested in the special qualities that crafts, from textiles and pottery to candles or papercrafts, have in a ritual context. Their capacity to transmit emotions and sensations and how they are responding to a pluricultural society.

Small changes say a lot about a society, like the shift from a wax candle to a LED candle that works with a coin, while the intention is the same, this change of materiality changes the experience. Instead of being shrouded by the smell of burning wax and smoke that connects you with the invisible, you are left only with the visual experience of switching on a candle.

Mexico is a place where death plays a leading role both in its traditions and in its current violent reality (with around 250 thousand murders in a period of 12 years, and 12,500 missing people in the last 5 years)\textsuperscript{9} Where 89.3\% of the population is catholic\textsuperscript{10}, where traditions emerging from a cultural syncretism are present in the everyday life and where an ordinary material or object can become mystical.

\textsuperscript{9} Hope, Alejandro, El Universal Newspaper, Mexico City, 2016
\textsuperscript{10} Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía INEGI (National Institute of Statistics and Geography INEGI)
Right now people say that Mexico is becoming a gigantic graveyard and at the same time there is a popular saying that goes like this: “La muerte en México duele pero al final deja un dulce sabor de boca”, which means that The death in Mexico hurts but in the end leaves a sweet taste in your mouth, referring to the offerings of the Day of the dead.

“Los muertos pesan más que los vivos; lo aplastan a uno” (“The dead weigh more than the living; they crush you”) ¹¹

That is how I started to lay the foundations for developing my working method. In my first experimentations, Sugar memories. These are other eyes (figs. 04, 05), I merge one custom around death and the ordinary of the everyday material. I explored around the Day of the Dead offerings, and extracted two elements; one material, sugar and one action, honor or praise.

Hence I started to reflect about these two concepts that are so opposite and that coexist, I worked on a material exploration with sugar, a material always present in the shape of skulls at the altars for the dead and that conveys so many opposite meanings loaded with sorrow in its history. By mixing it with raw fibers, cotton and wool, the result was a group of pieces that reacted and changed due to the heat, the touch, the cold. Sometimes melting, dripping and cracking.

¹¹ Rulfo, Juan, El llano en Llamas: Selección, Visor Libros, Madrid, 2001
Fig. 04 González Osnaya, Lourdes. ‘Sugar memories. These are other eyes’ (sugar, cotton and wool), 2016

Fig. 05 González Osnaya, Lourdes. ‘Sugar memories. These are other eyes’ (sugar, cotton and wool), 2016
Addressing the themes of sorrow and ambiguous loss, I would like to highlight the thoughts of American artist Bruce Conner regarding the use of spiritual inspiration in his work. From his point of view in the context of religion there is a way of speaking about certain experiences that is not present in other contexts. That language can be recognized very clearly in his assemblages made during his stay in Mexico between 1961-63, using different ritual objects and materials from Catholic and indigenous traditions to create haunting and sorrowful pieces.

Just as Doctor in anthropology Willy Jansen mentions on her research surrounding Holy Week religious art objects: ‘Ritual objects provide stability, tactility, and visualization of the memory of past cultural events and personal experiences... as a result, the mere sight of Mary’s face or the sound of the muted drums makes the body tremble with emotional memories of the past’ 12

Although I am not working with found ritual objects I am applying its language by bringing into play some elements of vernacular customs around death in Mexico. For me a ritual is an action or series of actions with a symbolic meaning, it can be private or public.

Traditions are the result of a collective creation, therefore by taking them as an inspiration we carry centuries of shared thinking. According to Brian Massumi, Canadian social theorist, myths and religion unite the singular and the universal of human experience. Following that thinking, the reference to elements of Mexican traditions around death in my work is a way to go from the particular to the general, given that these customs are based on a set of beliefs.

Having a personal reflective relation with traditions is a way for me to incorporate local ancient knowledge into a contemporary global context. Analyzing it from an external point of view and extracting some elements of it allows me, in addition to leaning on its language, to open it up to inscribe other experiences within it.

‘Extraction is not the end of the story, nor does incorporation spiral into repetitive copying. It is not despite but precisely because of intertextual dialogue, attribution, and evocation that performers may cultivate a personal style’ 13

Through picking up certain components and re-formulating them, I want to connect my personal cosmovision with that of the viewer in a sensuous experience.

During my Master's degree I made a research trip to Ecuador, and one of the things that stayed with me was the fact that for the indigenous cultures in the Amazon everything that is useful is sacred. I relate this to the work of German artist Wolfgang Laib, who creates sculptures and installations from organic materials such as pollen, milk and rice. I find the way he handles the materials very inspiring, his way of caring and manipulating them is almost like a form of prayer,

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which I think is transmitted into his pieces. This way of handling an ordinary material is something of great relevance in my practice.

Fig. 06 Laib, Wolfgang. Pouring milk for Milkstone, 1975

There are different ways of engaging with sorrow in crafts and arts, one being the use of traumatic confrontation as a trigger for an affective response or the allusion of specific occurrence to invoke memory.

Instead I am relying on the emotional encounter caused in part by the use of unstable and ephemeral materials, alongside the unpacking of traditions. Intending for the pieces to enact mourning actions themselves, but without a connection to specific incidents, they are not memorials to a particular someone or situation.

“...the works themselves are acting in the way their physical state changes, they are acting our loss, pain...”

Doris Salcedo, Colombian artist, works with the themes of sorrow and loss around the political situation in her home country. Although she refers to particular events on her pieces, in contrast with other artists working with political violence, she does not use the images of victims or violent moments themselves to create a response in the viewer, instead, as Jill Bennett refers, “Her work suggests the way in which a sensation (pain or loss) attaches itself to objects as to bodies”.

Regarding the attributes of unstable materials, American art historian and writer Cindy Nemser analyzes the use of them in Eva Hesse’s sculptures describing them as imbued with a melancholic sense of loss: “As the viewer looks at these sculptures, whose material properties change over time, he or she becomes conscious of the fact that loss is already in progress”.

Following the same line I believe the materials unpredictable deterioration and reaction to the physical conditions of their surroundings, gives them an independent voice in the creation of the piece and provides them with a sense of bereavement in themselves.

**Method**

My method will be to search for a point of convergence between the spiritual and the emotional in an everyday material. By the meeting of these 3 elements:

1. Reflecting on a series of **Traditions** as my starting point

As mentioned before delving into Mexican customs around death is a way for me to reflect around the materiality of rituals, and to extract elements to work with. For doing so, I work in different ways, either searching in my own memories, interviewing family members and in the case of ancient disappeared traditions I research through texts.

“The personal creative use of tradition did not begin in our life, it is as old as narrative art itself”.

2. Working with ephemeral **materials within that tradition**. Analyzing their role and symbolism inside of it and exploring their metaphorical potentiality outside that practice that connects them to mourning.

One important aspect is the materials physical qualities and the way they react to the exterior conditions. In that way, as mentioned before, they become active participants in the making process.

“This is not leaving all the responsibility to the maker but how nature comes in and helps co-create.”

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17 Ortiz, Alfonso, Source is missing.
Each of those materials have their own physical personal language and they are richly tactile. I work with the sweat of the sugar, the onions fragility, the smell of beeswax, etc.

“...del pequeño cadáver salía ya un ligero olor sacramental, de cera y de paños, un olor de nave infinita buscando sus paredes y el hueco eterno...” "...from the small corpse there was already a slight sacramental smell, of wax and cloth, an infinite church nave smell looking for its walls and the eternal gap ...”

3. **Visible trace of an action** What actions in my material manipulation could have a relation with mourning? How can I work with the physical memory of the material? Fiber artists working with

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19 Revueltas, José, El luto humano … (The human mourning), Editorial México, [México], 1943
grief as a concept rely on the language of textiles. They intensify the expression of actions such as wrapping, mending, tearing to mirror process like healing, hurting, taking care, etc.

In this part of my development I explore around the symbolism of the action I use to transgress or affect the material in order to transform it. What certain actions applied to a specific material means for me and what they could evoke in the viewer. How the excessive repetition of this action can amplify its language and to what extent do I have to carry this repetition in order to create an impact.

As an example, when I dip wool in sugar once it becomes a coating, when I do it hundreds of times it becomes a burden. By making this action evident, I hope to communicate this to the viewer.

In Relics of tears (fig. 08, 09) I delved into an ancient tradition of aztec mourning around XV-XVI century. It is about a rite that required the widow’s mourners not to wash their face or comb their hair for eighty days after their husbands died. After that period, the older ones removed the scabs caused by accumulated dirt, grease and tears, then the priests picked up the tears from the widow’s house to take them to the temple along with their sadness.

From this practice I focused on the moment of exacerbating the pain and their action in devoting themselves to suffering in order to overcome it. I worked on creating this elegiac wool and sugar textil by thinking about the accumulation of sorrow in the tears and dirt.
I thought through what happens when the pain is so much and the tears are so many that they can never disappear and they keep building up layers and layers which dry and harden. But from time to time they come back to cry.

In this way its hundreds of wool threads became heavier and thicker as stalactites, pulled down by the sugar coat weight and becoming stiff, indicating an invading overload of a material on another material.

While making a piece there are many processes involved that remain hidden or that are not evident at first sight, some of them leaving traces behind. By highlighting and making visible certain actions I want to imply that something happened there. The remains of an action, the “scar” of a process.

Both of these experimental pieces, *Sugar memories* and *Relic of tears*, reacted to their surrounding conditions, and after a time under the spotlight as sugar started sweating, they started to “cry”. I also wanted the viewer to spend time looking to the piece by awakening the curiosity of how it was built.

**The altar**

An altar for me, represents an entity whose presence speaks to a gut feeling and reaches to recall the memory of past events and personal experiences. An altar filled with votives and ex-votives, which are the materialization of something that existed or could have, of a moment of pain or hope that takes a physical form, leaving traces and building up layers, merging with time and becoming almost a living being: the presence of the absence. It invites you for contemplation…

> “Why is it that the contemplation of images exerts the power to arrest the mind”

Altars and religious spaces language is a big influence in my practice. From home made altars which are not necessarily connected to a religious belief to walls filled with ex-votives at churches. Places as Rothko Chapel in Houston, for example, that without any direct connection to an specific religion delves on its language to create the same sensation as you would have in a sacred or religious space.

As part of the Master programme we were asked to visualize our ideas in large scale and in paper for the exhibition Tearable Craft at Infra City. In the piece ‘Ausencia’ (‘Absence’) Fig.10-11, I made use of one characteristic of paper: its fragility.

I transgressed the paper by the means of an act as simple as a cut, but multiplied by thousands of times, I use the word transgressed, because that was my intention with the action. I also worked with the lightness, the silhouette of the voids, and the echo of the shadows. Aiming to evoke the encounter with an altar. The intention to evoke this sensation will be a constant in the following pieces.

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Fig. 10 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Detail of ‘Ausencia’ ('Absence') (paper installation at Infracity, 2017)
The materials

“When the deceased wake is held at home, below the casket is placed a dish with sliced onion dipped in vinegar, this, according to popular belief, makes the onion, because it is so strong, pick up the diseases that can be around the deceased and not transmitted to the mourners, this also prevents people who come to the wake not to get cancer in any of its variants. A cross made with lime is also placed, which together with the onion, protect the soul of the deceased from the influence of the evil spirits and from the corruption of the dead body. The onion on the plate and the cross of lime remain in the place of the wake the nine days of prayers and even when the cross is lifted. After that the cross of lime, the
Onions and beeswax are two of the materials included in my project. The onion is an element extracted from a traditional wake described above, which has the purpose to protect the mourners from the “cancer of the death” and the dead body from the evil, being such a humble element in the wake at the same time it’s very powerful.

Being protection and repelling the main functions of the onion, I search mournful qualities in it by intensifying the expression of peeling its most intimate layer and revealing it, trying to reconstruct its original body, covering and protecting itself. Working with its characteristic smell, its fragility and translucity.

I remember its smell, and the silent presence of that little dish during the whole time. That is the thing with objects in funerals, they become images engraved in your memory.

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21 Extracted from different sources and anecdotes among others from:
http://www.medicinatradicionalmexicana.unam.mx/termino.php?l=1&t=correr%20al%20muerto,
https://answers.yahoo.com/answer
Fig. 13 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Onion skin, work in progress, 2017

Fig. 14 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Onion skin over wax frame, work in progress, 2018
The beeswax is a material used for ex-votives and other offerings in Church. And of course is used in candles, which are a constant in many funerary and commemoration rituals around the world. In Catholic tradition the wax represents the flesh and the light, the divine. In the Day of the Dead altars each candle represents a loved one who has already died.

For my work with wax I experimented around dripping and thought about the accumulation of wax debris in worship sites as the remains of a prayer or a thought forming drops and building up scabs through time. Becoming Relics of prayers.

Fig. 15 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Altar at Balbanera Church, Ecuador, 2018

At night it rained again... The glass in the window was opaque, and on the other side the drops slipped on threads as thick as tears. «I watched the drops fall illuminated by the lightning, and every time I breathed I sighed, and every time I thought, I thought of you, Susana.»

Fig. 16 González Osnaya, Lourdes. WHIP exhibition, Beeswax and cotton thread 2018

22 Rulfo, Juan, El llano en Llamas: Selección , Visor Libros, Madrid, 2001
Fig. 17 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Fragment of Relic of prayers, Beeswax and cotton fiber, 2018

Fig. 18 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Ausencia, Exam exhibition installation, 2018
Discussion

How can I find mournful qualities in an everyday material taking as a starting point a very local practice?

Material wise I believe that although my perception of this elements in a traditional practice has to do with multiple factors such as specific memories and cultural aspects. It also has to do with the way the materials have been taking care of and the atmosphere that is created around them and through them.

I apply that in my work as well as the fact that when we look at this precarious and fragile materials we can feel that there is something being lost.

Taking the example of the onion skin, a part of the onion that is so fragile that it can barely exist on its own. Through the painstaking repetitive action of peeling it out from around 60 kg of onions and putting them together, I intended to lift it up to the same importance as it had in a ceremonial context. The fact that you can also see the trace of a repetitive action in the pieces is very important because it gives a hint of the care and importance that someone gave to that material, even being in some cases something that you could throw away.

Looking closely to small details in the things and actions we sometimes take for granted gives them a significant presence. I learned new things about this materials that I handle very often but I haven’t noticed, even how the onion skin that I made in the USA with american onions doesn’t react to the surrounding in the same way as the onion skins I made in Sweden or how the skin that is closer to the outer shell oxidises quicker than the rest .

I believe that these materials, through their smell and their language, create certain atmosphere in themselves but I also understood that other tools are needed to enhance them.

A sense of serenity and silence is a characteristic that I think many ceremonial spaces share, both in religious and in secular contexts. I have also found that qualities in a homemade altar above a drawer or in an improvised memorial without any link to a religion.

I feel that it might be because I can perceive the intention behind each action to build it, the care of placing a knitted doily under a rock, to aligning the corners of a little box to the edge of the furniture, to placing it under a window to receive the sunlight or in a corner so that nobody disturbs it. Very simple and on hand actions where I can feel the ceremonial in the everyday.

I try to follow that thinking for the way of placing the pieces in order to enhance their characteristics. As an example, with the onion skin work in progress I tried different options for setting it, in Fig. 18, for example, it is shown how I placed the piece intending that even in a full room you could still have an intimate/personal encounter with it. I tried to incite curiosity about what it was so that it might make you want to get closer, to do so, you have to bend and give your back to the rest of the room and the people then you got the smell. What I learned from this was
that in this way although I might have make the space more intimate, the onion qualities such translucence and fragility were not lifted up.

So the importance I had given to the onion in the making, it was somehow lost by letting it be directly on the ground. Consequently, if I was working with revealing its skin, then I needed to expose it through covering and enfolding a wax frame. This action in a certain way dignified it while also highlighted its fragility.

This gave me an understanding of how to set the pieces without staging them but adjusting in a subtle way certain aspects of a given space.

**Conclusion**

I work from a very traditional local starting point aiming to transfer part of that thinking and sensations into a contemporary global context. It is not my intention to recreate or communicate a traditional practice, but to work with that as a material tool to connect in our similarities and to reflect about the importance to remember, to mourn and to dignify the loss.

“The silence is all there is…”

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Fig 01 Revueltas, Rogelio. “Reynoso culpable sin pruebas” (“Reynoso guilty without proof”) Weaving in progress by Mr. Reynoso inside his cell. 2011 Own image

Fig. 02 Fig. 02 Bell Catherine. “Crematorium Vessel”, Ceremonial Exhibition at Craft Victoria, Australia, 2016

Fig. 03 Osnaya David. ’Untitled’ (Home altar, Puebla. Mexico), 2012

Fig. 04 González Osnaya, Lourdes. ‘Sugar memories These are other eyes Sugar’ (sugar, cotton and wool), 2016
Fig. 05 González Osnaya, Lourdes. ‘Sugar memories These are other eyes Sugar’ (sugar, cotton and wool), 2016

Fig. 06 Laib, Wolfgang. Pouring milk for Milkstone, 1975, Still Points: The Quiet Spaces of Wolfgang Laib
Brenton Good | Issue 53 https://www.imagejournal.org/article/still-points/

Fig. 07 González Osnaya, Lourdes. ‘Untitled experiment’ (corn leaves), 2017 Own image

Fig. 08 González Osnaya, Lourdes. ‘Relic of tears’ (sugar and wool, 120 x 50 x 40 cm), 2016 Own image

Fig. 09 González Osnaya, Lourdes. ‘Relic of tears’ (sugar and wool, 120 x 50 x 40 cm), 2016 Own image

Fig. 10 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Detail of ‘Ausencia’ (‘Absence’) paper installation at Infracity, 2017 Own image

Fig. 11 González Osnaya, Lourdes. ‘Ausencia’ (‘Absence’) paper installation at Infracity, 2017 Own image

Fig. 12 Fig. 12 Picture of Mexican artist Daniel Manrique Arias wake where you can see the dish with onion and the lime cross, 2010. https://literaturafotografiatepito.blogspot.se/2010/11/

Fig. 13 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Onion skin, work in progress, 2017 Own image

Fig. 14 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Work in progress with onion skin, 2018 Own image

Fig. 15 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Altar at Balbanera Church, Ecuador, 2018

Fig. 16 González Osnaya, Lourdes. WHIP exhibition, 2018

Fig. 17 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Fragment of Relic of prayers, Beeswax and cotton fiber, 2018

Fig. 18 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Ausencia, Exam exhibition installation, 2018

Fig. 19, 20 González Osnaya, Lourdes. Work in progress with onion skin, 2018
Appendix

During my master’s project my investigation has been touching upon the subjects of mourning, loss and absence. After both, the examination and the two exhibitions, I have discovered another facet that although was present in my physical work in an empirical manner I think in my research has been somehow overlooked.

This is that the awareness and care of an everyday good and its behaviour in both a ceremonial context and in daily life by looking closely to modest details in the things and actions that often go unacknowledged, could work as well as a visual tool to make us think and reflect in the way we deal with what surround us and how we position ourselves within nature.

While one of my intentions is to evoke an emotion through ordinary materials by shifting our perception of an everyday good to meet an important need to address the importance to have the time and spaces to remember and dignify the loss. At the same time, through my tutorials and examination, I got that this empathy that these pieces could trigger in the viewer might work to address other issues through the innate poetry inside the materials.

I believe the Japanese term Mono no aware (物の哀れ) could apply to why this pieces may cause this feeling, this concept refers to how humans feel empathy or sadness when becoming aware of the impermanence of things.

In my exam it was mentioned that I held a dialogue with the materials, and I agree that by placing me in the same position as the material by shifting the hierarchy between maker and matter, listening to its voice through my making makes them active participants in the generation process. Which I have mentioned before but in the sense of how they are reacting to their surroundings and transforming through time.

I think coincidences such as the shape that the scabs in the beeswax piece “Relic of prayers” took, resembling very closely to the shape of the small flakes of wax produced through a gland in the abdomen of the bees. More than a coincidence could be the memory of the material taking over.

Moving from my position as an external observer of the material to a critical position as part of it I believe could lead me to have a new understanding about an ordinary material.

This aspect of researching the materials through the materials is something I would like to take forward and keep investigating it. Along with their role in traditional ritual/ceremonial practices. I see tradition not as something static but something in a continuous transformation, traditional practices are the result of centuries of shared thinking, therefore they are an immeasurable source of knowledge.
One question that left me thinking after my exam was what do I mean when I talk about dignifying the loss, I now understand that I mean to give it the proper value, respect and understanding. And I think the ceremonial context in any situation is completely linked to respect. This loss could extend to other aspects of life besides death.

Other element of this project that I intend to take forward is as well to create spaces and materiality that without any link to a religion or culture can generate the appropriate atmosphere to deal with these difficult emotions and questions, to connect to people in this transitions regardless their beliefs. Let’s say in a room where you receive the ashes of a loved one or where you have to say your last goodbye. Death is something we all share and one of the most significant events in our existence, both our own and the loss of a loved one, we all deal with it in different ways but I think there are certain behaviours that are shared.

My intention is to use fiberworks as a tool of communicating with and through the immanent poetry of living matter. I think crafts work as a medium to stop and analyze complex situations with all of our senses through something that we as humans share which is the way we relate to materials and this can assist to communicate from another angle in a global society.
Gracias