

## GLOSSARY INFORMATION

This glossary intends to be more than an explanatory note to the words, terms or notions used in constructing this database. It is essentially a guide to an unconventional discourse on what is called development and to an emerging vision for a radical shift from the development paradigm, particularly from an intercultural perspective.

The database attempts to articulate a mode of thinking by creating new words and terminologies that place culture as the matrix to understand endogenous and traditional knowledge and practices. Many of the words, notions, concepts and terms used as descriptors are self-explanatory. Only those which are not have been included in this glossary.

### SECTION 1: TRADITIONAL AND ENDOGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES ONTOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Ontological foundation (of a given culture) refers to what is sometimes called: the Ontology, the Metaphysik, the Weltanschauung, the Cosmvision, The Kosmology, the Worldview of a given culture. This means each culture holds a particular vision of Reality as a whole and its myths, symbols, beliefs, insights, experience, expressions are the ground, the spring, the horizon, the postulates of all its knowledge and practices.

The three distinct dimensions of the ontological foundation of a given culture are considered here:

- the Human dimension: its vision of Man (Anthropological vision);
- the Cosmic dimension: its vision of the Cosmos ( Cosmological vision);
- the Divine dimension: its vision of the Mystery, the Transcendent, the Divine principle (Theological vision). A note of caution is required here in order not to reduce theology to a particular theology of a particular religion, for example to what the monotheistic religions understand by the word theology.

## ARTISTIC CULTURES, ECONOMIC CULTURES, POLITICAL CULTURES ETC.

The term culture is used here as suffix to artistic, economic, political and so on, in order to explicitate that the meaning of culture as the matrix of a given people, their way of life and their knowledge and practices in various aspects of human living. This is in contrast to the understanding of culture as a sociological/anthropological or a conceptual/objective category like other categories such as economics, politics etc.

In other words, it is an acknowledgement of the fact that the human groups in various parts of the world possess their own treasures of knowledge and practices pertaining to different realms of human activities such as arts, economics, politics, health care, education, law and justice, agriculture, environment so on and so forth. Different cultures have different notions to express in their languages which are most often non-translatable in European languages used here. Moreover, the meaning of those terms and notions can be radically different from the Western terms used here. [Examples: Arthashastras or the Jajmani system (economic system) of Indic traditions (in India); the "economics" of the gift or communitarian reciprocity among the Kanaks in New Caledonia; the traditions of Ayurvedic medicine in India or Chinese medicine; the "political" tradition of the Cercle and of the "Stateless Nation" among Iroquois people of North America (called Handenosauce)].

This particular way of understanding and using the word culture may enable us to understand the complexities of the issues concerning cultural identity; the necessity for the recognition of peoples' rights to cultural identity and of the need for a new methodology for a genuine intercultural dialogue.

## RELIGIOUS CULTURES:

It is not meant by this expression that some cultures are religious while others are not. We are referring to what could be called the religious dimension of any culture, understanding by religious the dimension of ultimacy in any culture is related to the question of salvation, liberation or fullness of life. Hence we are not referring only to theistic cultures or only to what is conventionally called the "great religions", but also to the religious cultures of Africa, of indigenous peoples; the religion of secularity; the religion of atheism and so on.

## PLURALISTIC PRACTICES:

This notion to the reality that over the ages people all over the world borrowed, transported, exported, imported knowledge and know-how, through various kinds of interactions. Today, particularly in the South, since the European colonialism, one can witness the evident existence of modern-western systems of practices in all human activities along with multiplicity of traditional practices. This co-existence of these two separate modes of knowledge and practices is not always harmonious. Very often the relationship between them is one of domination, contradiction and conflict, but at the same time it is creative and innovative. What is intended here is to emphasize the necessity to recognise this reality. It should also be noted that this contradiction between modernity and traditional practices exists in the industrialized societies of the North (although not always evident because of overpowering technologies), and there are many signs and evidence of creativity and innovation through the contacts with the Asian, African and Indigenous cultures.

## ETHNOSCIENCE:

Although this term is self-explanatory it requires some supplementary notes of caution as well as for further exploration. It is important to understand the significance of this term. For example, ethnomusicology, in the academic world refers to traditions of music other than mainstream western music. In the same manner ethnomedicine refers to medical traditions other than modern-western medicine and thus ethnosciences means modes of knowing other than dominant western scientific knowledge. This can signify, on one hand, that there is an awareness at least academically, of the existence of these other knowledge systems, but on the other hand it can also signify a process of "ethnoscience" of these knowledges. The process of ethnoscience gives these systems of knowledge and practices a peripheral status in relationship to the modern scientific system of knowledge which continues to be dominant.

## ECOSOPHY:

This is the wisdom of nature i.e. wisdom that comes from nature and from the cosmos. There are cultures that base their understanding of ecology on that wisdom, for example, the wisdom of Mother Earth, the animals, the plant life, the waters or rivers etc. Such ecological cultures follow directly the wisdom inscribed in ecosystem rather than the logic, planning, analysis and control from the dominant vision of ecology that is based on the logic of Man and his objective understanding of Nature.

## ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGIES:

To a large extent this database attempts to collect information on "traditional know-how" such as, in agriculture, in the maintenance of environmental balance and so on. This "traditional know-how" of peoples and communities across the world is grouped here as alternative technologies. And this is with a specific concern for the preservation, the conservation and growth of local knowledge instead of appropriating them within the paradigm of modern knowledge system.

## SECTION 2: THEORIES AND CRITIQUES OF DEVELOPMENT

### CULTURES AND DEVELOPMENT:

In recent years there has been an emergence of theories around the issues concerning cultures and development. For example, this decade has been pronounced to be the decade of Cultures and Development by UNESCO. These theories are predominantly concerned about the models and programs of development that do not sufficiently take into consideration the local culture in their projects. These theories give very little attention to the necessity and/or the need for analysing the very culture of development.

### ALTERNATIVES TO DEVELOPMENT

There has been much critique of conventional models of development which are mainly economic and technological in nature. There are many theories for alternative models for development. For example, endogenous development promotes development based on local culture or model of ethnodevelopment claims that there should be ethnocultural variations of development. Here, instead of speaking about alternative (models) of development, we are evoking the vision of alternatives to development based on the knowledge and practices of local cultures. The theories of alternatives to development articulate a critique of the notion and culture of development, particularly its claim to universality by the culture of development and its being the absolute point of reference for the good life.

### CULTURAL COLONIALISM OF DEVELOPMENT:

It is stipulated here that "development" as a notion is neither a-cultural nor universal. It is very much rooted in modern-western culture.

Without condemning here everything that comes under the culture of development it can be said that specially over the past four or so decades, activities and programs around this concept that have been and are being carried out, have forged a particular "culture". This culture is based on a rationalistic and technical world-view with a belief system in monetized economy and market as well as in technology which considers itself to be the salvation of human race. Thus most of these development activities can be perceived, in varying degrees, as contemporary forms of cultural colonialism of the North toward the South and of the modern-western culture toward the traditions of the West. It is not just a transfer of a development model for the well-being of all peoples but an imposition of a homogenizing culture on the whole world.