

COALITION FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Cultures – Cultures of Sustainability

BACKGROUND PAPER 17

by

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RADICAL INSISTENCE, RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF WORDS

(Words are like seeds. In the manner seeds carry the entire tree and the universe of the forest; words carry cosmologies, world views, corresponding institutional systems and material cultures. Like seeds they root themselves and unfold in appropriate climate and soil. Words like to live in clusters and contexts similar to the way plants and animals live in niches and habitats in the forest.)

Over the past century a diversity of initiatives have resisted in a variety of ways, in word and action, the ‘trickles down development paradigm’-blockades, non-cooperation, hunger strikes, silent protest marches...etc. Each act of resistance has sought to highlight that this paradigm is obsolete?? and has no legitimacy.

Time and again it has been pointed out that the negative consequences far exceed the benefits. Every incarnation destroys evermore of it's (the paradigm) own ground of existence. It's most recent incarnation being the neo-liberal agenda for development pushed forward by the WTO?

Development programs that are derived from this paradigm engage in the mass destruction of nature, both human and non-human, on the one hand and culture on the other. From these what trickles down is extreme cruelty to labour, to innocent citizens, to women, to the marginalised groups, to the minorities. What is left on the ground is genocide of cultural plurality, non-recyclable waste, mounting financial indebtedness, escalating technological obsolescence, ecological fundamentalism, growing vulnerability and insecurity, proliferation and infiltration of arms & ammunition in everyday life.

The ‘trickle down paradigm’ is unable to deal with these problems it has created. This is the final proof of its obsolescence.

However, this obsolete paradigm continues unabated.

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Why?

Is it because resistance has internalised the language of the 'obsolete paradigm', to in fact not only reproduce the language but also the paradigm, the world view and material culture?

Is resistance becoming free of the 'obsolete paradigm'? How can we know of the ground created by resistance?

To what extent is the method of resistance able to critique the 'trickle down paradigm'; build peoples resilience to the destructive unjust forces that trickle down to daily life; and build the basis for an even-handed, plural, just society and polity on the other. To what extent has this method learnt, drawn upon and enriched vernacular ideas and practices, engaged with peoples' day to day struggles and social and cultural traditions.

Binaries-The language of the Obsolete Paradigm

The obsolete paradigm, world view and material culture have been constructed with binary opposites. Some of these are as follows-

modernity-tradition; civilization-savagery; us-them; centre-margin; civilized-wild; humanity-barbarity; progress-degeneration; advanced-backward; developed-underdeveloped; adult-childlike; nurturing-dependent; normal-abnormal; subject-object; human-sub human; reason-passion; culture-nature; male-female; mind-body; objective-subjective; knowledge-ignorance; science-magic; truth-superstition; master-slave; good-evil; moral-sinful; believer-pagans; pure-impure; order-disorder; law-uncontrolled; justice-arbitrariness; active-passive; wealthy-poor; nation states- non-state processes; strong-weak; dominant-subordinate; conqueror-conqueredⁱ

These are part of a European-North American modern tradition. The construction these binaries beings with the conquest of indigenous lands and peoples across the tropical regions of the world, radically different culturally and historically, by Enlightened Anglo Saxons and Europeans. These people were constructed by the enlightened conquerors as their 'other' inverted image in order to define themselves as modern and "civilized". This legitimised genocide of indigenous people, of differences.

The binary 'uncivilised-civilised' shaped the State and the market as the foundational institutions of the modern tradition. The State and the market were enemies only for a short duration during the cold war. From 1989 onwards they became bed fellows. The making of the WTO forged their long awaited partnership-the State facilitated the making of a market oriented legal regime and now when the financial market is crashing the State has come to the rescue. This was inevitable for they shared a common mission constructed with language of binary opposites- 'to civilise' the 'uncivilised'.

The binary opposites became the terms of reference for determining who are to be the beneficiaries and by what means are the benefits to reach them. The 'other' can be a beneficiary only on the condition that it transforms in the image of the 'civilised'-until such time 'other' is quarantined. However, it the 'other' insists on its own 'being in the

world', it is annihilated.

This alliance has invoked these opposites to legitimate perpetration of abuses against indigenous people and to legitimise massive projects of mass destruction such as just wars, mega hydro-electric dams, reserves of nature fortresses, nuclear establishment...etc

These binaries have been trickling down to become integral to the language and practices of everyday life, injuring the natural and the social fabric of the existence of everything that makes life possible.

Who is the other? Anyone who opposes the State and the Market!

Resistance

The vocabulary of contemporary resistance includes terms such as culture, sustainability, development, labour, self rule, autonomy, decentralization, progress, modernity, tradition, science, innovation, experiment, experience, technology, secularism, human rights, societal transformations, nature, indigenous, civil society, peace, participation, democracy, ecology, conservation, non-violence, accountability, freedom, liberty, equality and justice.

These terms are also integral parts of the 'trickle down paradigm!!

The State and the market give meaning to these terms with the language of 'binaries'. In fact these are the 'terms of reference' Time and again the 'terms of reference' for trickle down development has proven to be lethal. The binaries listed above have given meaning of these terms and have for this reason become 'armaments of the modern mind' that has legitimised, in the name of 'public good', genocide and annihilation of differences.

These binaries have created the crisis of the times, namely, a massive hiatus between experience and reflection.

The binary vocabulary is neither adequate nor appropriate to address questions that emerge from our experience. To overcome this crisis resistance at its core is concerned with 'letting go' and 'giving up' binaries.

Does the meaning given to these terms by resistance free of binaries?

Has resistance been co-opted, reproducing binary meanings of terms?

How can we know whether the meaning of these come from binary opposites?

Decommissioning binaries and the culture of resistance

Binaries frame a reading of science, politics and culture. Each binary has been used as principles of exclusion. For instance, democracy, freedom and liberty have been used to conjure 'just wars' to civilize the uncivilised; secularism has been used to undermine inter religious engagements; conservation is used to push forest people out of the forest and promote corporate interests; science has been used to create technological bondage; participation has been used to manufacture consent; culture has been used to fuel ethnic –communal strife and cleansing; sustainability has been

used to undermine labour; self rule has been used to undermine autonomy; decentralization has been used to encourage destructive development; progress has been used to enhance commodity fetish; modernity has been used to undermine tradition; innovation has been used to generate technological obsolescence-the most dangerous non-recyclable waste, experiment to discourage out-of-the-box thinking.

The decommissioning of binaries is radical insistence in favour of words and world views that bring forth the culture of resistance and a culture resilient to binaries.

Radical insistence is an assertion of radical hope in the face of absolute vulnerability.

What is it about a form of life's coming to an end that makes it such that inhabitants of that life things cease to happen? Not just that it would *seem* to them that things cease to happen but what it would *be* for things to cease happening? (p8)...It wants to know not about actuality but about possibility: What is this possibility of things' ceasing to happen? If this is a possibility then this a possibility we must *all* live with-even when our culture is robust even if we never have to face its becoming actual. IT is a possibility that marks us human, how should we live with it...How we ought to live with the possibility of a collapse? (p9)ⁱⁱ

The language of radical insistence, its language, style, cultural norms, belief systems, material culture, mythologies, rituals and other related practices of habitus upholds that 'there are thousands of alternatives' and plural voices of people across communities in different parts of the world.

Such upholding is at the same time a negation of the mono-cultural minds that say 'there is no alternative' other than binary development and growth.

Would this upholding be tantamount to decommissioning binaries from all words-culture, sustainability, development, labour, self rule, autonomy, decentralization, progress, modernity, tradition, science, innovation, experiment, experience, technology, secularism, human rights, societal transformations, nature, indigenous, civil society, peace, participation, democracy, ecology, conservation, non-violence, accountability, freedom, liberty, equality and justice? Or would all these words have to be decommissioned?

The moot issue is what gives meaning and content to these words when they are freed of binaries?

The language of radical insistence upholds that words are like seeds. Each word has a root, its etymology. Like seeds they root themselves where there are possibilities of mutuality between it and the climate and soil, to reciprocally bring forth the character of each to the other-climate and soil of a place to the seed and the other way round. Word-life is in clusters and contexts similar to the way plants and animals-life is embedded in the reciprocity between habitat and niches. In the manner seeds carry within the entire plant and the universe of forest-its habitat and niche, words carry within them cosmologies, world views, corresponding institutional systems and material cultures.

Meaning is the way the 'being' of words is unveiled in word clusters. This cluster is the inclusive of historical social, cultural, political, material, philosophical contexts.

From this perspective differences in language go hand in hand with 'being-in-the-world'; that language is constructed from the interdependence between knowledge

and practice; that transformative capability of languages is embedded in experiments with truth. These together constitute the culture of resistance.

It is a culture of experimenting with modes of being in culture and nature-opening up possibilities for plural ways of reciprocity with nature. Here plural livelihoods are shaped by plural readings of space and time; justice is inclusive of plural voices; and everyday life is legitimised by social structures of sharing and responsibility. This is inclusive of voices of nature, for which reason the culture of resistance is embedded in 'rights of nature'.

The recognition of such an embedding of being-in-the-world is an article of faith, understood as self evidence of mutuality between nature and culture and the interdependence between experiments and truth.

To what degree has radical insistence challenged the State-market monopoly of the terms, definitions, and semantic domain that have determined the processes and agenda of development? In other words, has it engaged in struggles over words and terms of reference?

Has a method evolved to undo binaries? Has there been decommissioning lethal words and disarming the mind?

In what way is radical insistence decommissioning and disarming the mind?

Radical insistence unfolded the process of decolonisation.

The first aspect is decolonisation was the moving away parasite from the host, that is the moving away of the colonial powers (the British, the French, the Spaniards, the Dutch, the Germans) from their respective colonies. However, they continued to think of themselves as the civilizing force and to govern with what they left behind-their ideas and institutions and practices-the legal regimes, the military, the university research and education, the social and cultural values...etc.

The second aspect is the decolonisation of methodology. It would free those who have colonised from their own history of oppressing and suppressing. At the same time, it would free the colonised of the mind sets they have internalized that makes them look at themselves as less than what they themselves are in fact. This decommissioning and disarming the mind is a process to free method and thought of colonial methods, procedures, words and language on the one hand and restore to disarmament its more inclusive meaning of dismantling military establishments and discarding of lethal words, thoughts and languages.

To unsettle any fixed meanings, resist the monopoly of terms, decommission lethal categories and disarm the mind is integral to this second aspect of decolonisation.

Raymond Williams *Keywords*ⁱⁱⁱ published in 1983 showed how fixed meanings could be unsettled. *Keywords*'s were arranged in *cluster*. These were carefully chosen list of individual words that cross-referenced to generate, the clusters. Each cross referenced cluster of words opened up fields of semantic interplay within clusters. This brought-in social contexts and social forces that were at work in the semantic contestations in each cluster. For instance the cluster ' /industry/culture/ democracy interweaves economy, politics and culture in the meaning each of the three terms.

Each entry unsettled any (usual conservative) fixing of the meaning of words. Each

term was described to include a wider historical and/or contemporary range of meanings. This expanded vocabulary of possible meanings sought an empowerment of popular readership. By unsettling fixity of meaning it broke the monopoly of words and allowed for imagined alternative futures.

In 1998 Martin Jay's *Cultural Semantics: Keywords of Our Times*^{iv} enriched our understanding of semantic contestation. He underlined the extent to which language (terms, categories, principles) we use mediates and shapes our experience are politically is determined by the dominant discourse controlled by the state.

His work pointed out that public debates in the media, through journals and seminars determine the key words of our times-these are terms that the 'public' uses to think of their life and times. These are as it were the 'terms of reference'. In other words, select words are given legitimacy to mediate the relation between experience and thought. These are key words.

What this showed was that other languages the mediate our experiences were being marginalised. This further unsettled the monopoly of key terms.

There is a political economy of key terms, intelligible from the way they constitute world views, open/close frames for knowledge, justify practices, legitimise institutions, promote ways of life, and create illusions and deceptions. Word clusters and the semantic field of terms draw attention to some aspects of this political economy.

The third aspect is experimentations for the reconstruction of a world from the rubble left behind by genocide, war, terrorism; and creating time and space for plural voices, vernacular language and practice that question political power.

Experimenting modes of being

An aspect of radical insistence is the practice of 'relentless pursuit of decommissioning'. This is at the core of the culture of resistance. It requires of the pursuant to uphold plural voices and possibilities. Such upholding is simultaneously a letting go and a giving up all that stands in the way. The 'upholding is mode of being in pursuit', 'of being available' to people and to nature. It transforms everyday life into an arena of experimentation and frees the notion of experiment from the monopoly of modern laboratory sciences.

This practice confronts the possibility that things would cease to be that nothing would happen. These confrontations show the existence of rigid social boundaries-between people (for instance between Hindus and Muslims, between White people and Black people) and between people and nature (for instance people and national parks, biospheres reserves) that have created and institutionalised by binaries in the contemporary world.

The radical insistence to let go/give up these binaries is a transgression of social boundaries. Such pursuits are experiments with mode of being as also an experiment as mode of being. What notion of the experiment is embedded here?

These words constitute the vocabulary of only a handful of English speaking people across the world. There are several other languages which vast majority have, to see

and grasp the world. These vernacular languages are closer to their experiences.

It might be a worthwhile to commission vernacular languages. The vernacular here means that ground prepared by the language which has evolved in an engagement with the everyday lives of large majority of people. The diversity of languages holds the possibility of learning from cultural diversity of perceptions and thought?

In what is the being of words interwoven with the being of people?

What are vernaculars unveilings and contours of word-life?

Do vernacular overcomes the massive hiatus between experience and reflection?

Maori Resistance and Resilience

There much learn in this regard from the Maori people. They have demonstrated immense courage and wisdom in the way they recovered their language from colonial oppression. There was time not too far back ago when Maori was not accepted as a language of public discourse.

In the seventies there was only handful of people who spoke Maori, now there are several million. This story of resilience, resistance and recovery is amazing and inspiring. The Maoris are the most capable to narrate it.

A question that has disturbed professors at the Wannanga (Maori University) at Otaki New Zealand, is if this generation of young Maori people look at Maori as their second language, then what is the future of the language and what could be a language policy in this regard?^v

In the course of discussion on this question it emerged that all other indigenous languages across the world face this crisis. Time and again languages die when they cease, for a variety of reasons, to engage with the issues, questions and predicaments of time and existence-war, deception, lies, destruction, vulnerability at all levels of social life, loss of meaning and of sense of certitude. When language rise up and stand-up to such challenge does it draw its nourishment from the creative tension between experience and the angst of its own being. They learn from each other exchanging terms, metaphors, meanings...etc.

Language policy is likely to emerge to find ways indigenous languages engage with the questions of the contemporary crisis?

What can indigenous languages contribute? Can they give different perceptions that can contribute to clear understanding?

For instance, the world view informed by 'conquest of nature' which is based in the binary nature-culture has been critique. This has made it necessary to shift towards reciprocal relation between culture and nature. How can, the indigenous languages that have evolved in proximity and intimacy with nature-forest, the mountains, the sea, the rivers, the deserts-contribute to make this shift possible?

Today these languages have been losing the nourishment because the natural grounds (the forests, the rivers, the oceans and deserts...) that nourishes them languages are now caged (national, parks, biospheres reserves...) and not available.

How can resistance create conditions for words to engage with these natural fields?

Only recently, on September 28th 2008, fifty six percent of the people of Ecuador the constitution that had a place for 'Rights to Nature'^{vi}- this is unprecedented. It opens the possibility to shift to a world view based on reciprocal relations between nature and culture. To realise this it would be necessary to look towards indigenous languages for a vocabulary to grasp the voice of nature.

Is there a vernacular vocabulary to constitute the reciprocal culture-nature relation and build peoples resilience?

A forest dweller can identify plants from many part of the plant at all times across seasons. Smells, differences in burning, type of barks, texture of wood, leaf shapes and sizes, life cycles and other observations make identification possible. This also equips them to know the inner characteristics, useful to heal inflictions and physical ailments. Over the past decades this knowledge has been used by modern science and technology to prepare a legal regime fro intellectual property rights and ensure the sustainability for two life supporting industries-the pharmaceutical and the food. Such regimes are testimony to the efficacy of this knowledge.

This knowledge is embedded in the forest dwellers mode of being and not in the sciences of biology, physics or chemistry or mathematics. It is necessary to move away from notions of experiments conceptualised by laboratory sciences to understand the forest dwellers mode of being and also how it is linked to the discovery of medicinal useful knowledge of plants. This is upholding the pursuit of 'a mode of being available to nature' which is simultaneously a stepping out of/a letting go/a giving up of the frames not only for observation, measurement and analysis defined by language of biology, physics, chemistry and mathematics but also of the mode of being in the world that is embedded in these sciences.

Medicine men and women who have been able to hold on to the pursuit of being available' say true knowledge is that which 'presents itself'-that which makes itself available. The pursuant prepares to be ready to receive such knowledge. In other words, it necessary to give up everything else that takes way attention-for if the being in the world is distracted there is no way of seeing the coming-in of such knowledge. The seeing of such coming-in is also grasping it and holding it. Attentiveness and wakefulness is the quality of such being in the world. It only a mode of being in the world will hold the knowledge. A mode of being in the world is thus a receptacle-the crucible and container

From this perspective discovery is getting to grasp 'something that presents itself' for consideration. Swambhu in Sanskrit.

The preparation to be ready to receive is by means experiments intended to find out 'modes of being present' that can witness the 'knowledge self presentation'. A 'knowledge that presents itself' is of 'recognizable self evidence'. Such knowledge no proofs other than itself-not external proof-a revelation as it were.

Kaksar (play) for the Kiotor forest dwellers^{vii}, is significant to the mode of finding out. Experiments are playful ways of finding out a 'mode of being present' that will enable not to lose or not be available to the moment when 'knowledge presents itself'.

Where?

Social boundaries enclose the routine and the regular, that which is part of habit and

has not been opened-up. This is the taken for granted knowledge of being and doing, the cultural 'habitus' of binaries as it were. Here the taken for granted masquerades and 'self-evidence' and 'self-presentation of knowledge'.

Here, there is no space for self presentation of knowledge.

A clearing thus needs to be made.

Playfulness is a mode of experimenting with modes of being and it also constitutes experiment as a playful mode of being. Together they make such clearings in the world. Often times on account of the influence of binaries, the element of playfulness in experimenting with modes of being does not become a playful mode of being in the world. This makes it difficult to make a clearing-a time and space continuum for self presentation of knowledge.

It requires relentless effort and unyielding resilience make such clearings. Clearing is also a doing word-a verb-that designates and activity of clearing-up the encumbrances that stand in the way of mutuality and availability. These are encumbrances of the self that decommission towards parsimonious being in the world, when playful experimentation begins.

A clearing set aside privately-publically owned time-space continuums. For these are products of binary separations. A playful way of stepping out/letting go/giving up of 'encroached' spaces is engage in the pursuit of making spaces common available on the principle of mutuality.

The work to make clearings has two interdependent aspects- clear the mind of binaries and disarm to and also clear the ground of the rubble and debris generated from the genocide of innocent human beings, of nature and of culture that has been generated by these binaries.

Terms of reference for resistance and resilience

Such pursuits run out of stamina, its resilience depletes when suppression, economic sabotage, cultural seduction, social exclusion make it difficult to keep everyday life going.

What needs to be done to keep up the stamina and build resilience? How does resistance on its own built stamina and resilience, which is without recourse to external support? In what way does experimentation creatively harness energies released in the course of resisting these boundaries?

What we learn from resistance efforts? Two instances are described here.

The first instance-

Mendha is Gond villages in Garchiroli District Maharashtra. People from this village have shown tremendous capacity for resistance to the attempts to undermine the collective efforts to look after their forest. They have shown tremendous resilience and have continued their pursuit of holding on experiments in conservation.

One process which they shared was building up the sense of collective accepting that there are differences-some non-reconcilable. It is possible to see from their experience that community is defined by shifting alliances between individuals and groups.

However, this need not stand in the way of building a sense of the collective.

The most difficult problem they had to overcome was alcoholics. It was clear only way available was persuasion, any other method would fix the lines between different groups in the village.

There therefore need for delinking discussion from decision. Thus two forums came into being-one for discussion and the other for decision. Further, so long as any issue was in discussion it would be taken to the forum for decision. Such delinking persuaded the alcoholics to come to the forum for discussion.

Devaji an elder of the village said our discussion went on until all alcoholics saw the point namely, their making, selling and drinking was not helping them at all. Further, a way to shift their energies to forest conservation was a better way to let go of alcohol.

This took them no less than approximately one and a half to two years.

The second instance-

The people of in the region between the Keol and Karo rivers in Jharkhand, over several years of efforts have successfully resisted the making of a dam for generation of hydro-electric power. However, their insistence that the government make a Gazette notice declaring that the construction of the dam is called off has been ignored. Thus there is this lurking apprehension that the project is likely to be revived-when no one can say.

The leadership saw that the government's waiting capacity can corrode the energy generated from years of resistance. People are likely to relax, get into their routines and lose the sense of their pursuit. The question as a leader formulated was how to keep their energies for resistance alive, how build their resilience and hold the collective together?

They created a calendar of events to commemorate crucial turning points-such as the martyrdom of fellow beings, the burial ground became their sacred space-each time there was a visitor to the village he was taken first to this sacred space for standing in silence for a minute and offering flowers. Most importantly, the groups formed to look after different tasks during resistance-time were consolidated by allocating responsibilities to look after with routine activities of the village, such as the running of the primary school, non-formal education centres, livelihood centres' etc....

There are many similar examples we could learn from.

Resistance across the world has generated continuous collective experimentation with political, economic, social and cultural questions. It seeks to keep up the energy and inspiration of resistance alive and draws upon people's traditions, language, images, songs, literature, world views, social networks, institutions and also builds on them. It gives dynamism to these traditions, innovates and enriches the imagination and hold-up effervescence of the spirit. Embedded here are the seeds of resilience and the new ground.

The language of the binaries is ill equipped to reflect this experience.

Vernacular on the other hand has constituted both the thinking and the doing. It has provided the ground for experimenting with modes of being and also moved on to

experimenting as a mode of being.

Letting go/giving up in the vernacular^{viii}

The Koitor describe 'letting go' and 'giving up' as *lesna* and *digtu*. That is to take it out of discourse. Literally *lesna* means to lose track of, to dissolve, to shift ground. This term is used to say you lost track of the path and therefore got lost for instance in the forest. It also used to suggest memories have been dissolved-as for example, when a person does not want to revisit happenings. A derivative of *lesna* is *Leski*, it describes a person who shifts the ground of his being from social to a mere vessel where spirits of the forest come to sit and be available to fellow koitors for consultation. *Lesna* is also used to describe the manner in which the *leski* goes in to the forest and does not come back for several days. No one knows where the *leski* stays and survives. However everyone knows if he comes back he would have learnt from the spirits of the forest. *Lesna* describes his going into the forest as 'not coming back on account of losing the forest track (paths) that come home, indicating his walking other tracks-paths to knowledge.

Digtu suggests to splitting thread into two. This metaphor suggests disconnecting the flow. This term is used to irrevocably settle a question, or conflict-once settled not to be revisited again.

This cluster of words is linked to another cluster of words-*penu*, *darm*, *kaksar* and *kanjkhar*. The world of the spirits is accessible by *leski*. These three terms describe the spirit, its mode being and of relation to Koitors, and the texture of the time and space of their world. *Penu* are spirits of the forest, some them are associated with clans, families, individuals. Their presence is not physical form but a *darm*. This word is used for also shade and a shadow of physical objects such as a tree. When this term refers to *penu*, the suggestion is that these are beings that have no physical form of their own but can sit in other physical forms. The *leski* is only one. Other physical forms are stones, wood, trees...etc...

On festive occasions *Penu* come and mingle with Koitors-they dance to music and drums. The *Leski* is the vessel that brings them to the festive ground for play-this one mode their coming. The term *Kaksar* describes this mode of their coming. This is also used to describe the conversation Koitors have with the *penu*. Koitors maintain an equal relation with their spirits. There is dialogue, conflict, admonitions, appeasements, accountability and all else that transpires between equals. The world of the *penu* is *kanjkhar*. This is used to talk about what Koitors see when all the five senses are arrest and asleep. This universe of the *penu* is self-active, comparable to the self activity of the forest, demonstrated through its capacity to self regenerate. Their dynamics of their world is independent of the experiential world of Koitors.

The second cluster of words describes elements of discussion and dialogue. There is clear distinction between the senses-consciousness and self-active consciousness. These constitute two different related aspect of their being in the world-the physical body and the 'shadows and shades'. These two are brought to bear upon each other in playful dialogue and discussion. Together they determine their being in the world.

These two clusters are linked by the word-patta in Marhia. Patta are narratives of origin of the universe of the forest, of the life of penu and of the landscape.

Koitors observe, when a leski gives in to lies and deception, he loses the power of his words. This means spirits are then not available for discussion and dialogue. Thus the mastery of the word determines the details of a leski's everyday life-where to sit, what to eat, whom to meet, what to wear...etc. This gives shape to his being in the word. Words root a being in lies and deception or in truth and honesty. The word carries the being of the leski. The working out of these details is experimental-discovery by reflection on experience.

These terms give us vernacular rendering of the experimenting modes of being and experiment as mode of being.

A way forward

What are the ways available to build up the learning's of the Maori, the people of the Koel Karo, the Gonds of Mendha and the Koitors?

- ⁱ Alexander Laban Hinton, 2002. *Annihilating Differences-The Anthropology of Genocide*, University of California Press, and Berkeley Ch 1.
- ⁱⁱ Jonathan Lear, 2006. *Radical Hope-Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge USA.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Raymond Williams, 1983. *A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Oxford University Press US
- ^{iv} Martin Jay, 1998. *Cultural Semantics: Keywords of Our Times*, The University Of Massachusetts, USA
- ^v Based on conversations with professors at the Wannanga in Feb 2008.
- ^{vi} Chapter: Rights for Nature
- Art. 1. Nature or Pachamama, where life is reproduced and exists, has the right to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles, structure, functions and its processes in evolution. Every person, people, community or nationality, will be able to demand the recognitions of rights for nature before the public organisms. The application and interpretation of these rights will follow the related principles established in the Constitution.
- Art. 2. Nature has the right to an integral restoration. This integral restoration is independent of the obligation on natural and juridical persons or the State to indemnify the people and the collectives that depend on the natural systems.
- In the cases of severe or permanent environmental impact, including the ones caused by the exploitation on non renewable natural resources, the State will establish the most efficient mechanisms for the restoration, and will adopt the adequate measures to eliminate or mitigate the harmful environmental consequences.
- Art. 3. The State will motivate natural and juridical persons as well as collectives to protect nature; it will promote respect towards all the elements that form an ecosystem.
- Art. 4. The State will apply precaution and restriction measures in all the activities that can lead to the extinction of species, the destruction of the ecosystems or the permanent alteration of the natural cycles.
- The introduction of organisms and organic and inorganic material that can alter in a definitive way the national genetic patrimony is prohibited.
- Art. 5. The persons, people, communities and nationalities will have the right to benefit from the environment and form natural wealth that will allow wellbeing.
- The environmental services are cannot be appropriated; its production, provision, use and exploitation, will be regulated by the State.
- <http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2008/09/04-7>
- ^{vii} Koitors live in Abujhmarh Bastar, Chattisgarh India.
- ^{viii} This section is based on my fieldwork.

Sustainable Cultures – Cultures of Sustainability is a study conducted by the Coalition for Environment and Development, Finland and funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. For more information see http://www.ymparistojakehitys.fi/sustainable_societies.html