

Is Caste System a Kind of Indigenous Knowledge System?

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Abstract

The Global Knowledge can be broadly disassociated into two types: Indigenous and Modern. Indigenous or Traditional Knowledge traits are scattered worldwide among the folk people. These are oral and undocumented, subjected for loss and rediscovery, outcome of trial and error from informal experimentations during the course of folk life. These traits unite to form a knowledge system known as the Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS). IKS provide us various Public Services. This paper tries to establish the hypothesis that caste system in Indian Subcontinent is an important IKS.

Key Words: IK, IKS, Caste System, Great Tradition, Western/Global Knowledge System

Introduction

Knowledge is a part of culture and basically of two types: scientific and traditional. The Traditional Knowledge (TK) is oral, undocumented, and scattered unevenly but worldwide. TK results out through trial and error method as well as unorganized/informal experimentation. It is therefore treated as Peoples' Science. TK is also treated as Indigenous Knowledge (IK). The latter is basically the TK of indigenous communities. All these communities shelter beneath a huge umbrella known as Indigenous People (IP). However IP is a different issue. Indigenous communities are aboriginals, autochthons, closer to nature and living in a specific ecosystem for a long period. These TK traits are fragile and probability of losing them is very high. So, the common/ folk people use their culture and religious life jointly as a book and stored all TK there. Culture being psychic unity of mankind or result of psycho-biological need, could be diffused from the center(s) creating so many cultural areas exchanging their cultural traits with one another. A culture center may exert world wide impact or throughout a large part of the globe (resulting into formation of culture-complex or developed into civilization). Similar ecosystem in different geographies provides similar type of natural resources, similar mode of exploitation of them (with or without feedback) and similar pattern of relationship among nature, human and super-nature. This can be also treated as a relationship among (1) mode of production and reproduction, (2) social structure and (3) magico-religious/cultural issues. Simply saying, this is a relation among nature, human and super-nature. Communities who treat culture as result of their psycho-biological need and not mere psychic unity of mankind are not so much akin to civilization but are much closer to this relation among nature, human and super-nature (NMS). And this is not so hard to realize that TK/IT is chiefly confined within this NMS. TK/IT are of two types: hidden and open-ended. The hidden ones are deeply rooted within the culture(s) and social structures(s); so they seem to be more stable than the open-ended ones. The latter are vigorously used but could be loosed with time as they are not so much systematized like the former (attached to cultural values and social norms). Whereas the hidden ended ones survive even when in reality they have no roles to play and been replaced by certain better options. These well systematized, longer lasting, value-loaded and hidden IK traits with social-cultural emblems develop Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS). Knowledge, especially traditional knowledge or IKS is related to culture and qualitative in-depth study on this aspect (generally micro-level) is possible under Social- Cultural Anthropology. So, Anthropology, a holistic study of mankind and with both

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cultural and biological endowments, is exclusive to study of culture and IKS. No doubt, IK/IKS results out from trial and error method during unorganized experimentation.

Theories and methodologies practiced in Anthropology may help a lot especially on humanitarian ground to understand the folk perspective. Once attached with norms of social structure and values of culture; IK becomes more stable with increased longevity and therefore, from open-ended type changes into closed one deeply rooted inside culture. Material culture and social institutions change with time, so open ended IK may be subjected to immediate loss and rediscovery. Whereas close-ended IK attached with intangible culture, non-substituted institutions and folk life are the most stable and constitute World View of a community: these things could only be degraded through transformation, migration and/or change in geo-ecological settings. This second one works in a quite systematic manner in the folk life and hence treated as Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS): often being treated as summation of so many Traditional Knowledge Systems (TKS). Interpersonal communication (informal and formal) helps in transmission of TK.

IK/IKS can be viewed from another angle: TK/IK confined within nature, human and super-nature well takes the shape into Traditional Knowledge System (TKS) or IKS. But when summation of so many TKS takes place, it is definitely the IKS. A community scattered in various ecosystems or several communities in a particular ecosystem give rise to various TKS with certain common features as well as varied attributes among them. However, summation of all these TKS, if possible and if necessary, can launch a huge knowledge system that can provide us public services at large. Global Public Service is therefore coming from this generalized or summed up knowledge system. This kind of knowledge system incorporates huge territory (may be more than one ecosystems) and various communities (cross cultural situation and cultural diversity). In such wider sense, knowledge system of common people can not be just treated as TKS but Peoples Science or Ethno Science or IKS.

Is Caste System in Indian Subcontinent a Kind of IKS?

Caste system, a kind of division of labor, is an important IKS for Indian Subcontinent. There are innumerable types of division of labor in traditional agrarian rural structures so far developed and existed for millennia in Gangetic plains of North India. That variation may occur due to the fact that Gangetic plains of North India or northern Indian Subcontinent comprises of so many ecosystems. Even division of labor in each of the thousands of villages there is unique in it having certain occupational or service groups (based on family, lineage and other institutions reflecting the social structure). These service groups function through their communication or service exchange systems and survive due to religious cum cultural emblems (such as clan exogamy, caste endogamy, internal stratifications and local level hierarchy, various taboos, customs and beliefs in folk religion, values and norms in folk life). These people traditionally have faith, fear and belief in life and soul, traditional medical practitioner, spirit of the departed past, benevolent and malevolent spirits, ghost, special personalities who can interact with these, magicians, concept of Universe, spread of soul throughout the Universe (animism), concentration of soul in particular natural objects (animatism), idol worship, Super-nature, weather forecasting magico-religious personalities, and eminent people who are obliged to maintain rigidity in division of labor/ solidarity/ /social order/ stratification/ hierarchy. In this way develops the priestly category followed by local ruling category, various social rankings for the rest service/occupational groups, superiority and inferiority complex, solidarity and factionalism, and village clusters. These countrymen/folk peoples attached to peasantry are found worshipping nature, agricultural deities, fertility cults (both male and female) and Mother Goddesses. As these rural communities are indigenous or long-staying peoples of the region; who may better know from them about the natural resources there, the most appreciable and nature friendly ways to exploit these resources, how to structure the society on the basis of division of labor (solidarity and factionalism) and what would be the religious and cultural way to stabilize the specific nature-human relationship! These service groups are spoken off as caste or jati. Each of these divisions of labor composed of several castes is TKS.

Social mobilization compels these people for further improvements. They gradually shift from relatively isolated status to connectivity with outside world. Factors may be so many: gender stratification, bigger settlements, state formation, racism, wars, migration, pre- agrarian economic life, post-agrarian economic life, alternative of agrarian economic life, feudalism, estate system, slavery, trade and civilization, ethnic identity, religious identities, loosening in the rigidity of formal division of labor, increasing external links, concept of national-transnational-international, formation of big centers of various kinds, networking among centers with small

centers and sub-centers. These things generally result into rural cosmopolitanism. People outside this agrarian rural structures, not self fitting into rigid division of labor (as usually practiced), with other religious concepts (often pre-agrarian) and with any traditional non-agrarian economy (now marginalized) are given the lowest social ranking, considered profane and designated untouchable. That would continue unless and until they undergo religious reformation or purification process, change their religious identities, shed off their traditional thinking pattern/ mind structure/ cognition/ World View, accept pure economy or a better option than conventional rural economy and even subjected to racism. Despite rigidity in existing divisions of labor; these marginalized tribes, untouchables, deprived sections, neglected/ungrouped bulk, lower ranked groups and subordinate service groups are not totally devoid of status mobility. They might conditionally imitate culture(s) of the higher groups/ certain reference groups with certain restrictions. If the imitation process gets success, these people are referred to various social processes. Some of them are absorption of localities under a wider social structure with newer identity, kinds of negotiation and continuum, social and cultural changes, preservation of Little Traditions followed by cultural lag, universalization of these Little Traditions, formation of Great Traditions in major centers, parochialization of these Great Traditions up to the village level, formation of Multiple Tradition, status of transnational communities, multiculturalism, ideational and structural change, transformation, progress, scientific approach, new philosophies and so forth.

These people in some cases avoid accepting the existing divisions of labor in agrarian rural structure. They might consider better staying outside agrarian structures with self dignity and own heritage. These groups more emphasize on autonomous trade blocks and dumping grounds on conventional trade routes. Elite sections of these groups along with progressive sections of agrarian rural structures together or in different ways proceed towards westernization during the colonial period. This is eventually followed by rationalization, urbanization, industrialization, class formation, class struggle, pure economy, modernity, international lobbies, closed societies, semi-closed societies, liberal societies, bureaucracy, corruption, consumerism, economic boom, inflation, price rise, taxation, banking system, share market, equity investment, direct foreign investment, agent system, stagflation, economic recession, globalization, unipolar and multipolar world, anti-globalization, traditionalization and localization.

Castes or jatis in this long run are well survived. So many castes are there in so many names scattered throughout the Gangetic plains. Castes are there in each and every religious group in this region. Castes are institutionalized and ranked into so many strata. Caste stratifications become hierarchical mostly within those agrarian communities that are less provided with alternative economy, such as trade. Further, such a situation occurs when these people are found not provided with better equipments, modern facilities and proper technological assistance. They in their traditional nature-oriented less-polluting folk life are devoid of so many things and at the same time capable of providing so many information traits unknown or forgotten in the modern age. However, caste system has been loosened among the communities who believe in trade oriented religions like Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism, Islam, Sufism, Christianity and so forth. At least, for these sections caste system has been diluted to some extent (caste-like situation) and remains just non-hierarchical stratification. From Gangetic plains of North India, caste system is spread throughout whole of the Indian Subcontinents even in the trade blocks and trade routes. In the latter case, it becomes passive due to the presence of alternative economies. Agrarian rural structure in this way turns into extra-caste and cannot deny from the fact of caste-class nexus; but caste still remains a crucial factor for it.

Caste System in Great Traditions

Epics, myths, fairy tales and religious texts are full of hints about such cultures and knowledge traits in a bit modified way. These things along with undocumented folk literatures are crucial secondary data for multidisciplinary study on. And caste system is not beyond this. Caste holder rural communities with traditional religious beliefs are fond of Hinduism, because this religion backs traditional agrarian economy so well. Caste system in true sense could be a basic attribute of the Hindus in India/Indian Subcontinent constituting the majority section of population. Hindus not only confine this caste system within their folk religion, but in order to make it large and omnipotent also give it a shape of Great Tradition by relating this to their sacred texts. Hindus however have some quasi-egalitarian sections that are more akin to trade or other alternative economies. Vaishnavism is the best example. Various tribal groups have internal stratifications on the basis of their own divisions of labor, not typical to the caste system. Untouchables are also service groups; they are considered out-castes and treated community wise.

Hindus are well aware of numerous castes/ jatis that they have identified, classified, integrated or summarized,

managed them from innumerable to countable order, and also tried to generalize using four-fold social stratification system of Hinduism (Varna system). Untouchables, out-castes and tribes are considered community centric and hence placed outside the Varna system (non-Varna/ Aravna). Traders are important for all and hence they are present within Hindus and non-Hindus, caste groups and non-caste groups. Traditionally trade in India depended on reciprocity, barter system, kind, cattle hard, crop, cow and goat. The Indo-Aryan tribes entered into India about 3500 years back stratified themselves into the four-fold Varna system: Brahmin/Brahman (Priest), Kshatriya (warrior cum Ruler) and common people were the main strata; in India they changed their livelihood from nomadic/semi-nomadic to settled agrarian structure and hence the producing section from the common people were called in as Vaisya; the defeated bulk serving all the three superior sections as Sudra. Indo-Aryans praying to male deities, fire and sun understood the importance of caste system in Gangetic plains; they further realized the fact that how the system being guided by the priestly categories similar to the Brahmans. Apart from Vedic segment of Hinduism, they tried to incorporate this Caste system by overlapping that with their four-fold Varna system. In this way, Brahminical segment of the Hindus grew up in Gangetic plains that further dealt with new types of religious texts. The great Epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata have informed us of presence of agrarian and trade heritages in South Asia, locals and trans-nationals, patriarchal and matriarchal communities, patriarchy running behind matriarchy, matriarchy behind patriarchy, patriarchy behind matriarchy shadowing another patriarchy, brother-sister relationships, ancient trade routes, magico-religious, Vedic, Brahminical, Deva, Daitya, Manava, Danava, Sura, Asura, Arya, Anarya, Snake (Naga), Eagle (Garura), Raksha, Yaksha, Apsara, Gandharva, Kinnara, Vanara, Yama, Kubera, Varuna, Indra, Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu with His ten Avatars (Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Nrisimha/ Dare wolf ?, Vamana/Dwarf/Bantu?, Parasurama, Rama, Balarama, Krishna/Buddha and Kaliki), female and male cults, village deities, home deities, agricultural deities and various overlapping. Epics, myths, legends, fairy tales and other religious texts are full of hints about such TKS in a bit modified way and via symbolical documentations. Besides Veda, there are other Hindu sacred texts like Purana, Aranyak, Smriti, Samhita, Brahman and Geeta. Certain concepts like Dharma dynamics and Nishkama Karma. Dharma dynamics is all about reincarnation: labor division/ occupation/ service/ caste is ascribed and hence social stratification in occupational ground is hierarchical; the degree of performance throughout the whole life of a person belonging to a particular caste would be his Karma (work); doing the job without any hesitation and in the most accurate way would be his/her Dharma (duty); if the person obey the Dharma and the Karma in a proper way, that would further decide his/her hierarchical position in the caste stratification for the next life (higher or lower, sacred or profane from the existing one). This fear of Dharma dynamics is exclusively helpful in constant supply of labor into traditional Indian agrarian rural structure through the caste system. Whereas Nishkama Karma literally means work without any expectation: so doing your duty in a proper way, but without any such expectation for the next life. Buddhism is also concentrated on reincarnation and the philosophy of Dharma Dynamics, but it again highlights on how to get freedom from all the pains and sufferings and sorrow experienced by a living being. The only way is to be escape from this Dharma Dynamics. That is in another sense a search for a better alternative of the agrarian economy, so no need of agrarian rural structure and hence postulation of caste-like or caste free society. That might be an indication towards trade and interestingly Buddhism has a trans-national spread like Islam and Christianity. Another concept is of Purity and Profane. Certain caste services are highly appreciated especially that of the priests enjoying hegemony in rural set up. Only they can bring blessings of the nature by appeasing the Super Nature necessary for a good crop yield. Superordination of warrior categories and traders cum major producers is also quite common; but the priestly category has the authority to make them excluded from their high ranking status. Other additional caste groups, out-castes and non-castes from this agrarian point of view are profane and subordinate. Brahmins are the priestly category here and determinant factor on the entire caste system. Only alternative economy and better technology could reduce their hegemony. Otherwise, they are linkmen (Jajman) to the God and hence playing crucial role in agricultural festivals, religious festivals, disease cure and the most important rites-de-passage. All other castes try to maintain good relationship with them. Service exchanges among them or servicing in exchange of kind from the Jajman plus other superordinates are no doubt reciprocity generally known as the Jajmani system. So, caste mobility is possible when it is permissible by a Brahmin's verdict. Both-way Jajmani system often turns into one-way (sub to superordinate) and hence becomes too much exploitative. Change in Varna system is not possible, but certain suppressed caste groups may arrange certain alternative economic options and agitate against the existing order in caste system. These groups showing solidarity may turn into Dominant Caste dominating upon all (even upon the Upper Castes and Brahmins). They many say yes

to feudalism, big farm house, estate system, employer-employee relationship, urban-industrial set up and convert into trade-oriented religion or such a quasi-egalitarian religious sect or show off attachment to syncretism. They may even propagate a new religion not merely folk but with certain Great

Traditions and Religious Texts

These sacred texts along with various undocumented oral folk literatures are crucial secondary data for multidisciplinary study on TK/TKS that can provide us various types of public services, proper utilization of natural resources and environmental management, conventional communication system and transmission of message, how strong is the social structure and division of labor/social institutions, what is going on peoples' mind, how to manage human resource, what would be the best politico-economic approach, outline of sustainable development and so forth.

Here, so many divisions of labor, so many castes, and so many TKS scattered in a wider region turn into the Caste system as an indigenous attribute of (North) Indian society ranging from Little to Great Traditions. This system makes its way deep inside the mind structure of the common people. It has its elegant place in agrarian rural structure and its stronghold in cultures of all types (from psycho-biological to psychic unity of mankind). Caste system is followed by a joint-extended type of family system. As caste people in traditional life have had to depend more on manual labor rather than machines-on-advanced technologies due to their unavailability, their families turn into joint-extended type. Caste system has turned into the most viable IKS regarding division of labor at agrarian rural structures in Gangetic plains/Indian Subcontinent/ South Asia.

Can be Caste System viewed from Western/Global Knowledge System?

IKS fills the gap in the Global Knowledge System that so far has been kept blank by Western/ Modern Knowledge System. Caste as a terminology was first used by the Portuguese to describe inherited class status in their own European society. English caste is from Latin *castus* which means "pure, cut off, segregated". Application to Hindu social groups (*jati*) originates in the 17th century via Portuguese *casta* meaning "breed, race, or caste". But actually caste or *jati* in Indian society is probably the best example of IKS. So, the modern world could conceptualize caste as a division of labor, a social stratification and also a social system/social organization in agrarian rural structure. Caste system is basically a division of labour where various service groups (castes) in a village or cluster of villages exchange their services generation after generation on familial ground. It looks like a positive reciprocity and also a mode of alternative economy. *Varna* is also one type of IKS filling the gaps in Global Knowledge System. On hypothetical ground, zero could be better treated as the God. There exist some beliefs: we cannot visualize the God, so He/She is nowhere except in emptiness/hollowness/vacuum, i.e., zero. Brahmans are thought to be the closest to zero and their functioning is therefore ideal. So, Brahmans enjoy a position tending to zero but never zero. The other three *Varnas* must have their own positions and functions in comparison to that of the Brahmans.

Brahmans are supposed to enjoy the highest position in ideal stage and hence their behavior the idealmost. So, positions of three others *Varnas/Varnas* would be far, farther and the farthest and their functions would be different from that of the Brahmans. If we consider the ideal stage as the zero (0), then Brahmans are very close to zero but never at zero. Kshatriya, Vaishya and Surda are the other three *Varnas* and they are situated at distant locations from zero. We can regard it a clear way of discrimination. However, ideal behavior of a person in a position very close to zero is called Sanskritic. Socio-cultural mobilization where a group imitates the *Sanskritic* mode of behavior is *Sanskritization*. It does not mean that you have to follow the Brahmans but the ideal mode of behavior. The reference group to be followed could be the Brahmans or any other social group who have already mobilized to the ideal stage. So, one can follow either the Brahmans or other Sanskritized groups. Such groups are generally called Dominant Castes enjoying so many facilities. Any Brahman or other Sanskritized people can again deviate from the ideal stage because of other options such as Trade and prosperity, quasi-egalitarian versions, other religious guidance, syncretism, Westernization and Modernization. In lack of such alternatives, people have to follow this four-fold closed structure of *Varna* system and in certain cases could mobilize in terms of *Sanskritization*. But it is not sure that how far a group could be successful in status mobilization as because in due course there would be so many obstacles. Acceptability of a group (such as an occupational group) is directly related to what is going on inside the political organization and the economic institution with an overlapping of socio-religious system. And *Varna, Jati*, caste and such things in South Asia are

not beyond of that. Brahmins/Brahmans have to look after all the four Varnas and have full right to determine their proper functioning so that there would be no anomalies as well as no further proceedings towards zero. If one progresses towards zero and gets it, then that person is supposed to be free from all social bondages and would be treated as a Wiseman or a Holy Person (Saint) knowing the Truth and becoming a part of the God. The non-Varnas (non-castes, deprived section of the society and various tribal communities) often deny this Brahminical system rather they have their own systems. One of the most important systems is the magico-religious approach. This is in Hinduism treated as Tantra. Once there was no Universe, just a spot with no time and volume but only position with maximum density. From that stage generates the Universe with gradually expanding space/volume, increasing time and so decreasing density; but no change in total amounts of energy and mass that remain intact. In this way Universe could expand up to infinity. There is a concept of time machine that would help us moving back into the past and going into the future from the existing present. Here come hypothetical concepts like negative time, negative space, negative volume, negative density, negative mass, negative infinity and annihilation. So, here the range is from positive infinity to negative infinity (like a real world and a wonder land behind the mirror); and a person can stay at any position with its functioning. Now, the question is that what should be the change in that person's behavior for an induced positional shift! If that person is enhanced to a better state that would be considered as white magic and the person reaching into the Heaven; whereas a declining condition will be black magic bringing the person into the dark Hell. In order to exaggerate once present status unto either of Heaven or Hell; certain practices are performed like blood sacrifices, eating raw flesh, witchcraft, head hunting, dealing with human remains and so forth. Brahminical system cannot totally neglect this Tantric version and incorporates it with certain modifications decided by them. This modified Tantra-Brahminical heritage is basically captured by the Brahmins and Saints rather confining it within traditional Healers, Shamans or magico-religious personalities. The non-Varna or Avarna bulk of people could become incorporated into the Varna or caste system, if they accept the supremacy the Brahminical system over them and let their traditional life change into the modified form. In this Tantra-Brahminical system, people can experience the Heaven and the Hell. This is not a static system like the pure Brahminical one. So, many tribes have been absorbed by Brahminical heritage (Varna and caste systems) or they are in a Tribe-Caste Continuum. Certain groups stay on their own ways. But many of them are said to be highly deprived. They constitute the Dalit section in caste-dominated Indian society. Certain low ranking castes and various tribes have been therefore scheduled into Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC and ST). Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) is also there. Not so much deprived but still with certain lower ranking status groups are categorized within Other Backward Caste/Class (OBC). Extreme Backward Caste/Class (EBC) is also there. ST might be a Hindu or a non-Hindu. OBC or EBC can incorporate non-Hindu non-caste groups while being considered on class basis. These scheduling processes are performed according to constitutional provisions of India. Often these community centric groups classified themselves into various transnational communities. They starting dominating the local society even the Brahminical system on politico-economic grounds. They in this way become Dominant Communities. Some exclusive communities are Khmer, Mon, Bodo and Bhati. Such identities are actually certain generalized shapes of so many local tribes existed in various names and in various ways; and hence too much controversial. Such type of folk classification is also a kind of IKS. These transnational communities run parallel with the Aryan tribes. All these tribes in Indian Subcontinent and exclusively in North India have been more or less intermingled with the caste system. So, three categories have broadly emerged out: Upper caste, Dominant Caste and Dominant Community.

Why should confining oneself in close proximity to zero (the Brahman's Verdict) or reaching into the zero (the final escape or Nirvana) or ranging between Heaven and Hell? Another concept is that Hinduism should not be confined within Brahmanism (pure Brahminical system and Tantra-Brahminical system), but be treated as a holistic approach. Thinking beyond the zero can bring the Hindus really closer to the urban-industrial set up in its true sense. Ideationally they then become prepared for class system, certain structural change, socio-cultural modifications, social movements, westernization and modernization. Their approach would be then more free and liberal rather than their conventional and orthodox ideas. Islam and Christianity are both entered into Indian Subcontinent initially in the trade blocks like Kerala, Sind, Afghanistan, Indian Peninsula, Bay of Bengal, coastal Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Indus valley and Kashmir, Malayan peninsula extendable up to Indonesia. These religions later politically spread throughout a wider zone in South Asia according to the historicity: Shahi formation, Trukification and Colonialism that are different concepts.

Public Services from Caste System:

Politicization of this folk perspective in the name of indignity is therefore a basic fact and caste system is never out of this; and protest against unidirectional development, culture loss, and hamper to social-cultural phenomena have acted like stimuli in politicizing the caste system either of negative and positive senses.

Development is intensively connected with political and economic aspects. In Indian perspective, most people live in rural society segregated into various agrarian rural structures. Here, the economy could be broadly classified into production oriented and trade related types; and simultaneously categorized into Traditional, Nationalized, Mixed, Macro and Global besides Micro economy and Micro-financing (in a few pockets). Again, the polity could be stratified into 4 types: International Polity, National Polity, Regional or State Polity and Traditional Political Systems. In this global era, what should be the mode of development? Options are there: a) Getting directly into the global system through proper way or by hooks and crooks; b) (if resisted), returning back to Traditional or other earlier economic systems (on choice) and initiation from the beginning; c) development in a sustainable way: people would be negotiated rather than remaining isolated or integrated. When the first two are not sufficient, the third is chosen by people. Perceptions of Policy Planners at Global/ National/Regional stages may require help from multi-disciplinary approach, especially anthropology which is holistic study of mankind and also emphasizes on socio-cultural aspects through qualitative in-depth micro study (community wise or cross cultural; synchronic and/or diachronic). People in traditional politico-economic system should move in the direction of civilization, but this is a fact that they are confined within Nature-Human-SuperNature relationship. The latter is related to culture which is Psychic Unity of Mankind or results out from Psycho-Biological need. But study of culture now more emphasizes on symbols, cognition/World View and Post-Modernism/New Ethnography. Culture of the subject group plus development process (input) result into sustainable development (output): development in such case is more nature-friendly and pro- people; maximum people are attracted to it and benefited from the policy. Status of stakeholders and Entrepreneurship are added here with the demands of Compensation, Rehabilitation and Employment. Certain matters are also to be resolved: i) pure money- based economy versus traditional property oriented system; ii) rational versus cultural values and iii) one way development versus sustainable development. If these three problems could not be solved, then these would become the base of outsiders' interference where a policy would be always challenged by another and therefore no development work could be performed or be slow down from a steady or faster pace. A development becomes sustainable when it includes common people, their perceptions, their relation with nature, their knowledge on so many things, their modes of production with or without feedback, their local technologies, their disaster mitigation system, their biodiversity management system, their population bulk and demographic profile in the region, their social structures, their ways of communication, mind structure, their World View, their thought pattern, their folk lives, their traditional politico-economic attributes, their belief in super nature, their magico-religious behaviors, their philosophies, their ethno sciences, their social norms and cultural values, customs and beliefs, symbolic expressions of their inner perspectives, their connotation and their Ethnographic Profile as an extra-scientific and a least biased documentation.

TK/IK/IKS can contribute into Poverty Alleviation, Community Development, Human Resource Management, Disaster Management and so many things that are all parts of Development Study.

Further, IK/IKS is characterized by Ethno-science where the issue is extra-scientific, not typically rational, not very much objective, value-loaded, generally biased and humanitarian. Ethno-science rather emphasizes on the very relationship between the ethnic groups and their innovations on various grounds (technological, biodiversity, nature, etc.). So, caste system is an important IKS and the information set as well as Public Services from the same could make the development agencies piercing into the central dogma of Indian Subcontinent that now-a-days is illustrated as one of the major global destination for foreign investment.

Conclusion: Caste System a Way of Living

Caste is a social institution like family, lineage, kinship, clan and tribe and all these dependent up on certain social organization or communication system: gesture, language, power of word, slogan are certain frequently used communication systems; whereas marriage, interpersonal relationship loaded with cultural values and social norms, animatism, obligation/prohibition/folkways/morals, service exchange system and sense of solidarity are behind organizing the society. Traditionally, economic and political institutions are organized by religious sentiments with a sense of fear and obedience that are diluted with time by active involvement of

various new philosophies and State formation. Simultaneously, religious organization for life, livelihood and better livelihood are shifting from magic, magico-religious faith, religious involvements, traditional healing, traditional medical practices and modern medical system. All these together constitute a huge part of the society or social structure. In Indian Subcontinent, peoples could be grouped into certain categories on certain grounds as follows: 1) Agricultural communities, caste groups and hegemony of priestly category; 2) Mega Structure builders; 3) Mega Structure destroyers; 4) Localized femininity (in general); and 5) Expanding maleness.

Politically, Indians often discuss about Pre-Colonial, Colonial and Post-Colonial Periods with disputed time frames. Again, their discussion grows from local to national and international levels. Actually, they could hardly be risen from their self-conceptions of Upper Caste, Dominant Caste and Dominant Communities at ground/rural/local levels. These three categories negotiate with one another according to various local issues: but often it is shown that Upper Castes try to dominate qualitatively, whereas Dominant Communities numerically solidified when they think that they are being suppressed or marginalized not by internal social structure but by any of outside factors: trans-national trade or Globalization hampering the traditional set-ups. National and International politics could not rule out these factors. A concept of Shahi (from Sassanid Empire of Iran) was developed in post-Aryan scenario among the Indians who were well aware of existence of so many pre-Aryan, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Vedic, Brahminical, and Tantra-Brahminical elements. This Shahi concept has been utilized again and again by various invaders from or through Turan/Central Asia (also known as Kwarazm/Maverannahar/Turkistan) in post-Aryan phase via Iran. That led to Turkification of a huge part of the Subcontinent under the banner of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam or in a heterogeneous condition. This process is often criticized for being so racial. However, racism seems to be nothing new for the Indians who better prefer to stay along with their ethnicity. Turk-Kushan Shahi, Rajput Shahi (centering on Chwa Huns/ White Huns and Shishodia), Islamic Turk-Afghans (after defeating the Kidarites) and Turko-Mongols (Moguls) are major ones along with various collaborator tribes. Lucknow Shahi in North Indian Gangetic plain, Gorkha Shahi in Central Himalayas and Deccan Shahi in Black Soil South India are referred to be the minor ones. Certain vassal states were also there and positivist dominant communities were treated generally Sub-Shahis. There were some autonomous trade pockets/ trade blocks/ dumping grounds that were tamed by the Shahis through negotiation with western European traders (Catholic and Protestant) colonizing a huge part of the globe. They searched new trade routes and New World so as to overcome the so called nexus among Arabs, Buddhists and Magical World avoiding the Holy Roman Empire, Byzantium, Protestant States, Ottoman Turks and Balkans. British Raj (1857-1947) in Indian Subcontinent was established just after the Mogul Shahi and various transnational/international nexus were formed from time to time: Russian-Uzbek-Indian and mainland Europe. In independent India, the most prevalent nexus among India, Iran and Russia was resisted in Pakistan-Afghanistan region (the famous Cold War) leading to the problems like Talibanization and Global Terrorism. Indian society hence have choices like going back in traditional life and again returning back, micro-financing, magico-religious practices, Liberalization, Semi-Closed and Closed systems, and lastly Globalization succumbed to Global Meltdown or enjoying Economic Boom felt through inflation, price rise, stagflation, democracy in a multicultural situation, undemocratic ways, bureaucracy, increasing purchasing power, economic disparity and re-utilization of IKS. IKS is not against the process of globalization on Global Market Economy. Rather it has tried to prevent the deleterious impacts of the same and often it provides a proper protection against outcome of any other alternative. It might be criticized as a cleverly step in favor of providing safeguard to the Global Market Economy. The providers of IKS and the sufferers from Global Market Economy are the same. Therefore, to convince these people, certain rights at the global level have to be provided and International Labor Organization (ILO) is here playing the main role allying with United Nations and World Bank. ILO has illustrated the blue print of such universally applicable Indigenous Rights. Indigenous Rights encompass the domains like general policy, land, recruitment and conditions of employment, vocational training, handicrafts and rural industries, social security and health, education and means of communication, contracts and co-operations across borders, administration, and general provisions. All these criteria should be applicable to all the indigenous communities brought under the common umbrella of Indigenous Peoples.

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