Ideas of 17th century, destabilized traditional knowledge

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**Introduction**

Traditional knowledge refers to the knowledge that was given and promoted by the indigenous people and all their knowledge systems were embedded in indigenous or local communities, or cultural traditions of the region. For centuries, experience used to be gained by adopting the local environment and local culture, through the oral transmission of traditional knowledge from one generation to another. For years, the same knowledge used to be practiced, since it was transmitted from elders till the 16th century, but after the renaissance and other revolutionary movements, there was witnessed a stir that shook the base of the traditional knowledge. Around the 17th century, there was seen, a voice arose against traditional ideology as scientific knowledge and reasoning was becoming central elements of many communities. Scientific ideas and reasoning against the traditional knowledge destabilized the thinking that was being followed by people and particularly in the involvement of many researchers challenges the traditional knowledge, that weakens the base of the traditional knowledge.

**Discussion**

In the 17th century, it is the consciousness that becomes a central element of the modern sense which clashes with the ideas of traditional knowledge. The idea of consciousness started with Descartes as he gave way to a new approach of thinking about "**conscientia***”.* Considering the history, one could tell that before the 17th century, religion was the central ideal and the only purpose of life was considered to be praising the divine, but after that period, a revolution was brought which claims that man was at the center, whose consciousness made him the crown of the creation. Consciousness made man rebellion who starting questioning all the natural and unnatural processes and phenomena which become the ultimate cause of the destabilization of the traditional knowledge. Like many other rationalists, philosophers and scientists, Descartes, whose ideas claim that the role of consciousness as for him, it was primarily epistemic (making things available for the mind for ponding upon).

According to Descartes, transparency of the mind, reflection and intentionality are the main aspects of the consciousness that has destabilized traditional knowledge. Descartes believes that all these three aspects of consciousness lead towards doubt which needs confirmation. For proving a theory, one has to look and questions the subject under investigation from all angles. Rational thinking and questioning were the main elements missing in the traditional knowledge and one has to follow, blindly, what is being transferred by previous generations. Descartes also believes that doubting means, “I have a thought and that this necessarily entails that I exist” (“The arts 1000 reader”, 1996). Considering the revolution, brought in the 17th century, it won’t be wrong to say that one of the main things that had a conflict with traditional knowledge was the exclusion of supernatural elements and giving more weightage to rationality than spirituality which was the center of attention of traditional knowledge.

Like scientific thinkers, there were many political thinkers as well whose ideas clashed with traditional knowledge. For Locke, knowledge of all types come from the experience, and he believes that at the time of birth, the mind is a tabula rasa (an empty slate) that one fills through his or her experiences with the help of five senses. Locke’s ideas also destabilized some of the central concepts of traditional knowledge as he claimed that our experience is important (Maslej, Mar, & Kuperman, 2019). He emphasized the idea that even if we have demonstrative knowledge of God's existence, our understanding cannot comprehend who He is and this was one of the ideas that shook the bases of traditional knowledge (The arts 1000 reader).

On the other hand, he argues that reasoning is the capability given by God which aids us in searching the truth regarding our existence and world. According to Locke, if there is a God, then He must want us to be happy and people who make others unhappy must not be accepted by God, so each individual must preserve the rights of humankind which would lead to tolerance. It is the idea that made the basis of the state and church being separate entities, and as it is claimed that we all must come to trace truth through reason, then no man could better discover the truth than any other man and following this reason, this political leader believes that all political leaders have no right to impose their ideas and beliefs on people. This idea has a conflict with that of traditional knowledge in which the state was under Church. Locke claimed that if people were to blindly follow authorities and the government, it means that they are surrendering their reasoning.

**Conclusion**

Considering both the traditional and modern knowledge, it could be said that there is a conflict between the both, as in the former, reason it was missing that becomes dominant in the latter. In the 17th century, many ideas were presented by different researchers, philosophers and political leaders that destabilized the traditional knowledge which raised many questions against the traditional knowledge, as well as reasoning and consciousness, become dominant. Like many other field experts, Descartes and Locke presented ideas that waggled traditional knowledge.

**References**

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