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Review

Environmental ethics in the Hindu Vedas and Puranas in India

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Abstract

The Indian religious traditions are intertwined with equally disparate cultural, social, linguistic, philosophical and ethical systems that have developed over a vast history, compounded with movement of peoples, foreign interventions, and internal transformations in structures and identities experienced over time. How does one then begin to talk about environmental values and concerns in the Indian religious traditions? Although, these can be randomly and selectively discussed, this study aims at tracing the contours of certain highlights and tensions in the traditional approaches to the question of the environment. Of special significance, the study will look at Brahmanical-Hindu, Jaina and Buddhist traditions, in their ancient to classical modalities, concluding with some contemporary responses to the supposed impact, or lack thereof, of traditional perspectives to ecological problems facing a rapidly modernizing South Asian nation-state, from Gandhi to Bhopal and after.

Key words: Indian religious, cultural, social, Linguistic, philosophical and ethical systems.

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