

Concept of Womanhood and Mother Earth in Vedic Literature

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Abstract

The present paper tries to analyse the concept of womanhood and Mother Earth as depicted in Vedic Literature and tries to outline how ecology and the feminine are connected and interlinked. There is an attempt to see how the ancient religious texts honour the womanhood of woman and the Mother Earth.

Keywords: Womanhood, Mother Earth, Vedic Literature.

According to Vedic culture women are the pillars of a stable, happy and healthy society. In the Vedic culture, the concept of womanhood is connected with that of respect, honour, chastity, home and family. Women is the nucleus and foundation for a stable society. In her youth, a girl is protected by responsible parents, in her adult life by the husband and in her old age by children. When these principles of womanhood are no longer upheld, they naturally become polluted, create imbalance in society resulting in physical and psychological abuses and exploitation.

Vedic culture teaches men to regard all women as mothers except one's own wife, to regard another's wealth as garbage in the street and to treat others as one would expect to be treated. Traditionally all women are addressed as matrifigures them utmost respect. During the years of Vedic culture women have always been given the highest level of respect and freedom, but also protection and safety. There is a Vedic saying, "where women are worshipped there the Gods dwell for where the women are happy, there will be prosperity." Manu Smriti explains, fathers, brothers, husbands and brother-in-law who desire their own welfare must honour women. The place where women are honoured, there the gods are

pleased. If the female relations are in grief, the family will perish soon. On the otherhand if that family where they are happy, it will be ever prosperous. The houses where female relations, not being duly honoured pronounce a curse, perish completely as if destroyed by magic. And remember their own welfare, they should always honour women on all festivals with gifts of ornaments, clothes and food. (Manuscript III 15-19).

Vedas like *Iyemad Bhagavathasand* that when a woman is joined in to a family through marriage, she enters as a river and the sea to rule the family as a queen over the other members of the family along with her husband.

