

Environmental Resilience

Adapting to a Changing World

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Colonial Modernity and Its Impact on the Indian Environment

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Abstract

Modernity had predominantly been a colonial enterprise and European colonial powers in Asia and Africa had undertaken the 'task' of civilizing the 'backward peoples' in those regions as a grandiose project which found echoes in Rudyard Kipling's infamous concept of White Man's Burden. Nowhere did this theme find more endearing audience among the Europeans than the British colony of India which had become a sounding board of British colonial policy and practice. As the English tried to 'tame' the Indian sub-continent using technology and different means of coercion, they simultaneously felt the need to 'tame' the 'natives' through cultural devices such as language and propaganda to meet their imperialistic aims. In course of their modernizing process, British colonial administrators, not only destroyed the livelihood of the rural population through their different land revenue experiments but also undertook policies that severely affected the environment in more ways than one. This paper seeks to highlight the impact of colonial modernity on the Indian environment.

Keywords: Modernity, Britain, India, Colony, Forest

Antecedents

British colonial rulers and Europeans in general had been obsessed with the "backwardness" of India on account of its inherent superstitions and social malpractices. Indian backwardness was sharply contrasted with European superiority in social, moral and technical matters. Thomas Babington Macaulay, the colossal figure of European and British "progressivism" never ceased to bring Indians "at par" with the Enlightened West. The educational and social backwardness of India and that of the East in general, was one of his favourite targets. While drafting the Minute of 1835 to anglicize the Indian mind, he had vaingloriously commented

About the Book

"Environmental Resilience: Adapting to a Changing World" is a comprehensive exploration of the strategies and principles necessary to navigate the increasing environmental challenges posed by climate change, biodiversity loss, and other ecological disruptions. The book delves into the concept of resilience, emphasizing the ability of natural and human systems to adapt, recover, and thrive amidst changing conditions. The key themes include the importance of sustainable practices, the role of technological innovation, and the necessity of community involvement and policy frameworks in building resilient environments. The authors, experts in environmental science and policy, provide case studies and real-world examples to illustrate successful resilience strategies across different ecosystems and societies. This book serves as an essential resource for policymakers, environmentalists, and anyone interested in understanding and enhancing the resilience of our planet in the face of ongoing and future environmental challenges.

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