	Review Article

Environmental Thought of Other Philosopher vs. Tagore's thought

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Abstract

Environmental philosophy aims to prompt an effective human response to connected problems by understanding the unquestioned beliefs and presumptions. Tagore's environmental philosophy differs from other philosophers by promoting a holistic view of the environment. Tagore's environmental thought recognizes the intrinsic value of all living beings and emphasizes a spiritual and conscious transformation in humans' relationship with nature. Ambedkar's ideas are crucial to the dominant discourse, which is characterized by a concern for transforming the natural world to address social issues generated. The focus of this paper is on the impact of Gandhi's, Ambedkar's, and Tagore's environmental thoughts on Indian environmentalism.
Keywords: Gandhi, Dr. B R Ambedkar, Tagore, environmentalism, Sarvodaya, non-violence.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental philosophers can shed light on a variety of distinct concepts underlying our environmental crisis. This is accomplished by examining both the physical imprints of humans on the planet and the individuals who made those imprints. Theories not only explain intricate dynamics and structures, but they also allow us to consider how our actions and choices impact the world. Tagore's environmental thought differs from that of other philosophers in several ways. While many philosophers approach the environment from a human-centered perspective, Tagore's thought is more holistic and emphasizes the interdependence and interconnectedness of all living beings. For example, thinkers like René Descartes and Immanuel Kant view nature as a resource for human use and exploitation. Descartes famously claimed that animals are mere machines, devoid of consciousness or feelings, and therefore can be treated as objects for human benefit. Kant similarly argued that nature has no intrinsic value and exists solely for human purposes. Tagore avowed the intrinsic worth of all living things and emphasized the importance of humans developing a more harmonious relationship with the environment. He held that humans are not separate from nature, but rather a part of it. Tagore emphasized the interconnectedness of all life forms and advocated for respect and compassion towards all beings.

Tagore's environmental thought also differs from some modern environmental philosophers who focus primarily on scientific and technological solutions to environmental problems. Tagore emphasized the importance of science, technology, and spirituality for environmental sustainability, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all life and human awareness for a harmonious relationship.

Gandhi's Thought on the Environment

Science, technology, and development play crucial roles in shaping human destiny, but over-exploitation of natural resources for development can lead to environmental hazards. Gandhi's green thoughts offer a new vision to balance nature with human needs. Although not an environmentalist, Gandhi's ideas on Satyagraha, truth, non-violence, simple lifestyles, and sustainable development demonstrate how it can be achieved without harming nature and our fellow beings. His faith in the essential unity of man and all living beings, as well as the law of species, highlights the need for cooperation and sacrifice in the process of development.

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Gandhi's interest in nature and the environment may be seen in his speeches, writings, and working messages. International conferences like the Stockholm Conference and Rio Earth Summit were convened later than Gandhi's concerns. In India, major environmental movements like the Chipko movement and Narmada Bachao Andolan were inspired by Gandhi. He is considered the "World's early environmentalist in vision and practice."

Gandhi warned about the dangers of industrialization on a large scale, which he predicted would lead to industrialization, urbanization, unemployment, and environmental destruction. Hind Swaraj's 1909 work focused on mass production instead of mass production, aiming for an economic system that minimizes environmental degradation and achieves sustainable development. His concept of Swaraj or self-rule allows for practical sustainable development without compromising the quality of life, making his ideas relevant for sustainable growth and development today.

Gandhi criticized urbanization in India as a slow and inevitable death for the 7,00,000 villages, stating that it would remove opportunities for skilled use of the hand and head. He believed that removing cottage industries from small villages would reduce villagers to the level of beasts, lacking proper nourishment and joy. He argued that removing village handicrafts would lead to a reduction in the quality of life for the villagers. Gandhi was aware of environmental pollution and its health effects, particularly in industrial working conditions. He expressed these concerns in 1906, stating that there is an increasing appreciation among enlightened men for open air.

The Gandhian philosophy of non-violence can help reduce carbon footprints caused by wars and missile production. It emphasizes the importance of conservation of natural resources and the man-and-environment relationship. In today's high consumerism and waste-driven lifestyle, the depletion of resources and increased toxicity in air, water, and soil are detrimental to nature, highlighting the need for Gandhian principles in international politics and local communities. Gandhi influenced by Jainism, believed in the importance of nature and respecting diverse life forms. His concept of non-violence encompassed all living beings and embodied the eternal values of life. He emphasized the sacredness of life, including trees, plants, and cows. Gandhi criticized the reckless pursuit of industrialization, arguing that it poses serious problems for human existence and all living creatures and species on our planet. He sarcastically responded to Edward Thomson's criticism of wildlife decline in India that the English historian Edward Thomson once remarked to Gandhi that wildlife was rapidly declining in India, to which Gandhi replied with sarcasm, "Wildlife is decreasing in the jungles, but increasing in the towns."

Sarvodaya, a concept similar to sustainable development and environmental ethics, focuses on a healthy environment for human evolution and harmonious existence with nature and other living beings. Gandhi's vision integrates all spheres of human life, exemplifying the human ecological perspective. His teachings align with eco-friendly measures and living in harmony with nature. Gandhi's holistic human ecology perspective integrated all life spheres, predicting environmental problems and promoting a basic needs model. He opposed industrialization, stating it would strip the world like locusts, and advocated for limiting wants, achieving plain living, and high thinking, rather than following the West's economic imperialism.

Air pollution is a crucial aspect of sustainability and development. Mahatma Gandhi, during the first Satyagraha in South Africa in 1913, highlighted the cost and expenses of accessing clean air in modern civilization. He believed that the body needs three essential nutrients: air, water, and food, with air being the most essential. Gandhi defined India's independence in 1918 as three elements: air, water, and grain, which are now used by law courts to explain the right to life in terms of clean air, water, and adequate food. In the late 1930s, he defined democracy as access to pure air and water for all citizens. His ideas are relevant to the twenty-first-century world, emphasizing the importance of addressing air pollution and promoting sustainability.

Modern civilization has seen a proliferation of cars and airplanes, enhancing mobility and communication. Joseph Stizlitz's book 'Making Globalisation Work' highlights that 80% of global warming is caused by hydrocarbons and 20% by deforestation. The growing number of cars poses a threat to the environment. Mahatma Gandhi, in 1938, opposed the idea of having two cars and two radio sets for each Indian family, arguing that cars would create a lack of space for walking. He also opposed motorized transport during the Dandi March. Many European countries have implemented congestion taxes to prevent vehicular pollution, and some countries are adopting car-less days. The demerit of owning too many cars is now being realized with added poignancy.

Mahatma Gandhi's ideas on water scarcity and famines are relevant in the 21st century. He advised princely states to form confederations and take long-term measures for planting trees. He believed that afforestation on a large scale was the most effective way to address the water crisis. The world must follow Gandhi's advice, as British rulers treated forests as revenue sources without considering their ecological and sustainable development implications.

The Green Party in Germany was founded on the vision of Mahatma Gandhi, who believed that a lifestyle that relies on the endless supply of raw materials and excessive use can lead to violent appropriation of

these materials from other countries. The party aims to promote responsible use of raw materials in an ecologically oriented lifestyle, reducing the risk of violence and promoting a more sustainable future.

On the 69th death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Down To Earth explores his vision and impact on contemporary environmental conservation discourse, focusing on his foresight of a future where the earth's resources may not suffice to meet people's demands.

Ambedkar's Thought on the Environment

The United Nations celebrated Ambedkar's 125th birth anniversary in April 2016, focusing on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 17 goals aim to balance economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Ambedkar's plan of action for people, planet, and prosperity prioritizes environment, poverty, and inequality, aiming to protect the planet, create a healthy environment, and ensure equality and development in harmony with nature. Responsible use of raw materials in an ecologically oriented lifestyle reduces the risk of violence. Indian environmentalists often marginalize Ambedkar's vision for environmental sustainability, despite his contributions to various issues such as nature, village, land, agriculture, water, community, industry, technology, and science. Unlike Gandhi, who critiqued modern civilization intuitively, Ambedkar's modernization vision, heavily influenced by the West, has been relatively unexplored. Despite his contributions to environmental and political traditions, Ambedkar's influence on environmental issues remains relatively unexplored.

Ambedkar's philosophy focuses on village, land, agriculture, water, community, industry, technology, and science, addressing issues of caste injustices and the development of rural landscapes. He sees modernity differently, with Dalits living outside the ecological space and intellectual universe. Ambedkar's thought heralds a new tradition of Dalit development and environmental thought, critical to dominant discourse, characterized by a concern for transforming the 'natural world' to address social issues generated by caste oppression. Ambedkar's childhood and youth were marked by injustice, with the Mahar caste and village being inherently unequal to the untouchables. The built-in environment of rural and urban India was filled with caste oppression and Dalit aspiration. Ambedkar's experiences with the natural environment were unique, with many stories of horrors and hardships that passed through generations. His understanding of nature was complex, dealing with three broad but interconnected meanings: External Nature, Universal Nature, and Social Nature.

External Nature refers to the unmediated material world, which provides a strong foundation for basic material production and impacts society and human relationships. Universal Nature is the all-encompassing natural things that dominate society, determining the structure of society, often detrimental to the untouchables. Social Nature refers to the nature of social exclusion, where tradition aligns with the natural, leading to exclusion, discrimination, and injustice. In Ambedkar's understanding, nature is a contested social reality that is a rich archive for constructing histories of human activities. The notion of 'human' is based on natural equality, enabling man to make and re-make nature. Unambiguously, for Ambedkar, human encompasses nature, and social relationships govern nature. In so far and as much as nature has been socialized and converted into human's social body, it has led to far-reaching transformations, altering the 'natural' course of various processes, including that of the biosphere.

Ambedkar was critical of ideologies of a universal and social nature, as they often concealed the past and politics of exploitative casteist relations. His experiences with the natural world and his understanding of nature deeply impacted his relationship with humans and the nature of human existence. Ambedkar's ideas have profound ecological dimensions that need to be understood and appreciated. These ideas can transform the concept of the environment from exotic to organic, transforming it from disembedded to deeply embedded within each individual. The link between Ambedkar's ideas and Indian environmentalism is crucial to understanding the social and politico-ecological nexus between social exclusion and environmental problems. Intellectual environmental history, which focuses on the contributions of philosophers, poets, politicians, and activists, can capture Ambedkar's ideas from an ecological perspective.

Existing literature on intellectual environmental history in India can be classified into three broad categories: state-centric, ethno-intellectual, and nationalist thought. State-centric literature focuses on the contributions of technocrats and administrators during British rule, such as H. Cleghorn and D. Brandis. Ethno-intellectual literature focuses on the contributions of colonial ethnographers who explored tribal societies during the British period. Nationalist thought includes ideas from native bureaucracy, political parties, and nationalist intelligentsia's views on common pool resource management and ecological dimensions of ideas of prominent political leaders, such as M.K. Gandhi. Indian environmentalism has been dominated by a nationalist perception of ecology, leading to community-centric resource management policies. However, the implementation process has not led to substantial changes, highlighting the need for Indian environmental discourse to incorporate ideas of Dalit intellectuals advocating for an inclusive Indian society based on equity principles.

Ambedkar's ideas on human and environmental relationships have been largely hidden from mainstream academics, but their relevance has begun to be recognized in recent years. He emphasized the impact of an iniquitous socio-economic structure on the usage of common pool resources in India, arguing that the caste system prevented Dalits from accessing these resources, which he believed was the root cause of poverty and pauperization. Ambedkar identified graded inequality as the theoretical core of Hinduism, which he believed was operationalized by the Shastras. Ambedkar's sensitivity towards the exclusion of Dalits from ecologically important resources can be observed at two levels: the exclusion of Dalits from possessing land and the nexus between the caste system and access to forests and water. He highlighted the practice of untouchability in public goods by caste Hindus, such as the Punjab Land Alienation Act, which prohibits Dalits from purchasing land.

Contrary to essentialist and nationalist representations of human environmental relationships, Ambedkar offers a wider perspective reflecting the complexities of human ecology. He highlights the deprivation of forest-dependent people due to colonial forest policies and the attitude of upper-caste Hindus. Ambedkar consistently engaged with the issue of exclusion of Dalits from accessing natural resources, highlighting instances where a Chamar was severely beaten for drawing water from a village well. Ambedkar points out that the nature of Indian society, built upon caste hierarchy, determines access to resources, particularly in the domain of access to drinking water. He believes that untouchability may be a misfortune for the Untouchables but is a good fortune for the Hindus, as it sustains their natural pride and makes them feel as big as they are.

Ecology is a crucial aspect of academic and public discourse, and Ambedkar's ideas provide a fresh perspective on Indian environmentalism. He emphasizes the importance of the environment in social dynamics and the need for environmental governance based on equity and bio-ethical spirit. Ambedkar's eco-philosophy, which includes Buddhism, promotes ecological democracy and inclusive environmentalism, aiming for an environment for all. This bio-centric approach ensures equal rights for all species, including humans, over nature and responsibility for environmental conservation. Despite Ambedkar's contributions, the eco-philosophy needs further development to create a just ecologically embedded society.

Tagore's Thought on the Environment

Tagore's poetry reveals the synthesis of intellect and intuition, helping him realize absolute truth beyond appearances. Despite lacking institutional philosophical knowledge, Tagore's writings reveal his true picture as a philosopher. S. Radhakrishnan argued that Tagore's writings do not provide a systematic exposition of his philosophy of life, but rather an atmosphere charged with a particular vision of reality. Despite this, Tagore's writings reveal his philosophic mind, as he has a good realization of all aspects of the universe.

Tagore's philosophy of environment consists of two phases: his homely environment and the natural environment. His homely environment is limited and infinite, while the natural environment is limitless and infinite. Tagore believed that proper growth and development require closeness to nature, recognizing the rational bond between man and nature.

The author reflects on his personal growth and development, stating that his homely environment was not sufficient for his spiritual growth. He believes that the homely environment is the foundation of his spiritual vision, as it allows him to meditate daily with a verse from the Vedas, Gayatri. This meditation enriches his ability to perceive the underlying truth of the unification of all creatures, and he emphasizes the importance of daily meditation with the Vedas verse, Gayathri, to realize the essential unity of the world and human consciousness.

Tagore's second phase of perception of the natural environment is boundless and rational, with the man-nature bond being the most dominant aspect. He believes all biotic and abiotic creatures on earth are intuitively connected, and changes in one aspect affect others. He treats all creatures with the same worth of existence and believes all living beings, including animals, trees, and plants, are endowed with a soul. He believes that the uniformity of law in nature establishes unity, and without it, our world will no longer be familiar to us. Tagore states in Sadhana that this uniformity of law is essential for the harmony of the natural world.

Tagore emphasized the man-nature relationship and the responsibility of mankind to maintain a sustainable environment. He argued that human greed leads to the degradation of the natural environment, as humans develop scientific technologies for comfort. Tagore emphasized the distinction between forest dwellers who show love and respect towards nature, and city dwellers who forget to do so, resulting in environmental degradation. He called for city dwellers to restore love and respect for the natural environment for a sustainable future. Tagore, a century ago, emphasized the exploitation of the natural environment during his journey to Japan in 1916. He criticized modern humans for failing to respect nature and identified the root causes of ecological imbalance as basic vices like greed, pride, lust, and jealousy. He argued that cutting down trees for human needs exacerbates the ecological imbalance.

Tagore's writings, including Muktadhara and Raktakarabi, emphasize the preservation and conservation of natural environments. Muktadhara

depicts the exploitation of the environment by man, with a dam constructing a river. Prince Abhijit fights against the dam, highlighting the natural power of water. Raktakarabi portrays the mechanized bureaucracy exploiting nature and man, with the king developing an almost bureaucratic system. Tagore's dedication to environmental preservation was evident in his establishment of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, which emphasized the importance of nature for life. He organized festivals like Briksharopan and Halakarshan to raise awareness about the man-nature bond and the significance of the natural environment. Tagore also planted five trees, known as Panchabati, on his birthday, by Santiniketan's unique style. Tagore emphasized the importance of using nature for the basic needs of mankind, not just for individual needs. He argued that nature should not be seen as a resource supplier but as a shelter for all creatures.

Tagore criticized modern man and technological advancements but believed that modern technologies are essential for society's development without damaging the natural environment. He emphasized that no organism can live alone in the world and the success of the biological community depends on its interactions with the physical environment. Tagore emphasized the importance of being conscious when using natural things and treating nature as an eternal gift to mankind, not just a resource supplier. Tagore's philosophy of environment aligns with deep ecology. A philosophical perspective that emphasizes ecological consciousness and conservation of resources, wilderness, and moral extensions. He emphasizes the inherent values of nature, including economic, cultural, religious, and moral aspects. Tagore supports resource conservation and wildlife preservation. He emphasizes the importance of nature in fulfilling human needs. He appreciates traditional people's worship of nature and extends moral values to natural objects and elements. Tagore's philosophy of environment emphasizes the value of nature in human beings.

Tagore's principle of unity in diversity and synthetic approach to life aligns with Naess's biotic equality. He believes every entity, including natural elements, has value and should live and flourish. Despite human greed and passion, humans should not exploit natural resources. Tagore valued traditional Hindu culture and philosophy, maintaining balance and unity in diversity. He condemned modern industrial societies' greed, individualism, and materialism, which led to the exploitation and destruction of life systems.

CONCLUSION
Tagore's philosophy of environment focuses on establishing mutual relationships among the entire kingdom through love and respect for all beings. He believes nature is divine and creates joy and happiness through its divinity. Preserving and protecting the environment is essential for our happiness and shelter.

Tagore emphasizes the sustainability of nature through love, respect, unity, and sympathy. His philosophy is not anthropocentric or andocentric, considering all aspects of life and non-life in the universe. Gandhi believed in the idea of self-sufficiency and sustainable living. According to Gandhi, sustainable living and self-sufficiency are important. He does not believe in anthropocentricity or andocentrism, considering all aspects of life and non-life. He pointed out the relevance of living in harmony with nature and practicing simplicity. Gandhi recommended the utilization of local resources and traditional farming methods to reduce environmental damage. He also advocated for nonviolence against all living beings and believed in the concept of trusteeship, in which people are viewed as Earth's carers. Ambedkar, on the other hand, was more concerned with social justice and equality. While he did not address environmental concerns directly, his emphasis on improving marginalized populations can be considered indirectly tied to environmental concerns. Ambedkar's emphasis on education and empowerment of disadvantaged groups can contribute to a more equitable and sustainable society. Tagore's environmental thought was deeply rooted in his connection with nature. He celebrated the beauty of the natural world and believed that humans should have a holistic relationship with the environment. Tagore's writings often expressed the interconnectedness of all living beings and the need for harmony between humans and nature. He believed that industrialization and modernization should not come at the expense of destroying the environment.

Despite Gandhi, Ambedkar, and Tagore's differing perspectives on environmental protection, they all recognized the importance of living in harmony with nature and promoting sustainability. India and the world continue to benefit from their ideas on environmentalism.

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