

(Re-)Cognizing Nature's Lived Ontologies: Tagore's *Nisargaśṛṅgāra*

Akhar Bandopadhyay

Abstract This article advances the non-T crafted ecosophy of *nisargaśṛṅgāra*, viz., non-heteronormative human-<https://www.loretocollege.in/careereng/checkpayment.php>nature creative intimacy, through an in-depth exploration of Rabindranath Tagore's ethico-aesthetic *weltanschauung* (worldview). It instantiates *nisargaśṛṅgāra* through a slow-motion reading of Tagore's ontology of reciprocity, which posits dynamic interplays of identity-in-difference between finite and infinite life-worlds, thereby challenging the conventional unidirectional model of *Advaita Vedānta*. Tagore's non-speciesist anthropocentrism acknowledges the limits of human cognition while fostering empathetic compassion (*Apīḍana Samamarmitā*) towards nature, transcending Enlightenment chauvinism. Employing Jaina *Anekāntavāda* and Foucauldian discourse analysis, the article diachronically filters out *nisargaśṛṅgāra* as a thematic performance across Tagore's fictional and non-fictional works. It foregrounds his critique of urban estrangement (city-wall habit), greed-driven commercialism (epidemic of voracity) and technocratic mega-structures (non-aesthetic monstrosities). His concept of eco-debt (*nisarga-rṇa*) and the dual semantics of "property" underscore cooperative, non-monetary obligations between humans and nature, advocating a minimalist, non-violent ecological ethic.

Tagore's suggestively apprehended futuristic regression towards the *tapovana* (non-sanctuarized wilderness ideal) envisions decentralized, small-scale communities rooted in cosmic citizenship, countering ethnocentric (imagi-)nation-alism and mechanistic "developmentalism". The article also attends to Tagore's reckoning of nature's *rudra-rūpa-bhāva*, acknowledging its destructive aspects through *ecognosis* (*prema-vaicittya*, *ākṣepānurāga*), thereby surpassing blanket-'romanticized' depictions. While critics address Tagore's reliance on the East-West binary and his orientation towards agricultural science-technology as an alternative, they could also recognize his situated spatio-temporal limitations. Despite these, Tagore's *nisargaśṛṅgāra* offers a praxeological resistance to eco-alienation, merging aesthetic jouissance (*sahṛdaya āhlāda* through *akāraṇa ānanda*) with core concerns of environmental activism. The study thus situates Tagore's *nisargaśṛṅgāra* as a sympoietic narrative of deindividuated (Deindividuation, i.e., de-individuation. In other words, from the atomistic small I to the weness of the many selves. Parallels: Ubuntu in Bantu terminology) participatory love, proposing a relational ethico-aesthetic to confront and attenuate the ongoing ecological crises. The article concludes by affirming The significance of Tagore's works in crafting a synchronous "attitude towards nature," one that navigates the tensions between harmony and disharmony in human-nature relationalities through an onto-epistemological convergence.

Keywords: *nisargaśṛṅgāra*, *Apīḍana Samamarmitā*, futuristic regression, ecognosis, deindividuated love, identity-in-difference (*bhedābheda*)

I. *Nisargaśṛṅgāra*: A Retrospective Presence

The neologism *nisargaśṛṅgāra* (Bandyopadhyay 2024a; 2024b; 2024c) serves as an invitation to cultivate intimate, reciprocal connections with the “natural world” as one attempts to make sense of it. “Nature” partakes in one’s situated beings through myriad channels that resist the totalizing grasp of definitional closure. Instead of defining nature as a thingified “it”¹, one could approach nature as a dynamic experiential modality, a “thou” (Buber 2013), i.e., a complex embodied wholeness (not abstracted totality) that agentially enables creative joy through modes of self-expression.²

To embrace this experiential way of *encountering*, one must confront certain archetypal imaginaries beforehand. One of the most persistent views is that of *nature* (usually equated with planet earth) as “mother”, i.e., a selfless, nurturing figure who *serves* living forms without expectations. While such an imagery has played a constructive role³, notably in the Gaia thesis and certain ecofeminist worldviews, it risks perpetuating sacrificial logics under the supposed licensing of “unconditionality”. Particularly, when the term “mother” is framed within institutionalized family structures (as microcosms of the state and guardians of private property), the imagery of “Demeter” could lend itself to appropriation or taken-for-granted neglect. This is because this undoubtedly important image of “mother” is often taken as an entity, who could be constantly taken from since the mother does not ask for anything in return. This could lead to a certain normalization of extractive relations, where nature’s generosity is mistaken for infinite availability, thereby justifying exploitation, absolute entitlement, and neglect of reciprocity in human–nature relations.

Nisargaśṛṅgāra (Bandyopadhyay, 2024a) as a non-T crafted ecosophy⁴ moves beyond such designated confines *without negation*, urging us to think of nature (*nisarga*) not simply within the Earth’s biome but as part of a cosmic lineage: the stars as much as the soil, the non-arborescent roots of humans as “humus”⁵ as well as “nebulae-stuff”. In doing so, it proposes nature/cosmos as *lover*: a strategic metaphor more fluid than “mother,” capable of accommodating plural archetypal identifications (e.g., friend and/or caregiver and/or nomadic companion etc.) and non-heteronormative standpoints. While this approach is indebted to *ecosexuality* (Sprinkle, Stephens and Klein, 2021) for initiating a discourse on human-nature reciprocity through performative art, *nisargaśṛṅgāra* departs from the former’s commodified, often ritualistic tendencies (e.g., parlourized, isolated ecosexual bathhouses) to imbibe a cosmic implicate. Moreover, the connotation of “sexuality” is supplemented with “*śṛṅgāra*” (Bharata 1980), which refers not to crude biological sensuality alone but initiates an active

discourse on art as creative Self-cultivation (culturation of being as *a* body; care of the Self; Foucault 1966), where the natural world is no longer clinically objectified but is taken as a living subject of deeply engaged (*sahrdaya*) artistic, aesthetic explorations.

This overall braiding of the lineage-trajectory of the stars and soil recalls Rabindranath Tagore, who resisted restricting nature to the objectized scientific scheme (Tagore 1919/1996, 387). Tagore envisioned a performative mode of being *with* nature that allows thou *to be*, rather than enclosing thou's immanent spirit. This suggestively hints at the ethos of *nisargaśṛṅgāra*.

Undoubtedly, human-nature relational intimacy is far from being unprecedented in the history of human literary creations. Yet, such a disposition has lacked a certain ecosophical precision, thus calling itself forth with an immediacy of manifestation during the anthropogenic polycrisis of the natural environment. The present article thus aims to retrospectively (in terms of a hermeneutic circle; Bortoft 1996) trace Tagore's ecosophy through the lens of *nisargaśṛṅgāra* as more of a diachronic attempt. Although the term itself does not appear in his writings, does its ethico-aesthetic thematicity permeate his fiction, non-fiction, and praxeological engagements, thereby offering pathways to re-cognize (*pratyabhijñā*) nature's lived ontologies?

II. — Literature Review

Under the thematic purview of *nisargaśṛṅgāra*, the present article draws on primary sources from a few of Tagore's writings and select secondary sources to provide theoretical grounding. It is pertinent here to note Abu Sayyed Ayyub's *Ādhunikatā o Rabindranath* (1971), which examined Tagore's epistemo-ontological breaks to reveal the overlooked "*rudra-parva*" (catastrophic nature) in his nature-oriented thinking. Unlike Ayyub's focus on intra-human disasters and individual grief, this article emphasizes the contemporary metacrisis.

Further, Leonard K. Elmhirst's *Poet and Plowman* (1975/2008) explores Tagore's groundwork on rural reconstruction. The present study extends Elmhirst's narrative by tracing Tagore's shift from village reform to *āraṇyaka tapasyā* (forest collectivism), or even the blended cohabitation of the two. In addition, two papers of Debaprasad Bandyopadhyay are brought forth to further extend the theoretical horizons, viz., "*An-Arthanītid Rābīndranath*" (2011) which discusses Tagore's (non-)economics of austerity and advocacy for self-sufficient farming, while "*Buno Rabi Thākur*" (2015) addresses his internationalist

wilderness ideal. The present article advances the ‘mission’ of these two writings by first establishing Tagore’s onto-epistemological framework to support his ethico-aesthetic envisioning, aiming for explanatory adequacy in the longer run.

Moreover, Debarati Bandyopadhyay’s *Rabindranath Tagore: A Life of Intimacy with Nature* (2019) outlines a pertinent eco-critical biography highlighting Tagore’s intimacy with nature in his fiction, biographical details, and select correspondence. In this connection, the present author draws from the sources cited in Chapter 1 of Ramchandra Guha’s *Speaking with Nature: The Origins of Indian Environmentalism* (2024), which explores the interactions amidst the natural and human life-worlds. This study avoids the eco-biographical lens to sidestep individuated ethnocentrism, in order to pave way towards more layered outlooks into a chosen portion of Tagore’s multifaceted oeuvre.

II. Methodology

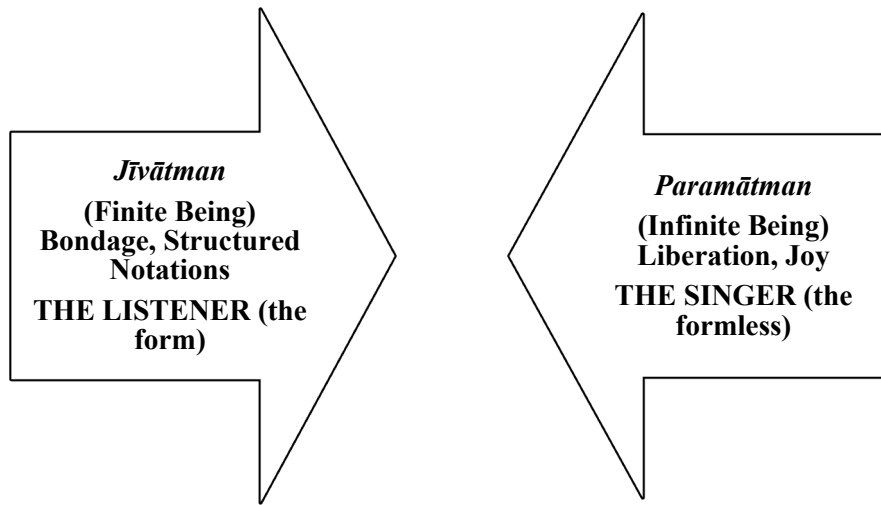
For this article, the author has deployed *Anekāntavāda* as a pluralistic tool to resist homogeneous fundamentalism and epistemic foundationalism (Bandyopadhyay 2001). This approach neither endorses blind, uncritical acceptance nor outrightly rejects alternating perspectives. Two modes of textual engagement are adopted (Bhattacharya 1982): *svikṛtagrahaṇa* (committing to a hypothesis while acknowledging contingencies) and *asvikṛtagrahaṇa* (non-committally considering a hypothesis as a legitimate possibility to avoid the violence of rejection).

Discourse analysis is conducted in terms of the post-structuralist Foucauldian school to identify the doctrinal elements of *nisargaśṛṅgāra* within the discursive formations of Tagore, attending to epistemo-ontological thresholds or ruptures, and situating these within their historical fields of discursivity (Foucault 1972). The article also closely aligns with *ecocriticism*, where literature and ecology intersect in advancing a commitment to environmental praxis (Glottfelty and Fromm 1996 xviii).

III. Tagore’s Ontology of Reciprocity

In terms of his *ontological formulation*,⁶ Tagore talked of a two-way process between the finite and the infinite realms, the *jīvātman* and the *paramātman*. While the *jīvātman* moves towards the *paramātman* from *bandhan* (bondage) to *mukti* (liberation), *simultaneously* the *paramātman* moves towards the *jīvātman* from *mukti* to *bandhan*. The infinite sings, the finite listens (*or vice versa*). The infinite goes from *ānanda* (infinite joy or *jouissance*;

Barthes 1976) to *rāginī* (structured notations) whilst singing, and the finite travels from *rāginī* to *ānanda* while listening (Tagore 1916b, 101-02).



This byway traffic was Tagore’s original contribution through reciprocity (comprehended as gentle empathy or *Apīḍana Samamarmitā*) between the dichotomous donor-receptor in terms of *ontological dependability* that leads to shared joy through duality (as it expresses in the lateral mutuality) of relations instead of asymmetric unidirectionality. The metaphorical categories of “*sīmā*” (boundedness) and “*asīmā*” (boundlessness/infinity) complement each other (in Bandyopadhyay 2019, 85). This is the “*līlā*” (play) of the world-creation in which the one became many in order to play the game of creation, since there is no sense of “joy”⁷ involved in undifferentiated solitary existence.⁸

Viraha is central to Tagore’s ontology, embodying the dissociation of love’s locus and the longing for reunion (*vipralambha śṛṅgāra rasa*). His historicist view of human evolution suggests *humanity* (strategic essentialism intended) was once unified with the cosmic existence (“The Eternal Man”/“The Infinite Personality”/“The Universal Man”/“Transcendental Humanity” etc.), embodying re-presentations of (w)holistic, synergistic assimilation beyond mere aggregation/collection of chronologically consecutive parts (Tagore 1961e, 592). Tagore opined that humanity is presently undergoing *hyper-separation*⁹, but through *tapasyā* or *sādhana*, the collectivity shall re-merge and re-emerge with-in its world personality (Tagore 1925b, 84).

The *Vaiṣṇava* conception of “identity-in-difference” (*bhedābheda*: the associative-dissociative oscillation in love-as-process-actualization; Chowdhury 2022) underpins this, as in ‘*Hiyāra bhitara haite ke kaila bāhira?*’ (Who took you out of thy cordial chambers) or ‘*Duñhu kore duñhu kānde bichched bhāviyā*’ (Whilst on each other’s lap, both lament contemplating dissociation) (Tagore 1925b, 85).¹⁰

IV. Tagore's Non-Speciesist Anthropocentrism

Tagore methodologically propagated (Tagore 1917c; Tagore 1930/1996, 911-916) the ideal of the human universe, viz., the idea that all endeavours in art, literature, science and aesthetics rely upon the human-centric viewpoint and one cannot escape its overdetermined bounds:

The world is a human world — the scientific view of it is also that of the scientific man. Therefore, *the world apart from us does not exist; it is a relative world, depending for its reality upon our consciousness.* (Tagore 1930/1996, 911; *emphasis added*)¹¹

Tagore admitted the *anthropocentric cognitive limit* (Tagore 1937, 1-3) without entirely denying the objective reality of the world or without considering it as a figment of “solipsistic human imagination”¹², but delineated the construction of truth-rooms consisting of *taking appearances seriously* (Bortoft 2012) with regard to the conditioning of human *frame of reference*, aligning with Quantum physics’ “Observer Effect”. However, this stance must be distinguished from the Enlightenment’s human exceptionalism/speciesism that conceptualizes a top-down, taxonomical, categorized *grada natura* in which humans have an innate rational license to “conquer” or “subdue” every natural component within a culture of *arrogance*.

Tagore’s *contextualized positionality* attacked the assumption of *supra-human pure objectivity* of the organized, institutionalized, funded science-technology, and came in line with the *sahajiyā*¹³ *dehatāttvika* conception of “*mānuṣ bhajā*” (worshipping humans as themselves being divine in their potential, i.e., cultivating/culturating the Self), without denying *savve jīve icchanti jīvi* (The Schweitzerian *will-to-live*; Goodin 2013) of the *Jaina-Bauddha* tradition of *karuṇā*, *maitrī*, *ahimsā* (compassion, conviviality/friendliness, non-violence):

For us, inanimate nature is the outside view of existence. We only know *how it appears to us*, but we do not know *what it is*. For that *we can only know by sympathy.* (Tagore 1917c, 99; *emphasis added*)¹⁴

V. The Creative Inter-Penetration of Spirits: Tagore's Engaged Ecosophy

The Poetics of Eco-Aesthetic Harmonizing: According to Tagore, nature/cosmos is considered an aspect of the (human-conceived) universe/-al Self’s tissue-plexus (*viśva āmi/viśva śarīra*) or expression of the unbroken continuity of eternal life.¹⁵ Humans can realize their immanently-transcendent potential through a *widening* of the scope of consciousness (extended ontos) by actively celebrating the observably harmonious processes

of nature/cosmos, such as its seasonal patterns (Tagore 1915, 6-7; comparable to Spinoza's "participating in eternity or divine nature" Spinoza 1677/2002, 345) through an intimacy with the all-pervasive companionship¹⁶ (Tagore 1931/2005, 92) in terms of *vyāhṛti* or accumulation of nature's spirit within the openness of the human spirit (Tagore 1992, 167). This process *reconciles* (not wholly sublates) the subject-object/outside-inside rift, as well as the nature-culture binary opposition in terms of manifold realizable *constellations* (Adorno 2000) of intelligible interactions amidst these commensurable pluralities, which could be understood through the notion of "*Bhūma*" (the extensive cosmic heterogeneity).¹⁷

This process is catalyzed through an integral *Love* (Tagore 1915, 20; Tagore 1936/1953, 14), which is the locative realization of the infinite in the finite (*and vice versa*), where the two subjectual life-worlds (*Umwelten*; Tagore 1961g, 558) reflect themselves on one another¹⁸ (*anyanya pratibimban* or mutual reflection in the *Sāṃkhya* system; Larson et al. 1987) without losing different selfhoods while forfeiting selfist-governance¹⁹ onto a shared plane of collective being, leading to a sense of serene exaltation or affinal *jouissance* (*āhlāda-amṛta yoga*) through the creation of "*viśva maitrī*" (distributive "we consciousness": *expansion of convivial approach*; Illich 1973). It is in this aspect that the relational contemplation of nature within the *deviduated* I-thou dynamicity takes shape.²⁰

The "rhythm" / "harmony" manifested in the natural/cosmic processes is movement bound by harmonious restriction.²¹ Hence, in the domain of world-creation, the infinite being is limited (*natura naturans* transitioning to-and-fro *natura naturata*; Spinoza 1677/2002) and archetypically personal/personified (not 'deified'-at-a-distance), and this is source of "creative regeneration", viz., constant revolutionary adjustments in life's conduct (Tagore 1931/2005, 42).

Tagore's ecosophical outlook was shaped by his childhood, spent "living away from nature" in urban confines, fostering *viraha bhāva* and prompting him to connect with nature through *imagination*, the most distinctly human faculty (Tagore 1931/2005, 41). This initial aesthetic defamiliarization from nature preceded his unmediated engagement with nature-as-such in the Himalayas, Bolpur, and Shilaidaha (Tagore 1917a; Bandyopadhyay 2019, xxxv).²²

Notably, the term "Nature" was used by Tagore not to aim towards a physicalist explanation of nature as inert/zombielike matter, but as embodied, transformative cosmic divinity. Tagore did not stop at the idea of nature merely "nourishing" (utility consideration) humans through food, water and resources; rather, the non-physicalist human-nature living intercommunion was foregrounded.²³

Tagore isomorphically weaved the witnessable “natural beauty” (harmony of interrelations) with the latent beauty of the human self (beyond surface-level beauty of ornamental forms; Tagore 1931/2005, 23). The natural world spontaneously creates a response in the heart of the receptor-subject/spectator and arouses in him/her/them a spirit of love and creative inspiration by means of the ‘signal of the stars’ (*nakṣatrer iṅgit*; Tagore 1916a). For Tagore, ‘Art is the response of the creative human soul to the call of the real.’ (Tagore 1931/2005, 125).²⁴ This convergence occurs due to love taken as the contemplation of infinity (*anantam*) in the beloved, viz., the merging of “*akhila-sohāgīni-rūpa*” (affection towards world-unity) and “*hṛdaya-vihārīni-rūpa*” (the one roaming the heart; Tagore 1884).²⁵

Tagore on the “Civilization”-al Complex: Tagore criticized the “city-wall habit” (Tagore 1915, 7) that fragments humans as ontological monads²⁶ from the rest of the universe, preventing convergence of performative streams of thoughts by conjuring the cradles of brick and mortar.

Tagore attributed this habit as arising out of the confrontation between (hu-)man and sea, viewing nature as a ‘hostile barrier’ to human “progress-ion”, serving as the prerequisite to the colonial ambitions of England, the island-nation (Tagore 1922a, 46). In contrast, the so-called South-Asian (“Eastern”?) philosophy integrated nature into *ādhyātmika sādhanā* within forest hermitages, embodying unity as non-regimented cohesive responsiveness (Fox 1995) without eliminative uniformity. This blanket East-West antonymic privileging underpins Tagore’s ecosophical perspective, which could be strategically viewed.²⁷

This bounded city life is a parasitic mode of living (Tagore 1919/1996, 385, 518), which survives by sucking the life out of the villages (Bandyopadhyay 2011; Bandyopadhyay 2015). The city-space is characterized by the wealth-power nexus to fill an excessive appetite (Tagore 1924/1996, 512) through the formation of competitive networks robbing the “life-sustaining soil” (Tagore in Elmhirst 1975/2008, 159).²⁸

The human passion of self-replicating “greed” (Tagore 1924/1996, 511; Tagore 1961f, 512) or the Spinozian “object of greed” (1677/2002) channels itself through conspicuous consumption and ostentatious display (Veblen 1899/1994) of a marketized society, where the dependency on the ideological narrative of ever-amplifying commodification reign supreme over the inherent value of emotive human relationality (due to the preponderance of the reason-emotion value-hierarchical dualism), reducing “human life” to reified evaluations, which could be quantitatively measured through the amount of property owned/consumed. All kinds of relationships become disposable “use and throw” products (Hobbesian market

friendships?!). *Raktakarabi* (Tagore 1925a; Tagore 1926) criticizes this statistical condensation and systemic extractivism to be unleashing the curse of the blind evil demon (*prakṛtir pratiśodha*; Tagore 1926).²⁹

Tagore observed that the contemporary societal order is driven by the blind, ambitious lust of self-conquest or self-aggrandizement (Tagore 1919/1996, 390) of a particular section of society, leading to the impoverishment of the other 98% (Tagore 1924/1996, 518). Hence, the socio-economic dimension was well-emphasized as part of Tagore's committed ecosophy.³⁰

According to Tagore, this circumscribed spirit of ceaseless accumulation through the intoxication of greed entails "race suicide" and cleansing of the habitat.³¹ The 'host-parasite'/'exploiter-victim' relational power-dynamic amidst nature/cosmos and humans suffocates innovations, since parasitism destroys its host instead of giving back what one owes, thus stifling love's expression due to systemic molestation/abuse. This could be compared to the contemporary practices of neo-imperialist forces (World Bank-International Monetary Fund-World Trade Organization) in reinforcing 'profitable' debt traps through "Structural Adjustment Programs" on the so-called "Global South" (Toussaint 2007).

In *Rṇśodha* and *Sārodotsava* (Tagore 1961a), Tagore unveiled the eco-(w)holistic notion of "*nisargaṛṇa*" (*eco-debt*), foregrounding a critical ethical lens, rebutting mere logico-legal imperatives/obligations, born of the reciprocal covenant between humans and nature. This calls for selfless, compassionate offerings to all natural constituents, devoid of egoistic impulses, as a response to nature's bountiful "thou-bestowal". Through symbolic renunciation (akin to *bhūta-ṛṇa/bhūta-yajña*, not violent animal sacrifices in *rites-de-passage*), rooted in eco-sensitivity, it resonates with the thesis of ecological entitlements and acknowledging of nature's intrinsic rights, in terms of its existent scales or limits (Leach et al. 1999; Illich 1973).³²

The concept of a "human-nature agreement" shifts focus from the market-centric, shallow, short-term and money-transactional "carbon credits", "ecosystem services", or "cap and trade" to a deeper sensibility in actionable insights: avoiding relentless depletion (debit) of nature's resources and instead constructively contributing (credit) "back" through *care*-ful knowledge (Bellacasa 2017) and creative attunement of heads-hands-hearts.³³

Dual Semantics of "Property": Notably, Tagore used the term "property" in terms of a twofold semantics. On the one hand, the notion of "property" in Tagore meant the inner intangible wealth of humans, not material possessions or artefacts³⁴, which contributes to the fulfilment of transnational responsibilities (Tagore in Elmhirst 1975/2008, 17-18; Tagore

1924/1996, 510-11). On the other hand, property signifies, at a particular historical juncture, the dissociation of the human spirit from the social and cosmic unity, thriving on *self-indulgence* or the *epidemic of voracity* (Tagore in Elmhirst 1975/2008, 18; Tagore 1924/1996, 511) that uses the “*ego-mechanism*” to alienate humans from nature/cosmos through the supplementation of automation or “cog-in-the-machine”.

This is “Commercialism” that characterizes the limited commercial man (sexism unintended; Tagore 1917b, 27) with an “aloofness” (Tagore 1919/1996, 398; Tagore 1912/2007, 65-66) towards cultivating their own creative consciousness or spirit of life and an increasing ceremonial tendency towards maintaining a ritualistic, mechanical existence with sybaritic tendencies as ‘desiring machines’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1977) along with the *augmentation of the physico-mechanical dimension* (Tagore 1931/2005, 19; emphasis added).

In *Muktadhārā* (Tagore 1922b), Tagore fiercely critiqued the anti-aesthetic technocratic monstrosity within the “society of the spectacle” (Debord 1994) by opposing the hydropolitics of mega-dams³⁵ that stifle nature’s free spirited self-expression through a worship of power.³⁶ The play’s resistance culminates in an act of *ecotage* (ecological sabotage)³⁷, as the crown-prince Abhijit locates a critical “crack” (incompleteness) in the seemingly infallible, “full-proof” formalist model-monstrosity within the narrative.

Tagore seemed to have assented to the responsibly moderated use of technology (Guha 2024) as “*techné*” without conjuring the Frankensteinian phantom of hyper-industrial *technik* (Illich 1973). In the same vein, Tagore criticized the ir-real simulacra (Baudrillard 1994) of trade advertisements.³⁸

Therein, Tagore cherished the ideal of “being-with-in-the-universe” (relational ontology of *en-flesh*-ment without biologism; Merleau-Ponty 1968) giving rise to the “universal (human)”, viz., the understanding of the expanded or even encumbered self, which could be presently termed as taking the form of a “Chipko Consciousness” in the short-story “*Balāi*” (Tagore 1961b, 729), and could broadly be viewed as a self-surrendering intimacy or clinging onto nature in tune with livelihood (synchronizing the basic means of subsistence) aspirations.

Human-Nature *Différance* as *Rudra-Rūpa-Bhāva*: Is the Chipko-Consciousness all-pervasive? Is “nature” all good, all harmonized, all perfect? The notion of revengeful nature could be interpreted in this context through (r-)ecognition (Morton 2016), i.e., the re-cognition of the uncanny, discordant aspects simultaneously with the attestation of transcendent-immanent beauty or ubiquity in the domain of nature. At the time of “staying with the trouble” of *Anthropo/Chthulu-cene* (Haraway 2016), one witnesses the intense, unusually frequent

large-scale disasters, whereby one can identify an attitude of *differing or deferring* (Derrida 1973) from lover/loved nature's space since humans are rendered helpless in the face of these macro-occurrences. This implies *durjaya māna* (unyielding or invincibly wounded sense of honour, anger or indignation) of *kṣobha-pūrṇa prakṛti* (disquieted nature), leading to *mānava prema-vaicittya* (human dissonance in love) as in eco-anxiety regarding nature/cosmos, which might also become *ākṣepānurāga* (reproachful attachment), i.e., re-cognitive assessment of lover nature/cosmos as atrocious/re-valuation of trust-foundations (Saha 1986).

Is nature “vengeful” on humans due to the non-consensual rape of the soil/land (in the Leopoldian sense), which has negated the human-nature agreement based on dutiful reciprocity, as evident in *nisargaṇṇa*? Tagore himself admitted this attitude of identity AND difference (*niṣṭhurā prakṛti*, *kṛur vidhātā*, *rudra-niṣṭhur sneha*, i.e., *amaṅgalabodha* realized through *bhayānaka rasa* and *bībhatsya rasa* coexisting with creative delight of *śṛṅgāra*; Bhattacharya 1983)³⁹ through a “*Rudra-rūpa-bhāva*”, especially noticeable in the last decade of his life (e.g., *Pariśeṣ* and *Punaśca*; Ayyub 1971; Bandyopadhyay 1999), an epistemo-ontological rupture in Tagore's disposition towards nature/cosmos, marked by dilemma, scepticism, loss of faith in merciful divinity etc.⁴⁰

However, Tagore found a solution to this problem of evil through a dilution mechanism (Tagore 1961e, 611), wherein one's sufferings, sorrows and miseries could be conquered by viewing them *sub specie aeternatis* (Spinoza 1677/2002) to sublimate them in the infinite flow of the universe, which knows no disharmony. Tagore understood this as playing the chords not in separation but in *musicking* harmony with one another⁴¹, whereby the play of life is seen in the *rasa-rūpa* by being one with the *rasika* or connoisseur of *rasa* within the *vṛhat viśva* or wider world-process (Tagore 1961e, 611; Tagore 1961c, 189).⁴²

Tagore's futuristic regression towards the Tapovana: Tagore's switch-over from the asymmetrical urbanistic framework was through the presentation of the localized, self-sufficient, decentralized, cooperative village republic or “*pallī-samāj*”, notably exemplified by *Kṛṣi Bank*, *Hitaiṣi Sabhā*, *dharmagolās*, cooperative farming and other such initiatives as part of the *Santiniketan-Sriniketan* project (Tagore 1961f, 493-582; Elmhirst 1975/2008). However, Tagore gradually transcended such postulation since ruralities are often marked by narrow-mindedness (Tagore 1961f, 773), the culture of the fragmented land (Tagore 1931b, 19)⁴³ as well as *khāṇḍava-dāha*/grassland-termination (Tagore 1929/1961, 33-34). Along the village-republic, Tagore presented his wilderness idea⁴⁴ (not the formalized wilderness ethic of bounded sanctuaries, enclosed parks or gated reserves) through his ideal of the “*Tapovana*”.⁴⁵

Is this “*tapovana*” a blind revivalism of the *Vedik* way of life? No,⁴⁶ since the futurist Tagore emphasized on the trajectory from “*jemon hoye thāke*” (what usually happens: the “is” of description) to “*jemon hoyā bhālo*” (what ought to become, elucidatory realization), (Tagore 1961d, 597), i.e., being-in-itself to being-for-itself.⁴⁷ It repudiates the revivalist idolatry or genealogical *phantasma* of the supposed “past” (Tagore 1931/2005, 108) and *suggestively* apprehends a futuristic *divī ārohana* (elevation towards human-godliness; Tagore 1961b, 976) to reach out to the realm of creative spirit’s surplus beyond the givenness of biologist identity.⁴⁸

Tagore’s futuristic *tapovana* as exemplified through the Santiniketan-Sriniketan praxes indicates the following salient features:

- Creation of life-sustaining and life-enhancing networks, preserving the integrity of the forest-centric ecosystems with minimalist human intervention. Nature is not to be caged as an instrumental *re-source* but as the *source* of liberation from sufferings. It is a shift from “*preya-nīti*” of commercialist consumerism to the “*śreya-nīti*”⁴⁹ of subsistent co-living and co-creating;
- Engagement in socially committed *saharṣa*, *aicchika śrama* (wilful/voluntary labour with jouissance; Tagore 1961f, 436; Bandyopadhyay 2011) instead of surplus labour appropriation and the alienation involved therein to give rise to eutrapelia (graceful playfulness; Illich 1973) or “surplus idleness” (Bandyopadhyay 2011). Simplicity in life-patterns (implying the *Economics of Austerity* through Buddhist Economics; Schumacher 2011, 38-46; Bandyopadhyay 2011) should be exercised by means of an attitude of humility and selfless service towards all the living and non-living components. This is the view from convivial eco-pedagogy;
- Cultivation and opening up of creative potentialities in all their possible aspects: agricultural practices⁵⁰, handicrafts, weaving, pottery, music, drama, dance, nature-festivals, poetry, painting, sculpting, green architecture without architectural imperialism etc., in synchronicity with nature/cosmos’ cycles by means of a (w)holistic, harmonious web/network of small-scale, inter-coordinated communities;
- Creation of decentralized cooperatives/*samavāya*⁵¹ *vyāvasthā* through horizontal mutual aid to counter cut-throat competitiveness that culminates into mutual destruction or mutual antipathy/collective mistrust (Bandyopadhyay 2011; Bandyopadhyay 2015);

- Practicing internationalism or cosmic citizenship (*cosmosian*) by moving away from ethnocentric nationalism that depends on the ‘imagined community’ through the modular constructs of race, religion, language etc. (Anderson 2015), i.e., from the mass intoxicating tendency of parochial “*svadeśikatā*” (nationhood) to self-actualizing “*viśva-jāgātikatā/viśva-nāgarikatva*” (world-citizenship; Tagore 1961d, 605; Tagore 1919/1996, 400).⁵²
- Epistemo-ontological Convergence/Confluence or Epistemological Amalgamation (Bandyopadhyay 2000, 60; not the buzzword of administrative-bureaucratic *inter-disciplinarity*) instead of mechanical over-specialization or constricted professionalism in any sphere of life by cultivating “*ātma-śakti*” or the inner, self-directing spirit of life free from extrinsic manipulation or institutional coercion, contributing to the unhindered expression of one’s latent capacities;
- Transitioning away from the linear, historicist notion of consumer-oriented, technological triumph-driven “progress” or “developmentalism” of the “sanctioned” extortionist ideology of the WB-IMF-WTO (Lazzarato 2012) by chalking out alternative living-patterns free from military-industrial subsumption.⁵³

Tagore’s futurism was simultaneously a positive *regression* towards the childhood (infantilism): the phase of empathetic innocence or “sense of wonder” (Tagore 1936/1953, 10), of experiencing and facilitating *akāraṇa ānanda* (“uncaused joy”; Tagore 1933/2010) through an innate sensitiveness *with* and *towards* nature (Tagore 1961d, 726). Tagore observed: ‘*Our subconscious tendency of panpsychism towards the natural world’s processes is created from the child’s play*’ (Tagore, 1940/2025, p. 105, Author’s translation, emphasis added).⁵⁴ The futuristic *tapovana* can be realized only through the child’s inquisitive creative imagination⁵⁵: ‘*Du hāt diye viśvere chui śīśura maṭo hese*’ (*embrace the world with both the hands, laughing like a child*) in the context of the tipping points: an already-unfolding critter genocide expressed as the “sixth” mass extinction episode.

VI. Conclusive Remarks

Tagore’s worldview of nature as “lived presences” could thus be re-cognized in terms of *nisargaśṛṅgāra* as a creative, praxeological engagement, positioning humanity with-in the emanating pluralities of cosmic expanse instead of constituting a “stand-apart” world-view. His ecotage of industrialized modernity reflects an iconoclastic commitment to radical environmentalism, countering estranged egocentrism. This ecosophy imbibes an art of resistance free from academocratic (Academocratic (a portmanteau) points to academics

practiced as a discipline-and-punish ambit) specialisation and the servitude of technocratic overreach. The metaphor of “nature as lover” evolves the same into a strategic praxis to confront the environmental apocalypse, embracing Tagore’s suggestive stance leading potentially towards collective entanglement and tentacular thinking (Haraway 2016).

This constructs a narrative-pathway of *Metaxu* (in-betweens of distinct beings; Voegelin 1990, 289–90) kinship and consciousness *with* (non-intentional, participatory consciousness) nature/cosmos through universal love and compassion, merging aesthetic joy, contemplation of collectivity/commons, and environmental activism within a sympoietic bricolage. Therefore, what Russell noted about Spinoza could as well be applied in the context of Rabindranath’s worldview(s): ‘...in a painful world they are a help towards sanity and an antidote to the paralysis of utter despair.’ (Russell 1984, 562)

Notes

References

- Abbey, Edward. *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1975.
- Adorno, Theodor W. *The Adorno Reader*. Edited by Brian O’Connor. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2015.
- Ayyub, Abu Sayeed. *Adhunikata O Rabindranath* [Modernity and Rabindranath]. Kolkata: Dey’s Publishing, 1971.
- Bandyopadhyay, Akhar. “Technological Quick-Fixes: The Crises of Cornucopian Ecology.” *Bengal Journal of Social Science and Development* 3, no. 4: 157–83. ISSN: 2583-3413, 2024a.
- . “Countering Technocratic Rationality, Approaching *Nisargaśṛṅgāra*.” Presented at the 11th Creative Theory Colloquium on Technology and Society: Hierarchies and Contestations, organized by the Association for Creative Theory (ACT) & Foundation for Creative Social Research (FCSR) in collaboration with International Herbert Marcuse Society, USA, India International Centre, The RAZA Foundation, and Shanti Sahayog (*forthcoming publication*), 2024b.
- . “The Criticality of Thresholds: *Nisargaśṛṅgāra* as a Libertarian Praxis.” Presented under Research Committee/RC-11 “Sociology of Environment,” Indian Sociological Society, at the 49th All India Sociological Conference (AISC) in association with BML Munjal University, Gurugram, Haryana (Delhi-NCR), 2024c.
- Bandyopadhyay, Debaprasad. “Dost Ayyub Sahacarye Ekti Sahityatattvik Paribhraman” [Abu. S. Ayyub and Literary Theory]. *Janapadaprayas* 6, no. 1: 23–76, 1999.
- . “The Making of the Indian Philosophy of Science”. *From the Margins*. Kolkata, February, 57–73, 2000. Reprinted as “Bharatiya Bijnaner Darshan-er Nirman”. Translated by Suman Roy. *Nabanna* 11, nos. 2–3: 40–51, 2000.

- . *Anekanta Sahityatattva* [The Theory of Plural Interpretation of Literary Texts: A Bilingual Publication]. Kolkata: Alochona Chakra, 2001.
- . “ECP is dead, long live ECP”. In *Language in India*, 12(4), 79–86. M. S. Thirumalai (Ed.), 2012.
- . “*An-Arthanītivid Rabindranath: Vittabhūmi Theke Cittabhūmite*” (*Non-Economist Rabindranath: From The Locus Of Wealth To The Abode Of Consciences*). In *Aksharyatra*. Edited by A. Sengupta, 19–46. Kolkata, 2011.
- . “O King, Stop Killing Deer of Our Hermitage: Environmental Consciousness in Indian Science and Technology.” Paper presented at the National Seminar on Science and Technology in Ancient India, Department of Sanskrit, Lalbaba College, Belur, November 18, 2014.
- . “*Buno Rabi Thākur*” (Tagore’s Wilderness Ideal). In *Srayan: Annual Issue*, edited by P. Basu, 86–98. Kolkata, 2015.
- Bandyopadhyay, Debarati. *Rabindranath Tagore: A Life of Intimacy with Nature*. Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2019.
- Barthes, Roland. *The Pleasure of the Text*. Translated by Richard Miller, with a note on the text by Richard Howard. London: Jonathan Cape, 1976.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Translated by Sheila Faria Glaser. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.
- Bharata. *Bharata Nāṭyashastra*. Vol. 1. Edited and translated by S. C. Bandyopadhyay. Kolkata: Nabapatra Prakashan, 1980.
- Bhattacharya, K. *Bharatiya Sanskriti O Anekanta Vedanta*. Bardhaman: Bardhaman Bishwabidyalay, 1982.
- Bhattacharya, K. C. *Studies in Philosophy*. Revised ed. Edited by G. Bhattacharya. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983.
- Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi. *The Mahatma and the Poet: Letters and Debates between Gandhi and Tagore (1915–1941)*. New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1997.
- Bortoft, Henri. *The Wholeness of Nature: Goethe’s Way Toward a Science of Conscious Participation in Nature*. Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 1996.
- . *Taking Appearance Seriously: The Dynamic Way of Seeing in Goethe and European Thought*. Edinburgh: Floris Books, 2012.
- Buber, Martin. *I and Thou*. New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*. London: Verso, 2009.
- Chari, Mridula. “Over 50 Years Ago, Bengal’s Chief Engineer Predicted That the Farakka Dam Would Flood Bihar.” *Scroll.in*, September 1. <https://www.scroll.in/article/815066/over-50-years-ago-bengals-chief-engineer-predicted-that-the-farakka-dam-would-flood-bihar>. Accessed April 30, 2023.
- Chowdhury, R. *Vedanta Darsana*. Edited by Sandip Pal and M. Anisujjaman. Dhaka: Jatiya Sahitya Prakash, 2022.
- Dasgupta, Shashibhusan. *Obscure Religious Cults*. 3rd ed. Kolkata: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1969.

- Dawkins, Richard. *The Selfish Gene*. London: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. New York: Zone Books, 1994. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1453m69>. Accessed May 23, 2025.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane. New York: Random House, 1977.
- Derrida, Jacques. "Différance." In *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, translated by David B. Allison, 129–160. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
- Dutta, Akshay Kumar. *Bharatbarshiya Upasak Sampraday*. Vol. 1. Kolkata: Upendranath Mukhopadhyaya, 1997. First published 1870.
- Elmhirst, Leonard K. *Poet and Plowman*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 2008. First published 1975.
- Foster, John Bellamy. "Marx's Theory of Metabolic Rift: Classical Foundations for Environmental Sociology." *American Journal of Sociology* 105, no. 2: 366–405. <https://doi.org/10.1086/210315>. Accessed April 28, 2023.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Care of the Self: The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 3. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.
- . *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972.
- Fox, Warwick. *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1995.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Translated by Joan Riviere. London: Hogarth Press, 1930.
- Glotfelty, Cheryll, and Harold Fromm, eds. *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996.
- Goodin, David K. *The New Rationalism: Albert Schweitzer's Philosophy of Reverence for Life*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt24hmm3>.
- Guha, Ramachandra. *Speaking with Nature: The Origins of Indian Environmentalism*. New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2024.
- Haraway, Donna J. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016.
- Illich, Ivan. *Tools for Conviviality*. New York: Harper & Row, 1973.
- Johnston, Adrian. "Jacques Lacan." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Spring 2023 ed., edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2023/entries/lacan/>, 2023.
- Kabir. *One Hundred Poems of Kabir*. Translated by Rabindranath Tagore. London: Macmillan and Co., 1915.
- Lakatos, Imre. *Proofs and Refutations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- Larson, Gerald James, and Ram Shankar Bhattacharya. *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*. Vol. 4, *Sāṃkhya*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987.

- Lazzarato, Maurizio. *The Making of the Indebted Man: An Essay on the Neoliberal Condition*. Translated by Joshua David Jordan. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012.
- Leach, Melissa, Robin Mearns, and Ian Scoones. "Environmental Entitlements: Dynamics and Institutions in Community-Based Natural Resource Management." *World Development* 27, no. 2: 225–47. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0305-750X\(98\)00141-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0305-750X(98)00141-7), 1999.
- Lemm, Vanessa. *Homo Natura: Nietzsche, Philosophical Anthropology and Biopolitics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *The Visible and the Invisible: Followed by Working Notes*. Edited by Claude Lefort. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968.
- Monier-Williams, Monier. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1899.
- Morton, Timothy. *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.7312/mort17752>. Accessed April 30, 2023.
- Naess, Arne. *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle: Outline of an Ecosophy*. Translated by David Rothenberg. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511525599>. Accessed December 10, 2023.
- Pavo, R. R. "Arne Naess' Ecosophy T: Its Norms, Hypotheses and Systematization." *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy* 4, no. 2: 15–30, 2018.
- Plumwood, Val. "Nature in the Active Voice." *Australian Humanities Review*, no. 46. <http://australianhumanitiesreview.org/2009/05/01/nature-in-the-active-voice/>. Accessed April 30, 2023, 2009.
- Puig de la Bellacasa, María. *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.
- Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli. *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*. New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2016.
- Roy, Subhendu. *Rabindranath-er Biswas-er Jagat* [Rabindranath's World of Belief]. Kolkata: Granthalay, 1980.
- Russell, Bertrand. *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1950.
- . *History of Western Philosophy*. London: Counterpoint, 1984.
- Saha, Dilip Kumar. *Vaisnav Padabali: Pad O Padakar*. Kolkata: Pharma KLM, 1986.
- Schumacher, E. F. *Small Is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered*. London: Vintage Books, 2011.
- Sehanabish, Chinmoy. *Rabindranath O Biplobisamaj* [Rabindranath and the Revolutionaries]. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1985.
- Sen, Sukumar, et al., eds. *Upanishad (Akhandā Samskaran)*. Kolkata: Haraf, 1980.
- Spinoza, Baruch. *Spinoza: Complete Works*. Translated by Samuel Shirley. Edited by Michael L. Morgan. Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 2002.
- Sprinkle, Annie, Beth Stephens, and Jennie Klein. *Assuming the Ecosexual Position: The Earth as Lover*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2021.

Sur, Abha. "Scientism and Social Justice: Meghnad Saha's Critique of the State of Science in India." *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences* 33, no. 1: 87–105. <https://doi.org/10.1525/hsp.2002.33.1.87>. Accessed April 30, 2023, 2002.

Tagore, Rabindranath. *Bhanusingha Thakurer Padabali*. Kolkata: Adi Brahma Samaj, 1884.

———. *Sadhana: The Realization of Life*. New York: Macmillan, 1915.

———. *Balaka*. Kolkata: Indian Publishing House, 1916a.

———. *Chaturanga*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1916b.

———. *My Reminiscences*. New York: Macmillan, 1917a.

———. *Nationalism*. New York: Macmillan, 1917b.

———. *Personality*. New York: Macmillan, 1917c.

———. "The Message of the Forest." In *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, edited by Sisir Kumar Das, 3:49–58. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1996. First published 1919.

———. *Creative Unity*. London: Macmillan, 1922a.

———. *Muktadhara*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1922b.

———. "City and Village." In *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, edited by Sisir Kumar Das, 3:59–68. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1996. First published 1924 (*disputed*; See Bandyopadhyay 2011).

———. *Red Oleanders*. London: Macmillan. <https://tagoreweb.in/Plays/red-oleanders-212/red-oleanders-4072>. Accessed May 25, 2025, 1925a.

———. *Samkalan*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1925b.

———. *Raktakarabi*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1926.

———. *Jogajog*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1929.

———. *Banabani*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1931a.

———. *Russia-r Chithi*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1931b.

———. *The Religion of Man*. New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2005. First published 1931.

———. *The Land of Cards: Stories, Poems and Plays for Children*. Delhi: Penguin India, 2010. First published 1933.

———. "Einstein and Tagore." In *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, edited by Sisir Kumar Das, 3:87–98. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1996. Conversations between 1930–36.

———. *Visva-Parichay*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1937.

———. "China and India." In *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, edited by Sisir Kumar Das, 3:99–108. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1996. First published 1937.

———. "Crisis in Civilization." In *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, edited by Sisir Kumar Das, 3:109–16. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1996. First published 1941.

———. *The Religion of an Artist*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1953. First Published 1930.

- . *Rabindra Rachanabali: Shashtha Khanda*. Janmashatabarshiki Samskaran. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1961a.
- . *Rabindra Rachanabali: Saptam Khanda*. Janmashatabarshiki Samskaran. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1961b.
- . *Rabindra Rachanabali: Dasham Khanda*. Janmashatabarshiki Samskaran. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1961c.
- . *Rabindra Rachanabali: Ekadash Khanda*. Janmashatabarshiki Samskaran. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1961d.
- . *Rabindra Rachanabali: Dvadash Khanda*. Janmashatabarshiki Samskaran. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1961e.
- . *Rabindra Rachanabali: Trayodash Khanda*. Janmashatabarshiki Samskaran. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1961f.
- . *Rabindra Rachanabali: Chaturddash Khanda*. Janmashatabarshiki Samskaran. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1961g.
- . *Java-Yatrir Patra*. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1961. First published 1929.
- . *Ciṭhipatra*. Vol. 13. Kolkata: Visva-Bharati, 1992.
- . *Gitanjali (Song Offerings)*. Kolkata: Parul Prakashani, 2007. First published 1912.
- . *Vyakti Prasanga, Parisishta*, 1940. In *Rabindra Rachanabali*. National Library at Tagore's Residence (NLTR). <https://rabindra-rachanabali.nltr.org/node/16167>. Accessed May 25, 2025, n.d.
- Toussaint, Eric. *The World Bank: A Never-Ending Coup d'État: The Hidden Agenda of the Washington Consensus*. Mumbai: Vikas Adhyayan Kendra, 2007.
- Veblen, Thorstein. *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. New York: Dover, 1994. First Published 1899.
- Voegelin, Eric. "Reason: The Classic Experience." In *Published Essays, 1966–1985*, edited by Ellis Sandoz, 289–90. Vol. 12 of *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990.

¹ In other words, as merely a sort of inanimate spatial container, a mere backdrop and/or "mere body/*res extensa*".

² Plumwood's notion of "Nature in the (self-regulative) Active Voice" (2009).

³ It is to be noted here that both "nature" and "natal" derive from the Latin root *nasci*, meaning *to be born* or "birthing". Nature comes from *natura*, while natal stems from *natalis*, gesturing toward understanding of nature

as something deeply tied to emergent properties. To speak of nature is to speak of the unfolding of life *constantly coming into being* instead of *already having become* (Bortoft 2012). [Kumar, Satish. (Founder, Schumacher College) in personal communication with the author. 21st May, 2025]

⁴ As differing from Arne Naess' (1989) model of self-realization and Warwick Fox's developments (1995) on the "Ecosophy T", since both are restricted to the biome-bound eco-sphere and share a scientific, model-theoretic foundation (e.g., essentialist categorizations of ego-self-Self, foundationalist derivation of "first principles", the presence of norm-hypothesis binary, value-object dichotomy, generality-particularity hierarchy etc.; Pavo 2018), while the present author reaches to the cosmic multi-dimensionality through creative praxeology.

⁵ Kumar, Satish. (Founder, Schumacher College) in personal communication with the author. 21st May, 2025.

⁶ Despite being essentially labelled an *Oupaniṣadik* poet-philosopher (Radhakrishnan 1918/2016), Tagore, despite being raised in a *Brāhmo* context, did not adhere to a monolithic "ism"-singularity in thought or praxis. Tagore himself once revolted against this unitary characterization: "Some have accused me that in my poetic creations, I have only propagated the infatuation of *Oupaniṣadik ānanda-maṅgala* by ignoring the commoner's life's *vyāvahārika vāṇī*, thereby depreciating the value of the latter's real relations. *If one discusses my poems in their totality, they could see this accusation to be a gross injustice against me.*" (Tagore as cited in Ayyub 1971, 23; Trans. present author; emphasis added). His thought reflects a dynamic confluence of Buddhism, Jainism, *Advaita Vedānta*, *Sahajiyā-Bāul*, Bhakti (Nanak, Kabir, Dadu, Rajjab, Lalan), Vaiṣṇavism, Western naturalism, Christianity, Secular Humanism, and Zoroastrianism, evolving to-and-fro across his pluridimensional life (Roy 1980; Ayyub 1971).

⁷ Creation through joy: "*Ānandādhyēva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyantē*" (Tagore 1915, 56).

⁸ '*sa va naiva reme, tasmād ekākī na ramate; sa dvitīya ma icchat*': *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, I.4.3; '*sohakāmayata vahusyaṁ prajāraye*': *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II.6.1 (Sen et al. 1980); In Tagore: '*Ekākī gāyaker nahe to gān, milite habe dui jone.*' (song does not solely belong to the singer, the two have to unite; written in 1899); '*Āmāy naile tribhuvaneśvar, tomār prem hoto je miche*' (*Without me, O God of the three worlds, your love would have been a lie*; written in 1911); '*Āmār milan lāgi tumi āscho kobe theke.*' (*I know not from what distant time thou art ever coming nearer to assimilate with me*; *Gitanjali*, 46; Tagore 1912/2007). Hence, there could also be plural *n*-ways of conceiving the interaction(s) between nature/cosmos and humans in their interchangeable participatory roles.

⁹ Plumwood 2009; connect it with the unthinkable existential threats of the ongoing ecological crises.

¹⁰ In the *Bāul Sahajiyā* tradition, the union of lover and beloved preserves selfhood, embodying love as a dynamic, reciprocal interaction. Gangaram (Sen 1953 in Tagore 1931/2005, 205) describes it as "the ocean in the drop and the drop in the ocean," reflecting the identity-in-difference principle (*bheda+abheda*). Sant Kabīr echoes this: "The creature is in Brahma, and Brahma is in the creature: they are ever distinct, yet ever united" (Kabir 1915, 6), marking a shift from binary duality to pluralistic unity. Yet, an ontological eco-divorce, driven by psycho-social estrangement and intellectual hatred (Bandyopadhyay 2024b) toward nature-as-othered,

rooted in ressentimental eco-anxiety over nature's unpredictability (e.g., storms, earthquakes), has deepened the nature-culture dichotomy through technocratic rationality. This disrupts the reciprocal flow of affection, leading to environmental dilapidation.

¹¹ Tagore's thesis can be compared to Russell's postulation:

The observer, when he seems to himself to be observing a stone, is really, if physics is to be believed, observing the effects of the stone upon himself. *Thus science seems to be at war with itself: when it most means to be objective, it finds itself plunged into subjectivity against its will.* (Russell 1950, 15; *emphasis added*)

¹² Tagore wrote:

The stars in their one relation to me are truly still and in their other relation are truly moving. The distant and the near are the keepers of two different sets of facts, but they both belong to one truth which is their master [i.e., the infinite human personality, the *visva-mānava-mana*, which comprehends both the parallel versions of relative truth in terms of the criterion of the innate ideal of perfection, viz., existential harmony-as-truth. - Author]. Therefore when we take the side of the one to revile the other, we hurt the truth which comprehends them both [The *anekānta* politics of tolerance. - Author]. (Tagore 1917c, 60)

¹³ Cf. Dasgupta, Shashibhusan. *Obscure Religious Cults*. 3rd ed. Kolkata: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1969. Also: Dutta, Akshay Kumar. *Bharatbarshiya Upasak Sampraday*. Vol. 1. Kolkata: Upendranath Mukhopadhyay, 1997. First published 1870.

¹⁴ Tagore's anthropic principle, where human observation and intersubjective meeting-points shape world construction, supports *nisargaśṛṅgāra*'s non-objectifying, counter-cultural strategy for dialogues-without-coercion. This cultivates helplessly marginalized humane traits, e.g., empathetic compassion, kindness, respect, and affection, derived from human moral standing, directed toward the wholeness of *sat* (existenz) within the human phenomenological field. Though anthropocentric in its reliance on human epistemic methods and ethics, it avoids speciesism, serving as a means to confront and mitigate environmental crises to some extent.

¹⁵ 'īśā vāsyamidam sarvam': *Īśopaniṣad*, I.1; 'sarvam prāṇa ejati niḥsṛtam': *Kaṭhōponiṣad*, II.3.2. (in Tagore 1915)

¹⁶ Tagore also recollected:

During the discussion of my own religious experience I have expressed my belief that the first stage of my realization was through my *feeling of intimacy with Nature* — not that Nature which has its channel of information for our mind and physical relationship with our living body, but that which satisfies our personality with manifestations that *make our life rich and stimulate our imagination* in their harmony of forms, colours, sounds and movements. (Tagore 1931/2005, 6; *emphasis added*)

¹⁷ Tagore came up with the celebrations of *Pouṣ Melā*, *Vasanta Utsav*, *Barṣāmaṅgal*, *Bṛkṣaropaṇ*, *Halakarṣan* etc., as part of an alternative cultural space to achieve this very telos of "R̥tusādhanā" (Contemplative Meditation of the Seasonal Cycles) in order to grasp '...the repose of perfection - the repose which is in the starry heavens, in the ever-flowing rhythmic dance of creation' (Tagore 1915, 10), leading to *yuktamanaḥ/yuktātmā praśānti* (bliss-in-assimilation; Tagore 1915,13). Thus, the fragmentary (vivisectional) post-mortemized (Lakatos 1976: the corpse of corpus) intervention of technocratic scientific enframing stands surpassed in Tagore.

¹⁸ Tagore wrote:

...we have our greatest delight *when we realize ourselves in others*, and this is the definition of love. This love gives us the testimony of the great whole... (Tagore 1931/2005, 35);

I become more in my union with others... [W]hen different personalities combine in love [...] then it is not like adding to the horse power of efficiency, but [...] what was imperfect finding its perfection in truth, and [...] joy; what was meaningless, when unrelated, *finding its full meaning in relationship*. (Tagore 1917c, 106; emphasis added)

¹⁹ A form of *possessive individualism*.

²⁰ Tagore propounded:

This joy, whose other name is love, must by its very nature have duality for its realisation. *When the singer has his inspiration he makes himself into two*; he has within him his other self as the hearer, and the outside audience is merely an extension of this other self of his. *The lover seeks his own other self in his beloved. It is the joy that creates this separation, in order to realise through obstacles of union*. (Tagore 1915, 58; emphasis added)

²¹ Tagore uses analogies to understand this: A poem not bound by the *metri causa* has no sense of beauty in it, a song not bound by the notations has no joy (Tagore 1936/1953, 18). On the other hand, it is also mere truism that by deploying gaps (*phānk*) or rather silences (Bandyopadhyay 2012) in the (re-) presentation of the lyrics/songs and metrical appropriation, skilled verses constrain or limit the chaotic (to be read as cosmic ripple effects, given that chaos is necessary in birthing a nebula, a star) presentation.

²² Even as an adolescent, Tagore found solace in the non-violent humility and universal compassion as he depicted it in *Vālmīki Pratibhā* (1881) within nature's embrace. The emergence of *Vālmīki's* non-violent poetic expression in response to the killing of two birds in love (*kāmamahitam*) within a natural setting ("*mā niṣada pratiṣṭham tvamagamahaḥ...*") reflects *nisargaśṛṅgāra* through *grievability* (Butler 2009), sparking artistic creativity as intuitive immanence (*sphoṭa*).

²³ Tagore clarified:

The water does not merely cleanse his limbs, but it purifies his heart; for it touches his soul. The earth does not merely hold his body, but it gladdens his mind; *for its contact is more than a physical contact - it is a living presence*. (Tagore 1915, 9; emphasis added)

²⁴ Tagore's *nisargaśṛṅgāra* might appear as an ethico-aesthetic ideal cultivating the *sambhoga śṛṅgāra rasa*, which involves the experience of pleasure-in-unity (whilst retaining ontological distinctions), countering the ideal of egocentric individuated separateness championed by the contemporary ecocidal paradigms (Tagore 1936/1953, 12). However, the term "*sambhoga*", by usage, denotes crude eroticism (carnal or sensual enjoyment; Monier-Williams 1899), which could be supplemented by "*saṅgama śṛṅgāra rasa*", since Tagore practiced the epistemo-ontological confluence or dynamic assimilation of one and/or the many through creative participation that belongs to the "surplus" realm of human nature, transcending biologism and pre-given, mechanized thought-processing (Tagore 1931/2005, 31).

²⁵ Does appreciating nature's representational beauty create an ethical duty to treat it kindly? Aesthetic appreciation doesn't inherently imply moral responsibility, but if natural beauty is deemed intrinsically valuable and threatened by androcentric, capitalistic ecocide (e.g., deforestation, mass extinction), preserving it may

become a moral imperative. Yet, beauty-standard is not intrinsic but subject-bound, culturally conditioned, and shaped by ideological constructs, as Tagore's non-speciesist anthropocentrism suggests (Ayyub 1971, 106). He views nature's value as human-imposed, through creative "knowing" and "feeling" that weave intimate meaning (*āntarika artha*; Tagore 1961e, 606–7; Tagore 1930/1996, 912), tying nature-love to human survival. Can this socio-politically constructed ethic be transcended? Natural beauty must be seen as situated within anthropic realities, requiring a socio-politico-ethical and *ādhyātmika* (self-cultivation, liberation) commitment, as Tagore envisioned. His aesthetic bridges *cosmic prāṇa* and human finitude, *viśvarūpa* and *viśeṣa-rūpa* (Tagore 1961c, 185–86), exemplified in his *khāncār pākhi-boner pākhi dialego* (1892). Without this, a Lacanian non-rapport (Johnston 2023) persists, akin to "there is no sexual relationship." Tagore's "prison-house" critiques the military-industrial complex's artificiality, enmeshed in capital's inversive illogic, blocking human-nature interlacement.

²⁶ The same idea has been rationalized by mechanistic materialists like Dawkins (2006), through the notion of "selfish genes" to legitimize social Darwinist competitiveness instead of horizontal mutual aid.

²⁷ Comparing *Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā* and Shakespeare's *Miranda*, Tagore noted *Śakuntalā's* loving, symbiotic bonding and belonging with nature, evident in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam's* celebration of human-nature interlacement, such as condemning deer-hunting and treating jungle creepers and fawns as one's kins (Tagore 1925b, 89-92; Tagore 1919/1996, 391-393; Bandyopadhyay 2014). Conversely, *Miranda* exists somewhat "outside" the natural realm, reflecting an alienating duality where nature is the 'other' (Tagore 1925b, 89), and not the intimate *an-other*.

²⁸ The urbanistic superstructure constitutes a closed system whereby property-relations divert humans from the joy that is derived from wilful creative engagement in an open-stringed environment characterized by mutual cooperation and spontaneous coordination. This idea approaches close to Marx's notion of "metabolic rift" (Foster 1999) following the industrial-agricultural revolutions, that irreparably prevents the retreat of the soil (=humus=humans) to its constituent elements.

²⁹ "Greed" is conceived by Tagore in metaphoric terms of the *Kubera-Lakṣmī* contrast: Kubera accumulates and multiplies material wealth, while Lakṣmī upholds beauty through prosperity of dwelling (Tagore 1924/1996, 513).

³⁰ In *Chinnapatrābalī* (1960), "zamindar" Tagore's pragmatic concern about the socio-economic plight of the villagers (who are compelled to surrender to nature) due to flood, drought, British colonialist policies etc. can be taken into consideration (as cited in Bandyopadhyay 2019, 6-8).

³¹ Tagore noted:

In the vegetable and animal kingdom however, the cyclic order of give and take have gone on unimpeded, the wheel has gone on unimpeded, the wheel has gone on moving the perfect evolutionary circles since the dawn of creation. *The disturbing factor has been the race of homo sapiens*. By creating his own world as a buffer, man has *placed obstacles on the path of reciprocation between nature and himself*, the points of contact between the two have become few and far between. He has forged with his own hands, as it were, a huge wall of brick and mortar to confirm his isolation and separateness from nature. (Tagore in Elmhirst 1975/2008, 159; emphasis added)

³² This is the ideal of perfection, which is the realization of the infinite essence of infinite personality with-in the finite manifestations of the “living channels of communication” (Tagore 1915, 26) supplied by nature/cosmos and the sense of belonging to the human community.

³³ Tagore maintained:

Man's compact with Mother earth can run a smooth course, if he gives back what he receives from her, If he returns to her those revitalizing elements which are her own gift. To deceive her is to delude ourselves. If her ledger-books show an enormous accumulation on the debit side over the years and ages, and the credit side has hardly any entry, it should be plain to see that the time is not far away when her offsprings will go completely bankrupt. (Tagore in Elmhirst 1975/2008, 159; *emphasis added*).

³⁴ M. N. Roy misunderstood this duality of meaning behind “property” and presented a flat critique against Tagore (in Sehanabish 1985).

³⁵ Kapil Bhattacharya (Chari 2016) and Meghnad Saha's (Abha 2002) critique of hydroelectric single-purpose dams could be studied in this respect in connection to Tagore's outright opposition to this so-called “temple of modern India”.

³⁶ Tagore was consistent enough in highlighting the necessity of letting nature be, without antagonizing our embedded relations with thou. He maintained: ‘*Cāhiyā dekho raser srote raṅger khelākhāni. Ceyo nā ceyo nā tāre nikaṭe nite jāni*’, i.e., *witness the play of colours in the waves of rasa. Don't, don't try to bring it near to you* (1926); or, in “*Mukṭadhārā*” (1922b): ‘*King, when you think that the world, which you take by force is your world. What you keep free, you gain. But seize it, and it eludes you!*’

³⁷ See Abbey, *Monkey Wrench Gang* (1975).

³⁸ Tagore warned:

Have you never felt shame when you see the trade advertisements, not only plastering the whole town with lies and exaggerations, but invading the green fields, where the peasants do their honest labour, and to hilltops which greet the first light of the morning?” (Tagore, 1917a: 105) “This commercialism with its *barbarity of ugly decorations is a terrible menace to all humanity*, because it is setting up the ideal of power over perfection. (Tagore 1917a, 152; *emphasis added*)

³⁹ ‘Persisting side by side, mercy and no mercy- unbearable doubt. Great dread, great hope- are sheltered in the same locus, both exist together.’ (*Sindhutarāṅga, Mānasī*, 1887; Trans. present author) Composed after knowing about a steamer-drowning disaster in the Bay of Bengal. (Ayyub 1971, 21-120).

⁴⁰ Tagore, especially in the post-*Gitanjali* period signifying an epistemological cum ontological rupture or break (Ayyub 1971, 21-22), did not subscribe to blind, irresponsible, uncommitted romanticism. His “attitude towards nature” was a committed pursuit that continually responded to the ongoing socio-economic, political, natural disasters as well as personal losses (Losses to which nature remained completely “indifferent” or *udāsīna*, e.g., Tagore's realization after his son, Samindranath Tagore's death; 1978, 41-42). Hence, Tagore was not oblivious to the “Crisis in Civilization” (Tagore 1941/1996) that was unearthed through the imperialist wars of aggression, economic exploitation, the rise of fascism, the great depression and associated processes. There has to be *anekānta* readings or “unpackings” of Tagore in this very context.

⁴¹ Tagore stated, introducing entropy to harmony:

Discords become too evident when the tuning of the instrument is going on, but they are not part of the music itself. Discords jar on us, and if they did not, we should not progress on our quest after harmony. That is why we give the name 'Rudra', or Terrible, to the Infinite—He draws us towards freedom along the path of the pain of disharmony. (Tagore as cited in Bandyopadhyay 2019, 122; emphasis added)

⁴² Tagore analogically observed: In the music of the dawn, one's personal pain becomes magnified into the universal pain in infinite forms, whence the pain is released, just as the snakes in *Mahādeva*'s locks appear as ornaments. (...) In *saṃsāra*, the tiny speckle of time appears as truth, while the eternal time lurks in the backdrop. In music, the eternal time is foregrounded and smaller time is dusted away: in this very notion consists the liberation of the mind. (Paraphrased by the present author from Tagore 1929, 283). This is precisely the view from *nisarga-abhisāra*. Such a consolation mechanism of "oceanic feeling" (Freud 1930, 21) could be criticized from certain aspects as being *escapist* in nature. As Russell (1984, 562) noted, merely diluting the *part* into the *whole* does not entirely solve the issue of human/non-human predicament. This is an open-stringed debate that deserves further attention to the particularities and exactitudes.

⁴³ 'By freeing oneself from the rural narrowness one should aim towards witnessing the universal man in the universal literature.' (Tagore 1961f, 773; Trans. present author); 'Using age-old ploughing devices to harvest crops in the bounded field (*āl-bāndhā-jamī*) and to fill up water in a broken pot is the same thing.' (Tagore 1931b, 19. Trans. present author)

⁴⁴ In *Banabānī* (Tagore 1931a, 5), Tagore stated that the forest-trees are the "mute" friends (*bobā bandhu*), who are other-linguistically communicating to humans across ages. In Tagore's short story "*Subhā*" (Tagore 1961b, 145), the "dumb" girl is affectionately united in a bond of loving kinship with the apparently "dumb" (?) natural world through nature's own arche-writing patterns in a similar manner.

⁴⁵ However, he was critical of the Gandhian *grāma svarāja* since the term "sva+rāja" involves governmentality, while the "Cult of the Charkha" was mere ritualistic, mechanistic habituation under the spell of a "mass intoxicating tendency" towards homogeneous mob behaviour (Cf. *Home and the World*, 1916; Nikhilesh's opposition to the intoxication of "*Vandemātaram*") that cannot bring forth holistic, long-term creative-cultivation (Bhattacharya 1997, 99-121).

⁴⁶ Tagore was clear regarding this fact of futurism:

All these *āśramas* [in the past] were agitated with *kāma* (lust), *krodha* (rage) and *dveṣa* (envy/malice), which can be found in the descriptive accounts of the *Purāṇas*. (Tagore 1961d, 725. Trans. present author)

In his autobiographical writing "*Ātmaparicay*", he wrote:

The *tapovana* I have mentioned recurrently as the ideal form of *āśrama* is not the product of historical analysis. It was derived from the poet's creations alone. (Tagore 1961c, 223; Trans. present author)

⁴⁷ This is consummated by transcending the animalistic traits (*pāśavavṛtti*) to attain *mahānubhavadva* through the realization of a supra-consciousness of unity of relations beyond selfish ego-considerations.

⁴⁸ Tagore reminded us:

Didn't you say that day, that the human truth is getting manifested through the process of becoming or *tapasyā*? *That this manifestation is not a biological one.*

Indeed, that is what I said. On the earth, humans are on the animalistic, barbarous realm or state. Through *tapasyā*, humans are gradually becoming wisdom-careers. There's still *tapasyā* remaining, much physical implements to be forfeited, only then will humans become godlike. In the *Purāṇas*, there is only the imagination of the Human God. *But God did not reside in the past*, he lives in the future of humans- in the ultimate chapter of human history. (Tagore 1961b, 976; emphasis added; Trans. present author)

Tagore further added to this:

...our imagination makes us intensely conscious of a life we must live *which transcends the individual life and contradicts the biological meaning of the instinct of self-preservation.* (Tagore 1931/2005, 41; emphasis added)

⁴⁹ Tagore's elucidation of the "*śreya-nīti*" is the ultimate "ought-ness" in *ātmajāgaraṇa* beyond the mundane craving after the "*preya*" (Tagore 1961e, 579), i.e., the *summum bonum* of the 'praxeological being' (*karmī sattā*), who is not opposed to the "aesthetic human" (*nāndanik mānuṣ*) (Ayyub 1971, 44). The aesthetic harmony is reconciled with the spirit of the "*śreya*" in laying down the framework of attaining intercommunion (*priya-milana*) or harmony of interdependence between the "Small I" (self) and the "Big I"/*vṛhat viśva* (Self) (Tagore 1961c, 189) through the *tapasyā of abhisāra* by courting and conquering obstacles, miseries, sufferings.

⁵⁰ Tagore could not envisage, due to his temporal limitations, that the so-called "scientific agriculture" (the course Rathindranath Tagore formally pursued) would merely become an ecocide of the land in the form of monocultural overproduction in terms of chemicalized farming instead of intergenerational/natural farming/permaculture (Bandyopadhyay 2011).

⁵¹ The term "*samavāya*" terminologically refers to the relation of inseparability (*apṛthakasiddha*) amidst the container and the contained, e.g., an individual leaf and the leaf's movement.

⁵² The notion of "Earthian" becomes translated to that of the "Cosmosian". Tagore distinguished between the *jāgatika bhūmā* and the *mānavika bhūmā* or *mānasika deśa* (Tagore 1961e, 574, 584), the former being the limited phenomenal physical or geographical space and the latter being the boundless, noumenal mental space.

⁵³ Tagore remarked:

We agreed to acknowledge that this chariot-drive was progress, and that progress was civilization. If we ever ventured to ask, '*Progress towards what, and progress for whom,*' it was considered to be peculiarly and ridiculously oriental to entertain such doubts about the absoluteness of progress. (Tagore 1937/1996, 714; emphasis added)

⁵⁴ Tagore's emphasis on the "play of the child" can be seen as the evocation of *śṛṅgāra*, aligned with *ātmasaṃskṛtīrbāva śilpāni* [self-culturation through artistic praxis], or *chandamayam vā etair yajamāna ātmānam saṃskurute* [through aesthetic forms the sacrificer refines his own self], the transformation of mundane *bhāvas* [emotive states or feelings] into dynamic, generalized *rasas* [aesthetic essences or sentiments] through creative-intellectual imagination and empathetic compassion (*karuṇā* [compassion], *maitrī* [friendship/amicability], *tanniṣṭhā* [dedication/steadfast devotion]). This culminates in the *praśānta* [tranquil, serene] ecstasy of *brahmasvāda* [the tasting of Brahman], savouring *brahmānanda* [the bliss of Brahman]

within the *bhāṇḍa* [the vessel, i.e., the embodied self], resulting in *ānandarūpamṛtam yadvibhāti* [that which shines forth as bliss-form nectar/immortality], the telos of all creative acts (Tagore 1961d, 610). Such *ānanda* [bliss/joy], arising from human–nature assimilation, is not merely *rasodgāra* [eruption or expression of rasa], but *bhāva-sammilana* [union of feelings], *bhāvollāsa* [expansion or efflorescence of emotions], realized through *tanmayāvasthā* [state of complete absorption/immersion] (Saha 1986). Tagorean *dehatāttvika* [corporeal/embodied studies] ecosophy can thus be linked to *Kālacakra-tantra* [Wheel of Time tantra in Vajrayāna Buddhism], and the Taoist Wu Wei [non-action/effortless action]: the still, equanimous flow of body, mind, and spirit.

⁵⁵ This viewpoint also aligns with the Nietzschean view of the responsible *Übermensch* as resorting to the “yes to life” in the child’s unearthing of curious possibilities beyond conditioned normativities to translate humans back onto nature as the reenergized, care-imbibed *homo natura* (Lemm 2020).