



## EDITOR'S NOTE

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Greetings and a warm welcome to the 5th volume of *Intersections*.

This volume engages with one of the greatest challenges that confronts humanity today — the ecological threat. This challenge is not unilinear but multifaceted that touches upon scientific, social, historical, and ethical concerns. The climate crisis, posed by alarming floods, unexpected rise in temperature, untimely rains, and unprecedented pollution leading to erosion of biodiversity screams out for human attention.

In an era of accelerating ecological emergency, technological alienation, and the waning of humanistic thought, returning to Tagore and Gandhi is not nostalgia—it is a necessity. Ecological consciousness is largely spiritual. In Tagore and Gandhi, this consciousness manifests through spiritual convergence and is rooted in reverence for life. The spiritual re-awakening that it precipitates arises from a recognition that the human self is part of a greater continuum of life.

Tagore's notion of nature as an extension of the self has its moorings in the Upanishadic principle of non-duality — the *atman* (individual soul) and the *brahma* (the universal consciousness) constitute a unified whole. Gandhi's spiritual ecology has another root but complements Tagore's fundamental idea. For him, the ecological crisis is first and foremost a moral one — the loss of *dharma* (religion) in the pursuit of material wealth. His principle of *ahimsa* (non-violence) extends beyond the interpersonal to the interspecies.

The volume opens with an article titled “Ecology and Spirituality in Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi: A Contemporary Perspective” by Rubaiya Nasrin. It sets the tone of the entire volume through an affirmation of the enduring relevance of Tagore's and Gandhi's ecological visions in contemporary debates on environmental justice. The article shows how literature reclaims Tagore and Gandhi's ecological ethics — nonviolence, simplicity, reverence for nature — to critique techno-capitalism and inspire postcolonial, ecofeminist climate fiction. It argues that fiction actively reimagines just, sustainable, and spiritually rooted human–nature relationships while offering transformative visions for environmental justice and future ecological belonging.

Akhar Bandopadhyay moves a step ahead in his essay “(Re-)Cognizing Nature's Lived Ontologies : Tagore's *Nisargaśṛṅgāra*”. He focusses on Tagore and his ecosophy of *nisargaśṛṅgāra* — a reciprocal, compassionate, and aesthetic relationship between humans and nature. Integrating Jaina *Anekāntavāda* and Foucauldian discourse analysis, it critiques industrial modernity and advocates Tagore's *tapovana* vision of a decentralized, ethical, and spiritually grounded coexistence as a means of countering ecological and cultural alienation.

“The Soul where Nature Lives, the Mind where Nature Breathes: A Study of Tagore's ‘Streer Patra’” is a sensitive and layered reading of Tagore's short story “*Streer Patra*” by Rita Sarkar. It argues that Mrinal's awakening is inseparable from her spiritual and ecological union with Nature. Moving beyond feminist emancipation, it situates her liberation within Tagore's philosophy of cosmic harmony. The human soul, she persuasively argues, ultimately finds fulfilment through communion with Nature.

In the following article, “Traditional Culinary Practices and Ecological Awareness in the Gandhian Tradition”, Catharinal Sylvia examines practices such as local farming, seasonal cooking, and



community-based food networks to show how these alternatives unsettle the extractive logics of industrial agriculture and consumer capitalism. By reconceptualising traditional food production methods as both symbolic and material acts of resistance, the article projects them as effective models of eco-resistance that affirm the political and ecological agency of food.

In a critical engagement with Tagore's short stories, Akansha Pandey, in her article "Whispers of the Earth: Ecological Sensibility in Tagore's 'The Homecoming' and 'Shubha'", critiques modernity as she affirms that alienation from nature leads to spiritual decay. Her article highlights Tagore's vision of harmony between humans and the environment, emphasising empathy, compassion, and interconnectedness as ethical foundations for ecological and moral renewal. The next article, titled "Ecological Redemption: Revisiting Tagore's Critique of Mechanistic Modernity in the Age of Climate Crisis" by Swasthika, builds further on this to argue that the climate crisis stems from moral and metaphysical alienation, not technological failure. Through Tagore's ideas of "man-in-the-universe" and Society versus Nation, it advocates ecological redemption grounded in empathy, restraint, relationality, and aesthetic coexistence.

Laki Molla's "'The earth has enough resources for our need but not for our greed': Man-Nature Relationship in Gandhi's Ecological Thoughts" probes into Gandhi's ecological philosophy which is a synthesis of ethics, spirituality, and environmental responsibility. Critiquing industrial modernity, it highlights his principles of *sarvodaya*, *swarajya*, and restraint as frameworks for sustainable living. Linking Gandhian thought to ecofeminism and modern environmental movements, it urges moral self-discipline and decentralized community action for ecological balance.

Abbas Khan takes up a unique part of Tagore's corpus – his letters. He reads them as 'living documents of environmental consciousness' that mirror the slow growth and vitality of trees. Through letters written from Kalimpong, Shilaidaha and Santiniketan, it traces his evolving vision of harmony between humans and nature, aligning with Arne Naess's Deep Ecology and Val Plumwood's ecofeminism. Abbas critically refutes Tagore's advocacy for a pre-colonial ecological worldview as ideal for society in the article "Letters as Living as Trees: Reading Tagore's Correspondence through the Lens of Ecological Aesthetics".

Surabhi Jha synthesizes Tagore's spiritual ecology with Vandana Shiva's materialist ecofeminism to critique capitalist patriarchy and environmental degradation in "Green Visions: Postcolonial Ecofeminism through the Writings of Tagore and Shiva". She provides a critical analysis of modernity's masculinist anthropocentrism by bringing Tagore's philosophical ecology into dialogue with Shiva's materialist ecofeminism. Challenging Eurocentric binaries of tradition and progress, Surabhi proposes a hopeful postcolonial ecofeminist framework that emphasises ecological harmony, resistance, and relational ethics despite mounting environmental and civilisational crises.

Debasmita Das has chosen to re-read a relatively underexplored segment of Tagore's oeuvre — children's literature. Her article, "Ecologies of Wonder: Nature, Childhood, and Resistance in Rabindranath Tagore's Literature for Children" examines this body of literature as a site of ecological intimacy and decolonial pedagogy. Rejecting Enlightenment rationalism, Tagore fuses nature, language, and childhood into an imaginative, more-than-human ecology that resists 'colonialism and hyper-nationalism'. His playful, intuitive style reimagines childhood as a space of wonder, ethical freedom, and ecological humanism.

"Echoes of the Earth: Re-examining Gandhi's Ecological Ethos in the Era of Climate Crisis" by Rima Chakraborty foregrounds Gandhi as a profound ecological thinker, linking his ascetic ethics, *swadeshi*



(home-rule), and *gram swaraj* (village self-rule) to contemporary sustainability debates. Compelling in its critique of industrial modernity, it persuasively positions Gandhian ethics as vital to ecological thought.

In the final article, “Rethinking Ecology: Gandhi, Duties, and the Limits of Rights-Based Ethics”, Priyanshu Prajjwal and Anupam Kumar challenge rights-based environmental ethics by proposing Gandhi’s duty-centred philosophy as a deeper ecological framework grounded in restraint, interdependence, and trusteeship. While offering a powerful corrective to legalistic anthropocentrism, it risks idealising moral self-discipline and underplays structural constraints. Yet it compellingly reframes ecology as a transformative ethical practice.

This volume, evidently, is not a mere compendium of articles on the contemporary ecological crisis. It creates an occasion to voice eco-ethical, eco-social, and eco-political concerns that beset the Anthropocene. It has tried to establish dialogues to address the crisis and seek alternatives in new paradigms. In our time, when environmental ethics is often reduced to technological management or policy reforms, Tagore and Gandhi remind us that genuine ecological change must begin with an inner transformation—a re-alignment of the human spirit with the cosmic order. They heralded what Vandana Shiva calls “earth democracy”, not in manifesto but in song, prayer, and practice. Their ecology of change is deeply connected to the ecology of the soul.