

Indigenous Resistance and Environmental Ethics: A Socio-Ecological Re-reading of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mahatma Gandhi.

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Abstract

Indigenous resistance has been studied extensively in connexion with political ecology and environmental studies and is mostly analysed within the framework of environmental ethics and modern industrialism criticism through the Gandhian thought. Guru Tegh Bahadur, on the other hand, lies primarily within the Sikh resistance theology and the early modern religious history. Such literatures are seldom bridged in a similar socio-ecological line of analysis. The paper fills that gap by doing a comparative re-read of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mahatma Gandhi in the context of political ecology. The study uses the qualitative textual analysis of relevant interpretive literature Sikh ethical sovereignty and Gandhian moral economy combined with critical theory of political ecology. The results imply three fundamental convergences, including sacred sovereignty that functions as a kind of ecological ethics that defends moral and communal life-worlds, Gandhian moral economy making a consistent critique of extractive modernity as well as emergent resistance as a kind of environmental stewardship and not only political critique. The paper introduces a socio-ecological map of sacred ecological sovereignty and extends the environmental ethics further than secular paradigms, making indigenous theological roots significant in the ecological concept.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Statement

The modern literature on resistance and ecology is still conceptually divided. The analysis of indigenous resistance itself focuses on the focus of political ecology and environmental justice, with resistance mainly centred on the issues of territorial rights and resource conflicts and extractive capitalism (Robbins, 2012; Temper et al., 2015). Environmental ethics, in its turn, has emerged in largely secular philosophical traditions usually with references to liberal moral approaches, or the discourse of sustainability disassociated with theological resources (Banerjee, 2003). Some ideas of Gandhian philosophy have been applied in this domain by writing of nonviolence, austerity and moral economy, but commonly in some kind of normative or romanticised form as opposed to a hard socio-ecological critique (Hardiman, 2003; Mehta, 2010).

Meanwhile, the issue of Sikh resistance of which the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur has a central place has been placed in the main context of religious history and formation of identity (Dhavan, 2011; Grewal, 1990). Although Sikh theology is strong in presenting an ethic of sovereignty and moral courage, it has not been rarely realised in terms of ecological or political ecology. More to the point, much of the native resistance literature is still geographically focused in the Americas and Australia and does not take or consider South Asian intellectual traditions as a source of environmental thinking (Escobar, 2008;

Robbins, 2012). This has created an academic separation where environmental ethics, political ecology, Gandhian moral philosophy, and Sikh resistance theology play side by side, but not in dialogue with each other.

1.2 Literature Mapping

The initial group is the Gandhian environmental thought. J. C. Kumarappa's, The statement of a description of a moral economy based on permanence and decentralisation as posed by Kumarappa gives one of the earliest critique of the industrial modernity (Kumarappa, 2010). Hardiman (2003) places Gandhi in the context of the wider anti-modern and ethical opposition to empire, and Jackson (2013) also associates Gandhian non-violence with the modern climate ethics. Mehta (2010) gives political-theoretical interpretation to the moral commitments of Gandhi, which is focused on ethical self-limitation and democratic restraint. These works combine to indicate that there may be a hidden ecological criticism of the Gandhian thought, though sometimes it is found in political or moral terms rather than the direct ecological theory.

The latter group includes political ecology and environmental justice. Robbins (2012) views the concept of political ecology in terms of analysis of environmental knowledge systems which are full of power; whereas Escobar (2008) anticipates the anticipating of territorial conflicts and departing ontologies against developmentalist modernity. Banerjee (2003, 2008) is a critic of corporate sustainability storeys and decrying of environmental regulation. Temper et al. (2015) visualise the

conflicts of environmental justice worldwide, demonstrating the resistance to be structurally related to the extractive systems. These authors all shed light on the way resistance activists oppose, not only the extraction of resources but epistemic and moral regimes that support extractive modernity.

The third group is that of Sikh opposition and moral sovereignty. Following the history of the development of Sikh warrior tradition, Dhavan (2011) places the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur into the context of the changing ideas of the community and statehood. Grewal (1990) and Fenech (2008) contextualise the history of the Sikhs in early modern North Indian politics, whereas Mandair (2009) interprets the Sikh thought as the critique of the colonial and epistemic domination. Even though these writings do not explicitly situate Sikh resistance ecologically, they show a strong ethical framework based on defending conscience, pluralism, and communal dignity components which may be familiar to the political ecology defence of life world.

1.3 Research Gap

In the midst of the purity of these literatures, it has not taken any lasting socio-ecological synthesis between Sikh martyrdom ethics and Gandhian ecological nonviolence. The opposition of Guru Tegh Bahadur is considered the theological courage; the opposition of modernity in politics as gained by Gandhi as the moral one; and the opposition as the environment is with the indigenous resistance as the environmental justice activism. The lack of communication between these traditions clouds a common ethical ground. Besides, South Asian indigenous theological traditions are still not adequately represented in the ecological ethics discussion that is customarily seen through secular or Western philosophy (Escobar, 2008; Robbins, 2012).

1.4 Research Questions

This study addresses the following questions:

1. Does the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur count as some kind of ecological resistance in political ecology approach?
2. What does Gandhian moral economy have to do with indigenous environmental justice descriptions of extractive modernity?
3. What socio-ecological paradigm would be formed in the course of comparative reading of Sikh ethical sovereignty and Gandhian nonviolence?

1.5 Thesis Statement

The present paper will hold that both Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mahatma Gandhi explain the resistance as not alone as a political protest, but rather as a moral justification of an ethical ecological order. Their thinking is expressed in the form of a joint engagement with sacred sovereignty, moral continence and mutual defence against extractive domination, through a socio-ecological re-reading that is based on political ecology.

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

2.1 Research Design

In this paper, the research design is qualitative interpretive research, based on the comparative theory of the socio-ecological politics. The paper does not make any efforts to gather empirical field material, but instead carries out a theoretically informed and textual and conceptual study of key interpretive literature on Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mahatma Gandhi. It is not the goal of biographical reconstruction but rather the normative reinterpretation. The study approach takes the tradition of resistance as ethical-political discourses that are both embedded in the larger socio-ecological contexts.

The methodological focus of establishing the Sikh ethical sovereignty and Gandhian nonviolence in a comparable framework is given by the comparative political theory. By so doing, the study will not be prone to anachronistic projection, but rather place both characters in their respective historical circumstances besides being exposed to the political ecology discourse of today (Robbins, 2012). The design is an interdisciplinary one that incorporates intellectual history, political theory, and environmental justice scholarship to recreate an underlying ecological ethic of the traditions of resistance.

2.2 Materials (Primary Intellectual Sources)

The data sources include conventional academic accounts of Guru Tegh Bahadur in the history and the theological tradition of Sikhism, and the critique of the message of Gandhian moral philosophy. On the Sikh element, the research relies on the evaluations of the creation of the Sikh warrior tradition by Dhavan (2011), historical contextualisation of the Sikh community by Grewal (1990), exposition of the moral-political authority of the Sikh Gurus by Fenech (2008) and postcolonial interpretation of Sikh epistemology by Mandair (2009). The edited volume by Singh and Fenech (2014) also offers the conceptual background of the Sikh ethical sovereignty. It is the totality of the works that shines light into the normative architecture of martyrdom, pluralism, and defence of conscience that Guru Tegh Bahadur had to do with.

In the case of the Gandhian element, moral economy expressed by Kumarappa (2010) creates a major deciphering point, particularly concerning the ism of industrial capitalism and extractive modernity. Hardiman (2003) can be used to place Gandhi political interferences in the context of anti-modern resistance and also Bilgrami (2006) provides a philosophical explanation to the profile of the moral purity that Gandhi had. These sources enable to make a reconstruction of Gandhian nonviolence as ecological, moral but not a purely political position.

The choice of the material is a volitional methodology: rather than relying on isolated religious images to Guru Tegh Bahadur and Gandhi, the work of academic interpretation is involved to gain effective normative and political aspects of the socio-ecological reading.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework combines the political ecology, the theory of environmental justice, the postcolonial ecological critique and the moral economy. Robbins (2012) and Forsyth (2003) explain that political ecology predicts the association between power, knowledge, and environmental governance. It offers instruments to perceive resistance as not just opposition to the state authority but a form of protection of the straddled ecological worlds.

Resistance movements are positioned in an environmental justice scholarship, especially mapping ecological conflicts by Temper et al. (2015) in the structures of extraction and dispossession in the global grand context. This point of view enables the work to theorise the structural similarity of Sikh martyrdom and Gandhian non-cooperation with the conflicts against extractive domination.

The postcolonial ecological critique presented by Escobar (2008) brings the concept of alternative ontologies to oppose the developmentalist modernity. This is very important in understanding the interpretation of Sikh sovereignty as well as that of Gandhian swaraj as both facing epistemic and material imperialism.

The theory of moral economy by Kumarappa (2010) is the normative relic in the framework. His criticism of the industrial civilization and promotion of permanence provides a theoretical

language both to associate environmental restraint with moral restrictiveness. These theoretical aspects put together would offer the critical framework by which the two traditions can be comparatively re-read.

2.4 Analytical Method

The research uses four analytical strategies that are in relation to each other. The interpretation is made on the basis of textual hermeneutics on the claims of normative embedded on scholarly accounts of Sikh and Gandhian traditions. Instead of carrying out the theological exegesis of scriptural works, emphasis is laid on ethical and political implications that have been singled out in the academic interpretations established (Dhavan, 2011; Bilgrami, 2006).

Second, conceptual reconstruction isolates categories of importance namely sovereignty, sacrifice, nonviolence, moral economy as well as community and rearticulates them in a socio-ecological frame. This process explains the way in which resistance traditions are used to express implicit ecological commitments. Third, normative comparison studies similarities and differences between Sikh martyrdom ethic and nonviolence of Gandhian level. The comparison does not discount differences but the manner in which the two respond to imperial domination and moral disorder is analysed through the strategies that are different but structurally resonant. Fourth, it uses a socio-ecological lens, which revolves around such relational categories as community, sovereignty, land, and sacrifice. This prism allows seeing resistance as stewardship of moral-ecological order and not simply a political opposition to some extent.

It is necessary to point out that this study does not take part in the theological justification or pious translation. Rather it gives a political-ecological re-reading based on interdisciplinary theory. The approach attempts to expose an understudied intellectual alignment of Sikh resistance and Gandhian ecological philosophy through the coming together of political ecology and the intellectual history.

3. RESULTS

The comparative socio-ecological reading of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mahatma Gandhi yields four interrelated analytical findings. These findings emerge from integrating Sikh resistance theology and Gandhian moral philosophy with political ecology and environmental justice frameworks.

3.1 Sacred Sovereignty and Ecological Order

The initial result is that of sacred sovereignty. Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur among Sikh historical literature is construed as fight against religious freedom and conscience by the imperial coercion (Dhavan, 2011; Grewal, 1990). His execution is also not based on sectarian claims and is aimed at pluralism and moral autonomy protection. According to Fenech (2008) and Mandair (2009), Sikh sovereignty was not only territorial, but ethical-based and was based on the defence of community-based dignity and freedom of belief.

According to the politics of ecology, one can take this defence of conscience to signify the opposition to epistemic domination. Political ecology emphasises on the relationship between imperial and developmental regimes and efforts to enforce authoritative forms of knowledge that are delegating alternative forms of lifeworld (Forsyth, 2003; Robbins, 2012). Within this context Mughal imperial coercion is not only evident power of political repression, but also is an endeavour to rearrange and reorganise moral and social worlds through a centralised power. The opposition on the part of Guru Tegh Bahadur is hence a form of defence of community based moral ecology against power homogenising power.

According to Escobar (2008), lots of indigenous struggles protect the territories of difference that ontological pluralism is endangered by the systems of dominant governance. Using this knowledge, Sikh independence may be seen as the protection of a moral-ecological order based on the sense of overall responsibility and spiritual equalities. Sovereignty in this case goes beyond the concept of statehood; it is a normative project to save life worlds of epistemological or political easements.

Accordingly the in this concept, sovereignty does not solely pertain to the political freedom, but to the moral custodianship of communal life. Sacred sovereignty has a social-ecological aspect of relational worlds of community, conscience and plurality, which is identified by political ecology as central to opposition against domination (Robbins, 2012).

3.2 Martyrdom and Moral Limits of Empire

The second insight is the topic of martyrdom as a moral outpouring against empire. The martyrdom in Sikh historiography is placed as a culture of resistance to forceful rule through virtue (Dhavan, 2011; Grewal, 1990). The sacrifice made by Guru Tegh Bahadur had set a line after which imperial power was termed as illegitimate.

Environmental justice scholarship adheres to a structural comparison. As shown by Temper et al. (2015), modern-day environmental crises emerge in the situations, in which communities are challenged by extractive projects and institutions that trample on the local autonomy. In this regard, Empire is used as a logic of extraction, be it political, economic or epistemic. The reinvention of nature in the development discourse discussed by Banerjee (2003) is criticised as land and community are subjected to the laws of economic rationality.

Sikh martyrdom when subjected to this analytic rubric can be viewed as an opposition to an extractive political order that is trying to gain a monopoly of different moral communities. Mughal as well as modern-industrial Empire is a unitary state and excludes other sovereignties. Political ecology underlines the fact that domination can be frequently experienced in terms of arguing resources, knowledge, and legitimacy (Forsyth, 2003; Robbins, 2012). The Sikh statement of martyrdom is, thus, understandable as a claim of moral boundaries of centralised extraction of identity, belief, and joint autonomy.

More importantly, the critique of developmental modernity by Escobar (2008) puts focus on the influence of the developmental ideas by the empire on establishing unique developmental paths. Martyrdom among the Sikhs defies this singularity of moral worlds in the plural. The anti-imperial aspect of the death of Guru Tegh Bahadur is similar to the fight against imperialism by the indigenous population to protect the land against mining, deforestation, or the loss of their home (Temper et al., 2015). In the two scenarios resistance sets moral limits over which power becomes illegitimate.

Therefore, martyrdom is not only a theological act, it is a political-ecological one: there are moral limits that the empire can never cross and still remain legitimate.

3.3 Gandhian Moral Economy and Ecological Simplicity

The third conclusion is based on Gandhian moral economy as ecological critique. Economy of Permanence by Kumarappa (2010) represents a conceptual protest against the industrial civilization based on the ecological harmony and restraint. He criticises the extractive nature of the contemporary economies and recommends the concept of decentralisation, self-sufficiency and sustainability. It is not simply economic reform of Gandhi therefore but restructuring of human-nature relations.

Hardiman (2003) puts the critique of Gandhi into the context of anti-modern resistance and Bilgrami (2006) views the politics of Gandhi as being based on moral integrity and boundaries of

desire. Mehta (2010) grants the focus on the ethical conception of democracy by Gandhi as being a self-restraint. These readings combined offer an ecological thoughtful philosophy of nonviolence: nonviolence is not only an interpersonal but also an economic and environmental association.

This dimension has conceptual clarity that can be given by political ecology. Robbins (2012) singles out extractive capitalism as part of the global environmental destruction. Banerjee (2008) points out the flaws in the narratives of corporate sustainability which reforms the ongoing exploitation. The self-renunciation and simplicity imposed by Gandhi in anticipation of such criticisms views industrial modernity as being morally decadent and ecologically unproductive.

Jackson (2013) makes direct links between Gandhian nonviolence and climate ethics where restraint and non-possession are the elements of environmental responsibility. In this respect, nonviolence does not involve only human relations; it is ecological principle. Moral economy by Kumarappa represents this extension by basing the economic life on circle of life instead of extracting it linearly.

The attack on industrialism made by Gandhi seems to be in the logic of accumulation of extractive modernity, through the concept of political ecology. His focus on swaraj and decentralised production are against centralised production that isolates communities with regard to ecological self-regulation. In this way, the Gandhian simplicity becomes the structural alternative of the extractive empire identified by the environmental justice scholarly community (Temper et al., 2015).

3.4 Resistance as Environmental Ethics

The fourth result is the conclusion of the other studies: resistance is environmental ethics. The resistance in both traditions is not a response to violence but a defiance that is principles-based. Non-cooperation is non-coercive to unjust systems and that is the case with Gandhi (Hardiman, 2003; Bilgrami, 2006). Political ecology enables one to view non-cooperation as ecological refusal with a withdrawal of legitimacy of extractive institutions (Robbins, 2012).

On the same note, Sikh pluralism defence would be interpreted as defence of diversity. The ecological theory appreciates biodiversity because it is necessary to the provision of resilience; the Sikh sovereignty also acknowledges moral plurality as central to social order (Fenech, 2008; Mandair, 2009). It is important that the metaphoric intersection is between defence of religious plurality and defence of ecological diversity between forces of homogenization.

According to Escobar (2008), alternative ontologies are not welcoming to the universalizing logic of development. Guru Tegh Bahadur and Gandhi are two figures who represent different moral ontologies that are based in community and restraint. Both traditions had community autonomy that is related to sustainability principles within political ecology. Decentralisation makes less reliance on extractive systems and enhances the stewardship at the local level (Kumarappa, 2010; Robbins, 2012).

Environmental justice scholarship shows that the resistance movements can in many cases be the protector of the ecosystems which can be exploited by some outside forces (Temper et al., 2015). The opposition in this framework will be transformed into environmental stewardship. The nonviolent protest of Gandhi and the martyrial defence of conscience by Guru Tegh Bahadur are both put into action as parents of moral-ecological order.

Accordingly, the comparative analysis shows that the same ethical design is in place, which is resistance as safeguard of

relational worlds community, plurality, and ecological balance against extractive domination. Political ecology sheds light over such intersection by showing that sovereignty, sacrifice and non-cooperation could be understood to be ecological ethics as opposed to exclusively as political strategies.

On the one hand, together these results imply that both characters express resistance in the form of moral ecologically defensive. By re-reading their traditions in terms of the socio-ecological theory the meaningfulness of the concept of environmental ethics is broadened beyond the socio-liberal approaches and the indigenous theological resources are placed into the context of the global ecological discourses.

4. DISCUSSION

The comparative findings invite broader theoretical reflection. By placing Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mahatma Gandhi within a shared socio-ecological framework, the analysis reframes resistance traditions as contributors to contemporary environmental thought rather than as isolated theological or nationalist narratives. This section interprets the wider implications of that reframing.

4.1 Reframing Indigenous Resistance Beyond Territory

The native opposition is often seen in the context of territory protection: land struggle, forest struggle, water struggle, and mineral mine struggle (Temper et al., 2015; Robbins, 2012). Though these tussles are still at the core, political ecology also accentuates that war fights are woven within far-reaching ontological and epistemological disagreements (Forsyth, 2003). According to Escobar (2008), most indigenous movements protect the territories of difference that are not merely about the land but is an entire relational world featuring other ideas about community, authority, and nature.

The widened meaning of Sikh articulation of sovereignty in the period of Guru Tegh Bahadur could be understood in this broad meaning. Conscience and plural religious practise defence were not only an aspiration to be juridically safeguarded; they were the reaction to the homogenising power of empire (Dhavan, 2011; Mandair, 2009). This opposition read socio-ecologically may be interpreted as the defence of the cosmos against their disintegration by moral-ecological disorder instead of merely their territory.

On the same note, Gandhian swaraj cannot be reduced to political autonomy. It represents a re-ranking of human alliances, monetary living and moral training (Mehta, 2010; Bilgrami, 2006). Swaraj is a challenge to the part of centralised, extractive political structures that distance communities, in the context of political ecology, against self-regulation over the environment (Robbins, 2012). Indigenous resistance under such traditions, therefore, will penetrate past land protection to relational worlds protection, community, conscience, and ecological equilibrium.

The idea of reframing expands on the conceptual lexicon of indigenous resistance studies. It indicates that cosmological integrity and the autonomy of morality are equal as far as the territorial claims are concerned. A combination of political ecology and Sikh and Gandhian thought gives the latter a more ethical dimension.

4.2 Environmental Ethics Beyond Secular Liberalism

Environmental ethics have commonly been set in secular philosophical terms attempting stresses on utilitarianism sustainability or rights-based environmental safeguards (Banerjee, 2003). Whereas such structures have a valid role, they can be blind to the theological and cosmological asset of the non-Western worlds.

The comparative study reveals that both Sikh moral sovereignty and Gandhian nonviolence have normative bases of environmental responsibility as it is not solely based on secular liberal arguments. In Kumarappa, (2010) moral economy, the ecological restraint is based on moral self-restraint as opposed to market correction. Jackson (2013), goes a step further to apply the Gandhian non-violence to climate ethics.

According to the Sikh philosophy as understood by Fenech (2008) and Grewal (1990), sovereignty cannot be separated, and thus ethical duty and communal responsibility. Mandair (2009) then obtains his argument that the Sikh philosophy has been opposing the epistemic domination by maintaining particular moral vocabularies. Such theological commitments may serve as the economic ecological resistance when interpreted through the environmental justice theory (Temper et al., 2015).

Even by introducing these traditions into the environmental ethics debate, it is contended that ecological responsibility should not be framed such that it is necessarily put forward in terms of secular liberals. In its place, theological materials are useful to offer powerful incentives of ecological stewardship based on divine duty and group morality. This does not involve theological exclusivity but it acknowledges plural premises of environmental responsibility.

4.3 Convergence and Divergence

It can be seen that there is convergence and divergence in the two figures as the analysis shows. The struggle of Gandhi focuses on simple action without a fight and refusal to understand. He bases his critiques of industrial modernity on the ethical restraint and decentralisation (Kumarappa, 2010; Hardiman, 2003). Non-cooperation is an organised non-involvement in the injustices (Bilgrami, 2006).

The struggle of Guru Tegh Bahadur on the contrary, ends in martyrdom. Dhavan (2011) puts this act in the context of Sikh sacrificial sovereignty. Ethical restrictions to the imperial power are found in the defence of moral plurality. Martyrdom, unlike the Gandhian satyagraha that drives the oppressor to change towards a better life by persuading them through moral means, does not speculate of such a reconciliation happening.

The difference is more methodological: satyagraha involves prolonged nonviolent action; martyrdom is an ultimate moral state of affairs. But they both express that resistance is defence of moral order and not domination seeking. Political ecology demystifies the fact that the two reactions are a challenge to extractive and coercive systems of centralising authority (Robbins, 2012; Forsyth, 2003).

It is here in common that the ethical structure convenes; that of restraint and community-based sovereignty and the defence of plural life-worlds. The difference is in expression of a tactic there being nonviolent mobilisation tactic and sacrificial refusal tactic. Identifying convergence and difference will allow flattening of unique traditions but shedding light on the similarities of the socio-ecological commitments.

4.4 Implications for Contemporary Environmental Crisis

Extractive capitalism and centralised accumulated systems are a major cause of the modern day environmental crisis (Banerjee, 2008; Robbins, 2012). The literature on environmental justice records the unequal ecological effects on the vulnerable

5. CONCLUSION

This paper attempted to fill a conceptual gap in the modern literary authorities: indigenous resistance has generally been analysed in the context of political ecology, Gandhi in environmental ethics, and Guru Tegh Bahadur in Sikh resistance theology. These traditions are seldom at a common socio-

communities (Temper et al., 2015). Ethical orientations are provided by the comparative understanding of this study.

To begin with, the concept of Gandhian moral economy objectively criticises the logic of industrial growth that is inclined to modernity. Extractive expansion has its normative alternatives: decentralisation, self-sufficiency, and voluntary restraint (Kumarappa, 2010). These principles coincide with the demands of local sustainability and local governments.

Second, Sikh religious sovereignty is the reminder of the ethical frontiers of the centralised power. It reminds the modern movements that the ecological injustice is a result of political system that is unable to accept plural life-worlds (Escobar, 2008). Environmental justice is implemented through defence of diversity, whether it is religious, cultural, ecological, etc.

Third, both traditions accents on autonomy of the community. Political ecology proves the fact that sustainable governance can be found very often as outcome of lower management instead of high-level management (Robbins, 2012). This insight can be echoed to the Gandhian swaraj and the Sikh communal sovereignty that imply that a decentralised moral community is needed in environmental resilience.

Therefore, the socio-ecological reinterpretation not only adds historical thinking to it but normative resources to address ecological injustice. It indicates that extractive modernity could be opposed by resistance based on self-limitation of the ethical self, and divinely ordained obligation.

4.5 Theoretical Contribution: Ethics of Sacred Ecological Sovereignty

The main theoretical input of this research paper consists in the development of such a theory as Ethics of Sacred Ecological Sovereignty. Four strands are to be incorporated into this concept:

To begin with, the analytical approach to comprehending power, extraction, and resistance is given by political ecology (Robbins, 2012; Forsyth, 2003). Second, indigenous resistance scholarship emphasises the struggles with the displacement and epistemic control (Escobar, 2008; Temper et al., 2015). Third, there is Gandhian nonviolence and moral economy which express ecological restraint and decentralised autonomy (Kumarappa, 2010; Hardiman, 2003). Fourth, Sikh courage (Sikh martyrdom that occurred with Guru Tegh Bahadur) sets the moral limitations on imperial pressures (Dhavan, 2011; Mandair, 2009).

Sacred ecological sovereignty is an ethical statement that communities should not just hold political right over the life world, they have a duty of protecting relational life-worlds against extractive domination. Sovereignty is holy not so much in sectarian message but so much so as to be based in its infected inviolableness of moral commitments. It is ecological in the sense that it involves protection of plural forms of life which include social, cultural and environmental aspects.

This integrative theory extends environmental ethics out of secular paradigms and puts South Asian resistance tradition into an ecological discourse of the globe. The study provides a conceptual interface between environmental justice and theology by combining together political ecology, indigenous resistance theory, Gandhian moral economy, and Sikh sacrificial sovereignty.

ecological paradigm. The paper has presented arguments in line with a comparative reinterpretation that seeks to examine Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mahatma Gandhi as expressing resistance in a political context not necessarily as a matter of political dissent, but rather as an ethical expression of moral-ecological politics. Through the lens of having their own traditions- when overlaying them into each other, one has convergent adherence to sacred

sovereignty, societal independence, moral self-restraint, and opposition to extractive domination.

There were four main findings created in the analysis. To begin with, the sacred sovereignty as it is expressed in the Sikh resistance traditions may be explained as the protection of relational life-worlds against the domination of the epistemological as well as the politics. This sense of sovereignty goes beyond the territory that is sovereign to moral stewardship of community and plurality. Second, the culture of Sikh martyrdom sets moral boundaries to empire, similar to the modern-day environmental justice movements, which oppose extractive systems. Martyrdom can therefore serve as an assertion of the fact that there are moral lines that cannot be tampered with by the centralised power. Third, Gandhian morphological economy provides a rational ecological challenge of industrial modernity. Madhayana has gone on to argue in an extended critique of extractive capitalism through voluntary simplicity, decentralization and nonviolence which Gandhi extends to the economic life. Fourth, opposition to both traditions is developed as a kind of environmental ethics: non-cooperation and refusal to sacrifice is a kind of protective action to protect the plurality of morality and environment.

The major theoretical innovation that the present paper is making is the establishment of the Ethics of Sacred Ecological Sovereignty. It is a framework that incorporates the ideas of political ecology, indigenous resistance theory, Gandhian moral economy and Sikh moral courage. Another way it is revamped is that sovereignty is not about the domination but rather as to the ethical duty to protect relational worlds, social, cultural, and ecology, against extractive systems. With the integration of theological resources into the environmental ethics, the framework broadens the existing paradigms in the secular world, as well as positions the South Asian resistance traditions in the context of the ecological discussion of the world.

Nevertheless, this is a research with major limitations. First, it is based on the interpretative secondary scholarship as opposed

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to primary scriptural exegesis. Although this method provided the theoretical consistency, yet, as one may see, this research may be enriched in the future with the direct involvement with the primary texts of the Sikh and Gandhian corpora. Second, it is a conceptual comparative framework and not an empirical one. It does not study modern trends that expressly allege on these traditions. Sikh or Gandhian ethics Empirical case studies of environmental activism based on the Sikh ethics or Gandhian ethics would also put the framework to the test. Third, the article narrows down on two individuals within the framework of a historical situation; more extensive comparative research between more indigenous traditions would help bolster the generalizability of the offered model.

There are directions in which the future research can take place. One of the avenues is to investigate the meaning of martyrdom and sovereignty in ecological activism by contemporary Sikh communities. The other is the re-evaluation of the Gandhian decentralisation in the capacity to consider the contemporary controversies on climate governance and sustainable development. Besides, the given concept of the sacred ecological sovereignty may be perfected through the comparison with the other indigenous cosmologies and its applicability to various cultural settings evaluated.

To sum up, this socio-ecological re-reading reveals that the South Asian traditions of resistance can be important sources of normative assets to environmental ethics. Even though Guru Tegh Bahadur and Mahatma Gandhi differ in their approach and historical situation, they all overlap in the statement of resistance as ethical custodianship of plural moral-ecological orders. Given such a convergence, it makes political ecology and environmental philosophy more valuable in that indigenous theological traditions can be incorporated into the current discussions of sovereignty, justice, and sustainability.

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