

## ABSTRACT

With his sensuous aesthetics, spiritual insight and political perspicacity, Rabindranath Tagore was particularly preoccupied with the experiences of seeing (and not seeing), and the various aspects of visibility and invisibility which were manifested in all the literary forms/genres he dealt with. However, since plays are inherently audio-visual in nature (unlike the primarily read texts of other literary forms) his engagements/experimentations with vision and visuality in this field demand special interest and attention. Although it may be somewhat conventional and even convenient to interpret his negotiations with sight and in/visibility primarily in meta-sensory and metaphysical terms, one ought to be mindful of the fact that Tagore (also being an astute theatrician) himself on several occasions emphatically expressed the intense potency of the physicality of seeing. Despite this, his dynamic engagements with the theme of vision and visibility in his plays have hitherto remained unexplored, and it is to address this research gap in the field of Tagore studies that I embark on the present research.

By way of defining the scope of my dissertation, I seek to state that that I will specifically deal with the thematic textual analyses of the authorised printed versions of the plays through the lens of sight and visibility. However, although the performance-related aspects of seeing and sight (which are naturally intrinsic to the medium of theatre) would be kept beyond the immediate concern of this work, I admit that in the case of an artist like Tagore, who "combined in himself the roles of author, actor and director", it is in fact "impossible to keep drama and theatre segregated from each other."<sup>1</sup> As a result, by way of establishing my

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<sup>1</sup> Abhijit Sen, *Rabindranath Tagore's Theatre: From Page to Stage* (London: Routledge, 2022), 4.

arguments, I shall seek to substantiate the textual citations with occasional references to Tagore's unique dramaturgical innovations and his negotiations with the idioms of the stage.