

A SYNOPSIS ON
“IN SEARCH OF INDIANNESS: AN ANALYTICAL AND
PERFORMATIVE STUDY OF THE PLAY ‘RAJA’ BY
RABINDRANATH TAGORE.”
SUBMITTED TO
THE MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA
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- A wonderful allegorical play, Raja (published in 1911) or The King of Dark Chambers (published in 1914), the English version of the same play has been written way back in 1910 by the legendary poet, novelist and playwright Shri Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore’s theatrical imagination, political convictions, the idea of democracy and the nature of ideal governance portrayed in this play makes it challenging for any theatre person.
- Our country being the largest democratic country with the ongoing political ups and downs and the current need for ideal governance makes it more appealing for me to study the play ‘Raja’ rather thoroughly. After the Sanskrit classic theatre, Tagore’s work is considered as a bridge between the traditional and modern style of theatre. The search of indianness which was popular in those days when the play Raja was written also has a separate dimension. The connect between the nation as a whole and an individual and a Vis –a-Vis gets portrayed as the play echoes the very rhythm of unearthly and personal rousing of an individual in their eternal quest for truth and beauty.
- A lot has been written talked about and thought over Tagore as a novelist, poet and even a dramatist but concentrating on the theatrical justice that he has given to his writings is an avenue where more and more research is possible. The text part, the writer’s thoughts, the director who is to perform that play, his perseverance and more over the audience who is going to witness that performance, I believe all this is interconnected. And the common thread that links all of this together is the play itself. The textual analysis, the performative analysis, whether it has any regional elements, does it have any socio political context, all these aspects needed to be studied carefully. So mainly Shri. K. N. Panikkar and Shri Ratan Thiyam both doyens of theatre who have performed this play have their own unique style of production which needed to be studied.

- The Indian philosophy that is eminently seemed in their plays make their performances remarkable. The southern or Dravidian culture portrayed in Shri K. N. Panikkar's play has more focus on Natyashashtra which is based on the Rasa theory. And on the other hand Shri Ratan Thiyam's production style shows the visual images and body culture with a base of Zen philosophy, the Japanese and the Korean theory which also has focus on Natyashashtra. Both these theories are intermingled but separate. Thus when we are to think about the profound pathos that brightens up the lightening flash of eternal truth, a study about all three becomes extremely necessary.
- Many people have studied Tagore in their own capacity. But majority have done it keeping in mind his theoretical aspects, very less has been talked about his practicality. There are some contradictory statements done by renowned theatre personality Mr. Girish Karnad, he had said, (NDTV News 9/11/12) 'Tagore is a great poet but a second rate playwright'. People like Kaushik Sen (Bengali theatre personality) have said, 'Plays are meant to be staged, reading a play and staging it are two different things'. Similarly many theatre personalities have given their views about Tagore and his plays.
- A lot has been talked about both, K. N. Panikkar and Ratan Thiyam as great directors, but now another aspect of study can be finding the aesthetic connect and / or Indianness in terms of philosophy, customs, rituals and traditions amongst all of them. The dramatic text, the dramaturgical text and the performative text that is created during the process of the play keeping in mind interpretations and treatment given to the script had been studied in detail. The content and the form relationship in Tagore's play Raja and philosophical, regional and global thoughts perceived and expressed by directors mainly Shri K. N. Panikkar and Shri Ratan Thiyam have been focused. After post independence in the era of 70s and 80s, people like Habib Tanvir, B. V. Karanth, K. N. Panikkar, Ratan Thiyam etc. tried to reflect the tensions between the cultural past, moods, thoughts, deep Indian traditions and indeed finally between varied political visions, though the urban theatre mainly focused on political and social scenario of independent India, however the rural theatre concentrated only on religious and historical elements.

- Indian theatre which has major elements in exhibiting the Indian art and culture became contemporary with the introduction of modern theatrical style after independence era. Thus, the whole changes in the performance language and future language that can be created / developed needed to be studied. Searching for the Indian philosophical approach in their performances as they both have their unique style of production shall definitely be challenging and interesting. This is rather more interesting as a detailed study would be done about the interpretation among the script, Tagore's interpretation and commonness and diversity of both the directors.
- In totality, keeping the above discussed points in mind, the 'Thesis' is divided into seven chapters, which are as follows:

CHAPTER NO.	TITLE
1	RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND HIS CREATIVE – ARTISTIC WORLD
2	TEXTUAL ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE PLAY 'RAJA' BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE
3	THE THEATRE OF K. N. PANIKKAR
4	PERFORMATIVE ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE PLAY 'RAJA' BY K. N. PANIKKAR
5	THE THEATRE OF RATAN THIAM
6	PERFORMATIVE ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE PLAY 'RAJA' BY RATAN THIAM
7	NARRATING THE NATION

CHAPTER: 1

RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND HIS CREATIVE – ARTISTIC WORLD

- In this chapter, Rabindranath Tagore's 'Artistic and Creative Journey', 'Activities Timeline' is analyzed with this detailed study of 'The Dramatic World of Rabindranath Tagore' has been discussed.

→ **Tagore's Bio-Literary Chronicle**

→ **Tagore As Dramatist**

→ **Tagore As Theatrician**

→ **Tagore's Vision of India**

CHAPTER: 2

TEXTUAL ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE PLAY 'RAJA' BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE

- Since the play is originally written in Bengali only the English and Hindi versions had been studied, but the original text would be kept in mind. In this chapter I have been included the theoretical study of the script, what are the socio – political or cultural aspects in the play as explained by the writer himself and also any other views or interpretation means textual / contextual analysis.

→ **Symbolic Drama**

→ **Source of the Story**

→ **Textual Analytical Study**

→ **Philosophical and Aesthetical Perception**

CHAPTER: 3

THE THEATRE OF K. N. PANIKKAR

- In this chapter, Panikkar's 'Artistic and Creative Journey', 'Theatre Activities Timeline' is analyzed with this detailed study of 'Panikkar's Theatre' has been discussed in which plays that have been directed as well as written and directed by him and evaluating...

⇒ **Synopsis of the Play**

⇒ **Interpretation with Director's Note**

⇒ **Production Note** on the basis of his path-breaking plays, a case study will be prepared and discussed; which are –

→ **Karnabharam**

→ **Urubhangam**

→ **Abhijnana Shakuntalam**

→ **Vikramorvashiyam**

→ **Kalivesham**

→ **Theyya Theyyam**

- **CREATIVE USE OF KERALA'S MAJOR PERFORMATIVE ART FORMS IN PANIKKAR'S THEATRE:**

→ **Kutiyattam – The Traditional Sanskrit Theatre of Kerala**

→ **Kathakali – Classical Dance of Kerala**

→ **Teyyam – The Ritual Tradition of Kerala**

→ **Mohiniattam - Classical Dance of Kerala**

→ **Kalaripayattu – Martial Art Form of Kerala**

- **“THOURYATHRIKAM” - THEATRICAL LANGUAGE OF PANIKKAR’S THEATRE:**

⇒ The “Macro Text Vs Micro Text” means -

→ “Dramatic Structure Vs Performance Structure”

→ “Narration Vs Action”

→ “Event Vs Character”

→ “Vachaya Vs Suchya”

→ “Sahitya Vs Abhinaya”; which is a palimpsest meeting of the “Classic” and the “Contemporary” on the grounds of the relation between “Narration and Action” and ultimately transforms in the “Rasa”.

CHAPTER: 4

PERFORMATIVE ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE PLAY ‘RAJA’ BY

K. N. PANIKKAR

- **METHODOLOGY (MACRO TEXT/SAHITYA VS MICRO TEXT/ABHINAYA):**

➔ **PERFORMANCE TEXT:**

⇒ Dramatis Personae (In Order of Appearance):

⇒ Synopsis of The Play:

⇒ Interpretation with Director’s Note:

➔ **SCENE WISE ANALYTICAL AND PERFORMATIVE STUDY WITH ILLUSTRATION:**

CHAPTER: 5

THE THEATRE OF RATAN THIAM

- In this chapter, Ratan Thiam's 'Artistic and Creative Journey', 'Theatre Activities Timeline' is analyzed with this detailed study of 'Ratan Thiam's Theatre' has been discussed in which plays that have been directed as well as written and directed by him and evaluating...

⇒ **Synopsis of the Play**

⇒ **Interpretation with Director's Note**

⇒ **Production Note** on the basis of his path-breaking plays, a case study will be prepared and discussed; which are –

→ **Chakravyuha**

→ **Uttar Priyadarshi**

→ **When We Dead Awaken**

- **CREATIVE USE OF MANIPUR'S MAJOR PERFORMATIVE ART FORMS IN RATAN THIAM'S THEATRE:**

→ **Lai Haroba – Ritual Dance of Manipur**

→ **Ras Leela - Classical Dance of Manipur**

→ **Thang Ta – Martial Art Form of Manipur**

→ **Nat Sankirtan / Pung Cholom – Cymbal / Drum Dance of Manipur**

→ **Wari Leeba – Story Telling Form of Manipur**

- **THEATRICAL LANGUAGE OF RATAN THIAM'S THEATRE:**

CHAPTER: 6

PERFORMATIVE ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE PLAY ‘RAJA’ BY RATAN THIAM

- **METHODOLOGY (MACRO TEXT/SAHITYA VS MICRO TEXT/ABHINAYA):**

➔ **PERFORMANCE TEXT:**

- ⇒ Dramatis Personae (In Order of Appearance):
- ⇒ Synopsis of The Play:
- ⇒ Interpretation with Director’s Note:

➔ **SCENE WISE ANALYTICAL AND PERFORMATIVE STUDY WITH
ILLUSTRATION:**

CHAPTER: 7

NARRATING THE NATION

- My contribution would be concentrating on play ‘Raja’ in the theatrical aspect considering the playwright and directors contribution but most importantly the “Indianness” brought forward by Rabindranath Tagore, K. N. Panikkar and Ratan Thiyam will be a new dimension for those who want to learn about the “Indian Philosophy, Customs, Rituals, Traditional Approach and Aesthetics”, in their artistic and creative works.
- **Nationalism in the works of Tagore**
 - **Indigenous Approach in the works of K. N. Panikkar**
 - **Indigenous Approach in the works of Ratan Thiyam**
 - **Comparative Analysis on “New Cultural Identity” by Rabindranath Tagore, K. N. Panikkar and Ratan Thiyam.**
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