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IMPROBABLE FOOTPRINTS: Cinematic turns in Tagore's literary works

### Abstract

Tagore spent the last fifteen years of his life making enthusiastic forays into hitherto uncharted artistic territories. Remarkable was his intense engagement with visual and audio-visual media, like painting and dance, including dance drama. At the same time, he developed a complex relationship with a non-traditional medium—cinema. He had realised that cinema had acquired a unique power to manipulate time and space, in a manner different from that of literature. And he detested cinema's servility to literature. He felt that cinema deserved to evolve and be respected as an autonomous art form, on par with literature. His own direct engagements with the medium (including writing a scenario, and supervising / directing a film production) left him unfulfilled. But his respect for the medium found subtle expression in assimilating some of cinema's structural elements in his own literary outputs—in novels, short stories and poems even. Through these efforts he was facilitating "literary adaptation of the techniques of cinema" in a reversal to the established norm of cinema's adaptation of literature.