

# Political Consciousness in Jibanananda Das's Poetry

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## Abstract

This study aims to continue the argument of Clinton B. Seely in *A Poet Apart* on the political consciousness of Jibanananda Das's poetry. Seely limits his discussion only in the *Darkness of Seven Stars (Satti Tarar Timir)*. The thesis draws upon Seeley's idea to apply political consciousness in Das's other works. Das's keen insight and poetic diction never avoided politics in his poetry from the *Fallen Feathers (Jhara Palak, 1927)* to *Darkness of Seven Stars (Satti Tarar Timir, 1948)*. Despite his love for flora and fauna as symbols and metaphors, his poems contain his consciousness on love and death, time triangle, historical sense, and human emotions. Das's poems refer to an existential crisis, collective consciousness, Freudian dream concepts; and his frequent use of symbols, mixed metaphors, allegory kept political ideas silent in his poetry. This study will be framed according to Susan Sontag's *The Aesthetics of Silence*, "modern art thus transmits in full the alienation produced by historical consciousness... art that is "silent" constitute one approach to this visionary and ahistorical condition." An archival methodology is followed to justify Das's ideas of politics, historical and cultural views and critique of contemporary political reality. His continuous transformation in poetic philosophy and his intellectual engagement with the conflict between the material and the non-material have made him universal both as a poet and a human. This study thus traces Das's gradual changes of political consciousness in his published volumes during his lifetime and posthumously.

**Keywords:** Colonialism, Symbolism, Imperialism, Historical consciousness, Realism, Time and Space.

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## I. Introduction

Jibanananda Das (1899-1954) is arguably the greatest modern Bengali poet. He was hardly known outside of Bengal during his lifetime. He becomes popular with the next generation. 'Hungry Generation' is known to be inspired by his writing. During the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971, his poetry from *Rupashi Bangla* inspired the freedom fighters to achieve independence. Since then, Das has become widely known as "The poet of Beautiful Bengal" (Rupashi Banglar Kobi). "Jibanananda is a genuine poet, poet of nature", said Buddhadeb Basu (365). He was one of the few friends of Das, among the contemporary poets and writers, Basu first realized Das's eminence as a poet: "His poetry is less intellectual rather than sensual. Less spiritual but more physical" (Basu 365). Basu wrote it during 1936 in an essay on *Dhusar Pandulipi* after publishing it as Das's second volume. Tagore praises Das's poetry as *chitrarupamay*. Since then, we have discovered another Jibanananda. An inverse Jibanananda, whom we never knew before. His poems are not just a type of memorable speech or romantic poetry. Das writes, "historical sense is the skeleton and a transparent time sense is the brain of poetry" (186). Das is a time traveler; his historical consciousness makes him futuristic. A historically conscious poet cannot escape politics. As one of the driving elements of society, politics is scattered throughout his poetry. But in different forms and views from his young age to the mature stages.

Jibanananda Das born in Barishal on 17 February, 1899. His grandfather Sarbnanda Das was one of the early leaders of the reformist Brahmo Samaj movement in Barishal. He migrated from Bikrampur to Barishal. His son Satyananda, Das's father, holds the leading position among Brahmo society, a headmaster, essayist, and founder editor of *Brahma Badi*, a journal regarding Brahmo literature and social issues. His mother Kusum Kumari Das was a renowned poet, one of the inspirational female poets during her time. She is mostly known for her "An Exemplary Boy" (*Adarsha Chele*) piece. Jibanananda spent most of his life in Barishal and Calcutta. He received his Master's degree in English from Calcutta University in 1921. The following year he joined Calcutta city college as a lecturer. During graduation at the Presidency College in 1919, his first poem

was published in *Brahma Badi*. Later he became a regular contributor of poetry in various magazines such as *Kallol*, *Kali O Kolom*, and *Pragati*. His first volume *Jhara Palak* was published in 1927. It was the arrival of a modernist in the post-Rabindranath era of Bengali poetry and literature. His first volume is not a typical Jibanananda. His individual mastery in poetry has become explicit and fluent since 1930. He was the first Bengali poet who was accused of obscenity in poetry for *Campe*. Das devoted himself to studying the English language and literature since 1923. It builds the structure of a modern poet in a post-WWI colonial society.

Jibanananda, as a true devotee of literature, accumulates the essence of western literature and philosophy. Then incorporates these modern literary techniques into Bengali poetry. His use of symbols and mixed metaphors has kept his political consciousness silent. According to Susan Sontag's study of *The Aesthetics of Silence*:

"Silence also exists as a punishment- self-punishment. When artists demonstrate that one's very sanity may be the price of trespassing the accepted frontiers of consciousness; and, of course, in penalties (ranging from censorship and physical destruction of art-works to fines, exile, a prison for the artist) meted out by "society" for the artist's spiritual nonconformity or for subversion of the group sensibility" (6).

This statement is also applicable to Jibanananda Das. SajaniKanta Das accused him of obscenity in *Campe*. But Das later in an essay "CampeProsongge" defended himself. He writes,

"*Campe* is in fact a song of incapability. Song of depression and shelter lessness. We are helpless to nature and evolution. *Campe* is just an illusion of it. ... I know there is no place for experimenting with intellectuality. It is kind of blasphemy in our literary society" (242, my translation).

Jibanananda identifies his critics as prurient. And he believes if he were at the western literary circles, *Campe* would be a piece of the discussion. Das understood the nullification of thought process, and said in *KobitarKotha*,

"Not everyone is a poet, only a few can. Those who have imagination and intellectuality, and the essence of empiricism, can relate human history with the help of modern ideas and literary techniques in their poetry" (33, my translation).

Jibanananda is recognized as the first surrealist in Bengali poetry. Literary movements in Europe encouraged Das to incorporate modern literary techniques. His poetry after 1930 breaks the boundary of consciousness. Using various uncommon symbols and metaphors, experimenting forms make his poetry multidimensional. Not only *Banalata Sen*, but also in *Mahaprithibi* and *SattiTaratimir*. Love for nature and motherland, sexual love for women, along with human emotion, grief, poverty, and hunger are merged simultaneously in his poems. Das is the first Bengali poet who used myth and archetype to narrate primeval reality. For this reason, the tales and characters of Indian, Egyptian, and Greek mythology are common in his poetry. Post-world wars crisis, ongoing communal conflicts, riots, droughts, epidemics, colonial repression, everything are the elements of his grotesque description. The pain of the modern mechanical age annoyed him. So, Das's poetry is the reflection of this rotten political reality. Das is notable for his local and regular use of unpoetic words. So, his diction turns to his individuality and makes him untouchable. In his early poetry (1920-1936), Das used many Arabic or Persian words, during the 1930s he started using pure Bengali or local words. But later (1937-48) his use of English words along with Bengali in parallel makes his poetry universal. Closer to modern life. Seems like an aerial view from space in *Mahaprithibi* and *SattiTaratimir*. These two volumes portray the political thinking of Das more closely. He dreamt of a socialist system. As he writes, "that dreamland is still far away" (*EishobDinratri*, my translation). But he has little hope yet. Das never declares his political identity, not in poems nor in essays. So, my argument is that a stream of periodical political consciousness beautifies his poetry silently.

Clinton B. Seely investigated political consciousness in Jibanananda Das's poetry in his *A Poet Apart*. Chapter Six, titled, "The Poetry of Politics," closely reads *SattiTaratimir*, and explored politics within some selected poems. This study expands upon Clinton B. Seely's idea to understand Das's political consciousness. It examines three different decades of his life. It is a representation of Das's constantly changing perception of political consciousness from *Jhara Palak* to *SattiTaratimir*. I have used an archival method for my research using secondary materials to forward my arguments on Das's politics.

The ideas of politics are silent because of Das's unique poetic pattern. His tendency to go back to the root of history allows him to use myth and mythical elements in his poetry. Das's choice of words always seems prose-oriented. His poetic diction never followed typical fashions. He creates his own poetic style and collection of words. He violates language norms in his poems. He knew that a single word is worthless, but when a word sits beside another then the context creates the poetic attributes. So, he blended the local and foreign words along with other words that have come from Bangla and or its ancestors. Das is the master of using adjectives

and metaphors. His thoughts and consciousness, feelings, and culture allow him to keep silent his political statements. During the 1930s, the genre of Bengali poetry has changed route. Among the contemporaries, Das himself was one of them. This period is very important because the WWI was already over but the impacts are still going on. The great depression begins and the WWII is coming. Russian revolution, then the rise of fascism, are the main reasons to incorporate political ideas in his poetry. Bengali poetry finds its new route since then.

To explore political consciousness in Jibanananda Das's poetry, this research is divided into two timelines: one is from 1920-1936 can be described as the timeline of his 'politics of aesthetics' and then from 1937-1948 can be called 'politics of resistance'. It will help to identify and understand his gradual changes in political. During his early life, Das was influenced by Chittaranjan Das's nationalist political philosophy and the Swadeshi movement for Indian independence. We found a glimpse of these ideas in *Jhara Palak* (1927). Though *Dhusar Pandulipi* was published in 1936 most of the poems were written during the 1920s. *Rupashi Bangla* is published posthumously but it is found as a manuscript of 1934 in his trunk. In these volumes, the political consciousness of Das is not flourished as his own style. Rather we found the nationalist political ideas, communal harmony, using of myth and local legends. But after 1936, Das was seeking for greater consciousness. *Banalata Sen* (1942) earned him reputation and demonstrates his own style of poetry. *Banalata Sen* and *Rupashi Bangla* are the two collections where Das worships nature as a form of a woman. In *Banalata Sen* he discovers world history and worships nature in form of a woman as a lover. But in *Rupashi Bangla* Das worships Bengal's nature in a motherly manner. His use of myth and legends, imagery, rhetoric, and symbolism are part of his politics of aesthetics. On the other hand, his politics of resistance began in 1937. Since then, he used to criticize the colonialists, imperialists, and fascists directly in *Mahaprithibi* (1944) and *Satti Tarar Timir* (1948). In these two volumes, Das has observed world history by going beyond time and space. It seems an aerial view from the top of the globe in *Mahaprithibi* and from the center of the universe in *Satti Tarar Timir*. It allows Das to predict the grotesque reality of the mundane future. So, this study will explore the following questions:

1. Does Das's political consciousness lie in his social and historical senses?
2. Is Das's poetry free from the rules of time and space?
3. Does Das want to go back to the prehistoric age by rejecting modernity?

The study on the "Political Consciousness in Jibanananda Das's Poetry" is vast area of research. After Das's death his family had found many unpublished poetry and prose. According to Gautam Mitra, Das has written an uncountable number of poems, 15 novels, and 127 short stories (Mitra 92, 1). Many of them have been published posthumously, and some yet to be published. Time limit is a big limitation for this study. Political senses in Das's poetry are explicit in his poems since 1940. But this study only limits to find his gradual political consciousness among Das's published volumes.

## II. A Survey of Das's Political Poems

Jibanananda Das is one of the first Bengali modernist who is conscious of history and society. "Das specially carries his historical consciousness to go beyond spiritual barrenness" (Tripathi 99). There is no pleasure, love, light of hope, no healing for pains, no peace, and belief in human life. We hear the echoes of these broken columns in his poetry. Das believed to go beyond the narrowness is the only way to gain love. So, we find his screaming for love and beauty in his poetry. Das's early poetry is written in a lyrical manner from *Jhara Palak* to *Dhusar Pandulipi*. But later, Das broke this boundary and took his poetic senses to beyond time and spaces in *Banalata Sen*, *Mahaprithibi* and *Satti Tarar Timir*. *Rupashi Bangla* is also included as it is written in 1934 as a manuscript. So, this chapter will explore his political consciousness among these published poetry volumes in his lifetime.

### 2.1 *Jhara Palak (Fallen Feathers, 1927)*

*Fallen Feathers* is the first volume of poetry by Jibanananda Das. Published in 1927, these verses are Das's early life poetry. In this collection, we find his early life political consciousness. As a young poet Das was inspired by the *Swadeshi movement*. He gets the idea of practicing secularism from his family. Das writes against religious communalism. He invites the Hindus and Muslims to build solidarity to bring independence in "Hindu-Muslim". His early days of poetry are inspired by Tagore's transcendentalism and rebellious tones of Nazrul Islam. The communal conflict between two of these major religious groups in the subcontinent has a long history. The colonizers used this historical conflict as a political tool, which resulted in the 'Partition of Bengal' in 1905. Though it was canceled in 1911, these two groups never came together. Das invites them for brotherhood and writes,

"Who says Hindus are the only nation in India?"

They tied up the nuptial chain to Muslim's hand" (*Hindu-Muslim*, mytranslation).

The land of India is not only for the Hindus but also Muslims who have the same rights. He sings the songs of humanity. "For the Youths" (*NabaNabinerLagi*) and "To the Youths" (*KishorerProti*), the implicit meaning of these poems is nearly identical. Both poems invite the youths of India to raise their voices against the British from a greater Indian perspective. Because youths are the future of a nation. If they do not raise their voices the future of the Bengali nation will remain under the British. Das's political consciousness is not flourished in this collection. From his diary, we know that he was inspired by Chittaranjan Das. Famously known as Deshbandhu, a Bengali nationalist leader, fought for the Bengal Pact. In "Deshbandhu", Das praises Chittaranjan, from a nationalist perspective. Das compared Deshbandhu to Hindu mythical saint Dadhichi and Arjuna from *Mahabharata*. He writes,

"The sound of *Gandibain* informs the approach of your revolting

Indeed, you're the new ambidextrous for India's liberty" (my translation).

It is clear that the ideology of Chittaranjan attracts Das as a young poet. In "Sailor" (*Nabik*), we can get in touch with the historical and social consciousness of Das in the *Fallen Feathers*. Where he refers to Prithviraj, who was killed by Muhammad Bin Ghori in the 'Battle of Tarain'. Das indicates the downfall of Prithviraj as the new era of Muslim rule in the subcontinent. Some other poems from this volume such as "Egypt" (*Mishor*), "Pyramid", and "Desert sand" (*Morubalu*) contain Das's historical consciousness but his political consciousness is confined to nationalist ideologies. Das will start to flourish individually as a poet and thinker in the second half of his life. From *Gray Manuscript* to the *Darkness of the Seven Stars*.

## 2.2 *Rupashi Bangla (Beautiful Bengal, 1934)*

*Beautiful Bengal (Rupashi Bangla)* is one of the finest poetry collections in Bengali literature. The title itself symbolizes Bengal territory. This collection is a tale of local legend, myth, and history. The natural beauty of Bengal attracts Das. These poems visualize us the frame-by-frame representations of natural landscapes, somewhere in detail. Das is so obsessed with Bengal's nature and he wants to come back again and again to the Bengal region. So, he desires, "Go wherever you desire- I'll remain alongside Bengal's Bank" (Alam 43). Das always walks through the history of civilization. In *Rupashi Bangla*, we can find Das as a regionalist but he is not confined within Bengal. He writes,

"The tales of the earth live on forever

Through Assyria in the dust- Babylon in ashes- lie" (Alam 43).

Das's historical consciousness has brought his focus on mythical politics. Then he posits his political ideas subtly with the vivid imagery of Bengal's natural beauty and landscapes. In "I have seen Bengal's face" he talks about Behula from *Manasa Mangal Kavya*. Behula, who danced in Indra's court to save her husband Lakhindar. Das describes it as Bengal's rivers, fields, flowers, wailing like strings of bells on Behula's feet while her dancing at *Amara*. In "One day your child will leave your lap behind", Das refers to Lakhindar. By saying he would like to die by grasping *Gangur's* scent of waves on his face. It indirectly indicates himself as Lakhindar. The idea of "self" in each poem brings his collective consciousness to *Beautiful Bengal*. This volume contains a Bengali collective consciousness. In the course of history, Bengal has seen many political and social upheavals from the Pala regime to Bakhtiyar Khilji. Later from the Mughals to the British. Das incorporated all these political events in a sonnet "Deshbandhu: in memories of 1326-1332". He writes:

"I know Ballal Sen will not come, even Roxygenakar-

Deshbandhu comes like the wavy Padma

as if a storm has come to the gathering of tired *Shalik* birds" (my translation).

Das silently raised his voice against colonialism in Bengal from the twelfth century. In this line, Das implies that Deshbandhu is a light of hope for Bengal. The people of Bengal are a metaphor for a tired *Shalik* bird. The word blue (*nil*) has come up many times in *Rupashi Bangla*. The first line of "Deshbandhu", "when the twilight wind singly touches the branch of banyan in Bengal's blue forest and steppe," (my translation). The significance of the word *nil* (blue) refers to the 'Indigo revolt' in Bengal in the nineteenth century. When the East India Company forced the farmers to cultivate indigo that caused some famines. Das uses the word *nil* many times in his poems to portray dejection and solitude. For instance, he writes

"If I'd drop down in the blue haze of autumn, or Broken abbey turns to bluish because of alga," (my translation).

The color of alga is green. Das's glance finds it blue on the abbey because many people die due to revolt and later on famine. Das's political consciousness is silently screaming throughout the branch of his uttered sentences in *Beautiful Bengal*. He doubted that again Bengal would divide soon. Because of those uncertainties, Das titled his collection *BanglarTrostoNilima*.

### 2.3 *Dhusar Pandulipi* (Grey Manuscript, 1936)

Jibanananda Das's second volume of verse *Grey Manuscript* (*Dhusar Pandulipi*) was published in 1936. In this collection, Das has come out from the influences of his contemporaries and manifested his originality. Political consciousness in Das's poetry has begun to flourish from this collection. Das never directly engaged in any political party and activity. But he is always conscious of politics. Political ideas in his poetry have come with the manifestation of nature. He is not spiritual rather more physical and sensual. For example, he writes in "Sensation" (*Bodh*),

"Into the half-light and shadow, I go.

Within my head not a dream but a sensation is at work" (Seely 64).

In this verse, Das opens himself as an individualist. He is continuously thinking about life, human psychology. An existential crisis is arising in his psyche. It shows his alienation and skepticism towards humans, women, and society. There is a greater consciousness that gradually transforms thinking and brings him out from influences by others. Das illustrates his political views in *Campe*. Here the doe is a symbol of the oppressed.

He writes:

"I can no longer sleep;

As I lie here

I hear gunshots;

Again, I hear the sounding guns," (Seely 103).

Sounds like someone is successfully hunting in the forest. The hunter symbolizes the colonizers. The sound of firing indicates the modern invention of weapons that helped the colonizers to grab power. His frequent use of symbols allows him to represent the vultures as the symbol of the colonizers.

"Vultures sail the whole afternoon from field to field through Asia's skies," (Seely 114).

This line shows the authenticity of his political consciousness. Das refers to mythical politics and historical perspective by referring to mythical elephants and the word Huns. Huns are a symbol of a barbarous people. It is usually used to refer to the German soldiers in World War I or II. "Vultures" (*Shakun*) is a perfect demonstration of Das's political consciousness in *Dhusar Pandulipi*.

### 2.4 *Banalata Sen* (1942)

*Banalata Sen*, a single poem earns Das huge popularity among the readers. It is the only volume of verse for which Das received his only prize in his lifetime. However, readers have recognized *Banalata Sen* as a volume of love poems. Most of these verses are written between 1931 to 1936. Das is kind of a poet who never ignores politics even in his love poems. For instance, "If I were" (*Ami Jodi Hotam*), "Windy Night" (*HawarRat*), "Darkness" (*Andhakar*), *Suchetana*, and *Shyamali*. *Suchetana* refers to Das's political and social consciousness. This volume illustrates an unstable colonial society. Calcutta, once a village was developed by the British as a city. Das predicts the effects of industrialization will hamper rural harmony. He writes, "one day Calcutta will be the city of love and joy" (*Suchetana*, my translation). In the second stanza, he talks about colonial repression. "The world is terribly sick now" (*Suchetana*, my translation). Colonialism came to the subcontinent through the ocean route. They rule this territory and transfer the profits to their country by ship. But people here are facing drought and dying of starvation. Das's view finds those stolen crops as the corpse of Bengal's people.

Again, Das refers to colonialism in *Shyamali* by saying "Young men traveled around the world to change their fate by digging for gold" (my translation). Das can hear the sound of crying of those young and can feel the pain of empty ports at noon. The word 'river of blood' directly refers to the revolts against the colonial power. The title *Shyamali* symbolizes the country, or more specifically Bengal territory. Das's idea of love is not only confined to women. He talks about his love for his country by creating an image and name of a woman. Then he runs through the course of history with human emotion. It shows his love and frustration for a lady. But indeed, this love is for his country. Das acclimatized the technique of hiding the actual meaning under love ideas. This is why political consciousness in his poetry is screaming silently.

### 2.5 *Mahaprithibi* (The Great World, 1944)

*The Great World* (*Mahaprithibi*), the title itself a symbol. *Mahaprithibi* has first used in the "Prayers" (*Prarthana*) poem. Das writes,

"Oh, Father! give us the ultimate vision:

or why are we dying in the great world?" (My translation).

Seely experiences *Prarthana* as a prayer song. But in this poem, Das quickly summarizes a historical journey of human civilization. He is not praying to any god; he is just saying his own words. He requesting god to give

psychological knowledge to humans during intercourse. Then Das acts like asking to god "Who builds the Pyramids, and who has broken?" He symbolizes the Pyramids as a tool of politics. In the *Great World* Das has looked into this world from the roof. Poems in this volume seem like an aerial frame. Another politically charged poem is "Words of that Wise" (*Bolillo Ashwattha Sei*). The word *Ashwattha*, in Bengali, is a symbol of a wise man. In the disguise of a wise man, it is Das himself. He describes the horror of the partition of Bengal because of communal conflict in the early twentieth century. He says religious national identity could not change people's ultimate sufferings in this capitalist colonial world. In *Parichayak*, Das indicates the language politics of Bengali and Urdu. Politics of Language is one of the common tools of communal conflict. And language is one of the indicators of a particular nation. Das does not go to the root rather he travels across the world with human emotion and grief. Again, his political consciousness is clearly expressed in "SomeChorus" (*BibhinnoChorus*). He writes,

"The notion of history has gone to the far past  
Enemies and friends heading towards the western Sun," (my translation).

The word 'western sun' (*Paschim Surya*) is a symbol of colonialism. An ultimate uncertainty playing in the poet's psyche. Using Dodo as a symbol indicates the uncertainty and ultimate turnover of human civilization. Das refers to spiritual politics in *Mono Kanika*. He knows war is a tool of business monopolization. Imperialists are more interested in making a profit and ruling the world. They have no morality and humanity as they use common people and soldiers as the tools of their power and politics. So, Das writes:

"The words of Nagarjun, Kautilya, Kapil, Charbak blowing in the wind  
Or the words of Edith, Molina, and other nurses,  
Continuous war for the sake of business" (*MonoKanika*, my translation).

Identical politics is also found in *SubinayMustafi* and *AnupamTrivedi*. In disguise these two names, both are Das himself. Mustafi and Trivedi are his alter egos. Trivedi reads Plato, Marx, Hegel, Freud but he denies all. As Das states:

"The tree at Gaya where Buddha Gained enlightenment,  
And Stories of his birth and death; Hegel and Marx,  
Had once pulled him by his ear, here and there" (*AnupamTrivedi*, Alam, 92).

The tone of this poem screams that Trivedi also achieves enlightenment. Modern human life is ultimately suffering. Trivedi rejects all political theorists as well as politicians and says Totem is more loveable than a lover. The word totem refers to his primitive idea of a society, primitive communism. Suddenly he turns to love by symbolizing a woman's heart as a totem of a camel. And Das ends with Trivedi's dialectical conflict. The depth of this conflict gradually transformed to enlightenment. Das has realized time through his journey across human history and narrates from the top as he is omnipresent.

## 2.6: *SattiTaratimir (Darkness of Seven Stars, 1948)*

The *Darkness of Seven Stars* (1948) is Das's most politically acclaimed volume of verse according to Seely and other critics. The horror of World War II has flurried in his poems. The increasing movement for Indian independence, communal riots, famines, and partition of Bengal along with the political upheavals across the world are the subsistence of this volume. For example, Das writes in "Dance of Twilight" (*GodhuliSondhirNritya*):

"Yet they sense in the decrepit roar of cannons  
That Shanghai is being destroyed" (Seely 153).

These lines refer to the 'Battle of Shanghai' in the second Sino-Japanese war in 1937. Love is an integral part of his poem. He can escape politics but not love. That is why Das incorporates love ideas with his political consciousness. He believes if men love their women they could not engage in war for trade. Das understands that the second world war is coming. The title *GodhuliSondhirNritya* is a symbol of ultimate darkness, the upcoming world war. We find evidence of the Sino-Japanese war again in the last two lines of *Bhashito*. During World War II, hatred, violence, and animosity were at their peak for power and domination. A man-made famine runs through the streets of Bengal. Das does not escape from this cruel reality in his poems. "Some Chorus" (*BibhinnoChorus*), "The Crop Fields" (*Khete-prantore*), and *Pratiti* are the poems where we can find his social and economic consciousness during the famine of 50 in Bengal. We can assume that these poems are written during 1942/43. Das mentions 1942 thrice in the poems. These verses are the songs of the farmers of Bengal. Their misery, grief, and straits are the fuel of civilization. "Night's Chorus" (*Ratrir Chorus*) is another political poem by Das. He says,

"The sun had shone for long in skies like Egypt.  
Stars had kept vigil for a long time over China and *Kuruvarsha*" (Alam 108).

The word *Kuruvarshais* metaphorical here. According to mythology, India is one of the greatest places on the earth. Accordingly, the Kuru was the ruling empire of the *Mahabharata*. Das uses the word *Kuruvarshato* show

his eastern superiority along with Chinese and Egyptian civilization. But he denies the western imperialism when he composes:

“In the west, Europe is like a ghost;  
In the east, Asia's ghost rears its head;  
Africa's godhead is animal-like, dark;  
Yankee transactions begin and end with dollars” (*Ratrir Chorus*, Alam, 109).

Das rejects the vague ideas of democracy, religion, and rituals in the *Bibhinno Chorus*. Das says people have no affection for people. Though they are sexually obsessed, there is no love because of hesitation and mis faith. “His Highness” (*Shamarurha*) is intellectually political. Because he invites his critics to write poems. Das criticized the critics in this poem. Writing poetry is a process of continuous stimulation of mind and thought. His other politically charged poems discussed by Clinton B. Seely in *The Darkness of Seven Stars* are “Wristwatch”, “The Sailor” (*Nabiki*), “Song of the Destruction of Darkness” (*Timirhananer Gan*), “Sunlit” (*Sourakarajjwal*), “Darkness” (*Andhakar*), “On Night of the Winter Solstice” (*Makarasankrantir Rate*), and “New Entrance” (*Uttar Prabesh*).

### III. ‘Politics of Aesthetics’ in Jibanananda Das's poetry (1920-1936)

Jibanananda Das, one of the early and arguably the greatest Bengali modernist poets. Modernism in world literature was introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century. In Bengal, modernism has come with the writings of Rabindranath Tagore, Madhusudan Dutt but it has flourished with the writings of Jibanananda Das, Buddhadeb Basu, Sudhinranath Dutta, Bishnu Dey, and others. Das started his literary career as a student. His mother Kusumkumari Das was a renowned poet and his father Satyananda Das was a teacher and editor of *Brahmabadi*. Das was a regular writer in *Brahmabadiduring* his student life. He was a student of English literature and belonged to a cultural elite family in Barishal. He was inspired by the medieval Bengali literature and poets. Mythical references from ancient literature are extensively used in his writing but in different forms and views throughout his life. He was familiar with *Manasa MangalKavya*, *Chandi Mangal*, Chandidas's *VaishnavaPada Vali*, and ancient literature like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. So, his early poetry sounds lyrical. Das's desire of being original to his feelings pushed him to experiment with words, rhymes, meters, and images with Satyendranath's pattern of rhythm. We find this type of evidence in the *Fallen Feathers* (*JharaPalak*). Das's first volume of verse, published in 1927.

Political consciousness in Das's early poetry is highly influenced by nationalist ideas and the *swadeshi* movement in this time. More specifically Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. The founder and leader of the Swaraj Party. Who believes in Hindu-Muslim unity, co-operation, and communal harmony for the movements of Indian independence. Das pays his tribute to Deshbandhu several times through his poems. We can find the tone of communal harmony and co-operation for independence in these poems: *Hindu-Muslim*, *Deshbandhu*, “Nikhil, my brother” (*NikhilAmarVai*). During the post-WWI era, Indian people continuously revolted against the British regime. The Swadeshi movement combines a Bengali collective consciousness for independence. Some political events at the beginning of the twentieth century: partition of Bengal in 1905, due to colonial administrative advantages, led to communal riots, had great impacts on Das's psyche. It flourished later in his volume of Sonnet *Beautiful Bengal* (*RupashiBangla*). However, the first world war, communist revolution against the Tsar's feudal system in the Soviet Union had a great impact on Das's later poetry.

The glimpse of Das's historical and social consciousness we find in “Sailor” (*Nabik*), “Desert Sand” (*Morubalu*), *Pyramid*, and “Egypt” (*Mishor*) with Satyendranath's style of rhythm and meter. Das never engaged in any political party. He had no particular political ideology. We find him as a regionalist in his early poems. He is so obsessed with the beauty of Bengal. As a follower of Deshbandhu's ideology, he was influenced by nationalist ideas. But his keen insight and wisdom allow him to think universally. As a student of English literature, Das was familiar with western literature and philosophy. Some argue that Das's poetry represents Bengal's reality in a western manner. Das was a sailor in the ocean of history. His time traveling towards human history and civilization brings his historical and social consciousness. For example, in *Sailor* Das went back to the near past. Where he refers to Prithviraj, who was killed by Muhammad Bin Ghori in the battle of Tarain in 1192. In *JharaPalak*, Das's time traveling is not confined to the history of the last millennium. *Egypt* and *Pyramid*, despite having historical titles, these poems reflect his emotions. Titles are just symbols. But his political consciousness subtly exists here. He does not go into detail, rather he expresses his emotion on particular times or events in the past during this time span. Jibanananda Das wrote all of his seventeen poems of *Dhusar Pandulipi* during his Calcutta days in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In 1930, The great depression began in America as the worst economic downturn in the history of the industrialized world.

The effects of this downturn had an impact on the colonial society in India. We find this reality in Das's life and poetry.

*Rupashi Bangla* (*Beautiful Bengal*, 1934) is in fact his open evocation to an agricultural society through his poetry. A lonely adult at presidency boarding in Calcutta. Depression, poverty, incapability of adapting to the capitalist system, joblessness, sexual frustration, and emotional crisis enlightened him to rediscover the world and reality. The world is the ultimate suffering. The depth of these feelings has a great impression on *Dhusar Pandulipi*. For example, *Bodh*, it is the poetic representation of his metamorphosis. He talks about love, dreams, physical reality, and alienation from society. He is searching to be enlightened. It begins a journey towards the history of human civilization by criticizing the material reality. For instance, *Vultures* begins by criticizing the colonial reality. Das personifies the vultures as the symbol of the colonizers. Again, *Campe*, we find his critique of materialism. Though *Campe* is accused of obscenity and criticized among literary circles. It is one of Das's political poems in this volume. According to Seely, "the word *Ghaiharini* is a symbol of the snare. Ghai, an Assamese word, means a decoy bird. Das transferred the decoy definition from the male bird to a female deer." Here Das personifies the *Ghaiharinias* a mixed metaphor of Shovana. Das's lover, despite being married Das was struggling to come out from her obsession. But in *Campe*, Das does not confine himself to love emotion and human relation rather expands it with social and political reality. As Seely writes, "*Campe* gives us an inkling of not only what he is trying to say but also both how his background in English literature informs at least one of his poems as well as how he saw himself in the world of contemporary Bengali poetry". Besides, love is an integral part of Das's poetry. His political ideas and thoughts are juxtaposing parallelly in his poetry. His political consciousness began to flourish from *Dhusar Pandulipi*. This volume is a grey illustration of personal experiences within his cruel surroundings, and a way of expression to look into it.

After being sacked by Calcutta City College in 1928, Das taught in Bagerhat P.C. College, and Delhi Ramjas College. After his marriage with Labonno Dasgupta in 1930, he decided not to back at Delhi. Again, he started to lead a bachelor life in Calcutta before getting a teaching position in Barishal B.M. College in 1936. During his time at Calcutta, Das experienced a new life. A jobless married bachelor. Naturally an introvert, sometimes he worked as a reporter in a newspaper, worked in an insurance company for some days. Being jobless he has experienced another part of life that he did not deserve. For this reason, Das symbolizes his troublesome times in a grey time frame, and poetry as *Grey Manuscript*. "From 1930-35, Das has written an uncountable number of poems, 15 novels, and 127 short stories (Mitra 92, 1). The sonnets of the *Beautiful Bengal* were published posthumously in 1957 but the manuscript was written in 1934 as a collection of sonnets.

Jibanananda Das is a worshipper of beauty. Nature and women. To understand his political consciousness in *Rupashi Bangla* and *Banalata Sen* it is necessary to understand that women are the human form of nature. Homeland symbolizes mother, motherland. So, a beautiful woman and motherland Bengal becomes a mixed metaphor as *Beautiful Bengal*. Das worships Bengal's nature as a form of a woman. According to Hindu mythology, it refers to a deity Annapurna also to *Annada Mangal* by Bharat Chandra. Being a member of a cultural elite in Barishal, Das studied medieval Bengali literature in his early life. During his time at Delhi and Calcutta, he realized his love for his motherland and the natural beauties of the southwestern part of the Sundarbans. In this Sonnet volume, Das brings folk and mythical tales of Bengal. His interest in medieval poetry and *Mangal* poets influenced him to experiment his poetry in the structure of sonnet. According to Seely, Das's father Satya Nanda was critic to Nationalist ideas. We also see Das's rejection of nationalist ideas in his later poetry. Perhaps in this time Das's dialectical conflict of individual political identity led him to worship *Bangla Ma* and her beauty. He is absolutely true to his feelings. Jibanananda wanted an undivided sovereign Bengal territory. Because of his emotion for Bengal, he wants to come back again and again.

However, the actual title of this volume given by Das himself was *Banglar Trosto Nilima*. A Bengali word *trosto* means 'scared'. *Trosto* symbolizes his doubts of Bengal's unity because of partition in 1905 and cancellation in 1911. Das assumes Bengal will be divided into east and west during the post-colonial era. His implications became reality. Poet's brother Asoka Nanda Das and the publisher changed the title to *Rupashi Bangla* because they thought an easily understandable title would attract the readers. But this incident is the ultimate disaster in the history of Bengali poetry. The title *Rupashi Bangla* actually misinterpreted the actual meaning of this volume and led the readers to the opposite direction of interpretation. It is a highly politically charged volume which is tinged with the love for his motherland.



#### IV. 'Politics of Resistance' in Jibanananda Das's poetry (1937-1948)

Jibanananda Das's poetry, published since 1936, show marked difference in terms of his political orientation. He began experimenting with his poetic patterns. According to Seely, Das in the 1920s was devoted to the study of English language and literature. He was alive to the modernist movements in the West such as *Dadaism* by Tristan Tzara, *Surrealism* by Andre Breton, *Magic realism* by Franz Roh. Some identify Das as a symbolist like Baudelaire, and as the first surrealist in Bengali poetry. According to Das's poems and essays, it is clear that he studied *DasCapital* by Karl Marx, *Phenomenology of Spirit* by Hegel, political economy, existential philosophy by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Writings of the Romantics, pre-Raphaelites', Elliot, Mallarme, Valerian, Joyce, Rilke, Yeats, and Kafka (Best essays, Das). During this time Das's political consciousness began to flourish in his poetry. During 1930 Das prioritizes on ideas and philosophy rather than rhyme scheme and meter. He gradually came out from the poetic patterns of his contemporaries and creates his own style of poetry. *Banalata Sen* first manifests Das's own style as a poet. Jibanananda confessed his poetic philosophy in his essay *Poetry and Satyendra Nath*,

"He will be remembered as master of rhythm and meter but not a great poet. If he would true to his emotion and intellectually solid, his consciousness will turn to vision. A visionary poet need not caring for rhythm and meter" (Das 195, my translation).

WWII began in 1939. Jibanananda Das predicted the possibility of WWII in *Dhusar Pandulipi* and *Banalata Sen*. *Dance of Twilight* has composed that prediction. It is compiled in the *Darkness of Seven Stars* but was written in 1937 during the second Sino-Japanese war. Many poems from *Great World* and *Darkness of Seven Stars* were written during 1937-44. Other unpublished poems during 1940-1948 are now published as *Unpublished Poetry*.

*Banalata Sen*, though published in 1942 most poems are written before 1940. Jibanananda tells a story of his traveling throughout the world and creates the historical time frame. In *Rupashi Bangla* he worships the Bengal mother in the form of a beautiful woman and in a motherly manner. But in *Banalata Sen* he worships nature in the form of a woman in a physical manner or as her lover. In this volume, Das came out of Bengals territory and began to walk on the course of history. His historical and social consciousness started to flourish from this volume and later to *Mahaprithibi* and *SattiTaratimir*. As a volume *Banalata Sen*'s first line "long I have been a wanderer of this world," (Das 459). Again, the last couplet in "Walking",

"Why I walked alone onto Babylon's dark street;  
a busy millennium gone but it is unknown yet" (my translation).

Das was a time traveler. He can predict the future by going back to history.

"*BanalataSen* is a rare combination of timeless and temporal in Bengali literature. Das is sad by experiencing unsatisfied love but always seeking beauty. So, he explores love and an individual in the road of history and geography. *Banalata Sen* is in fact Das's deep historical consciousness" (Tripathi 99, my translation).

Many poems of this volume are considered surreal. But political elements are silently screaming. For example, *Shyamali*, "If I were", *Windy Night*, *Darkness*, and *Suchetana*. Poets like to play with readers' psyche by breaking the boundary of consciousness. Das tries to understand nature by expanding life, subtle feelings of love, and by expanding the human civilization on the bank of history. Life is not confined to him, rather it is extensive and deep. That brings his universal collective political consciousness which is an integral part of social mobility. History lies in human society, similarly, politics is a part and parcel of society and history. Das's political consciousness makes him futuristic and keeps him alienated and inactive from public politics. This alienation puts Das in a higher position of his stream of consciousness. For this reason, he can look into the world by going beyond time and space in his next volumes.

Political consciousness in Das's poetry since 1940 again changed route. In his last two volumes, Das is not searching for fantastical reality within love, beauty in women, and nature. By walking across the map of history, Jibanananda is futuristic now. He begins to portray the horror of the world war, industrial effects, hypocrisy and exploitation, autocracy, and fascism by using symbols and metaphor. For example, *Vultures*. In this cruel world, there is no certainty of life. Das feels it and writes "Gradually this earth is becoming a town of the dead" (*Mritodernogori*, my translation). The phrase "town of the dead" symbolizes Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Das recognizes the statesman and military leaders as 'Harelghughu' (i.e., red turtle dove). It symbolizes the imperialist statesman as they are 'least concerned species' like red turtle doves. These corrupted imperialist leaders turned this earth into a city of the dead. After 1940, Das started traveling through time and space. Contemporary reality is the main element of his poems since then, which enables him to be futuristic in his poems. *Mahaprithibi*(1944) and *SattiTaratimir* (1948) are the representation of a post-colonial society. In this modern world, nothing is apolitical. Das is also a victim of political reality. Political consciousness is blowing with the waves of his words.

*Mahaprithibi* was published in 1944. The metamorphosis of Jibanananda appears in "A Day eight years ago" (*Aatbochor ager ekdin*). He writes,

"A woman's heart - love - a child - a home - these are not everything,  
not wealth nor fame nor creature comforts-  
there is some other perilous wonder that frolics  
In our very blood" (Seely 136).

The word perilous wonder in Bengali *biponnobishmoyis* symbolic here. A greater consciousness frolic in Das's blood. Das was searching for enlightenment like the Buddha. So, his poems are now not some memorable speeches or the representation of love for nature, women, and history. Rather his uttered words are now kind of a prophecy. His visual representation of frames is aerial now. Seems like in space, from the top of the globe. Now he is more suspicious regarding the present and future. So, he composes in "SomeChorus",

"Time is biting this nation like an insect.  
our children will become older one day," (my translation).

Das compares the earth to a dustbin. He adds that, "this world turned to the dustbin, a millennium ago... (*Some Chorus*)." By 1940 a significant change had come to Das's thinking and poetic patterns. His word selection is also being changed. He brings raw and regular unpoetic words to his poetry. The horror of WWII had a great impact on colonial life in British India. It caused a famine in 1943. The unstable political situation, communal riots, anti-imperial movements, poverty, hunger, unemployment, and ultimate uncertainty. Das had no faith in corrupted and short-sighted politicians. He criticized Nehru in his essay *Economic aspects*. Das describes:

"The upcoming independence in India will not bring economic harmony in independent India. No solution to unemployment, poverty, the economic system, political system, business, and lifestyle. Will our leaders ever understand? (234, my translation).

In "Words of that Wise" (*Bolillo Ashwattha Sei*), Das writes,

"The wise slowly say: where are you heading towards-  
where you want to go?" (My translation).

By looking into the future, he talks about contemporary political reality. The downfall of humanity, animosity, brutality in the modern mechanical age. He observes the rise of print capitalism and language politics during the colonial era. Das's political consciousness does not get himself out under his microscopic aerial view. *Anupam Trivedi* is kind of a poem where he briefly criticized himself under his historical and intellectual consciousness. The dialectical conflict between material and abstract pulling Trivedi up by his ears. Trivedi is in fact Das himself, his alter ego. We find his socialist ideology here. He rejects the modern mechanical age and inventions. He wants to go back to that primitive society. Though Das never engaged in a political party he is always conscious of social and economic aspects. That makes his poetry politically conscious. His manifestation of political consciousness is more focused in *Darkness of Seven Stars (SattiTaratTimir)* and other unpublished poetry, published posthumously.

The *Darkness of Seven Stars* was published in December 1948. Verses of this volume were mostly written in 1928-43. His poetry after 1943 was published posthumously as *Bela, Obela, and Kalbela* (1961), and *Unpublished poetry*. Some were included in *Mahaprithibi*, and *SattiTaratTimir* after his death. Das was finding a greater consciousness in *Mahaprithibi*. And *SattiTaratTimir* is a continuation of that search and a way of expression on looking into worldly matters from the center of the universe. For instance, *Prithvi SuryakeGhire* (*Earth around the Sun*), in this poem Das portrays the universal metamorphosis of civilization, social and political systems, rituals, poetry, music, philosophy, and scientific inventions. Das did not look upon women's position in society. In *Samayer Tire (On the coast of time)*, he writes,

"There are drunk generals drinking women's love as wine,  
and using women like water" (my translation).

Das's most politically charged poem in this timeline is *1946-47*. It portrays the post-WWII horror, independence of India, the partition of Bengal as East Pakistan, communal riots, refugees, famine, and ultimate sufferings of people in Bengal. Jibanananda, himself is a victim of this partition. He had to migrate to Calcutta in 1946. At that time, he was a professor of English literature at B.M. college in Barishal. He went to Calcutta on leave from Barishal but never came back again. *1946-47* states the ultimate suffering of people, their grief, and hunger as "they allocate those damn bones to the dogs, budgeting their wagons of meat" (*1946-47*, Seely 197). Das also writes

"High reaching factory after factory—  
anxious progress, along with the bank,  
remains wide awake. Do you feel sleepy?" (Seely 197).

The poem 1946-47 is a documentation of the colonial division of the subcontinent by the British. In this poem, he portrays the refugee life of millions of people who are going to be migrated and their life at that time with his poetic brilliance, metaphor, and allegory.

*EisobDinratri* is another politically charged poem by Das. He talks about society, social class, politics, economic crisis, and immorality. In this poem, he directly refers to socialism and communism by saying:

“They do not know where workers will find a society with an equal wage  
drought after a drought, a melody of war after a war...” (my translation).

Das highly criticized the society and societal systems, corrupted politicians, and lack of resistance of general people. He describes his time as more barbarous than middle age. So, he writes, “Was the middle age witnessed so much brutality?” (*EisobDinratri*, my translation). In *Eikhane Surya's* Das questioning why the orient has lost their glory. Again, replying to himself because of western mechanical advancement. His use of mixed metaphors catches the sky in a mousetrap. Human intellect and the power of machines give a huge boost for occidental mobility in modern society. “Why does the ancient sunshine timidly on the shore of India China Egypt and Chaldea?” (*Eikhane Surya's*, my translation). Das's another politically charged poem *End of a great war (MohajuddhaSheshHoyeche)*. He writes,

“Termination of a great war-  
but the darkness and horror not finished yet...” (my translation).

Absolutely, Das understands, a new era of the cold war has begun. He sings an optimistic song. He hopes humans could redesign the social infrastructure with their brevity, kindness, love, and wisdom. Das criticized western organizations, who work to bring peace and humanity. Namely the Geneva convention, United Nations, and Commonwealth in his essay *Earth and Time*. He identifies them as corrupted and described them as the tools of neo-colonialism. According to the essay,

“That dreamy socialist earth land is yet to be born. If that consciousness of social equality, scientific blessings are worked combinedly then there is the least possibility of occurring communal conflicts...I hope economic equity and scientific blessings gradually bring a social harmony” (Das 43, my translation).

During the 1940s Das became more modernist in poetic nature. So, he incorporates politics in his poetry. He believes poetry is not a memorable speech. Rather a poet needs to be concerned socially, and historically. He believes that time and reality are the essences of modern poetry. He writes in his essay *Modern Poetry*,

“Modern poetry has some special features. Sense of time, land and nation, and reality are the main substances of modern poetry,” (Das 135, my translation).

Das wrote in his essay *Kabitar Katha*,

“My poems may show the consciousness of history and society, but it wants an entrance of a greater consciousness” (Das 33, my translation).

Jibanananda perhaps found that consciousness in 1940s poetry. So, it can be said that, Jibanananda was searching for *Nirvana* like the Buddha. Similarly, his stream of consciousness brings a cosmic explosion for his enlightenment in poetry. Hence, during 1945 his poems became more optimistic regardless of the grotesque description of life and political reality. He hopes one day the darkness of seven stars will be subdued and “the ring of seven sages” (*Saptarshi Mandal*) will directing humans to compassion, empathy, and social harmony.

## V. Conclusion

Jibanananda Das's time (1899-1954) was a transitional period for modern civilization. Das witnessed two great wars, communist revolution in the Soviet Union, rise of democracy in modern Turkey, the fall of the British Empire in South Asia and Africa, the rise of fascism in Italy, Germany, and Spain. It was a time of global conflict: conflicts between imperialism and communism. Das understood no system would bring peace to humanity. So, he wants to go back to the prehistoric age to rebuild society. In his imagined community, there is no inequality. As Das composes:

“Middle and working class do not know where they'd get equal wages,  
or how to fulfill the fundamental needs...” (*EisobDinratri*, my translation).

It is a song of despair but here in disparity lies his hopes and political consciousness. Das's poetry is highly political in depth. His observation towards history, philosophical reflection, personal experiences make his glossaries unique. His symbols and mixed metaphors create a frame-to-frame visualization. And keep the readers moving. Das is very dynamic in creating emotions in different frames. For this reason, his political consciousness is scattered silently throughout his poetry.

Jibanananda Das is considered as the loneliest poet. We found a philosophical metamorphosis in his writings. An existential crisis, and an ultimate suffering and struggling. From his essays we get to know that Das writes about western philosophy: Marx, Freud, Jung, Pavlov, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche. Das has realized the

truths of self and world because of his loneliness and depression. It is proved by Kierkegaard's statement in *The Journal*,

"Sadness means to be alone in having understood something true and as soon as one is in company with others, with those who understand the sadness becomes an irony" (*The Journals* 132).

Das was alienated from his society because of this sadness. From his sadness we hear the song of hopes. His optimism, like his political consciousness, is also silent under his pre-established poetic pattern. His poem "Darkness" (*Andhakar*), despite his grotesque description of mundane reality, we find an optimistic and politically conscious poet who knows what is the ultimate solution for humanity.

Das is a scientific poet. He acknowledged the contribution of science. He rejects religion. He many times criticized communal conflicts in history, religious superstitions and the idea of god in his essay *Jukti, Jiggasa O Bangalee*. He thinks there is no relation between religion and the sense of humanity. He believes in rationality and evolution theory. He thinks, blessings of scientific inventions and an equal distribution of money can bring harmony to civilization. Das's time sense in his poetry can be compared to Einstein's *Theory of Relativity*.

"Present is always moving, past and future are illusory. Ideas are constantly developing, immortal and relevant to time. Moment is a relative reality, and time is constantly flowing" (Jahangiri 241, my translation).

Jibanananda frees poetry from the rule of time and space. From *Jhara Palak* (1927) to *SattiTararTimir* (1948) we find Das's poetic journey beyond time and space. His visual images of stars (*nakshatra*) are the eternal symbol of time. His images: "lady's ocean bluish face, the ultimate pain of empty ports at noon, Suranjana hears the Greek Hindu Finnis' ritualistic music" take us to history. These force the readers to imagine and rethink. Das examines human life by walking on the shore of human civilization and then predicts the future in his poetry. He believes revolution is possible. So, he writes,

"Not very far- but it's possible. I think that will be long lasting. Science can bring social harmony and equality in the human mind" (*Satya, Biswas O Kabita*; Das 121).

Again, this Jibanananda writes in his poem, "that dreamy society is far away". A dialectical situation between his poetry and essay. But he is true to his poetic perception and reality. For this reason, we found a hazy political consciousness in his poetry, which is silent. As Susan Sontag describes:

"A genuine emptiness, a pure silence, is not feasible - either conceptually or in fact. If only because the art-work exists in a world furnished with many other things, the artist who creates silence or emptiness must produce something dialectical: a full void, an enriching emptiness, a resonating or eloquent silence. Silence remains, inescapably, a form of speech and an element in a dialogue" (8).

Jibanananda Das breaks the boundary of time and space in his poetry. *JharaPalak* (1927) has a manifestation of his contemporary realities and political events in lyrical patterns. *DhusarPandulipi* (1936) also has the same manifestation but in a different manner. Das as a poet along with the Kallol generation wanted to overcome the influences of Tagore in Bengali poetry. In that sense, *Dhusar Pandulipi* is a manifesto of post-Rabindranath poetry. *RupashiBangla* (1934) represents his love for his motherland in the form of a woman. In *Banalata Sen* (1942), Das seeks for beauty on the shore of human history and worships the earth in the form of a woman. His time consciousness and historical travel make him futuristic in *Mahaprithibi* (1944) and in *SattiTararTimir* (1948). Most critics think political consciousness of Das is mostly manifested in his last two volumes. In his poetry during the 1940s, Das takes him out of the universe and criticizes the terrible reality during WWII and predicts the ultimate uncertainties of human civilization.

In the end, by analyzing Jibanananda Das's poetry and comparing it to his essays it can be said that political consciousness is explicit in his poetry. His posthumously unpublished poetry has carried that allusion of politics. Clinton B. Seely, despite being an American, he first understood the political concepts in Das's poetry. This study on "Political Consciousness in Jibanananda Das's poetry" is further study where Seely put his pen off in *A Poet Apart*. Hence, this is a vast study and research. I have tried to study Das's poetry from a microscopic view to understand and analyze his political consciousness.

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