An attempt to find out the relationship between Eliot and Jibanananda has a possibility of showing a negative result, because outwardly these two poets are very different from each other. Eliot is taken as a classicist but Jibanananda is a romantic poet. The former is essentially a poet of urban civilization, while the latter is mainly a poet of rural life. Eliot is accepted as a realist, but Jibanananda is found to be rather unrealistic and mystic as a poet. The world of Eliot is illuminated by the bright light of his intellectualism; the world of Jibanananda is semilighted by the mysterious light that dwells on the border of the known and the unknown, and the visible and the invisible. Eliot speaks directly and precisely to his readers, but Jibanananda has no reader, not even a hypothetical one, before his mind's eye, when he writes. He only speaks to himself in an almost inaudibly soft voice. Besides, Jibanananda is not a moralist or religious poet like Eliot. He does not write with a mission. A lonely poet, he is absorbed in the difficult task of deciphering in his poetry, the most eluding sounds, smells, and touches of the world of our senses and of the world beyond our senses.

Yet, it can be seen that these two poets have something in common, something basically identical which draws the attention of a careful reader. Both of them have a firm conviction that good poetry cannot be written without proper knowledge of the poetic tradition of the language in which
a poet writes. Both of them are conscious of history. They also consider the question of time seriously and have a desire to know the mystery of life and death. Both of them share a view of life which brings them very near to each other, so far as the goal of poetic journey is concerned. In the use of symbols and images also we see a remarkable affinity between these two poets. All these resemblances encourage one to go deep into the poetry of Jibanananda to see how and in what way his poery is related to that of Eliot. Jibanananda is generally accepted as the most original Bengali poet who has created a new poetic style. For his sensuousness he is compared by the critics, with Keats; for his sense of weariness and consciousness of death, with Rilke and T.S. Eliot. He is said at the same time to be an impressionist and surrealist. However, a comprehensive discussion of Jibanananda in all these respects is outside the scope of the work. We are here to see his relationship with Eliot as a poet. The first thing that draws our attention is the interest shown by both the poets in tradition in poetry. About tradition T.S. Eliot writes, "Tradition is a matter of much significance.............it involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to any one who would continue to be a poet beyond his twentyfifth year; and the historical sense involves a perception not only of the pastness of the past but its presence."^1 Again he says "This historical sense, which is a sense of timeless as well as temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional".\(^2\)

Understanding of tradition, therefore, means a correct sense of history

2. Ibid., p.49.
i.e. "not only of the pastness of the past but of its presence." In other words, it is that part of History which survives contemporaneity and becomes not only a matter of past but also of past, present, and future i.e. the timeless. This is what makes tradition. When the writer interprets this timeless part of history in the present context he is at the same time timeless and temporal and as such traditional. Consciousness of history, therefore, is a basic condition to be fulfilled by a "traditionalist", in this sense.

In the critical writings of Jibanananda asserts the importance of history and tradition in literature, particularly in poetry. In "Rabindranath and adhumik Bangla Kavya", he writes, "When great writer writes with the contemporary time and society in his mind, the form and language of his poetry takes a new shape. There appears such a harmony in his poetry that it becomes unique".

This means that a poet must go into the heart of his time and only then he will be able to evolve a style of his own. Without a perfect consciousness of history one can hardly travel to the heart of his time. Arthur Mizener speaking about T.S. Eliot's consciousness of history, says "this acute sense of his own world goes back a long way with Mr. Eliot. As early as 1931 he was saying, when I wrote a poem called "The Waste Land", some of the more approving critics said I had expressed the disillusionment of a generation, which is non-sense. I may have expressed for them their illusion of being disillusioned, but that did not form a part of my intention".

Mr. Eliot's poetry did not certainly express this popular disillusionment, but it did not speak to something in its age more potent than either that age's opinions—most of which Mr. Eliot disliked or its sentimentalities; it achieved its greatness by penetrating to the very heart of his own time.  

In his poetry, Jibanananda wanted to be careful about this history-consciousness; that is why he points out: "That poetry, even if it claims to be wholly conscious, leaves room for doubt about the ability of the history-conscious poet to perceive clearly the history and society of this time."  

Again he writes, "the poet must understand the society. In the marrow of poetry there must be history—consciousness and in its mind a clear sense of time."  

It is, therefore, clear that Jibanananda is conscious of history. The particular word "history" (Itihasa) is mentioned in his poems repeatedly.  

"Man has always taken his birth  
In the longevity of this earth and all the time  
New history has crowded on the shore." (Samayer Kache, Sattitarar timir). Again,  

"Conquest of all sounds of death of blood of fear./In the conscious age of them, made unlimited human knowledge famous time and again,/ yet history is always fresh and new." (Samayer Kache, Satti Tarar timir).  

4. Arther Misener (To meet Mr. Eliot, T.S. Eliot. Edited by Hugh Kenner) p.16.  
6. Ibid., p.20.
So he admits that what man has created on this earth is, in fact, a history of the man-kind and also the fact that history is present in human consciousness and is becoming new every time. His poem "Makar Sankrantir Rate" bears a subtitle which means that consciousness of the timeless in history is like that of a bird or the timelessness itself is like a bird that moves from the remote past to the unknown future like an eternal spirit. So he writes:

"This earth, these stars I remember were there
In the city of Rivers,
Rivers made of death decay love and revolts of mankind".

(Makar Sankrantir Rate, Satti Tarar Timir).

In his poetry present fuses with the past in the moments of deepest contemplation. He recalls things which create in the minds of the readers an atmosphere of the ancient world with all its unknown mystery. For example:

"In the winter moonlit night
Mohin's horses graze, like
Like horses of stone age......
Feeling the silent meolith-moonlight
Of the horses. (Ghora-Satti Tarar Timir).

Elsewhere he writes:

"May be the sound of change is audible to history, that makes it pull-back and create countless moments." (Jay-Jayantir Surjya-Bela, Abela, Kalbela).

In his poem "Itihasa Yan" he writes about the nature of human knowledge which he finds often limited.
"The realization of greatness of time
Brings knowledge to us.
But
We have now only the inertia and decay"

(Itihasa Yana.....)

He is conscious that our experiences and knowledge are limited to moments and we are not conscious of the expanding time of the universe. Hence, we do not have the wisdom we need.

"Sound of sea, wind sunlight blood and death
Dance like witches. Frightened, we run to the cave
For cover and want to be one with the sound of the 'Brahma'
Our two thousand year's experience is like that!"

(Itihasa Yana-Bela Abela Kalbela)

The poet in the same poem says that it is not possible for us to be one with the "Brahma". Eliot writes:

"All our knowledge brings us nearer to ignorance
All our ignorance brings us nearer to death
But nearness to death no near to God.

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in the information?
The cycle of heaven in twenty centuries
Brings us further from God and near to dust"

(two Choruses from the Rocky-Waste land and other poems).
This remarkable similarity of ideas in both the poets is surely interesting. In both oases human knowledge is seen very imperfect. For twenty centuries we tried to be nearer to God or we, in other word, wanted to be one with the "Brahmaa". But we failed: our attempts only brought us "Further from God and nearer to Dust". Yet, we know the history of the evolution. Our knowledge of history gives us necessary information about our past. We know how man first came to this earth; We have that knowledge in our consciousness. We also believed that we knew the history of the creation - the coming of the light from darkness, forests from seeds, ocean from drops of water. All these we have stored in our consciousness.

"From the depth of darkness we have come here
To this moment, the way through which speed
Goes to wood, drops of water to blue ocean
How man, a miserable creative came to this earth
A new comer with a misty look,
All these are known to us
We have all these in our consciousness"

(Andhakar Theke, Bela Abela Kalbela).

Again, "For ages we kept watches on history
And saw that a new sun can take the flames
From the dying sun of the winter"

(Andhakar Theke, Bela Abela Kalbela).

Jibanananda's history-consciousness is also seen in his numerous illusions and references to history and tradition. Whenever he wants to see the
presence of the past in the present he refers to places or things associated with the ancient history. Particular place will bring to the reader's mind the particular culture, and atmosphere of the time. Thus, in the present context past comes very much meaningful. Frequently he telescopes past into present and vice-versa. For example:

"In the far off Ur-Babylon-Egyptian desert, under the pyramid of Asia.

She saw me in the attire of an Assyrian Emperor"

(Asta Chand - Jhara Palak).

Again, "These pangs

I saw them in Assyria and Egypt

In Delhi, Ninev Babylon saw them too

Thousands years ago"

(Payrara-Dhusar Pandulipi).

In "Banalata Sen" echo of the same idea can be heard:

"For thousand years I am on the streets of this world

A wanderer, moving from the cyclone sea to the dark Malaya-Ocean.

I was there

In the mysterious kingdoms of Asoka and Bimbisar

And in the far-off unknown land of Vidarva.

(Banalata Sen - Banalata Sen).

About "Banalata Sen" Dipti Tripathy writes: "Among the poems marked by history-consciousness "Banalata Sen" must be mentioned first. Such a perfect fusion of the timeless and the temporal has never been achieved in Bengali-poetry, before Banalata Sen."

Dipti Tripathy further writes:

"This history-consciousness of the period of "Jhara-Palak" fades into the death consciousness of "Dhusar Pandulipī". Its revival in the "Banālata Sen" suggests that the poet in his attempt to overcome the heavy burden of death—consciousness has inevitably taken shelter under history-consciousness.⁸

Both the statements show how important was history-consciousness, in the poetry of this poet. This history-consciousness, to Jibanananda includes the discovery of the human tradition, particularly the Indian tradition, without which a poet's journey is like sailing without a radar.

T.S. Eliot in the "Waste Land" writes:

Falling towards
Jerusalem, Athens Alexandria
Vienna London (Waste Land)

Again in the Hollowman:

"Sunlights on a broken column
There is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the winds singing
More distant and more solemn
Than a fading star".

And Jibanananda writes:

"Moon light on the sands : scattered shadows of pine
Like broken columns of Dwaraka - remain standing

⁸. Ibid., p.185-84.
Dead and pale" (Hasar Bachar Dhere Khela Kare- Banalata Sen).

Sometimes he combines past with the present creating a mixed effect.

"That consciousness moved through Pyramid, Popyrus and printing press..."

(Charidike Prakritir" - Bela Abela Kalbela).

Again, "Ur, Moy, Harappa Athens Rome Calcutta

In the sea of the Sun"

(Prithibir Raudra - Bela Abela Kalbela)

It is now clear that Jibanananda consciously approved the importance of tradition in poetry. He is conscious and not simply aware, of the history and tradition. We have already seen some of his observations regarding history-consciousness. But these are not all. He made clear statement about his realization and attitude in this respect:

"The consciousness which comes from the suggestion of the great universe, constitutes a stabilising and unalienable truth in my poetry. I came to realize the truth soon after I started writing poems, and I accepted it as such."

Elsewhere he says:

"The present world is built on the crest of the eternal world: and the poet's creative sphere makes its appearance by tearing the veil of the truth, and falsehoods of many ages."

In the present situation of our civilization Jibanananda finds a challenge against the tradition and history. There is a disproportionate dependence on "isms" and scientific theories, taken a-part from the inte-
grated history of the world. That would stand in the way of good literature. In this connection he holds that unless the history is accepted as a whole or tradition is given a broader meaning, good works of art can not be created.

"In the modern Soviet land wherever there are produced some good literatures - these are results of steadiness, a special knowledge about what has happened, and a faith that such impossible heavens can be created, which has never been created and by maintaining a high level of faith and attention."

Thus, it can be seen that consciousness about history plays an important role in the poetry of Jibanananda. In his poetry the timeless and the temporal are often fused to create exquisitely beautiful poetic expressions. It is also seen that he makes extensive references and allusions to history and traditions, though it should be admitted that his allusions are mostly confined to history alone and not so much related to the literary tradition, religion, science, psychology and philosophy as we see in case of Eliot.

Tradition can also be traced in the style, form and method of a poet. In T.S. Eliot's poetry, a reader enjoys the Charm of Chaucer, music of Spenser, surprise and delight of Dryden. Presence of Shakespeare, Webstar, Marvell and even the voice of Milton could also be easily traced in his poetry. So, Mr. Eliot was doing nothing new until he invented his own idioms. Traditionalism, therefore, does not end in the understanding of the

11. Ibid., pp.81-82.
presence of history in the literature of the past and present but requires a ceaseless effort to capture its essence in the new work of art. T.S. Eliot's political works show the same process through the fusion of the past and present. Helen Gardner finds that Eliot's style has not developed abruptly out of nothing. It is an improvement of the traditional English verse form - "The characteristic metre of Prufrock and other observation is irregularly rhyming verse paragraph in duple rising rhythms, with more or less variation in the length of the lines.............The underlying rhythm is unmistakable, it remains a duple rising rhythm the staple rhythm of English verse, the basis of our heroic line." The same is said by Williamson in his notes on "The portrait of a Lady".

"The form of the verse, Eliot tells us was drawn from Laforgue and later Elizabethan drama, assimilating their conversational modes; its use of the half line also reminds us of Spenser or Milton. Helen Gardener further maintains: "The volume of poems(1920) has abandoned the "Prufrock" metre. In its place we have the blank verse of "Gerontion". The heroic line is handled here with the freedom of the later "Elizabethan dramatists". And "We hear the voice of the Jacobean dramatists again in the voice of the thunder at the close."

So, in respect of material as well as style, Eliot is always in close contact with the major poets of the past though where the fusion of the past and the present takes place in his poetry, it is difficult to point out immediately. Williamson, however, holds, "While he seeks the

15. The art of T.S. Eliot - Helen Gardner, pp.18-19."
permanent in the temporary, the timeless in time, he ultimately finds it on the religious level. He is the poet, in deeper sense, of the historical consciousness.\textsuperscript{16} The same is generally true in case of Jibanananda. He started with Nazrul and Satyendranath as his ideal and there could also be felt the presence of the great poet Tagore in his poetry. Dipti Tripathy says, "His first poetry book "Jhara Palak" (1554 B.S.) has incorporated Tagore's concepts of Beauty. Yet, his poetry of this time shows the history-consciousness and use of words of local origin of Satyendranath, epicureanism and youthfulness of Nazrul, awareness of the flesh and blood and use of Arabic and Persian words of Mohitlal; which creates a world of senses; revolt of Kallol-age and style of Premendra and Achintya."\textsuperscript{17}

Again, "From the time of "Jhara-Palak", in order to avoid the influence of Rabindranath, he consciously followed Satyendranath and Nazrul."\textsuperscript{18} About the verse style of Jibanananda Dipti Tripathy writes:

From the time of "Jhara Palak" he experimented with different rhyme schemes. His poems "Koichikar Pichë", "Je Kânâni niye" have a rhyme based mainly on sound. "Sagar Balâkâ" or "Baner Châtak Maner Châtak" are written in music-predominated rhyme. But in these poems echoes either from Nazrul or Satyendranath are heard.\textsuperscript{19}

His important books of poems are written in a verse form with predominance of melodious sounds, either in "pâyâr" or on the rhyme scheme of Balâka.

\textsuperscript{16} A reader's guide to T.S. Eliot Williamson, p.29.
\textsuperscript{17} Adhunik Bangla Kavya Parichaya - Dipti Tripathy, pp.151-152.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p.152.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p.207.

\textsuperscript{*}In our youth, when we were coming across the necessary stage of revolt against Rabindranath, we found resort in two poets – one was Jatindranath Tagñyuta, the other Mohitlal of "Biswarini". B. Bose- Rabita - Asâr, 1359 B.S., p.67.
About "Jhara Palak" Buddhadeb Bose also writes: "His important books of poetry are written in the "Payar" type rhyme, mostly in unequal number, which must be accepted as written in Bālaka type rhyme". In all these Jibanananda shows his keen interest in the traditional Bengali poetic style. His traditionalism ultimately converges on and culminates in his consciousness of history. About him it can be safely said "He is a poet, in a deeper sense, of the historical consciousness." His sense of history makes him believe that there is no final phase in the life of a man. The process of development of the civilization is a continuous process, no matter whether it is a progressive movement or not.

"History pervades you

The different races, mind, human life;

The more we know the faces of the world the more

We move in the way of time.

But not always transcending I know".

(Andhakar Theke-Bela Abela Kalbela).

Yet, it is most likely that history moves onward, may be in a spiral-like motion. "Ancestors turn to the past leaving behind all rights.

I saw the pippal tree and our ancestors

And waves of fathers

And all things of the past.

Then again after a long time - life returns in

Far superior to the madness of youth, more sorrowful

Yet there comes death again".

(itihasa Yana, Bēlā Abēlā Kālbelā).

There may be decomposition, destruction and death but stream of life will follow on through the process of destruction and creation.

"Your name will not be there, O Musafer; For the script is written in charcoal

The last drop will dry up from the bottom of your drinking bowl.

Flies will stay for a moment discussing nothing

And then depart

In search of the wine of life

Elsewhere" (Ogā Darodia - Jhārā Pālāk).

Again, "From blood, fat and decomposed, flesh

Flies fly away in the sun again".

It appears that to Jibanananda, history is not an isolated phenomenon of the creation. It is creation itself, it is the splendid creation, "the greater world", what he calls, the "Maha Prithibi". He looks at this creation as the manifestation of time recorded and unrecorded. Here, in his profound love for the "Maha Prithibi", the timeless and temporal unite in utmost ease. He looks at the creation with extreme pleasure. There is an unending attraction for him in every element of nature - green fields, rivers, birds, sky, bullock-cart, crickets, dewdrops, darkness and light, stars, forest and man on this earth and everything they see. His history consciousness was never materialistic. A sense of wonder for the mystery of the creation was always present in his mind. His history consciousness
and time consciousness led him to the highest quests of eternal desire of man to know the secrets of nature, secrets of this splendid creation.

In the last poem of the "Bela Abela Kalbela", he shows his keen interest in the mystery of the creation, which, of course he knows, has little chance to be satisfied.

"Still I say
Let me move from light to light
As long as I continue to live
Let me see how the grass on earth
Distils from the dark poisons of creation
And the trampled humanity
This wide blue sky
Let us think of it, Let us......"

(He Hriday – Bela Abela Kalbela).

He knows, this association, this attachment is not a communion with the supreme nature. In its deepest it is not even an ordinary love but a concept which is independent of the objects which stimulate its projection in the mind. It is timeless and eternal.

"What was Assyria is now dust
And there are ashes in place of Babylon
But the stories of the earth,
They will remain for ever"

(Rupase Bangla)

Or

"When the light of this earth will go off at last
There will remain no man but his dreams."
Only that face and I shall remain there in the dream*.

(Swapna - Maha Prithibi)

Another aspect of the traditionalism in Jibanananda is the perfect assimilation of the Anglo-Bengali romantic tradition, in his poetry. From the time of Nabin Chandra Sen Bengali poetry has been largely influenced by the English Romantic poetry. Ujjal Kumar Majumdar has shown it clearly that Nabin Chandra Sen was profoundly influenced by Byron. His famous narrative poem "Palasir Tuddha" was directly influenced by the idea as well as technique of 'Child Harold' and 'Donjuan'. Behari Lal who is considered to be the pioneer of romantic poetry in Bengali was influenced by Keats, Byron, Wordsworth and Shelley. Rabindranath, through perfect assimilation of the best of the characteristics of the English romantic poetry has made them a part of the Bengali poetry. One reads his 'Rabi Kahini', 'Udasini', 'Ekakini', 'Pagal', 'Ahallya', 'Marir Ukti', 'Purusar Ukti', 'Ananta Pram', etc. without being particularly conscious that ideas of these poems are taken from Alastor, solitary reaper, Odé to a nightingale, To sleep, Adonais etc. Keats' love of beauty always enchanted Rabindranath. His essays on aesthetics are full of references to the often quoted line "Truth is beauty, beauty truth.....etc." About Browning he once said:

"Browning was a great teacher, he was a tonic force and was full of love for humanity. Many of his poems are dear to me. And his plays - they are wonderful". Shelleys pantheism and Wordsworth's nature-worship

* Bengali Kavya Paschatya Prabhab - Ujjal Kumar Majumdar, p.135.
** Great thought Vol.7, p.109; quoted from Bangla Kavya Paschatya Prabhab - Ujjal Kumar Majumdar, p.259.
were also equally dear to him. But all these are carefully selected and used by the great Bengali poet in his poetry. The great master makes them all his own - perfectly Tagorite in character.

It is the credit of Jibanananda and other Bengali poets of the time that they could recognize that English romantic poetry has become a part of the Bengali poetic tradition. The clear idea about tradition, which they get mainly from Eliot, helped them to recognize this aspect of the Bengali poetry and also inspired them to utilize the newly-created tradition to their great advantage. As a result, the modern Bengali poetry is essentially romantic in character. In Jibanananda's poetry this is seen clearly. Basically, he is a romantic poet. In his poetry one can see the presence of many of the qualities of the English romantic poetry - but not in the English form and technique, not even in the form or shape they have taken in Rabindranath's poetry, but completely in his own form and style. He loves nature; his poems, particularly those of "Rupase Bangla" are full of exquisitely drawn pictures of landscapes, fields, rivers etc. They are enriched by smells, sounds, mists, fog, dew-drops, rains, winds etc. all from the fields, rivers, and sky of Bengal. It will take a long stretch of imagination to connect them with the sounds, smells or landscapes of the lake districts or New Habrides. Yet, in a sense they are not far from them. Thus, the woman of his conception is not far from Rabindranath's 'Abhallya' or Shelley's "spirit that wields the world with never-wearied love". But this woman, again, is like the "Prakriti" of "Samkhya" - a purely Indian concept.

* Adonais, Shelley
+ Cf. Chapter III, p.408
In this way, in Jibanananda's poetry there is not only the consciousness of tradition and history but also the conscious use of the tradition and history. In the use of romantic tradition particularly, he excels. He not only used the existing tradition but created new tradition for the Bengali poetry in this respect. For the next generation of poets he opens the door of a new line of development.

**PART II**

**IMAGES OF MODERN LIFE, ELIOT AND JIBANANANDA DAS**

(Appeal of Eliot's modernism - Jibanananda and modernism).

It has been noted that what in Eliot's early poems attracted the writers, critics and readers, is the depiction of the modern life, its uncertainties, doubts and its particularly mechanical observance of the routines of life. The effect of such imaginative sketches was startling. The method of shock treatment, through dispassionate revelation of the hollowness of the modern life appeared to be the right answer to this degenerating and unproductive age. Besides, the style also appears to be very realistic. Stephen Spender in his memoir of T.S. Eliot writes:

"We did not ask ourselves whether a work was in the line with the great tradition. We felt drawn to it if it was about the world we knew we lived in, the things that deeply concerned us and if we wanted to write - written in a way that seemed to help us to do so". And again "The young man cumben- cular "Who assaulted" the typist home at tea time had a great deal in commen
with any undergraduate who went down to London and had a where in a bed - sitting room, returning in time to climb into college, by the train called "farnicator".\textsuperscript{21} Majority of the young English and European poets who had a chance to read 'Prafrock and other observations' or poems of 20's or "The Waste Land" stopped a moment or two before they could overcome the tremendous invitation of such method. Danger of the attraction of such method became great because a poet could not easily ignore the society he lived in and the society was in fact offering a hopeless prospect at that time, demanding a radical change in the approach of a poet.

Faraway from Europe and England in the Indian soil the problem of the intelligentsia was not much different. As a result, almost all the modern Bengali poets saw the life around them as decaying and disintegrating. Occasionally it appeared that they were looking through the eyes of T.S. Eliot at the hollowness and sterility of the modern civilization, no matter whether they finally retained the same point of view or not. It should be mentioned here that Eliot was for a considerable period of time a very puzzling poet, not only to the Indian's but to the English poets, readers and critics as well. It took time for an Indian reader to understand the ideas and methods of Eliot and not until very recently an Indian reader could have at his disposal enough material to form a better understanding of Eliot's work. However, his modernity was obvious and its appeal to a Bengali poet was immediate and profound. Jibanananda is not an exception in this respect. Eliotian realism is not altogether absent in his poetry.

This can be seen in some of his poems and images.

A picture of the decay and destruction of the modern life can be seen in his "Autumn" image. About the "Autumn" image D. Tripathy writes:

"In the image of "The Waste Land" Eliot saw the sterile modern life. Jibanananda saw the same in his image of "Autumn". In the spent-out fruitless sterility of Autumn he saw the decaying unproductive world of his time."

"The first harvest has gone home
In the barren field of autumn
Only Dew drops fall
December river breathes mist
Freezing bamboo leaves dead grass and stars
Ivy moon springs snowy light,
On the paddy field
Gathers sharp misty fog"

(Pecha Mathor Galpa-Dhusar Pundulipi)

Or,

"Autumn has come
Hawk's golden wings have turned brown
Doves are rapidly losing feathers and there is little time for the Shalik."

It will sleep in dew water
With its stiff yellow feet turned up.
Everything here is dying and falling
Faithful to the hurried laws of time."

(Dujan - Banalata Sen)

* Shalik - a common Indian bird.
We see the same kind of image in another place,

"By that time
Autumn-evening-air has touched the surface of the earth
Dead leaves come flying like ghosts
The earth breathing like an asthma patient
And the mind of man dies slowly
As if suffering from tuberculosis"

(Jiban, Dhusar Pandulipi).

Eliot writes:

"The river's tent is broken; The last finger of leaf
Clutch and sink into the wet bank, the winds
Cross the brown land, unheard"

(The Waste Land)

Again, we see the similar images in Jibanananda which appears to be very much Eliotian.

"December river breathes mist
Freezing bamboo leaves dead grass and stars,
Icy moon springs snowy light
On the paddy field
Gathers sharp misty fog.

(Pencha-Dhusar Pandulipi).

Eliot writes: In this decayed hole among the mountains
In the faint moon light, the grass is singing
Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel
There is empty chapel only the winds home

(Waste Land)
There are other images of modern life in Jibanananda's poems:

"The laper opens the Hydrant and licks water
Or it may be the Hydrant has burst itself
Midnight descends like a mob in the city
A car coughed like a fool and passed
Spraying patrol on the street.

(Ratri - Satti Tarar Timir).

Or, "Warmth of light puts its soft lips on the cheek
The place is full of smell from Kerosine, wax,
wood, jute and leather
Mixed up with the sounds of dynamos
Nerves are strung like the string of a bow.

(Ratri - Satti Tarar Timir)

In Eliot's early poems we see similar images:

"As if the world gave up
The secret of its skeleton
Stiff and white
A broken spring in a factory yard
Rust that cling to the form that strength has left
Hard and curled and ready to snap".

(Rapsody, On a windly Night).

Or, The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passage ways.

(Preludes).
PART III

Symbolism and imagism in Jibanananda (concept of time in T.S. Eliot and Jibanananda):

However, it is clear that these apparent similarities are few. What makes Jibanananda look like a Eliotian poet is not these images of modern life but the affinity of his poetry with the deeper aspects of Eliot’s poetry. One of these is the extensive use of symbols and images in his poems. This does not mean that the use of symbol or image is the mark of an Eliotian or even a modernist. But extensive use of symbols towards the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century resulted from certain necessity, both social as well as literary. The society by this time had become so complex, the pattern of human life so intricate, that a poet found it difficult to express himself in terms of the conventional poetic devices. Hence, there started an investigation to discover the best mode of expression for the age. To a section of English poets, symbols and images appeared to be the answer. Among them were poets like T.E. Hulme, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot. Jibanananda’s poetry also shows that he has felt the need for expressing his emotions with the help of symbols and images. Like Mallarmé he could have said "To mean an object is to destroy three quarters of the enjoyment of a poem, which is made up of the pleasure of guessing little by little; to suggest it, that is ideal".  

Particularly on two counts Jibanananda appears to be a fellow symbol maker of Eliot. Firstly, by the use of personal symbols and secondly,  

by the quality which makes the symbol an image and an image a symbol, attributing a broader significance on them and turning them at the same time as useful device in the art of writing poetry.

Mysticism in poetry, a dweller in the twilight between perception and beyond perception, can only be suggested and not told in clear terms. Hence, the help of symbols and images is almost unavoidable in poetry. There is much similarity in the use of symbols by Eliot and Jibanananda, but there is also a difference. Jibanananda has not used symbols from myths or legends as often as Eliot has used them. Eliot's symbols and images are mostly from tradition. "Many of the images are traditional, common symbols which have an age old meaning: the rose, the garden, the fountain, the desert, the yew. The poet accepts this traditional imagery and mingles it with images of natural beauty and with more esoteric images: the white leopards, jewelled unicorns, the aged eagle, taken from mediaeval allegorical fantasy and the flute player in blue and green and the silent sister veiled in white and blue, from the world of private myths making".  

But there are, as mentioned above, also personal and private symbols. Jibanananda is also a personal symbol maker. Save and except a few traditional symbols, most of his symbols come from the inner world of his personal experience. In his attempt to express the most difficult of his ideas Jibanananda was creating certain symbols and images for his own use. He has hardly used such symbols which immediately would recall in the mind of a reader certain past experience. The symbol used by him creates  

rather new experiences and emotion not quite applicable in words. This is also true to a certain extent in case of Eliot, who is not quite free from the romantic inwardness in the use of images or symbols. "The symbols and images he employs have the arbitrariness of the individual's inner world and have hardly emerged into the self explanatory world of art. The speaker is not wholly willing to share his secret, perhaps because it is still in part a secret from himself." The same view is also expressed by Elizabeth Drew who writes that Eliot, "because of his intense and personal experience is also to express a general truth : retaining all the praticularity of his experience to make it a general symbol." Symbols of individual's inner world of imagination are the symbols generally used by Jibanananda. These are, therefore, not derived from general tradition of the Bengali poetry. To understand and explain them, a reader is to read them sometimes in the context of the poem itself and on other occasions against the background of the poetry of Jibanananda. Helen Gardner writes about T.S. Eliot: "The withdrawal into the world of inner experience brings with it a new kind of imageries; an imagery deriving from dreams, not from observation and retaining the inconsequence, the half understood, but deeply felt significance of dreams, their symbolic truth." This is what we see in Jibanananda. Symbolism in Jibanananda is a link between his art and his life. The same is said about Eliot. "Symbolism may be said to be the link between Eliot's art and his life, or rather the channel by which his belief flowed into his poetry and his

25. Ibid., p.122.
poetry into his belief".28

Some of the symbols often used by Jibanananda are the river, the sun, the sea, the darkness, the woman; and animal symbols like owl, horses etc. But these symbols hardly carry the conventional meaning with them. Besides, he is not always consistent about the meaning of the images or symbols. Often the symbols change the shades of their meaning or inter change their places. One of the symbols frequently used by him is the 'river'. It is difficult to say whether the river meant much more than the ordinary meaning in his early poems. 'Jhara palak' has hardly any river image. Poems collected in "Rupasi Bangla" has references to "Dhansiri" or "Jalsiri" rivers or rivers in Bengal. But there the river banks are often some ideal places where the poet will go to sleep with a desire to passway from this unromantic horrid world.

In his poem "Mita bhasan" we first see an attempt to give a symbolic meaning to "the river", "the sun" and "the woman" images.

"Yet, river means soothing water for treatment
Sun means light.
And woman still means you
Though I have seen so many 'Radhikas' go.

(Mita bhasan - Banalata Sen).

But then, this is not the final meaning. He saw river from different angles of vision before he came to accept that river meant a certain aspect of the time.

Often, he looks at it as not actually the time but a transparent film of time which is present everywhere and one can see it the moment he really looks for it. It becomes visible like a reflected beam of light.  

"Or, when the name of the river is recalled
The rivers appear in all direction reflected
And remain visible till the night-fall".

(Bivinna Koras - Satti Tarar Timir).

Or, And then you become resplendent

Like a river in this morning.

(Kabita - Do).

But generally he believes that the river connects the past and the present and carries the time with it.

On its pebbles

The river is all the day,
The musical groves of sunrays.
But the pebbles disappear in a moment
The water has dried up in the remote past
Yet, the pebbles are new.
And the river carries bright water.

(Janantike - Satti Tarar Timir).

It appears that the river moves in a cycle. From its source the river moves to the ocean and from ocean to the source in an unending cyclic movement.

It was inevitable to associate the cycle with the eternal cycle of life and death, destruction and preservation - the endless process of the universe.
Eliot writes:

"The time destroyer is time the preserver
Like the river with its cargo of dead negroes
Cows and chicken coops
The bitter apple and the bite in the apple".

(The Dry Salvages).

In Eliot the river is associated with one of the aspects of time—the human time. The "brown god" river is our own time. "The river is—within us
"the sea is all about us" (The Dry salvages). In Jibanananda also river is ultimately associated with time.

"The stream of time flows on
The stream like that of the river".

(Dipti - Satti Tarar Timir).

So, it may appear that he thinks of time as moving in a cycle. Time as a succession, flow, history or development, running endlessly from the future into the past or time as eternal extension without end, direction or order, is not yet evident in his poetry. Again, he writes:

"Some where on the river bank on the shore of time
There still stands an old faded palace
And after the bloody ages of sufferings
He finds on the shore of time once again the eternal fool
Mounted on the back of an ass.

(Unmesh - Satti Tarar Timir).

In the eternal flow of the time the poet often drifts like a sleeping swan.
"These are not swans of our earth
From the milky way they come
Crowding the evening river-
The lonely swans."

(Akti Kabita - Satti Tarar Timir).

But in this stream of time there is the fire that burns perpetually, the
fire that torments the mind of the poet by its mysterious presence. It is
this fire which eludes all attempts to know its meaning.

"The golden fire burns silently in the body of the water
By the black art of a magician
It burns itself but does not burn anything else".

(Akti Kabita - Satti Tarar Timir).

There are also clouds within the river, but these come down from the sky
and lose themselves in the infinite depth of the river.

"In the unfathomable depth of the river
Dives the white light cloud
Without reaching the end of the time" (Hans - Do).

Woman :

Closely connected with his image of the river comes the image of
the woman. The phase of "Banalata Sen" where he said "Woman to me still
means you" is very seen over. He gradually moves to the traditional Hindu
concept that holds woman as the source of all creation - who creates and
preserves the creation. She is like the traditional idea of "Prañātī". Man
meets her as a partner of creation. But he is only an instrument in the
total scheme of creation. Ideas of Bargson and Show can be traced here. But essentially his "Women" is a concept from the Indian philosophy. It comes very close to the "Samkhya" concept of "Purusa and Prakriti". The woman is compared with "Prakriti" of "Samkhya" who is active. "Prakriti is non-intelligent or unconscious, Purusa is intelligent or conscious. Prakriti is productive. It is transformed into modifications. Purusa is non-productive. It is not subject to modification. Purusa is neither cause nor an effect. It is unchangeable and immutable. All things change every moment except the conscious self or Purusa. Prakriti is active. Purusa is inactive. (History of Indian Philosophy. By Jadunath Sinha Vol.II, page 51). It is to be noted that Jibanananda agreed with the critics of Samkhya and believed that Prakriti cannot be non-intelligent or unconscious. However, that Prakriti is active to serve the end of the Purusa or the pure spirit different from the "Jiva" can be seen in his poems. Prakriti may be taken as the time creative and Purusa, the time indifferent or the other face of time which is not directly connected with creative activities. That is why woman is found to be often identical with river and the two symbols interchange places in many of his poems.

"I saw there over that field
The soft river-woman
Spraying flowery mists".

(Mrityur Age - Dhusar Pandulipi)

He understands it clearly that woman is more than what we see in her. Spirit of woman is the supreme spirit that works behind the world of creation. Meaning of woman, is, therefore, deeper than what it seems to be on the surface.
"There are other woman
Besides what we have in our etymology today
There is still a part of the past life for us.

(Janantika - Satti Tarar Timir).

So, he goes back to the past, to the darkness at the beginning of the creation to understand the other meaning of "Woman". He can see eternal woman behind the woman he meets.

"If I could meet you at the source
Simply for the reason of union and fare-wall
Then I could remain satisfied like others lovers
Serving the vast world and its immense time
But you do not know - I saw you once
Behind the back-drop of eternal time".

(Surjya, Nakshatra, Nari - Bela Abela Kalbela).

He knows that the time serving role of the woman is a temporary phenomenon. She is an eternal spirit and moves with the mission to be united with the supreme spirit in the universe. But the woman is not always conscious of her real self.

"Those few moments within the naked body a man;
Are they the only medium to transmit to the mind of time
The knowledge that you still remain with your body
Surrounded by the heartless ages of light-years?"

(Surjya, Nakshatra, Nari - Bela Abela Kalbela).

But then, he feels that it may not be totally correct to say that the woman
does not know her ownself. It may be that the woman knows her identity as well as her destiny. At least she is aware of her bigger role in the creation.

"You could have become a flowing river
   With your sun-shine hair,
   And day-light complexion
   If you wished.
But you became woman
And found out the man
Or may be a life beyond man's knowledge".

(Dipti - Satti Tarar Timir)

In "Dujan" (Banalata Sen) he was an the threshold of such realization.

Woman will go the long way of eternal time to meet her ultimate love.

"Lover thought: This woman beautiful will reach
   The end of the starry land
   Where I shall not be, nor will my sweet love,
   Neither the despair, nor the haziness of this earth.
   Love herself, the passionate love, will discover her mate
   Among the divine dear"

(Dujan - Banalata Sen).

By mentioning "divine dear" as her mate the poet suggests that the ultimate love of the woman is sexless. There, she is a spirit and spirit unites with the spirit at the source of creation. It may be interpreted that from the dear she will find out the stag, - her love. But sex consciousness is almost totally absent in the poems of Jibanananda and such interpretation may be
ruled out. In "Banalata Sen" he (the soul of man) meets "Banalata" (the woman) and found peace of his mind for a moment. But the soul of man did not recognoise the eternal woman in her at that time and missed the blissful peace he was searching for ages.

"Banalata Sen of Natore -

She gave me peace for a moment or two".

Though this is one of his most famous poems, he is not at his deepest here. It is clear that his knowledge of man and woman became deeper in his later poems. There, he began to realise the place of woman in the eternal scheme of time. Time and woman are accomplices in the great scheme of creation. Often they are so identical that they are believed to be the same.

"Though there were rivers in your eyes
After the down again
There remained only one in our land,
A woman, who walked, along the river bank
When the mist is lifted"

(Swabhab - Satti Tarar Timir)

Or, "On the lap of far-off woman
The flocks of ducks remain unseen
In the dazzling afternoon light."

(Hans - Do)

Again and again he used the river image not just casually but to acquaint the reader with its new meaning; with the realisation or rather the revelation of the meaning of woman to him. Woman, river, time are the same but they play different role at different times.
"Just like a mystery - in a moment
Forgetting the existence of the river and the woman"

(Charidike Prithivi - Bela Abela Kalbela).

Again, "The woman who is never seen
In the darkness of six or seven stars
The same river has arrived at my heart".

(Anek Nadir Jal - Bela Abela Kalbela).

This realisation came to him after long and deep meditation. Through his observation of the greater nature and his awareness of things happening beyond our knowledge - he is led to the conclusion that,

"When all stars in the sky die
It means that a woman is dead
Knowing that, I have known the time."

(Saratsar - Bela Abela Kalbela).

His consciousness of history leads him, towards the end of his journey, to understand the greatness of the scheme of the universe. In his endless search for peace, out of chaos, confusions, failures, frustration, boredom etc. he arrives at the shore of time. Time flows on eternally irrespective of human wish, in its mechanical way. But along with the indifferent time moves another force, the woman, which is vitally connected with the world of creation. As a part of the creation man is connected with that phase of time. It is love which unites man with that spirit and that is the possible end where the anguish and sufferings of man may have a resolution.

"Yet, he has to be lover
Independent of human necessity is time."
It has still left for man
All its gifts knowledge from external consciousness
-it appears.
It is now time for us to be illuminated inwardly”.

(Itihasa Yana - Bela Abela Kalbela).

This aspect of the concept of the woman is atlast revealed to him. Now, he understands that the woman of flesh and blood is a counter part of the 'woman' who is a creative force herself.

"Even that day I did not see your face
And no one told me that
You were still here on this earth."

(Surjya, Nakshatra, Hari - Bela Abela Kalbela).

Thus, when the greater meaning of woman reveals itself to the poet, his "Suranjana" also changed from a woman of flesh and blood to the woman who is nature herself, a creative force of this universe. From the "Suranjana of "Banalata Sen" where "she is the soul of woman waiting for man", She becomes a universal spirit in "Satti Tarar Timir". She is not destined for worldly love i.e. there is no need for her to offer herself to a man. She is the "Prakriti" the all prevailing spirit of love and creation.

"Suranjana, don't you go there
Don't you speak with that young man.
Suranjana, come back
In the night filled with silvery fires of the stars".

What words you can have with him, that young man?/In the sky beyond this
Sky, you are like the earth where love grows like grass."

(Suranjana - Satti Tarar Timir).

When woman becomes nature, a creative force, or time the preserver, she is a benevolent force. She can save the soul of man from destruction in the hands of indifferent time. This can be achieved through love and in this love can be found a solution of the eternal question about human destiny.

"Yet, I could know you, woman,
Only at the end of the journey to
The history of human genius

In the darkness of cruelty and failure,
And loving you, not the man,
I know how sweet could be
The bitter poison of human existence."

(Tomake - Bela Abela Kalbela).

It can be seen that the concept of time has entered into his poetry almost as seen as he started writing. Jibanananda is born in a country where the concept of time moving in a cycle from birth to death and from death to birth, is as old as the history of the country itself. Time as an unbroken sequence of moments including the past and the future in the present was also not unknown to the thinkers of ancient India. Samkhya discusses the question of time and space in details. "Vyasya point out that the past and the future are not all together non-existent. They exist in subtle form in the present condition. The future is what will be manifested. The past is what has been manifested...... so the past and future exist in reality"."

* cf. J.N. Sinha , History of Indian Philosophy vol - 5 p 51.
But like many serious thinkers he had doubt about the origin and nature of the movement of time. What is time? Is it an idea or a reality? From where does it come and where does it go? Does it move in a straight line, in a cycle or in a spiral? Such questions torment his mind always.

"Everything is here within the reach
Yet we wonder in the labyrinth
That leads us nowhere"

These are old sayings - all these;
Believing, the time moves in a cycle
The weak-kneed society
Like a burning cigar
Moves in the same direction everyday
With the hope of returning to the same place.

(Aborodh, Bela Abela Kalbela)

Eliot writes:

"What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning
The end is where we start from."

But take a part of it, the smallest of the segments and it has also the same pattern of movement. Just like the magnetic particle of a magnet it will show the same behaviour.
"Every phrase, every sentence is an end and a beginning
Every poem is an epitaph"

(Little Gidding)

And any action,
"Is a step to the block, to the fire down the sea's throat
Or to the illegible stone: and that is where we start
We die with the dying
See they depart and we with them."

(Little gidding).

But where do we go?
"At the source of the longest river" (Little gidding)

Here we see a remarkable similarity in the realisation of these two poets.
Both are conscious of history. Both are conscious of a time which moves like a river and both of them want liberation from the shackles of the indifferent time in one way or other.

"For man there is no love, no heaven except
The way upward
There is movement no doubt
But progress is steadier than movement."

(Itihasyan - Bala Abela Kalbela).

Eliot describes his "still point"

"The inner freedom from the practical desire
The release from action and suffering release from the inner
And the outer compulsion, yet surrounded
By a grace of sense a white light still and moving" (Burnt Norton).
Jibanananda's 'Pragati' is also free from movement. It reminds us of the "White light still and moving" or "Erhe burg without movement".

In the sea imagery of Jibanananda - there is the presence of the time element. Like many of his imageries the sea too at the outset means more than one thing.

"We are always moving forward
To meet the ocean
The ocean of life or death
Or the flames of dancing hope"

(Anasurjyer Gan - Satti Tarar Timir).

Or, What sea music is this
Of life or of death? (Surjya Tamasi - Do).

In many cases, however, he is free from the doubt and uses the sea symbol to mean death.

"Chased by the blizzard they come down to the sea
Like men descending into the unconsciousness of death
......
Like the unfathomable truth, death waits there
In the million mile wide jaws of the sea."

(Pakhira)

Again, "Not only death
But moving towards the sea of death
We saw all that was to be seen.

(Surjya Pratim - Satti Tarar Timir).

Erhe burg - Exhilaration.
In Eliot also the imagery of sea is often connected with the idea of death.

"Defunctive music under sea
Passed sea-ward with the passing bell".

(Barbank with a Baldker).

Or, and any action:

"Is a step to the block, to the fire
down the sea's throat
Or to an illegible stone."

(Little gidding)

Again, There are other places
Which are also world's end, some at the sea jaw
Or over a dark lake in a desert or a city

(Little gidding)

Or, "The houses are all gone under sea"

(East Coker).

If river has the flow of time within it, the sea must also have an
element of time in it, for, the river ultimately meets the sea. While the river
represents the flowing time, the sea stores all time past, present and future.
It keeps in it what the river carries up to it and deposits. But it is not
the river that makes the sea. Sea has its own meaning as we have already
seen. But so far as the time is concerned it does not flow but gets accumu-
lated there or it may be that time becomes unlimited there, stretching beyond
our conception, all limits.

"On the shore of the sea of time
In the morning of yesterday
And in today's darkness some one
Like a white big bird with wings spread,
Some one there with his life a dancing flame may think
there are courage, hope, dream".

(Samayer Kache - Satti Tarar Timir).

Again he writes:

"Returning to the shore of greater time
With a deeper consciousness of our time
We may find our earth dearer
And dearer till we die".

(Hemanta Rate - Bela Abela Kalbela).

Two different kinds of time are thus represented by the river and the sea symbols. We see similar use of these two symbols in T.S. Eliot's poetry. Helen gardner writes: The simplest is the treatment of the river and sea images in the Dry Salvage, the symbol of two different kinds of time, the time we feel in our pulses, in our personal lives and the time we become aware of through our imagination, stretching behind us, beyond the record of the historian and continuing after we have gone. Hence, the similarity in the sea images are obvious.

"We can not think of a time that is oceanless
Or of an ocean not littered with wastage
Or of a future that is not liable
Like the past, to have no destination".

(Dry Salvages).

Again,

"The river is within us, the sea is all about us
The sea is the land's edge also, the granite
Into which it reaches, the beaches where it tosses
Its hints of earlier creation."

(Dry Salvages).

It is very unlikely that Jibanananda has taken these symbols directly from T.S. Eliot. Why then there are such similarities present in the writings of these two poets? This is because both these poets are conscious of time, conscious of history. Besides, the age was an age of enquiry into the nature of time. Individual's place in the society is found to be of doubtful validity. This position in the universal scheme is therefore sought to be known. Questions are raised whether time is a terrestrial or super terrestrial phenomenon; whether it is a concept or an entity itself; and whether it is static or dynamic, and if dynamic, in what way it moves? T.S. Eliot's interest in the question of time is well known. Now we see that Bengali poets like Jibanananda and Sudhindranath are also seriously interested in the question of time. The obvious similarity in the uses of symbols or images, related to time, between Jibanananda and Eliot, comes from their identical interest in "time". Once they are conscious of time and once they believe that the idea of time can only be expressed through symbols and images they are bound to select some suitable symbols and the selection obviously falls on the river and the sea, because nothing else can explain the nature of time more clearly. We see in Eliot the awareness of time in a most subtle form. He is also conscious of two different kinds of time
the human time and the time eternal. In Jibanananda this is not only human time and time eternal but also time creative and time indifferent. But the enquiry, ends not in the realisation of the presence of two different kinds of time. It is extended to a greater knowledge about the human time and external time and an attempt to achieve a conciliation between the two.

**Darkness**: 

But there are occasions when the same symbols or images are used to mean different ideas by Jibanananda and T.S. Eliot. Both T.S. Eliot and Jibanananda use 'darkness' as an image. While darkness is creative and meaningful to Jibanananda; it is destructive and negative in T.S. Eliot. To Eliot it is an oblivion or even extinction of the self; a total vacancy in existence.

Echoing Milton he writes:

0 dark dark dark, they all go into the dark

The vastant inter steller spaces, the vacant

into the vacant" (East Coker).

The darkness is not the darkness of Purgatory.

It is the darkness of death.

"Time and bell have buried the day

The black cloud carries the sun away"

(Burnt Norton).

Darkness is a void and waste and light is killed by darkness:

"Waste and void, Waste and void. And darkness

On the face of the deep".

(Chotases from the Rock).
"But their light was ever surrounded
and shot with darkness" (Do)

But Jibanananda loves darkness. His poetry is more shadowed by darkness than illuminated by light. It appears that to him light and darkness are not two different phenomena. Darkness contains light in it. Darkness is productive; it is meaningful. From darkness life comes out into light. Darkness is like the darkness in mother's womb. Life rests there as a foetus, unseen but sure to come out in the light.

"Yet, they are not dead
Like divers in the foaming sea
They float up to the land of fables"

(Pratiti - Satti Tarar Timir)

Or,

"Like dark mounds turned upside by the tiller's blade
A world of a quarter of a mile"

(Kshete Prantare - Satti Tarar Timir)

Darkness can be darkness with fire burning within it. Though it appears to be a paradox there is always light within darkness.

To the right, left, above or below the time
I found you.

In the burning darkness"

(Samayer Tire - Bala Bala Kalbela).

Life is born in the darkness and it remains there until it comes out in the light. Darkness is fruit-bearing; it is productive; Tagore's idea of 'Balaka' also can be seen here.
"From the depth of darkness we have come to this moment of the world. How the forest grows from the seed. . . . . . . "

(Andhakar Theke - Bela Abela Kalbela).

Or,

"Darkness of creation still surrounds us O woman!"

(Surjya, Nakshatra, Nari - Do).

In the process of creation and destruction the last phase may be darkness but even this darkness will have a light in it, for, the spirit of light will remain forever within the darkness.

"0 fire you are the milky way! In the eternal darkness

Burns your fire holy

If the last word of creation is night stark dark

And if the human mind is the mirror of this darkness

Even then light of creation will be kindled up

In the mind of time, sky and earth.

(Magh Sankrantir Rate - Bela Abela Kalbela).

However, it is interesting to note that in the end Eliot, also equates darkness with the light. Maxwell, in his "The poetry of T.S. Eliot" writes:

"Yet, in Burnt Norton III light and darkness seem to be equated, contrasted together with the dim light of the world. The paradox is elaborated in East Cocker and we are told that -

"The darkness shall be the light

and stillness the dancing."31

Again, Donald Davie in his essay "Eliot, the end of era" writes:

"Darkness and light, stillness, and dancing are two pairs of opposed terms. They are reconciled in the agony of death and birth. Birth, coming from the darkness to the light, is a sort of death, for as soon as we are born we begin to die and death, going from the light to the dark, is a sort of birth into eternal life. 32

It now appears that inspite of the initial difference the two poets come almost to the same conclusion about the nature of darkness and light.

Fog:

There is also the fog image used both by Eliot and Jibanananda. For example:

"The brown waves of fog toss up to me
Twisted faces from the bottom of the street".
(Morning at the window).

Or, "Unreal city
Under the brown fog of a winter noon".
(The Waste Land).

It may be seen that fog in most cases obstructs our view of the reality and suspends our agonies in the languid moments of semi-darkness. It makes most of the things unsubstantial to the poet. Even death melts into something unsubstantial when looked through the opaque fog:

"Death -
Has become unsubstantial, reduced by a wind
A breath of pine and the wood song fog". (Marina).

32. Donald Davie - Eliot; The end of an era - Hugh Kenner, p.198.
Often, the fog image is coupled with smoke images as in the "Protrait of a lady":

"Among the smoke and fog of December afternoon
You have the scene arranged itself as it will seem to do".

(Protrait of a lady)

Or,

"The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window panes
The yellow smokes that rubs its muzzle on the
Window panes".

(The love song of J. Alfred Prufrock).

Fog image:

The fog and mist images are used extensively by Jibanananda in his poems. For example:

1) "Silently washes the feet once
And then gets lost into the fog" (Rupsi Bangla)

2) "If one day I wither and drop down
In the blue fog of the 'Kartik' (Do)

3) "The Shalik that dies in the mist
Never returns again" (Do)

4) "And that golden winged hawk?
Do the wings of it come floating
Through the fog in the field?" (Do)

5) "I know -
One day in the fog of this field I shall be lost
No one will find me again". (Do)
6) "Like the fusion of fogs from
The heaven, Earth, and Hades
A deep shadow rises in the mind".
(Sristir Tire - Satti Tarar Timir).

7) "Many autumn of this kind have ended,
In the mists of time"
(Nabiki - Satti Tarar Timir).

Jibanananda also uses the fog image to have an effect of unsubstantiality in the otherwise matter of fact world of ours. In fog his agonies are suspended for the time being and he is able to liquidate or dissolve his existence in a diffusing semi-darkness. But one can not but note that the more the poets (Eliot and Jibanananda) advance in age and experience, less do they use the fog or mist image. More light enters in the world of their poetry, until one goes to the "Fire of love" and other to the 'Sun' of knowledge and wisdom, for a resolution. One, therefore, pauses and wonders whether fog is a phenomenon that exists outside the minds of the poets concerned or is it a state of mind that wants to obscure the view of life the poets are not quite willing to look at closely? The more the unwillingness to look at the realities of life is overcome, the less is the necessity of such opacity.
Besides these symbols and images, Jibanananda used many other images in his poetry. It is not necessary to illustrate all of them here. What is important to note is that in spite of the general belief that Jibanananda is least affected by the current European and English poetic movement, one may have the impression that it is he who practically used symbols in the fashion of English and European symbolists more than any other modern Bengali poet. For this reason the obscured and mysterious language of the symbolists can be seen in his poems. As mentioned earlier, in Jibanananda's poetry it is seen that the symbol and images mingle one with another in the fashion of Eliot, the imagist-symbolist. His woman, river, camel, owl etc. symbols are also images. Similarly, in Eliot symbols like 'Lotos' 'Rose' 'Broken column' 'knot of fire' etc. are also at the same time serve the purpose of images. In the conscious use of symbols and images mingling the one with other - Jibanananda is pioneer in Bengali poetry.

There is, however, another side of his use of symbols. Leonard Unger in his essay, "T.S. Eliot's images of awareness," says that Eliot's images, at least some of them, do not depend on the traditional or normal association of things but on the awareness of his mind. This is an awareness about things which are not really present before him; which he actually does not see but whose presence he feels in his mind. About such presence Hary Blamires says:

35. T.S. Eliot's images of awareness (From T.S. Eliot - the man and his work edited by Allen Tate, pp.205-231.)
"There we become aware of presence, definite, significant, weighty—yet not directly felt by the senses. They are not seen; they are not heard; they do not impress their tread on the dead leaves; but they evidence themselves indirectly by the fact that we recognize our environment as being alert to them. This awareness is very much present in Jibanananda which is often explained by the critics and admirers as "sensuousness" of the post. Let us see some of the often quoted lines from his poems:

"The Hawk shakes off the smell of Sun from its wings".

(Banalata Sen - Banalata Sen).

Or, "In the sky birds exchange words
And then fly to a sky no one knows where
But the smell of their wings float all around"

(Pakhira)

Examples like those show the keenness of the senses of the poet. Or is it keenness of senses alone? What amount of sensuousness can perceive such experience? Perhaps no amount of sensuousness can experience such things. It can not be also simple imagination because such things are not altogether non-existent. What senses of men cannot feel is not necessarily non-existent. A dog may very well pick up the trail of a particular smell when human being cannot even say that such smell exists. This sense of awareness which is expressed by images of smell, taste or sound etc. are often connected with animal symbols in Jibanananda. The reason for such connection may be that the animals have access to a world, the doors of which are closed to man for his alienation from nature.

Before this is discussed let us see how the images of smell, taste and sound used by Jibanananda show great similarity to the images of smell, sound, music etc. in Eliot's poetry. Imagery of smell abounds in Eliot's poems. For example in 'Prelude' there are the "smell of steaks in passage ways" and "Faint stale smell of beer".

In Rhapsody on a windy night" there is a catalogue of such images—"Old nocturnal smells". Of particular interest are:

"a paper rose
That smells of dust and au-de cologne".

Or, "Female smells in shattered rooms".

In Prufrock he writes:

"Is it perfume from a dress"
That makes me so digress?

In the "Protrait of a lady" there is the reference to "the smell of Hyacinth across the garden".

In the "Ariel poems" there is the "valley smelling of vegetation. In the "Journey of Magi" there we see "the fragrant brilliance of the Christmas trees." More impressive images appear in the last section of the "Ash Wednesday".

"And the lost heart stiffens and rejoices
In the lost lilac and the lost sea voices
And the weak spirit quickens to rebel
For the bent golden rod and the lost sea smell..."
The smell renews the salt savour of the sandy earth.

In the "Little gidding" he notes:

"There is no earth smell or smell of living things".

Similarly such images can be frequently found in the "Choruses of the Rock" and verse plays of Eliot. It is needless to make a long list of such images. What is important is that they are mostly images of awareness which we also see in his images of music or sound, or in other images. Some of the music images are:

"I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a further room.
I have heard the mermaids singing each to each" (Prufrock).

Again in the "Protrait of a Lady",

"Would she not have the advantage after all?
This music is successful with a dying fall.
Now that we talk of dying
And should I have the might to smile".

In the "Burt Norton" the awareness of the poet shows a peculiar acuteness:

"Words move music moves
Only in time, but that which is only living
Can only die. Words after speech reach
Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern
Can words of music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese Jar still
Moves perpetually in the stillness
Not the stillness of violin, while the note lasts".
Jibanananda is also aware of many such things, as some distant smell, sound, touch etc., which can not be felt by the sensory organs. Sometimes his awareness is uncanny. His world is full of music like music "with dying fall", smell like "lost sea smell" and other suggestions hitherto unexplored by any other Bengali poet.

Let us see some of the images of smell in Jibanananda. We can have a catalogue of them from "Rupasi Bangla".

1) "I did not know that the hair of a beauty can rain such delicate smell. The hair of a beauty smells so sweet - I did not know"
   (Rupasi Bangla).

2) "Smell of soft paddy or earthen pot

   The smell of the Ducks feather, of the water of the pond and its fishes"
   (Do)

3) "The life of Bengal, in the silence of the saddened tired smell."
   (Do)

4) "The whole day will pass in the smell

   of the water in earthen pitcher."
   (Do)

5) "When ducks in stale water smell dew drops."
   (Do)

6) "In the Sun-light lingers the smell of wet pain."
   (Do)

7) "There the barn-owl is a budding youth like the smell of new paddy"
   (Do)

8) "There floats the ancient silent smell of pain

   of human feelings." (Do).
This awareness almost borders on the region of imagination in "Banalata Sen". Yet, these imageries are so intensively and accurately drawn that they appear to a reader as reality and not merely awareness. For example:

1) And then there is left only the vast starry sky
   Smell of the ducks - and one or two ducks of imagination.
   (Bunoh Hans - Banalata Sen).

2) All business of life is now over
   Now we have the smell of sleep on our body.
   (Hazar bachar dhare sudhu khela kare - Banalata Sen).

There are many other images of smell used in his poetic works:

1) The scent of childhood on the grass in the field.
   (Abasarer Gan - Dhusar Pandulipj).

2) Like the murmur of a distant river
   Comes another smell - the smell of an end.
   (Abasarer Gan - Dhusar Pandulipj).

3) There still clings to the village
   (From the bodies of the village beauties)
   The smell of bodies of beautiful girls full of fragrance and husked rice. (Do)

4) Silvery fish flashes in the Sun
   And smooth water is all full of the smell of grass.
   (Samanya Manush - Bela Abela Kalbela).

5) The air is filled by the Jasmine scent
   of past, present and future (Mita Bhasan).
Similarly sound images also show a distinct awareness. Here some of these sound images:

1) After the day, night falls
   Making sounds like dew drops.
   (Banalata Sen).

2) Touching the silence of the moon light of these Neolith horses.
   (Ghora - Satti Tarar Timir).

3) Like a white sheet of cloth immeasurable drops of dew Under the foliage of Olive tree
   The sound of the far off seas And the sound of the lonely breeze.
   (Wristwastch - Satti Tarar Timir).

4) At the end of this world there lie Countless remains of buildings Broken, soundless.
   (Godhuli Sandhar Nritya - Do)

5) Sounds of sea, of the wind, the sun, blood and death Dance like frightening Witches, and We hide into the darkness of caves.
   (Iti hasayana - Bela Abela Kalbela)

6) The darkness sings In the tune of dew drops.
   (Kayakti Line - Dhusar Pandulipi).
We have seen how the smell images of Jibanananda remind us of Eliot's smell images like "lost sea smell", "the smell of grapes on the autumn table", "there is no earth smell or smell of living things", "a paper rose that smells of dust, female smells in shuttered room" etc. His sound images similarly bring in our mind many of Eliot's sound images: For example, when we read Jibanananda we are bound to recall lines from the "Burnt Norton" -

"Foot falls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose garden".

Or, "Go, said the bird, the leaves were full of children
Hidden excitedly, containing laughter".

Or, Lines from "Bur Bank",
"The horses, under the axle tree
Beat up the dawn from Istria
With even feet".

Also lines from "the Waste land"
"And dry grass singing
But sounds of water over a rock
Where hermit thrust sings in pine trees
Drip-drop, drip, drop, drop drop drop
But there is no water".

Or, "Under,
A woman drew her long black hair out tight
And fiddled whisper music on these strings".
Or, "Grass is singing
Over trumbled graves about the chapel
There is the empty chapel, only the winds home".

Though the voices are dry, we also remember the lines of "Hollowman".

"Our dried voices, when
We whisper together
Are quiet and meaningless
As void in dry grass
Or rats feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar".

Or, Lines from the "Ash wednesday"

"And bones sang chirping
With the burden of the grass hopper".

Or, from the "Difficulties of a statement"

"O hidden
Hidden in the stillness of moon, in the
Silent croaking night".

In almost all his images of awareness, Jibanananda used animal symbols like the bird, the fish, the horse, the whale etc. The reason is probably that the world of nature is not fully known to us or it may be that mankind has forgotten largely what they knew about nature in the past. To understand nature and feel its presence in the blood one is to invoke the superior animal instinct which is still in communion with the nature. The world unseen to us may become visible if we look through the eyes of the animal. That is why Jibanananda writes:
"When did we land
On this earth as life...
This is life, This gives us a passport
To enter into the darkness of the sea."

(Unmesh - Satti Tarar Timir)

Or, "I was never one of you
0 man! 0 man!
Never I did know your world
Yet, I am not a stranger from another planet".

(Andhakar - Satti Tarar Timir).

Again, "I germinate like a grass blade
In the grass
Tearing the sweet dark body of the grass mother" (Ghass).

For the same reason he thinks that nocturnal birds like owl or the bat must have their natural place in the nature imagery, particularly those of the moon and the night. It is they who know the night better than the day birds or animals who move in the light. So he writes:

"I saw its body filled with the colour of a sad bird
Wetted by the dew drops from the evening sky it surrendered
to the branch of gum tree,
Over its head the crescent moon was shining
The blue moon, like crooked horns, was listening to
Its voice (Sankha Mala - Banalata Sen).

Or, "Like the zig-zug sky of the bats"

(Swapner Dhwanira).
Or, "Like the whale of the dark sea
I swim towards the East".

(Unmesh - Satti Tarar Timir).

Again : "A bat becoms all to its self earned 'moonlight'-'wisdom'
At the farthest end of the horizon".

(Kabita - Do).

Or, "Red round sun of the autumn evening
Sinks silently. In the moon light
Owl on the 'papal' tree watches it alone".

(Gadhuli Sandhir Nritya - Satti Tarar Timir).

Or, "In the two eyes of one there is no sleep
And no desire to sleep
Sitting in the yellow crowded foliage and
Rubbing its feather in the dew drops
And covering the branch with its wings.
Watching the image of sleep and the sleeping
This bird keeps awake through out the night of December
With the earthly moon and the earthly stars".

(Pocha - Dhuser Pandulipi).

Awareness of death in Jibanananda and Eliot:

One who takes life seriously is bound to be disturbed by the thought of death. Almost all great thinkers of all ages considered the question of death in one way or another. Nevertheless, the question of death remains as unresolved as ever. Of the important modern poets, T.S. Eliot is one who writes with a mission. In a way his mission is to show what life
means; to read the book of life again in a new perspective and to make an attempt to interpret it from the new point of view. In "The Waste Land" he writes:

"What are the roots that clutch what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man you
Cannot say, or guess, for you knew only
A heaps of broken images, where the Sun beats
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief
And the dry stone no sound of water.....
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you.
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you
I will show you fear in a handful of dust".

Naturally, he could not avoid the question of death. His 'Prufrock' does not consider death or the end of life from a philosophical point of view. He is a modern man, who cannot rest his faith on religions or philosophical teachings, which want to remove the fear of death from the mind of man. He is afraid of the old age. He is conscious of growing old without any real knowledge of the life or death; without any consolation of becoming wiser as years go by. He says:

"I grow old I grow old
I shall wear the bottom of my trousers rolled
Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a Dqah?
I shall wear white flannel trousers
and walk upon the beach".
His 'Prufrock' not only shinks in size as the old age approaches, but his heart shrinks in fear of the steady progress of life towards the ultimate end.

"I am no prophet and here is no great matter;
I have seen the eternal footman hold my coat and snicker,
And in short, I was afraid".

Prufrock, a modern man, does not like to face death; for him there is no consolation in death. In "The Waste Land", the awareness of death is very prominent.

To the question "I never know what
You are thinking, think"
The protagonist answers, "I think we are in rat's alley
Where the dead man lost his bones".

Again to the question:

"You know nothing? Do you see nothing?
Do you remember nothing?"
The answer is:

"I remember
These are pearls that were his eyes".

Similarly, an atmosphere of woe and horror of death pervade the "Ash Wednesday".

"Because these are no longer wings to fly
But merely vans to beat the air
The air which is now thoroughly small and dry
Smaller and dryer than the will
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still.
Pray for us sinner now and at the hour of our death
Pray for us now and at the hour of our death".

Presence of death behind the show of life has always tormented his mind
and he writes:

"Eyes that last I saw in tears
Through division
Here in death's dream kingdom
The golden vision reappears
I see the eyes but not the tears....
Eyes I shall not see unless
At the door of death's other kingdom".

(Eyes that I saw in tears - Collected poems).

Again, "The wind sprang up at four O'clock
The wind sprang up and broke the bell
Swinging between life and death
Here in death's dream kingdom".

(The wind sprang up at four O'clock).

In "The Waste Land" he warns that he will show the "fear in a handful of
dust". Since then, 'dust' is repeatedly mentioned by him as the end of life's
journey.

"The cycle of heaven in twenty century's
Bring us farther from God and nearer to the dust"

(Choruses from the Rock).
"Now they go up to the temple
Then the sacrifice
Now come the virgins urns, urns attaining
Dust
Dust
Dust of Dust...........
(Triumphant March).

Again,
"Rising and falling, crowned with 'dust' the small
The small creatures chirp thinly through the dust
Through the night"
(Difficulties of a statesman).

In the "Rook" as well as in some of his verse plays we see a resigned acceptance of death; a quiet preparation to meet death when it comes. Thomas Becket in the "Murder in the cathedral" says:

"All my life
I have waited. Death will come when I am worthy
And if I am worthy, there is no danger
I have therefore only to make perfect my will".

So, it may appear that in his early writings Eliot was conscious of death as a terror then as a necessary phase in the course of life. The meaning of death gradually becomes more intelligible when he looks at death as a part of life. The terror of the unbearable life fades finally, removing the fear of death with it, in the "Four quartets". So long there was only one movement, the mechanical progression, the "appetency" of times, which leads man to the abyss, the bottom less world of unworthy death. So, he denounced the movement:
"Not that movement
But abstention from movement; while the world moves

In appetency, on its metalled ways

Of time past and time future".

(Burnt Norton).

But the tyranny of time must be overcome. Time is to be conquered through time and so also the fear of death. Helen Gardner sees that with the whimper of the "Hollow man" a hope for a new birth is born. The "Time of tension" of the "Ash wednesday" between dying and birth is relaxing dissolving the tension in the acceptance of two different kinds of time. The time we feel in our pulses, in our personal lives, and the time we become aware of remaining through our imagination, stretching behind us, beyond the record of the hystorian and continuing after we have gone. Now he is convinced that the still point can be reached by real freedom from the tyranny of time and that freedom can be achieved to a considerable extent when the desire is removed and hope is abandoned.

One can thus enter the centre of time, the still point, free from the forces of time's movement. The movement now is like that of a movement in a train or ship; a free suspended movement not connected with the stations or the ports.

"Fare forward, travellers; not escaping from the past
Into different lives or into any future;
You are not the same people who left the station
Or who will arrive at any terminus....

And on the deck of the drumming liner
Watching the furrow that widens behind you".

(Thy Dry Salvages).

The convincing victory over death in the "Wasteland" is now affirmed. And he passes with confidence in the realm of "Little gidding". About "Little gidding", D.W. Harding writes: "It deals with the dissolution of death and futility of life for those who have no conviction of spiritual values in their life's work. So the enigma of death which is not yet resolved beyond doubt is again taken up by the poet and in the final section of the poem a reconciliation is found in the acceptance of a consuming experience of highest love and in the surrender to a spiritual principle beyond us, which is the only alternative to consuming ourselves with the miserable fires of sin and errors." "The final selection" says Harding "develops the idea that every experience is integrated with all the others, so that the fulness of exploration means a return, with better understanding, to the point where you started. The theme has already been foreshadowed in section III, where detachment is seen to give liberation from future as well as the past, so that neither past nor future has any fascination of a kind that could breed in us a reluctance to accept the present fully.

The tyranny of sequence and duration in life is thus reduced. Time processes are viewed as aspects of a pattern which can be grasped in their entirety at any one of its moments.

"The moment of the rose and the moment of the yew... Are of equal duration".

One effect of this view of Time and experience is to rob the moment of death of any over significance we may have given it; an over strong terror of death is often one expression of the fear of living, for death is one stage in the life process that seems too terrifying to be borne. In examining one means of becoming reconciled to death, Eliot can show us life, too made bearable, unfrightening, positive, inviting.

"With the drawing of this love and the
Voice of the calling
We shall not cease from exploration
And the end all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time."

Thus in the renewal of hope; in the return to the starting place, in the belief of a resurrection, the fear of death is drawned and the credibility of a bearable life is reassured.

Jibanananda also is intensely aware of death. A keen awareness of death has drawn him into the problem; and he finds that though there are occasional digressions, the show of life is always moving towards the inevitable last act, which is death. About the death-consciousness of Jibanananda Dipti Tripathy writes:

"The consciousness of weariness and of death are the main trend in the poetry of Jibanananda as well as in the modern Bengali poetry." 

Development of death-consciousness in Jibanananda has certain stages. In his early poems death means physical or biological cessation of life's

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37. Little Gidding - D.W. Harding, T.S. Eliot.
38. Adhunik Bangla Kavya Parichaya - Dipti Tripathy, p.175.
activities. Also, he considers death as the death of faith or belief. Premendra Mitra observed in "Kallal Yaga" that poets of that time were all in love with death. Death was romantic for the revolutionaries whatever were their activities political or literary. It was an off-shoot of the patriotic sentiment of self sacrifice, strongly present among the terrorists of the time. Death wish of the poets was the counter-part of the actual death game that was being played in India and particularly in Bengal by the revolutionaries. In death faith transcends mortality and enters the realm of glory. So, Jibanananda writes:

"The blood of self sacrifice does never vanish in darkness
Bones of the dedicated cry in the voice of thunder
Death is not extinction, life does not end in the cremation ground
His 'Veena' rings in all countries and its vibrations are
Heard through ages"

(Vivekananda - Jhara Palak)

Again,

"Are the last waves of the Ganges
That come seeking death on the ferry-bank of "Baitarani"

(Smashan - Do).

But his poetry soon reflects the sentimental and emotional attachment to death borrowed from the political atmosphere of Bengal of that time. Next comes a phase when the poet searches for the meaning of life from the accepted fact that an individual can never avoid death. And this death means

* Synonymous of styx of the classical myth of Greece and Rome.
total extinction. No one to remember him after his death and nothing to preserve him in the memory. If the life is meaningless and unbearable in the context of the prevailing conditions of the society, then out of this context, taken simply as a problem of an individual, it is utterly hopeless. A strong death wish pervades the consciousness of the poet at this stage. There is no use maintaining an existence of agony and suffering only. Hence, he wants to die, to end his existence, in the calmness of death. He therefore, writes:

"When I shall go to my last sleep
In the darkness, gazing at the starry night
Under a jack fruit tree
Or by the side of Dhaleswari, Chilai". (Rupasi Bangla).

"The Kanch poka is sleeping, and I shall also go to sleep by its side". (Do)

"Death will come sometimes -
Some where the soft green grass will keep me under its cover."
(Rupasi Bangla).

This death wish is very strong in his poems - "Andhakar"

- "I have wished to cling like endless death to
  the bosom of darkness, and be the lonely womb
  . . . . . . . . . .

  Nursed by solace of sleep in deep darkness;
  Why you want to awake me up?" (Andhakar).

+ Dhaleswari - Chilai - Rivers.
* Kanch Poka - an insect with transparent gloss.
Again in "Jiban" he writes:

"I called death like a friend and a beloved

To come to me

And I had my face into its lap like a frightened child".

This death-consciousness has no hope of rebirth. The poet, for the time being accepts the victory of science over religious beliefs and philosophical speculation. Traditional Hindu faith in rebirth is of no consolation to him. He writes; "For a long time man maintained certain beliefs. They believed in the existence of soul, in "Brahmma" or his other manifestations ......yet, they believe in a life here after and in the existence of the soul after death. They believed that the individual soul was indestructable. They had faith in religion and "Brahmma"........ Now the "Brahmma" is almost non-existent. Soul is not immortal. Perhaps there is no soul at all. Man donot believe in Magic or Miracles. Now, faith in science is increasing and consequently also in the method of science".39

So, with a mood of resignation he writes:

"By the Dhansiri River I shall go to sleep

In the winter night

Knowing certainly that I shall never awake

from that sleep."(Andhakar).

He submits to the dharm of death completely in his poem "Baitarani". Here, the poet returns from the land of death, to revisit the world he loved so much, in the form of a vulture. For seven days he stays there and wonders over the merits of life and death. Ultimately he decided for the second time

that death is preferrable and should be embraced willingly, for it offers ultimately peace and eternal sleep.

"Now, for seven days and night —
I pondered; then asked for death, which is much preferrable
So, once again on the wide discoloured wings I fly, I fly,
through the vacumm,
Like a sharp vulture racing —
This is no leave taking, no past time, no dream
There the darkness of the water of Baitarani
Gives peace, peace, peace,
And sleep."

It is better to accept death because — there is no hope for immortality of the individual soul. Nothing can perpetuate this existence. With a mind full of grief the poet admits the sorrowful end of the individual.

"Who remembers death? 'Kristinasa'* moves all
The time swallowing land after land in its
Search for new banks. It never remembers the sand banks dead
Left behind" (Rupasi Bangla).

Or, "Shalik"* that dies in the winter never comes back

Never that sleep is broken. Who wakes up from that sleep?
Though the hawk goes on crying and murmurs the wind"

(Rupasi Bangla).

* Kristinasa — A violent river of East Bengal.
* Shalik — A kind of Indian oriole.
But then, the desire to surrender to death without any hope is also gradually abandoned. The idea of total extinction becomes unbearable to him and desire to live on this earth appears.

"One day nobody will see me here amidst the mists in the field;
The journey of the heart ends when he enters the cold world
Yet it will take some time to find consolation
And to forget this field of the earth."

(Rupasi Bangla).

Or,

"I shall leave this place one day. But then the night sky With all its stars will go on in An endless rotation, without my knowledge"

(Rupasi Bangla).

Or,

"It would give me paid to think
That if I had lived longer on this earth
I could have seen the barn-owl with more care"

(Rupasi Bangla).

However, hope gradually returns and the desire to live wins. A hope of rebirth now appears in some of his poems.

"Shall I get back the body?
After shedding my blood on this silent dewy soil Shall I come back?"

(Pipasar Gan - Dhusar Pandulipi).
Doubt recedes slowly and at last he becomes convinced that he will come back to this earth, though it may be in a different form or shape. Realisation of the secrets of nature, as can be seen in his uses of new symbols etc., enables him to see this life in a new light. It is not so unbearable now as it appeared him earlier.

"I shall come again to the banks of Dhansiri
To this Bengal
May he not in the shape of a man
But as a "Shankhachil"+ or a "Shalik"

(Rupasi Bangla)

The time-consciousness steadily helps him to win the morbid fear of death. It is a fact that individual can not avoid death but the death of an individual is also of no real significance. Because, now he can see time as an unbroken stream of events where death or birth does not really interrupt the eternal movement of time. There cannot be only nothingness at the end of life. The pattern of creation is only partially known to us. But it promises a continuation of the life after death. Man dies only to return in his sons and daughters. Mankind as a race, therefore, never dies. Besides, the consolation offered by the immortality of man as a race, the question of individual place in the scheme of time is also not so hopeless as it appeared to him at the onset. Until now he saw one face of time only, the destructive; the constructive side was out of his view. He only saw the time, man generallyware aware of, the sense of time created by the rising and setting sun and moon, the time which was on inspite of human effort to

+ Shankhachil - a type of hawk.
stop it, and he felt a deep pain. He felt that man can neither conquer nor be one with it. Nothing abides, all goes, as Eliot would have put it 'to dust' ultimately. So he wrote:

"Two small and black hands of this clock
Want to take us to the soundless grassy grave
Though our courage, conviction love promise not to go there
Yet, habit prompts our footsteps so easily to that direction".

(Gharir Bwiti Hat)

Or,

"You shall remain here but the time will not wait
And never will it be distracted from its course."

(Jiban – Dhusar Pandulipi)

Again,

"Still now the earth moves from darkness to light
Watching the sun happily.
It could have been perhaps better, if it had stopped."

(Itihasa Yana – Bela Abela Kalbela).

Or,

"Even then,
For eternity we could have waited
But will time allow us to do so?"

(Nari Sabita – Do).

But now he is aware of a second time - the time creative. As it can be seen in his 'Woman' and 'Sea' symbols the time is now not indifferent to man or his destiny. The second time i.e., the time creative has hopes stored for the humanity in it - a promise that preserves expectations. He now admits the existence of the second time:
"When earth moves round the sun, day is lightened
The night darkness;
This is the law of daily rotation
Slightest deviation from this never happens
Or if this is to happen then our relative human time
Has to change into a second time".

(Prithivi Surjyake Ghire - Bela Abela Kalbela).

He also feels the existence of a benevolent force - in the second time -
"the face of prakriti" and he finds some sort of comfort in it.

"When life attains greater depth and becomes better
It can closely feel the presence of Prakriti"

(Surjya Ratri Nakshatra - Do).

Thus, he discovers that along with the current of in-different time, there moves another current - the current of Prakriti; which may be taken as another face of time. This is where the individual counts. There he comes into the greater scheme of the universe. He is a part of this force when he knows the secret of it. However, to know this secret he must have wisdom which Jibanananda symbolised by the 'Sun' and 'fire'. Eliot finds his last hope in the knowledge of the fire of love divine which will save the soul from the despair.

"The only hope or else
Lies in the choice of pyre or pyre
To be redeemed from fire or fire."(Little Gidding).

Jibanananda writes:
"On the right, left, above and below the time
I saw you in the burning darkness
And heard the tremendumous sound from the wings
Of the great white bird - that is sun-
The great sphere of fire is singing."

(Samayer Tire - Bela Abela Kalbela).

When the Sun or fire enters into the mind illuminating the darkness, man knows what is woman or Prakriti. Sun or fire which is also a manifestation of Prakriti, shows man the way to be united with the greatest force of Prakriti which is love. When man knows this, he is no more afraid of death. He accepts it with a keen interest to know what is there within the mystery of the creation. So he writes:

"O sky! O eternal knot of time!
Loving knowledge, light, woman and music
I am like sun - water and the blue throated bird
Of the morning."(Akti Kabita - Bela Abela Kalbela).

This consummated love will give the energy that will be necessary to save the soul at the end of the journey.

"When the universe will go dark one day
Woman; you will follow what you had in your mind
But did not speak out.
And will transform the body the mind and yourself into a hale,
Like a dark power of Shidry gold."

(Magh Sankratri Rate - Bela Abela Kalbela).

* Cf. the "Knot of fire" of Eliot in the little Gidding.
There the eternal time waits for the interested soul, at the end of segmented and fragmented time.

"If I do not know the eternal current of time
How can I have you, unindebted - overcoming the claims of
Small fragmented insignificant time?"

(Satabdi-Bela Abela Kalbela).

Pain of death is now forgotten. The great love makes life bearable. He is now in communion with the prakriti or woman and that shows him how the poison of life can be turned into the nectar of life.

"Woman, loving you, not the man,
I know how sweet can become
Our poisonous existence".

(Tomake - Bela Abela Kalbela).

Honey of life is now extracted from the bitter poison of life. Life is now meaningful; so is death, for the conquest of life means the conquest of death. Though it is different love, in Eliot also we see that the ultimate resolution is found in the fire of love.

"Man cannot help loving, his choice is between the fire of self love and the fire of the love of god. 40 In "Little gidding" he asks man to go for the "Love of god". In Jibanananda also, the most essential thing for man is to feel and to find out the force of love that flows eternally through 'Prakriti'. It is always there, benevolent and eager to take care of him. He is only to respond and cooperate and then this love seizes him into its folds and makes him one with the creative force. This creative force moves

with the time eternal as a part of it. There is, therefore, no beginning or end, only a movement— a progress through creation and destruction, birth and death. The problem of life and death is thus not an isolated question, neither there is an isolated answer for it. It is integrated with the great question of the creative process that wields the universe. Compared to that, the question of human existence is of little significance. The prospect of a blissful expectancy is, therefore, good when man and Prakriti are one in a love-tie and perhaps there, in the eternal mystery, rests the solution of the mystery of life and death.