Chapter IV

Selected poems of Yeats: close reading in the perspective of their impact on Jibanananda Das’ poetic self

W.B. Yeats is one of the greatest modern English poets. His verses are well-read worldwide cutting across all barriers of dissimilar and strange weather, climate, history, culture and tradition. The wave of the impact of his poetry spatters on even Bengali literature. Jibanananda Das, among other Bengali poets, relishes the gusto of Yeats’ poetic vigour and fervour. In the process, Yeats appears to be a brightening star in the firmament of Das’ poetic art. Yeats’ poems appear to exercise a considerable impact this way or the other on the growth of Jibanananda Das as a poet. A close reading of some selected poems of Yeats pinpoint the impression of this impact on Das’ poetic self, though Das holds an individualistic credentials as a great poet himself. Das was a student and a lecturer as well, of English literature. He came closer to Yeats’ poetic world very early in his life. He was awe-struck to find how masterly Yeats exhibited the rural landscape coloured by myths, legends and folklores especially in his earlier poems. Das conspicuously transmitted that poetic spirit into his own verses but in tune of Bengal’s rural surroundings and tradition. Yeats discerning eyes catch:

“O hurry where by water among the trees
The delicate-stepping stag and his lady sigh,
When they have but looked upon their images—
Would none had ever loved but you and I”

[ The Ragged Wood : In The Seven Woods ]

Das sketches a similar kind of picture in his poem Campe, Dhutor pandulipi :

Eke eke horinera aasiteche gobhir boner poth chhere,
Sokol joler shobda piche fele onnyo ek ashwaser khnoje
DNAATER NOKHER KOTHA BHOOLE GIYE TAADER BONER KACHE OI
Sundori gaacher nicher — jyotsnai!

Both poems, ‘The Ragged Wood’ and Campe are love poems. Both poets go
deep into the heart of love which can expresses itself faithfully without caring the consequences, possible only in the setting of nature, away from the manipulated atmosphere. So lovers take the shape of stags to express them solemnly.

Autumn was favourite with both the great poets. Autumn was the season frequented in the verses of both poets. Yeats finds in autumn:

"The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine-and-fifty swans."

[ The Wild Swans at Coole ]

Das incorporates imagination into reality in the realm of *hemanto* (autumn) in his poem *Haas, Saat-ti Tarar Timir*:

_Nichide unchu unchu ulubon, ghaaser bichhana;
Onok samay dhore chup theke hemanter jol
Protipanno hoye geche je samaye nilakash hole
Sudure naarir koole takhan hnaaser dolbol_

Yeats again plays with autumn, this time, with colour, leaves and mice in the poem, 'The Falling of the Leaves':

"Autumn is over the long leaves that love us,
And over the mice in the barley sheaves;
Yellow the leaves of the rowan above us,
And yellow the wet wild-strawberry leaves."

Most poets have made the glorification of the season of spring. But the diversity and variety are the characteristic elements of autumn. Das' sensitive eye discovers in autumn the inherent beauty, the life-soul as well as the shades of emptiness. His *Obosorer Gaan* depicts the source of life in the form of harvest:

_Hemanter Dhaan oothefoley,-
Dui paa chhodaye boso aeikhane prithibir koole_
Again the season of autumn at times signifies the desolation and the loss of life. His another poem, Piramid evokes the agony of separation:

\[\text{Moder jibone jobe jaage pata-jhora} \]
\[\text{Hemanter biday-kuhlci} \]
\[\text{Aruntado aankhi duti meli} \]
\[\text{Godir mora smritir shashan} \]
\[\text{Du-diner tore shudu;} \]

The diversity of life is manifested in the diversity of autumn. Das perceives these similar attributes of life and autumn. Ambuj Basu justifyingly comments about Das' treatment of autumn that Das' poetry recognizes the amalgamation of varieties that constitute the harvest as well as the empty field, the fullness as well as the void and life as well as death.

The poetic selves of Das and Yeats feel about love in the similar fashion. In Yeats' love poem like 'The White Birds' [The Rose] and Das' Ami Jodi Hotam, [Banalata Sen], both voices echo one another. Yeats' lover contemplates:

"I would that we were, my beloved, white birds on the foam of the sea
We tire of the flame of the meteor, before it can fade and flee;
And the flame of the blue star of twilight, hung low on the rim of the sky,
Has awakened in our hearts, my beloved, a sadness that may not die."

Both poems appear identical in the canvas of images; but visions are somewhat different; where Yeats' poem is love-oriented, Das' is an attempt to come out of the anguish of life. Yeats' Nature is all-embracing of colour, fragrance, grace and flavour; the same is the case with Das' Nature; but in Das' case, it possesses an added variety in the sphere of elaborate manifestation of different aspects of Nature. The affliction of life at times drives him to the fancy world and his inner voice laments:

"Ami jodi hotam banahangsa
Banalansgi hote jodi tumi,
Kono ek diganter jalsiri nadir dhare"
Das’ voice thus sounds more romantic at heart divorced from the harsh ways of the world. Love remains an irrelevant aspect in his life shrouded in some kind of mystery. He rather idealizes love in his verses. But due to his masterly presentation coupled with artistic imagination, nowhere and never in the poem his silence on love in his personal life is felt. Both ‘The White Birds’ and *Ami Jodi Hotam* in the process speak of the flight into a dreamy land, of course with a woman who ensures some kind of serenity and peace of mind. In ‘On Woman’ [The Wild Swans At Coole], Yeats reflects on woman’s bountiful nature and generosity:

“May God be praised for woman
That gives up all her mind,
A man may find in no man
A friendship of her kind
That covers all he has brought
As with her flesh and bone,
Nor quarrels with a thought
Because it is not her own.”

Das in the similar tone reinforces the positive impact of woman on mankind in *Mitabhashan, Banalata Sen*:

“Tomar saundarya naari, ateeter daoner matan
Madhyasagarer kaalo taranger theke
Dharmashuker sposto ahobhaner moto
Amader niye jai deke
Shantir sangher dikey-dharme-nirbane;
Tomar mukhe snigdha pratibhar paane”

Passion strikes both poets when the chosen woman is cast away beyond time and space; as is in the case of Yeats’ persona:
“She was more beautiful than thy first love,
But now lies under boards.”

[A Dream of Death: The Rose]

Das feels in the similar vein in *Saptak, Saat ti tarar timir*:

“*Aikhane Sarojini shuye ache, jani na se aikhane*

*Shuye ache kina*

*Onek hoyeche shoya;— tarpor ekdin chole geche*

*Kono door meghe*

It is quite interesting to find how alike both poets feel and think under the varied surroundings. Their poetic spirits crossing the barrier of time and space seem to sing a somewhat similar song as far their thought process is concerned. Love once departs life; only the memory of moments is left. Yeats speaks out:

“‘Your eyes that once were never weary of mine
Are bowed in Sarrow under pendulous lids,
Because our love is waning.’

And then she:

‘Although our love is waning, let us stand
By the lone border of the lake once more,
Together in that hour of gentleness’"

[Ephemera: Crossways]

Das too declares with his heart out in *Aghran Prantare, Banalata Sen*:

“*Jani tomar du-chokh aaj amake khnoje na aar*

*Prithibir pore –*

*Bole chup thaklam, kebali ashwathpata pore ache ghaser bhitore*

*Shukno miyano chhnedha;— aghran eseche aaj prithibir bone;”*

This familiar tone is also echoed in Das’ poem, *Dujan, Banalata Sen*:

“*Amake khnojo na tumi bahudin – kotodin amio tomake*

*Khnoji nako; ek nakshatra niche tobu – eki alo prithibir paare*

*Amora dujone achi; ...*”
Das sings of love whose mighty passion succumbs to time at the end of day as is recorded in the poem named *Prem, Dhusar Pandulipi*:

“Ekdin – ek raat korechi premer saathe khela
Ekraat – ekkdin korechi mrittyur abohela
Ekdin – ekraat; — tarpor prem chole geche, —
Sobai choiya jai, — sokolere jete hoi bole
Taharo furalo raat – tadhatadhi pore belo bela
Premero je ...”

Yeats, before Das, urges somewhat identical feelings in his ‘The Rose of the World’:

“Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream
For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
Mournful that no new wonder may betide,
Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam
And Usna’s children died.”

Both poets believe in the transitoriness of glory on earth under the changing phase of time. Yeats proclaims in ‘Easter 1916’:

“Wherever green is worn,
Are changed, changed utterly ;
A terrible beauty is born.”

Poet Das looks back to history and finds man’s constant struggle often overlooked and not rewarded. In *Jotodin Prithibite, Bela Obela Kaalbelaa*, Das reflects:

“Itihas dher din proman koreche
Manusher nirantar proyaner mane
Hoito- ba andhakar samayer theke
Bishrinkhal samajer pane
Chole java;”

This *Bishrinkhal* or disorder also clouds Yeats’ perception:
"Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,"

[The Second Coming]

Yeats masterly conveys the elaborate image of disorder in ‘Reconciliation’ [The Green Helmet and Other Poems]:

Some may have blamed you that you took away
The verses that could move them on the day
When, the ears being deafened, the sight of the eyes blind
With lightning, you went from me, and I could find
Nothing to make a song about but kings,
Helmets, and swords, and half-forgotten things
That were like memories of you – but now
We’ll out, for the world lives as long ago;"

Das reproduces the similar idea with a passionate mood in Janantike, Saat ti Tarar Timir:

"Tomake dekhar moto chokh nei – tobu
Gabhir bismaye ami ter pai – tumi
Aajo aei prithibite roye gecho
Kothao santwana nei prithibite aaj;
Bahudin theke shanti nei
Nidh nei
Pakhiro moton kono hridayer tore
Pakhi nei"

Ireland during Yeats’ time underwent bloodshed at the cost of humanity and liberty. Yeats is both a political and cultural nationalist simultaneously. The Easter Rising in 1916 left a mark in his agitated mind:

"Now days are dragon – ridden, the nightmare
Rides upon sleep : a drunken soldiery
Can leave the mother, murdered at her door"
To crawl in her own blood, and scot-free;
The night can sweat with terror as before
We pieced our thoughts into philosophy,
And planned to bring the world under a rule,
Who are but weasels fighting in a hole."

[Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen : The Tower]

The picture of disillusionment arisen out of the horrors of war coupled with the degradation of human nature is intensely highlighted in this Yeats’ poem. The images used in the poem are poignant to the mood of the poem. Bhabatosh Chatterjee rightly points out, “The image of ‘drunken soldiery’ is associated with and takes on an added overtone from the blood and mire and violence of dragon-ridden days.25"

Das, though not a political man, was set back by the worldwide uncertainty, economic crisis, loss of values, etc. conditioned by the two world wars. His humanitarian outlook could not ask for any explanation but cries out:

“E bikel manush na machider gunjaranmoi
Jugey jugey manusher addhyabasai
Oporer sujoger moto mone hoi
Quisling26 banano ki nij naam – Hitler saat kanakodhi
Diye taha kine niye hoye gelo lal :
Manusher haate tobu manush hoteche najehal;
Prithibite nei kono bishuddha chakari
E kemon paribeshhe roye gechi sobe — ”

[Srishtir Teere : Saat ti Tarar Timir]

Das possesses a sense of history. His poetic mind visits the landscape of history and comes across places like Kashi, Taxashila, Ujjayini, Agra, Delhi and so on. In Yeats’ poems too, myth, folklore and history are merged into one. Yeats in his ‘Sailing to Byzantium’ recounts:

“Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.”

26 Quisling refers to a traitor. Historically, it refers to Vidkun Quisling of Norway. He joined hands with Hitler during the Second World War betraying his country for which he was sentenced to death later.
Yeats’ poetic self cannot resist the call of the historical city of Byzantium, which assures the poetic persona of the timeless art and immortality. Bhabatosh Chatterjee aptly comments, “In Sailing to Byzantium, the poet expresses his desire to leave the sensual world and the young at their gallantries, and sail to Byzantium, the holy city of unageing intellect.” Das too traverses the India of bygone ages. In Banalata Sen, one comes across such beautiful and immortal poetic lines:

“Hazar bachar dhone ami path hnatitechi prithibir pothe, 
Singhal samudra theke nishither andhakaare malay sagare
Onek ghurechi ami; Bimbisar Ashoker dhusar jagate
Sekhare chhilam ami; aaro door andhakare Bidarva nagare;”

The opening sentence of the poem epitomizes Das’ profound consciousness of history. The continuation of history is indicated in the word, hnatitechi (walking), the continuou tense form of the verb hnota (walk). Here history is timeless. This history gives the poetic persona ample time, hazar bachar to traverse the extended tract of the world. In the treatise on poetry entitled Kohitar Kotha, Das enunciates that the core of poetry must contain the consciousness of history and the soul of poetry must have the crystal knowledge of time. Das’ Banalata Sen is a testament to this basic attribute of poetry. Narayan Haldar truly observes that the journey of the poetic persona arrives at the vague future passing across the territories of the grey history of the past and the present; the poetic self possesses the tremendous sense of history in his consciousness.

The spirit active in Banalata Sen also roams about in Yeats’ another poem, ‘The Song of Wandering Aengus’:

“Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly sides”

The yearning spirit of the Celtic legend, Aengus roams about in a timeless world of ‘hollow lands’ and ‘hilly sides’. The plural forms of words, ‘lands’ and ‘sides’ refer to the extended tract of the world, to wander through which time

27 Byzantium refers to the ancient Greek city, founded in 657 B.C. Later it became Constantinople when it was made Roman capital by emperor Constantine I in 330 AD. It is now modern-day Istanbul, of Turkey.


29 Aengus is an Irish mythological figure. He is considered the god of love, youth and poetic inspiration.
down the history has been taken enough to grow ‘old’. Yeats’ consciousness of
time and history here is at work. History is, for both Yeats and Das, the navigator
to the evolution of mankind. It reflects the growth of civilization. In this regard,
Yeats takes ‘towers’ and ‘stairs’ as symbols of the progress of civilization:

“Alexandria’s was a beacon-tower, and Babylon’s
An image of the moving heavens, a log-book of
The sun’s journey and the moon’s …
I declare this tower is my symbol; I declare
This winding, gyring, spiring treadmill of a stair
Is my ancestral stair;”

[Blood and the Moon: The Winding Stair and Other Poems]

Even Das takes up the image of the winding stairs in particular and stairs in
general in his poem, _Manusher Mrittyu Holey_:

“Ekdin nagarir ghurano snidhir path beye
... ... ...
Sei snidhi ghure prai nilimar gaye giye laage;
Snidhi udbhasito kore rodh;
Snidhi dhore oopore uthar pothe aarekrakam
Batas o aaloker asa-jooa sthir kore ki osadhoran
Premer proyan? ”

Yeats and Das in some of their poems sound identical. Yeats’ ‘He Re­
proves the Curlew’ and Das’ _Hay chil_ are true exponents of idiosyncrasies of
Nature articulated almost in a similar fashion. Yeats’ speaker, a keen observer,
addresses —

“Passion-dimmed eyes and long heavy hair
That was shaken out over my breast:
There is enough evil in the crying of wind.”

Yeats’ soft heart appeals to the curlew not to cry which will otherwise pain his
mind. Das addresses in the similar vein:
But the tone in Yeats’ poem is subjective, while that in Das’ poem is, to a more extent, objective. The eyes of both the chil and the curlew are filled with tears. The chil cries flying across the river named Dhansidhi while the curlew cries flying close to the watery place of the west. Both birds create melancholic atmospheres. Das digs relatively more into the mystery of nature ending up appealing to universal strokes of pain and pessimism, thanks to his objective approach. The pathos is too poignant in Das’ poem. On the pathos visible in the eyes of the chil masterly treated by Das, Tarun Mukhopadhyay comments that the eyes of the chil painted with unbearable grief for the loss of the soothing and loving memory witnessed by the Dhansidi saddens the poet’s heart. However, both poems can be placed parallel to one another as both reminisce the bygone love set in a rural background. Both Yeats and Das made an extensive use of images and metaphors. Dews, moon, stars, river, sky etc. make up images in Das’ verses. Das might have got an impetus from Yeats in drawing such images.

In Yeats’ ‘The Valley of the Black Pig’—

“The dews drop slowly and dreams gather; unknown spears
Suddenly hurtle before my dream-awakened eyes.”

The image of dews also revisits in Yeats’ another poem entitled “He tells of the Perfect Beauty”—

“And therefore my heart will bow, when dew
Is drooping sleep,”

The image of ‘dew’ appears in such line from “He gives his Beloved Certain Rhymes”—

“And stars climbing the dew-dropping sky’
Live but to light your passing feet.”

In Das’ poems dew is a recurring image. In his famous poem entitled Banalata Sen, we come across such line: “samasta diner sheshe shishier
The poem ‘Kudhi Bachar Pore’ beautifully picks up the image of dew, “Sonali sonali chil—shishir shikar kore niye geche tare/ Kudhi bacher poresei kuasay pai jodi hothat tumare.” In Howar Raat one comes across such majestic poetic line, “Andhokar raate...samasta nakshatrerana.” Another poem, Shikar presents a canvas of dawn where the image of dew pervades, “Sokaler aaloy toltol shishirer...jholmil korche.” In Maather Golpo one can glimpse, “Prothom fasal geche ghore—/Hemanta maathe- maathe jhore/Sudhu shishirer jol.” The dew-drop is marked in the poem, ‘Abosorer Gaan’, “Charidike nuye podhe...shishirer jol;”

Stars play important roles in canvassing picturesque gallery in the verses of both poets. Yeats writes:

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  “And then I must scrub and bake and sweep
   Till stars are beginning to blink and peep;”
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[ The Song of the Old mother: The Wind among the Reeds ]

Yeats loves to play the image of stars in the wilderness, “Until the axle break/ That keeps the stars in their round.” The poem named ‘The Dawn’ brings out both images of ‘moon’ and ‘stars’ together: “From their pedantic Babylon/ The Careless planets in their courses,/ The stars fade out where the moon comes”. Poet Jibanananda Das is outstanding when it comes to image-painting. The galaxy of stars comes alive in his poem named Howar Raat. The galaxy is conditioned by history, astronomy, love, nature altogether, thereby, bringing about an overwhelming creative picture, that speaks of Das’ range of creative imagination and artistic skill:

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Swati tarar kul ghineshe nil howar samudrer sada boker moto udheche se
   Kaal amon chomokar raat chhilo
Samasta mrito nakshatrerana kaal jege uthechilo—akashe ek til fsoak chilo na;
   ...Jholmol korchilo samasta nakshatra;
Je nakshatreron akasher booke hazar hazar bacher aage morey geyeche
Tarao kaal janelor bhitor diye asankhya mrito akash sange kore eneche.
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Star is a favourite image with poet Das. It is frequently revisited in his verses. In his Nirjon Swakshar, a precise simile comes out:
“Bahirer akasher shitey
Nakshatrer hoeiteche kshoy.
Nakshatrer matan hridoy
Podhiteche jhore—”

Through such images Das creates a romantic world. In Koyekti line, Dhusar Pandulip, a beautiful delicate world is visible, “Jekhane samasta raatir nakshatrer aalo podhe jhore./ samudrer hawai bese aaxe/gaan gay sindhu tar joler ullase.” His another poem Suranjana exhibits: “mone podhe kobe ek tarabhora raater batase/dharmashuker chhele Mahendrer saathe”

Poet Das, being younger to Yeats separated by some thirty four years, might have been an ardent reader of Yeats’ poems and inspired by them and have taken some poetic lessons all by himself at the end of the day. He had passionate love for Nature. He absorbed its colour, flavour, grace and its serenity. His frustration with life contributed to his intensifying adherence to nature. The uncertainty over his personal life and poetic recognition as well, coupled with severe criticism of his poetry, turned his interest towards his sense of unification with nature’s bountiful resource. He escaped into the lap of nature—the world of tranquillity and seclusion—away from the madding crowd. His continual bonding with nature gave him an impetus to delve deep into the complexity of human life. He came back, with an added vigour and persistence, to human society once he had escaped from. He made a bid to fight all that shook him earlier by virtue of an acquired passion, feelings and sympathy derived from all-inclusive Nature. His deep love for nature, in turn, gave birth to his genuine love for mankind:

“Ami jhore jabo, tobu jiban agaadh
Tomare rakhibe dhore seidin prithibhir pore
Amar sakol gaan tobu-o tomare laksha kore
... kono ek manushir mone
Kono ek manusher tore
Je jinis bneche thake hridayer gobhir gohbore—
Nakshatrer cheye aro nishabdo asone
Kono ek manusher tore ek manushir mone”
A poet is an individual with all his idiosyncrasies and mindsets different from another poet. Despite some apparent identical poetic elements between them, dissimilarities are not lesser and negligible. But when it comes to image-building in a poetic world, both poets seem to live under the same climate of signification. There are some instances in the following:

"Where mouse-grey waters are flowing."
"Ne-ul dhusar nadi apnea kaaj bujhe probahita hoi"

"Your eyes ...
Are bowed in sorrow under pendulous lids,"
"Pakhir nidher moto chokh tule natorer Banalata Sen"

"O curlew, cry no more in the air,
Or only to the water in the west;"
"Ilay chil, sonali danar chil, ei bhije megher dupure
Tumi aar knedo nako udhe udhe dhansidhi neditir paashe"

"... a bat rose from the hazels
And circled round him with its squeaky cry,"
"Ekti badudh dur soparjito jyotsnay manishay dekha diye jay
Jahader kotodur chakrabaal ache labhibar"

"... the mice in the barley sheaves"
"Indur sheeter rate reshamer moto roome maakhyayeche khud"

Amidst the apparently similar kind of imageries employed by both poets, subtle difference cannot be overlooked:

"The cat went here and there
And the moon spun round like a top,
And the nearest kin of the moon.
The creeping cat, looked up."
Yeats’ ‘cat’ roams close to the moon quietly and Das’ cat plays with its paw under the saffron light of the evening sun. Thus poet Das tends to get a clue from his great Irish predecessor and then makes it his own, keeping tune with Bengal’s landscape and tradition, thanks to his artistic creativity.

The genesis of Das’ poetry being akin to Yeats’ poetic fervour may be attributed to his vast knowledge of English literature. He belongs to a period when Tagore’s romanticism does not correspond to modern poetry to which contemporary Bengali poets can adhere. So they are bound to look elsewhere. Das himself confesses in his treatise Kobitar kotha that they are born in a period of non-conformist a culture and hence that they have no option but to derive inspirations from European literature for language and themes corresponding to modern worldview. Yeats and Eliot appear to be torch-bearers for them. However, Yeats’ poetry appeals to Das’ imagination. Yeats depicts an Ireland imbued with great landscapes and Nature’s variety. Yeats is a nationalist. More than a political nationalist he is basically a cultural nationalist. His earlier works were written with a mission of reviving great Irish cultural heritage which was, to a larger extent, spoiled and damaged by the British imperialist strategy. Thus Irish mythological figures and landscapes came alive in his poetic pages. Besides, his infatuation with occultism and magic coloured his earlier poems. All these elements play key notes in drawing images in Yeats’ poems that may illuminate the psyche of Das whose poems delineate images corresponding to the rural Bengal’s landscapes:

"Charidike uchu uchu ulahan ghaser bichana
Onek samay dhore chup theke hemanter jol
Protipanna hoye geche je samaye nilakash bole
Sudure naarir kule takhan haaser dalbal
. . Nayti amal haas nadite royche mone pore"
The image reminds of Yeats’ ‘The Wild Swans at Coole’:

"The trees are in their autumnal beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine-and-fifty swans."

Not only in thematic contents and thought-processes but also in poetic techniques they appear to be the boarders of the same boat. In order to create a strong emotional effect in their poems both make the judicious use of ‘anaphora’ — a rhetorical term for the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or poetic lines. An instance of anaphora is seen in Das’ *Ekta Kabita* [*Saat ti Tarar Timir*] :

"Se aagun jwole jaiy
Se aagun jwole jay
Se aagun jwole jay dohe nako kichu"

In Yeats’ case, it is :

"Remember all those renowned generations,
Remember all that have sunk in their blood,
Remember all that have died on the scaffold,
Remember all that have fled, that have stood,"

[The Marching Songs: Last Poems]

Though primarily symbolist in spirit, Yeats was much influenced by the imagist movement. On the other hand, as influenced by the surrealists, Das too underwent a great deal of impact upon his poetic tools by the imagists. The poems by both poets are rich in multitudes of concrete images. Both Yeats’ poetry and Das’ poetry show how mesmerizing and proportionate as well a poetic language can be. The diction at their hands brings about the desired effect. All sensibilities find expression to the fullest. Das’ poetic words are essentially his own. He is the master in creating phrases which give the impression of both
touch and smell. His chosen words bring forth the lively atmosphere of the rural Bengal imbued with its folktales and myths. Buddhadeva Bose’ discerning mind reflects on Das’ poetry, “All poets, in a sense, are poets of Nature, but Jibanananda is so in a rather special sense: he is absorbed in nature, physical nature, and in certain aspects of it. A nature-worshipper, but by no means a Platonist or pantheist; he is rather a pagan who loves the things of nature sensuously, not as tokens or symbols, nor as patterns of perfection, but simply because they are what they are. Not content with mere seeing, he must possess nature through the more savage sense of touch and smell ...” On the other hand, W. B. Yeats is a pioneer in bringing back Irish legends and tales in the tradition of English poetry. In this regards, his observation in his essay entitled ‘The Celtic Elements in Literature’ is noteworthy: “All folk literature and all literature that keeps the folk tradition, delights in unbounded and immortal things.” His ‘The Song of Wondering Aengus’ reflects such approach:

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When I had laid it on the floor
I went to blow the fire aflame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And some one called me by my name:
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Das’ poetry is remarkable, one of many reasons being the haunting of folk tales roaming all around:

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Jekhane shukay padma—bahu din bishalakshi jekhane nirah
Jekhane ekdin Shankhamala Chandramala Manikmalar
Knakan bajito, aha, konodin bajibe ki aar"
[ Jotodin Bneche Achi : Rupasi Bangla ]
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Thus both Yeats’ poetry and Das’ poetry are replete with myths and legends enriching their respective poetic credos thereby making native cultural traditions intact and known to common readers. So, in many ways, these two great poets despite hailing from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds seem to stand together on the same common platform. It is somewhat amazing to find certain common elements in their poems. The reason may be attributed to the probable fact that Yeats, a world-known English poet, being predecessor to Das, must have some kind of impact on Das as a poet who is an
ardent follower of English literature. But again it is the greatness of Das who has at times outthought Yeats to create an extended imagery to the desired effect bringing all sensibilities to the fore, of course keeping tune with his surroundings and tradition. In the process, Das’ poetic self has been built up on its own accord, of course with Yeats being one of his models and guides. His greatest achievement is that he earns a niche for himself as a great modern Bengali poet independent of Tagore’s overwhelming impact on the contemporary poets of Bengal.