

Islamic Perspectives in Approaching Literature: Representation of Muslim Life and Practices in *Palli Kabi* (Country Poet) Jasimuddin's Poetry

Mohammad Kaosar Ahmed¹

Abstract

Abstract: *Jasimuddin holds a distinguished position in the history of Bangla Poetry. He was able to clasp a distinguished entity as a poet living in the era of Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam. He is oft-quoted as Palli Kabi (Country Poet) because of his exquisite presentation of the rural Bengal. While celebrating him as a country poet, we often disregard the Islamic themes and beliefs presented in his poetry. This paper is an attempt to read Jasimuddin from Islamic perspectives which will reveal that Muslim practices and culture are entrenched in his poetic self which most Jasimuddin critics overlooked and sometimes ignored.*

Key Words: *Trust in Divine Providence, Adhan, Non-Communal*

মসজিদ হইতে আযান হাঁকিছে বড় সক্রমণ সুর,
মোর জীবনের রোজকেয়ামত ভাবিতেছি কত দূর।

(The sorrowful melody of the *Adhan* floats from the mosque;
How far is the end of my life?)

(“Kabar”, *Rakhali*, 1927)

Introduction

An author is the product of the society s/he lives in. This is true about Jasimuddin as well. Being a Muslim and living in a Muslim majority country, his poetry reflects a handful of Islamic themes and issues which are hardly discussed. It is interesting to note that the influence of religion on Bangla poetry has always been very strong (Kabir, 1970, p. 33).

¹. Associate Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, International Islamic University
Chittagong, kaosarahmed@rocketmail.com

Jasimuddin has earned his fame as Palli Kabi (Country Poet), and this labeling often narrow down his poetic caliber. Living is the time of great literary giants like Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam; he successfully separates himself from their trends and upholds her distinct identity as poet. While we frequently appreciate the Islamic legacy of Kazi Nazrul Islam, we hardly talk about Jasimuddin's. A serious reading of Jasimuddin's poems will unearth that Islam has been deep rooted in his poetic self. The study of his unparalleled presentation of the trust in divine providence, write-up about Islamic practices like *salah* (prayer), *adhan* (the call for prayer) *mawlud* (devotional ritual about Muhammad pbuh) etc can bring a new dimension in Jasimuddin criticism. Here, in this paper, I have attempted to read Jasimuddin's poetry from Islamic perspectives with a view to figuring out some of the Islamic themes and Muslim practices that Jasimuddin presents in his works.

Trust in Divine Providence

Jasimuddin's first poetic publication is *Rakhali*, a book published in 1927. *Rakhali* is a collection of eighteen poems which includes five folk songs. Two poems of the book, "Pallijanani" (A Rustic Mom) and "Kabar" (Grave) give Jasimuddin extraordinary prominence and "Kabar" is considered to be his best creation in his poetic career. Noted Jasimuddin expert, Sunil Kumar Mukhpadhay (1988) terms this poem as a "rare artistic success" which one cannot find even in "the greatest poets" (p. 110) and critic Achintakumar Sen Gupta evaluates the poem as "a new beginning of Bangla poetry" (qtd in Mukhpadhay, 1988, p. 111). Though the critics glorify the poems artistic excellence and the way it opens the window towards the rustic world, a world that is usually ignored or unnoticed, with a view to concretizing the tragic expediencies of the rural people, most critics fail to grasp the real message of the poem – a message that is a fundamental belief of the Muslims, not to lose trust in Allah even in an utmost woe. The protagonist of the poem holds the Quranic view firm in him that

wala tayasoo min rawhi Allahi innahu la yayasu min rawhi Allahi
illa alqawmu alkafiroona. (Quran 12:87)

(never give up hope of Allah's Soothing Mercy: truly no one
despairs of Allah's Soothing Mercy except those who have no
faith.)

"Kabar" presents the life of an old farmer who dreams of peaceful life tied with the ropes of love and warmth. A typical countryman, he aspires to be happy building a "nest of affection" (Mukhpadhay, 1988, p. 115). In fact, he succeeds in crafting a "nest" but for a short span of time. He starts experiencing storms after storms. Starting with his beloved wife, the grown up son, the virtuous daughter-in-law, the lovely granddaughter and finally his darling daughter die. Now the old farmer lives with his only surviving grandson visiting every day the

graveyard, talking to and praying for them. The life that he is leading now is a pessimistic one. Death is a natural phenomenon, but the experience that the old farmer confront is, to some extent, unnatural because we do not expect the son to die before the father or the grandson before the grandfather (it may happen sometimes, but we do not usually see immature people are dying in continuity before the aged ones like the farmer's). The poem presents certain tantalizing clues about his death wishes, but what is important to note is that the poet does not show least suicidal tendency in the old farmer's characters. Having a haunted life, a life of the burden of sad experiences, the old man visits the graveyard every day with his grandson and narrates to him how everyone died. The narration is so touchy that makes the readers weeping and we feel pity for the old man. But he is not the tragic hero since he is in no way responsible for the tragedy. He possesses no tragic flaw which might cause the tragedy of his family. What happens is the will of Allah and he accepts it.

This is the most important stone which most critics left unturned. The schools of criticism are busy unfolding the pathos of the old man or arguing whether the poem is a pastoral elegy, but little attention has been given to explore what makes the old man mentally so strong. It is her religious footing. As a believer, he holds fast what the Quran relates:

Walanabluwannakum bishayin minaal khawfi waaljooAAi wanaqsin mina
alamwali waalanfusi waalththamarati wabashshiri assabireena. Allatheena
itha asabathum museebatun qaloo inna lillahi wainna ilayhi rajiAAoona.
Olaika AAalayhim salawatun min rabbihim warahmatun waolaika humu
almuhtadoona. (Qur'an 2:155-157)

("Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods, lives, and the fruits of your toil. But give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere. Those who say, when afflicted with calamity, 'To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return.' They are those on whom descend blessings from their Lord, and mercy. They are the ones who receive guidance.")

The old farmer has every reason to be pessimistic, and, in fact, sometimes he is; but it never leads him to agnosticism. This unbearable tragic experience does not shade even a tiny dark spot on his faith on divine providence (Allah). The poem reveals that whenever he finishes the story of his dead kinsman, he along with his grandson prays to Allah for their salvation and for granting them heaven; and finishing his story to the grandson, they prayed for all Muslims who are by now dead:

‘আয় খোদা! রহমান!
বেহেস্‌ড নসিব করিও সকল মৃত্যু-ব্যথিত-প্রাণ।

(O God! The Merciful!
Bestow heaven to every death-stricken-life) ("Kabar", *Rakhali*, 1927)

Jasimuddin critic Sunil Kumar Mukhpadhay is surprised noticing that this “strange soul” who is severely tormented which is vividly presented is still praying to Allah. Mukhpadhay (1988) wonders that this man feels the hellish agony and wishes to die, still never questions the “ways of God” (p. 116). This sad farmer epitomizes the Islamic belief that:

Fainna maAAa alAAusri yusran.
Inna maAAa alAAusri yusran. (Qur'an 94:5-6)

(So verily with every difficulty there is relief.
Verily with every difficulty there is relief.)

Adhan and Salah

We find frequent references to *adhān* (an Islamic call to *salah* by a *Muazzin* five times a day) in Jasimuddin's poems. In “Kabar” when the old farmer is relating the sad tales of his dearest ones, the muazzin's *adhān* from the nearest *masjid* makes the old farmer's sadness more profound. The somber mood of the farmer is met with the mysterious melody of the *adhān*. The evening and the poignant tune of the *adhān* give an odd feeling to the farmer's mind about his own death (Mahmud, 1995, p. 188). The *adhān*, somehow, reminds him the nearness of his death:

ওই দূর বনে সন্ধ্যা নামিছে ঘন আবীরের রাগে,
অমনি করিয়া লুটায় পড়িতে বড় সাধ আজ জাগে।
মসজিদ হইতে আযান হাঁকিছে বড় সক্রমণ সুর,
মোর জীবনের রোজকেয়ামত ভাবিতেছি কত দূর।
জোড়হাতে দাদু মোনাজাত কর, ‘আয় খোদা রহমান!
বেহেশ্‌ড নসিব করি সকল মৃত্যু-ব্যথিত-প্রান’।

(The warm-coloured sunset has kissed the fields
And great is my desire to hug the earth around me close today.
The sorrowful melody of the *Adhan* floats from the mosque;
How far is the end of my life?
Let us fold our hands, little grandson, and pray:
'O come, eternal God, let Paradise descend for our loved ones.'
("Kabar", *Rakhali*, 1927)

Jasimuddin always treats the *adhān* as a sad melody (Mahmud, 1995, p. 188). In *Sojon Badiyar Gath*, the dwellers of *Shimultali* village are leaving their houses with a view to avoiding a clash with the low-caste Hindus. Before departure, the Muslims assemble in the *Masjid* for counseling and finally they offer *salah* for the last time in their native place. In this connection, Jasimuddin again provides the readers with a heart touching narration of the *adhān*:

হেনকালে দূর হতে উঠিয়া কর্ণে আজান গান,
রাতের আঁধারে জড়াজড়ি করি দূর বন পথে হারাল তান।
সেই সুর শুনি কাতারে কাতারে মুসলমানেরা মসজিদ ঘরে,
মিলিল আসিয়া নীরব চরনে অধর কাঁপে কি শঙ্কা ভরে।

(Hence the *Adhan* with its heartrending melody from the far-flung
Lost its rhythm mingling with darkling night to the distant forest.
Hearing the call to prayer Muslims in the Masjid
Stand side by side mutely with a strange fright.)
(*Sajon Badiyar Gath*, 1933)

When Munsī Saheb opines to leave the village to Kajir Gao in order to avoid casualty, most people disagree (though finally they agree). One of the main reasons they show against leaving their native place is connected with *adhān* (Mahmud, 1995, p. 188). They are anxious that nobody will ever give *adhān* in this Masjid:

এই মসজিদ কারে দিয়ে যাব? ফজর মেহেদী মাথার আগে,
মুয়াজ্জিনের আহবান ধ্বনি উঠবে না আর মোহন রাগে।

(To who will we leave the Masjid? Before the henna-colored sunrise
The call of Muajjin will never be heard.) (*Sajon Badiyar Gath*, 1933)

Along with *adhān*, the poet brings the practice of offering salah in various poems. He shows the importance of salah in the life of the devoted Muslims:

ভাই আমরা দিনে পাঁচ বার এই মসজিদে নামাজ পড়ি,
খোদা রসুলের পথ পাইয়াছি কোরআন শরিফ সামনে ধরি।

(Brother, we pray five times a day in this Masjid,
We have come by the path of God and his messenger from this Quran.)

এই মসজিদের শেষ নামাজের জামাতে আজিকে হইয়া খাড়া,
আর কিছু মোরা নাহি ভাবি যেন সারে জাহানের মালিক ছাড়া।

(Joining the last prayer in this Masjid today,
We should not think of anything except for the Creator of the Universe.)
(*Sajon Badiyar Gath*, 1933)

Beside mandatory salah, he shows that people of this region often offer *nafl* salah when they face any turmoil:

আবার আদিল পঞ্চ রেকাত নফল নামাজ পড়ি,
খোদার নিকট করে মোনাজাত দুই হাত জোড় করি।

(Again, Adil offered five-rakat nafl prayer,
Then prayed to God spreading his two hands.) (*Sakina*, 1959)

More specifically Jasimuddin writes a long poem about Saaltut Tarabih (offered during ramadan).

তারাবি নামাজ পড়িতে যাইব মোল-া বাড়িতে আজ,
মেনাজদ্দীন কলিমদ্দীন আয় তরা করি সাজ।

(Today we'll go to house of Molla to offer tarabi prayer
Come, O Monajaddin! O Kalimaddin! Come with beautiful dress up.)
("Tarabi", *Matir Kanna*, 1965)

Along with Tarabi, he presents about Ramadan and festivity during the month of Ramadan. As Ramadan is a compulsory *ibadah*, Muslims take it with high seriousness.

মাহে রমজান আসিয়াছে বাঁকা ঈদের চাঁদের নায়,
কাইজা ফেসাদ সব ভুলে যাব আজি তার মহিমায়।

(The month of fasting has come like the curved moon of Eid
We'll disregard all disputes amongst us on this occasion)
("Tarabi", *Matir Kanna*, 1965)

Mawlud

Despite a great controversy regarding the authentication of *Mawlud* in Islamic *sharia*, Muslims in the Indian subcontinent celebrate the birth of Muhammad (sm) terming *Eid-e-miladunnabi* with festivity arranging *mawlud* and *mehfil*. Though this celebration is a *bidah* (innovation) according to the mainstream *Ulemas* and cannot be taken as an *ibadah*, it has become endemic in Muslim culture in Indian sub-continent. In these programs people usually discuss the *sirah* (life of Muhammad s.m.). Jasimuddin focuses this tradition of Muslims in the poem "Munshi Sahib" of *Dhankhet* and in *Sojon Badiyar Gath*. In "Munshi Sahib", he portrays Munshi Sahib as the typical clerics who using their melodious voices relate the life of Muhammad (sm) to large gathering of people. a sense of awe surrounds the audience. In such a gathering Munshi Sahib tells the people about the sacrifices of Muhammad (sm) for his followers and his presentation astounds the listeners:

মুন্সি সাহেব মলুদ পড়ে, বুক ভেসে যায় নয়ন জলে,
তারি দোলায় চতুর্দিকে সবার হিয়া যায় যে গলে।

... ..

খনে খনে গাঁর চাষীরা গদগদ কর্ত লয়ে,
আল-ইহুমা ছালে- আলা পড়ে দুর্গদ একিন হয়ে।
নানান বুকের সুর যে সেথা লোবানেরি ধুঁয়ায় ভেসে,
সাত-তবক আশমান পেরিয়ে যায় ভেসে কোন সুদূর দেশে।
খোদার আরাশ কুরছি পরে হয়তো সে সুর মুড়ছি পড়ে,
মুন্সি সাহেব মলুদ পড়ে মুখ গৌয়ো চাষীর ঘরে।

(The Mawlud of Munshi Sahib causes our chest to be washed by tears
And moves the mind of the devotees around him.

... ..

Every now and then the farmers with a voice choked with emotion
Chants *allahumma sale ala* with utmost devotion.
The melody of the diverse souls mingled with smoke of Benzoin
Travels to a distant land across the seven skies.
The melody probably is sprained in the throne of God,
Though Munshi Sahib chants the *mawlud* in an illiterate, country peasant's house)
("Dhankhet", *Dhankhet*, 1932)

In *Sojon Badiyar Gath*, Jasimuddin again presents a vivid picture of *mehfil* arranged to discuss the sirah of Muhamma (sm). People of seven villages come to attend the *mehfil*:

তাহার পরে কোরেশদেরি হাতে তাহার কি লাঞ্ছনা,
চখের জলে মুসি সাহেব করল কেঁদে সে বর্ণনা।
অবিশ্বাসীর কেল-া মাঝে বলছে একা দীনের নবী,
হাতে তাহার খোদার কোরান, বুকে তাহার খোদার ছবি।

... ..

এই ভাবেতে মুসী সাহেব হজরতেরি জন্ম থেকে।
মরণ তক সব কাহিনী করল বয়ান একে একে।

(After that Mushi Shahib described crying
How he was harassed by the Qur'aish
Amidst the infidels the Prophet preached alone
Holding Quran in his hand and God in his mind,

... ..

In this way Munshi Shahib strating from the prophet's birth
Described all stories of his life serially.)
(*Sajon Badiyar Gath*, 1933)

Basic Beliefs of Muslims

The basic Islamic beliefs and *akidahs* find a sincere expression in Jasimuddin's poetry. The most common Islamic concepts like *Nabi* (prophet), *rasul* (messenger), *behest* (heaven), *dojokh* (hell), *the Arsh of God* (the Throne of God), doomsday have got frequent mentions in his poems (Mahmud, 1995, p. 190). In one of his famous poems "Pallijanani" (rural mother), the mother having a sleepless night with her dying son is making prayer for his recovery and in the prayer she mentions Muammad (pbuh) with utmost respect. In another poem "Tarabi", Jasimuddin pictures the Night Ascension of Muhammad (sm). Here he mentions the names of several prophets with reverence: Adam, Noah and Abraham (pbut).

Sometimes he makes references to the Angel of Death, heaven and hell. In “Tarabi”, he describes the death scene of Muhammad (sm) and how the Angel of Death takes the soul of the prophet:

বিমারের ঘোরে অস্থির নবী তাহার বুকের পরে,
আজরাল এসে আসন লভিল যান কবজের তরে ।
(When the prophet was restless due to severe illness
The Angel of Death Descended upon him to take his soul)
 (“Tarabi”, *Matir Kanna*, 1965)

He mentions heaven and hell in several poems. In “Kabor” the old farmer pleads for heaven repeatedly:

হাত জোড় করে দয়া মাঙ- দাদু, ‘আয় খোদা দয়াময়,
আমার দাদীর তরেতে যেন গো বেহেস্তড় নসিব হয়’ ।

(Fold your hands, grandson, and pray:
'Come, oh merciful God,
Let Paradise descend for my grandmother.')

হাত জোড় করে দয়া মাঙ- দাদু, ‘আয় খোদা দয়াময়,
আমার দাদীর তরেতে যেন গো বেহেস্তড় নসিব হয়’ ।

(Fold your hands, grandson and pray: 'O come, eternal God,
Let Paradise descend now for father and mother.')

হাত জোড় করে দয়া মাঙ- দাদু, ‘রহমান খোদা আয়;
বেহেস্তড় নসিব করিও আজিকে আমার বাপ ও মায়’ ।

(Fold your hands, grandson, and pray:
'Let Paradise descend for my unloved sister.')

জোড়হাতে দাদু মোনাজাত কর ‘আয় খোদা! রহমান!
বেহেস্তড় নসিব করিও সকল মৃত্যু -ব্যথিত-প্রাণ ।

(Let us fold our hands, little grandson, and pray:
O God! The Merciful! Bestow heaven to every death-stricken-life)
 (“Kabar”, *Rakhali*, 1927)

Munshi sahib in “Dhankhet” preaches people how on the Day of Judgment prophet (sm) will stand holding the doors of heaven and Satan holding the doors of hell. Tinu Fakir in *Sakina* narrates the hell (Mahmud, 1995, p. 191). Besides Jasimuddin mentions about the throne of Allah and *isme azam* (beautiful names of Allah) *Sakina*:

সকিনার কান্দনে হায়রে গাছের পাতা টোটে,
আল্লাহর আরস কুরছি কাঁইপ্যা কাঁইপ্যা ওঠে।

(Sakina's cry moves the leaves to fall
The Throne of Allah occasionally vibrates)
পদ্মার বুকে তারে ডুবাইতে য়ে,
এছমে আজম পড়ে আদিল চোখের জলে নেয়ে।

(Whilst drowning him in the river Padma
Adil murmurs names of Allah with eyes full of tears.) (*Sakina*, 1959)

Muslim History and Culture

Incidents from Muslim histories find a vivid expression in Jasimuddin (Mahmud, 1995, p. 191). He collects materials from early muslim history to develop his themes; for example, in one of his poems he elaborately presents how Abraham (as) left Hajer in exile as to follow the command of Allah and glorifies Hajer's miserable life with her son Ismael (as). He presents Hajer as a unique example of self-sacrifice in order to obey the command of Allah.

One of the most famous incidents of Muslim history that influences the literature of this region in the tragedy of Karbala in which Hussain (ra), younger son of Muhammad (sm)'s beloved daughter Fatima (ra), was brutally killed by evil forces. Jasimuddin has used the incidents of karbala in at least three poems. He brilliantly invokes the emotion of the readers by his passionate presentation of the tragedy of Hussain (ra). In "Munshi Shahib", he envisions the reaction of Fatema (ra):

মা ফাতেমা হাসেন হোসেন দুই ছেলেবে জড়িয়ে বুকে,
কারবালারই করুণ গাঁথা স্মরণ করি কাঁদবে দুখে।
(Fatima, the Mother of Hasan and Hussain, embracing her sons
Will reminiscent the heartbreaking story of Qarbala with a distressing heart.)
("Munshi Shahib", *Dhankhet*, 1932)

In "Najir" of *Matir Kanna* (1965), he draws a vivid picture of reactions towards the tragedy:

কাসেদ আজিকে ফিরিয়া যাইবে শূন্য মদিনা রাহে,
শূন্যপৃষ্ঠ কাঁদে দুলদুল, আকাশের পানে চাহে।
তোমার ও লহু অঙ্গে মাখিয়া লালে লাল আসমান,
মুরছে ধরণী রাতের কাফনে জড়াইয়া দেহখান।

(Qased will return to Madina alone,
Duldul losing its rider cries staring at the sky.
You color of your blood reddens the sky,
The earth has wrapped herself with the darkness of the night.

Further, in *Sakina* (1959) he with an elegiac note depicts the unutterable reactions of Hussain's companions:

অনাহারী পুত্রের হয় এষে মায়ের আর্তনাদ,
পিতাহারা জয়নালের ভাইরে দুষ্কের সংবাদ।
কাঁদিলে সাহের ভানু ভুখের জ্বালায়,
বিধবা সকিনার কান্নায় আসমান ভাইঙ্গা যায়।

(The mother cries for the starving son,
For Joynal, losing his father is the saddest news,
Saher vanu is crying due to hunger
The sky is about to smash to smithereens hearing the snivel of widow Sakina)

Use of Arabic and Persian Lexis

Jasimuddin has been credited for her successful and fitting use of Arabic and Persian words in her poetic discourse. Muslim Bangali community frequently uses Arabic and Persian words in their colloquial language. One cannot properly picture the Muslim life and society excluding Arabic and Persian dictions; since these two languages are inextricably linked with Muslim history and culture. So is the case with Hindu culture too; one dare not expose Hindu culture and society without using Sanskrit lexis. Jasimuddin like a true genius, as Sunil Kumar Mukhpadhay avers, uses Arabic and Persian with astounding appropriacy (Mukhpadhay, 1988, p. 429). He uses ample Arabic and Persian words that have already been included in Bengali discourse: (underline added in the following samples to indicate Arabian and Persian words)

- a. হাতজোড় করে দোয়া মাঙ দাদু, 'রহমান খোদা! আয়;
বেহেশ্‌ড় নসিব করিও আজিকে আমার বাপ ও মায়!'
(“Kabar”, *Rakhli* 1927)
- b. নামাজের ঘরে মোমবাতি মানে, দরগায় মানে দান,
ছেলেরে আমার ভাল কোরে দাও, কাঁদে জননীর প্রাণ।
ভাল করে দাও আল-া রাসুল! ভাল করে দাও পীর!
কহিতে কহিতে মুখখানি ভাসে বহিয়া নয়ন নির।
(“Pallijanani”, *Rakhali*, 1927)
- c. মোল্লা তখন কলমা পড়ায় সাক্ষী উকিল ডাকি,
বিয়ে রক্ষপার হয়ে গেল, স্কীর ভোজনা বাকি।
(*Nakhsi Kathar Math*, 1929)
- d. পুল ছুরাতের পুলের পরে

নিবেন নবী হাতটি ধরে
হবেন উম্মতের তরে
কাঁদিয়া আকুল।

(*Padmapar*, 1950)

- e. ভোরের আজান হইতে না হতে তসবি লইয়া করে
খোদার আরশে পড়ে মোনাজাত ছেলেরে তাহার স্মরে;
রেহেলের পর কোরান রাখিয়া পড়ে সূরা ফাতেহায়,
ঐশ্বর পাটা নয়ন পাতার পানি পড়ে ভিজে যায়।
(“Najir”, *Matir Kanna*, 1965)
- f. কেঁদে কেঁদে বলবে খোদা, মর উম্মতের সকল গুনা
মাফ করে দাও, – মাফ করে দাও, মর পুণ্যের লইয়ে দুনা।
(“Munshi Sahib, *Dhankhet*, 1932)
- g. বুরহাকে চড়ে চলেছেন নবী কর্তে কলেমা পড়ি
দুধ ধবল দূর আকাশের ছায়া পথ রেখা ধরি।
(“Tarabi”, *Matir Kanna*, 1965)
- h. খোদার নিকট পঞ্চ রেকাত নামাজ আদায় করি
সাতবার সে মনে মনে নিল দরুদ সালাম পড়ি।
(*Sakina*, 1959)

A Non-Communal Poet

Though Jasimuddin is a Muslim poet and he takes materials from Muslim beliefs and history, he was successful in establishing himself as non-communal (Mahmud, 1995, p. 196). A close reading of his poems proves that he uses Hindu myths and culture as well in his poems. In fact, as a genuine poet, he searches everywhere for materials irrespective of religion. Since Muslims and Hindus have to live together, Jasimuddin always propagates a bridge between these two races (Mahmud, 1995, p. 196).

এদেশ কাহারো হবে না একার, যতখানি ভালোবাসা,
যতখানি ত্যাগ যে দেবে, হেথায় পাবে ততখানি বাসা।
বেহুলার শোকে কাঁদিয়াছি মোরা, গংকিনী নদীর সতে,
কত কাহিনীর ভেলায় ভাসিয়া গেছি দেশে দেশ হতে।
এমাম হোসেন সকিনার শোকে ভেসেছে হলুদ পাটা,
রাধিকার পার নুপুরে মুখর আমাদের পার ঘাটা।
অতীতে হয়তো কিছু ব্যথা দেছি পেয়ে বা কিছুটা ব্যথা,
আজকের দিনে ভুলে যাও ভাই সে সব অতীত কথা।
এখন আম আমরা স্বাধীন হয়েছি, নতুন দৃষ্টি দিয়ে,

নতুন রাষ্ট্র গরিব আমরা তোমাদের সাথে নিয়ে।

(This country does not belong to any specific one; the belonging
Depends on someone's love and sacrifice for her.
We cried with Behula when she was in the tide of the river Gankini
Then we floated in the raft of stories from hither to thither,
We were overwhelmed by the tragedy of Imam Hussain and Sakina.
Jingling of Radika's tinkling anklet amused our minds.
Perhaps we gave each other pain in the past
Let's forget today all those bitter history
Today we are independent, with a new vision
Let's build the country together.)

("Bastutagi", *Matir Kanna*, 1965)

Jasimuddin writes the above mentioned time during a period of historical turmoil when India was separated into two parts based on religion. Here, the non-communal poetic genius is making a plea to the majority Muslims to have a try to make a harmonious tie with the non-Muslims.

Conclusions

Jasimuddin earned his reputation as the Palli Kabi (Country Poet) for his marvelous presentation of the rural Bengal. While presenting the life of the rustic people, he unequivocally demonstrates his religious traction. The old farmer's firm belief on God in "Kabor", the love that people of *Shimultali* village show for the *Masjid*, people's submission to God in need through prayer, his skillful use of the Arabic and Persian lexis are some of the example of religious influences on his poetic self. If we read his poems for esthetic pleasure only, we are sure to miss these religious implications, but a reading of his works with Islamic approaches will indisputably provide evidence that Islamic themes and Muslim culture and practices are an indispensable part of his poetry.

Works Consulted

- Ali, A. Y. (1983). *The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary*. Delhi, India: Kutub Khana Ishayat-ul-Islam.
- Jasimuddin. (1927). *Rakhali*. Dhaka: Student Ways.
- . (1929). *Nakhsi Kathar Math*. Dhaka: Nawrose Kitabisthan.
- . (1932). *Dhankhet*. Dhaka: Nawrose Kitabisthan.
- . (1933). *Sajon Badiyar Gath*. Dhaka: Student Ways.
- . (1965). *Matir Kanna*. Dhaka: Polash Prokasoni.
- . (1959). *Sakina*. Dhaka: Nawrose Kitabisthan.
- . (1950). *Padmapar*. Dhaka: Polash Prokasoni.
- Kabir, Humayun. (1970). *Banglar Kabbo*. Dhaka: Khan Brothers.
- Mahmud, Anik. (1995). *Jasim Uddiner Kabbe Bisoyboicitra O Shilparup*. Rjshahi: Eureka Book Agency.

Islamic Perspectives in Approaching Literature: Representation of Muslim Life and Practices ...145

Mukhpadhay, Sunil Kumar. (1988). *Jasimuddin*. Dhaka: Nawrose Sahitto Somvar.