

Henrik Ibsen and Indian Bengali Literature: A Stage Production Perspective

Md. Amir Hossain

Senior Lecturer, Department of English
IBAIS University
Uttara, Dhaka-Bangladesh.

Abstract

This paper aims at examining the impact of Ibsen's plays in the Indian Bengali Literature through the stage production. It also focuses on the critical judgments of Indian poets, playwrights, interpreters, directors and producers along with their interpretation, translation, transformation, and stage production of Ibsen's plays including *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, and *Rosmersholm*. It also attempts to discuss social, religious, cultural and economic circumstances of the people of Indian Subcontinent. His middle period prose plays are considered as social problematic plays, and his profound psychology, thought and imagination have been influenced in Bengali dramatic composition and stage performance. The identity of Bengali Literature has been resuscitated through Ibsen's plays as discussed in the paper.

Key Words: *A Doll's House*, *An Enemy of the People* Bengali drama, *Ghosts*, Henrik Ibsen, *Rosmersholm*.

Introduction

Henrik Ibsen is one of the greatest modern dramatists whose plays have enabled to earn popularity with great success in comparison with the famous dramatists of the world. His plays have been not only interpreted and staged in the western world but able to draw attention of playwrights, interpreters and producers in the oriental countries. In a multilingual country like India, his plays have been interpreted and translated in more than one language, and have been performed in many theatres all over the country. Above all, his faith, thought and inspiration have spread very far and wide in the psychology of social attitude and sage society of India. Ibsen's plays deal with mask manifestation of the pillars of society, ostensible idealism, past freight in present occurrence, process of soundless unperturbed plays, trio-dramatic structure, stage production, naturalistic stage decoration, slowly imminent storm and so on. There are some pieces of dialogue that is the reflection of Ibsen's imagination. In most cases, the effort of the dramatic composition of Bengali playwrights has been defeated in Ibsen's style and weaker melodrama. This paper attempts to focus on Ibsen's plays like *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, and *Rosmersholm* with a view to universalizing his contemporary social, economic, political, religious and feministic outlooks in the post modern age of India. Here, we have mentioned critical comments of several numbers of Indian playwrights, producers, directors, transformers and translators who have staged Ibsen's social and feministic problematic plays with a view to unveiling freedom, identity and self-sacrifice of Ibsen's psychology as well as his dramatic personae to the Indian audience, theatre-goers, and the bourgeois.

Henrik Ibsen and Indian Bengali Literature

In 1918 Ibsen was mentioned in a small story written by Rabindranath Tagore, and it is thought that perhaps, it is the first story which deals with Ibsen in Bengali literature. A story, *First Number* [my translation] is a satirical image of self-ego and self-palace of an Indian husband. A wife is completely neglected by her husband not only in Ibsen's plays but also in European classics. The long tortured existence of such wife is manifested by leaving husband, family, even connoisseurs in quest of self-identity and self-freedom. Nora is found to have reflected in Rabindranath's heroine Onila. At the out set of the story, the mention of Ibsen is not a drastic matter. Now, let us come to the point of Bengali drama of Rabindranath, whose relation with the poet is somewhat different.

In 1928 a Bengali playwright followed Ibsen for writing a play. An influential playwright, Joggash Chandra Chowdhury, in the inception of *World Conqueror* [my translation] wrote, according to the demand of modern time, I have followed the new style (i.e. Ibsen's style) in composing and producing play. Therefore, the statement of the playwright proves that the Ibsen's style is the modern style in composing a play. But the introduction of the play has been borrowed from a historical play on a cruel plunderer, Nadir Shah of Persia who squandered and deranged Delhi. Though it was not a conventional and historical play, but it was written to endeavor the psychological analysis of a cruel intruder, which style of Ibsen, the playwright applied was not comprehensive? However, he also wrote the character-centred plays of the middle class society which were represented through stage direction and limelight. According to his own taste, he followed — Ibsen's style. The dialogue of the plays was written in accordance with speech style. We can realize Ibsen's powerful women through the heroines of the plays like *Bengali Daughter* and *Married* [my translation] who leave their families and husbands in order to establish their own identity and self-esteem. Therefore, though the play, *World Conqueror* is not appropriate in this regard, Joggash, in his social plays, tried to follow the Ibsen's style.

In Bengali drama, the two playwrights were also prominent in Ibsen's style during the pre-liberation period more definitely guessed who started writing plays in 1930s. Though none of them definitely mentioned anywhere about Ibsen yet it reminds us of his plays. Swachindranath, senior in age between them, wrote Pseudo-historical plays in rhythmical pattern to focus on patriotism. A prominent scholar of Bengali drama wrote about him, He is the first dramatist of our modern age, who worked, after two world wars, about the problems of the changing town society of Bengal, and highlighted modern attitude. Most of his plays deal with the characters of the middle class family. His plays have been generally divided into more than one scene of act, but the dramatist hardly refuted the traditional custom. But, asides and soliloquies are less noticed in his plays. The shadow of the past has been existed in the present situations through retrospective method in *Red Lotus* [my translation]. In these two plays, the stage direction is reflected along with the well-definite narrations of set and light casting forth, and dialogues are written in colloquial language. Most of social plays unveil the hypocrite of the middle class people.

Bidhayak Bhattacharja was another dramatist whose art demands the appreciation. He was, mainly, engaged himself to have composed the social plays. The perfect image of Bengali middle class town society had been fostered in his plays of 1930s and 1940s. This was the age of a change: a turbulent change happened between social and individual relationship in the pre-liberation Bengal. The new Indian female community had to play the dominant role in the sprouted exciting environment from this innovation. Many heroines of Bidhayak Bhattacharja exposed personality among them; some characters are regarded as protesting modes through dialogue. He highlighted the negative aspects of the middle class society in the play, *Hunger* [my translation]. We also find an embodiment of complex characterization of his inner psychology in *Cloud-Free* or *Earthen House* [my translation]. Indian playwrights have tried to expose the efforts of the realistic image of contemporary middle class society, emphasis on the individual autonomy from social hypocrite perspective, stage direction, use of retrospective method, a new type of Bengali female character with the help of dialogue of prose and speech style and so on. In the post war period, the commercial play had dominancy on Bengali drama, but as an alternative play, with the beginning of avant-garde theatre and in the post war period, Ibsen and his dramatic art began to popularize in India. If we want to understand the alterations of Bengali drama completely, we must ponder over the dramatic history of 20 century period. In the pre-war period, with the result of gradually increasing political and social consciousness, following the way of Fascist opposition cultural movement, the promising actors' organization, Indian People's Theatre Association was established in 1943. It was a national organization which had a powerful branch in Bengal. Here it is mentioned that the powerful middle class society would control most of economic and cultural movements with the Indian liberation war, who became influential in the independent south Bengal.

The mission of IPT related with Indian Socialist Party was to build up a demo dramatic movement which would not only connect the people but also create dramatic inspiration in the minds of the people by using folk stage production. But, due to different complexities, the dream of IPT did not come true. Within several years of its origin, it was divided due to ideal contradiction. But this institution was established from the spontaneous feeling and emotion which did not fail in attempt, rather a promising dramatic movement was created through the breakdown within a year of liberation. A new type of progressive dramatic movement, Group Theatre Movement achieved popularity. Within a few days some group theatres were established to stage social and political drama. These new types of group theatres would emphasize on the development of society and art more than entertainment and commercial success. The group theatre placed itself in lieu of entertainment and commercial drama during the pre-liberation period. Ibsen and his dramatic art became indispensable due to the recent established group theatres.

Ibsen's *A Doll's House* was first translated in 1946. A group theatre namely a new stage communion performed *Doll's House* [my translation]. The direct translation and transformation of the same play is very little known. In 1951 a drama-worker, Sheuly Mojumdar translated this play for the second time. A small group theatre performed the play. It is interesting to note that a group would perform English drama in most cases. Uthpal Datta was a famous director of this play who established Little Theatre. After two years, the group theatre was named People's Little Theatre. Then the name of translation was *Doll's House* which was directly translated from an English edition. No attempt was made to change the drama coping with the Indian socio-economic perspective. Even the drama was staged along with the co-operation of European Costume.

Ibsen's *A Doll's House* was the first translated and performed play in Bengali literature. After *Ghosts*, this play was able to draw the attention of Bengali speaking producer, director, translator, and transformer. A group theatre, Sondhanid staged *A Doll's House* for the third time. They achieved popularity for translating the western plays. A drama-expert, Osok Sen translated the play literally. He himself was the director of the play. In the translation, the name of the play was unchanged. The most successful stage production of *A Doll's House* was Sombhu Mitra's *Doll's Game* [my translation]. In fact, the character, environment and circumstances of *Doll's Game* seemed to be contemporary Bengali middle class people and their families. Besides *Group of Conspirators*, *Doll's Game* [my translation] is one of the plays through which Ibsen got popularized to the Bengali audience. At the end of 1950s or in the beginning of 1960s, another little known group theatre, Art Theatre translated the same play and then, staged. The fourth edition of *A Doll's House* was *Freedom*. Before 1960s, the Bengali avant-garde group theatre found the European drama of the world famous dramatists like Chekhov, G. B. Shaw, O'Neil, Camus and so on. Bengali drama was influenced by Bertolt Brecht. In 1969, a little known group theatre, Onnesha staged the translated play, *Rosmersholm*. A respectable dramatic personality, Gangapod Boss transformed the play, and his own son Swadesh Boss was the director. The play was named *For A Dream*.

In Bengali literature, the play *Ghosts* of Ibsen was mostly performed. *Ghosts* were staged at least in the five languages. The play was translated for the fourth time and changed for the one time. At first, a famous actress of 1950, Momota Banerjee translated it directly. A group theatre, Souvanik staged this play in 1958. A senior member of this group theatre was Birash Mukherjee. The name of the play was not changed, and it was staged by the name of *Ghosts*. Nandhikar, at that time, was a famous group theatre. In 1960 this play was changed for the Bengali theatre-goers. The transformed play was named *Shapele* [my translation], and its art of characterization and social perspective was Indian. Both Ojitash Bandhpadhaya and his co-worker Depan Sengupta changed this play. But unfortunately, this play failed to gain popularity. In 1936, a small group theatre, Known-Unknown [my translation] translated the play, *Ghosts* and then, performed on the stage. This time the name of the play was unchanged. In the beginning of 1970, a famous filmmaker and drama-actor, Soumik Chatterjee translated the play into Bengali by the name of *Shapele*. He himself was the director. It was the first commercial production of Ibsen's play in Bengali literature.

Professional actors and actresses performed the play on the stage. In 1984, another young director, Anjon Datta translated the play, and his Open Theatre performed the play on the stage. This time the play was staged by the name of *Ghosts* and European Costume.

A matter seems to be apparent from a long list of translation/transformation and stage production of Ibsen's plays in Bengali drama that have been translated and transformed due to the inspiration of the stage production of drama-personnel, where many of them worked as producers and directors. Another mentionable matter is that all translations and transformations have been taken from English edition for want of comprehensibility of the Norwegian language. If we consider the stage production, then it is found that translation has become more than transformation. Yet dramatic transformation has enabled to get the appreciation of the audience than translation. Another important aspect is that Ibsen's plays have been translated and transformed in the field of literature though they are very few in numbers. Such a famous dramatist Ojid Bandhupadhaya transformed the play, *Hedda Gabler*. His Sokuntolla Ray is an appropriate replica of Bengali name of Ibsen's heroine in the field of transformation of Norwegian plays. Unfortunately, no group theatre attempted to produce the play on the stage.

From the above discussion it is observed that Bengali dramatists have given priority of Ibsen's plays. Ibsen's early period plays were not staged in India due to some reasons. *Vikings of Helgeland*, *Lady Inger of Ostraat*, even *Peer Gynt* are difficult to perform on the stage not only in India but also in other country because of purely Norwegian character and spirit. On the other hand, *Brand* and *Emperor and Galilean* are so dependent on Christian religion that these plays are compelled to lose their appeal to other religious audience. But, Ibsen's social plays have enabled to earn popularity from the Bengali audience, producer and director. Both *Ghosts* and *A Doll's House* are the most staged plays. Except *Rosmersholm*, Ibsen's last period plays are not able to draw the attention of Bengali drama-producers and translators. Perhaps, the Bengali directors have tried to stay far from this drama. Symbolic presentation is mainly meaningful in the field of a definite culture, and this meaning relies on the local psychology of a specific time. So, symbolic presentation is difficult to transform from a country and culture to another country and culture.

Most of the producers/directors or translators/transformers think that the main eminence of Ibsen's plays is embedded in discussion as well as criticism because some problems are presented in these plays in such way that they seem to be prevalent in Indian societies. There are some prominent directors: Sombhu Mitra, Utpal Datta, Ojitesh Bandhupadhaya, Swadash Boss and Solil Banarjee. But Swamitra Banarjee, Birash Mukharjee, Asok Sen and Onjaan Datta, creating a complex embodiment of the play have given priority of Ibsen's strategy, character, and the realistic image of circumstances in their directions. Ibsen has written the better plays. Consequently, directors have performed his plays on the stage. They, coping with the Indian social perspectives, have not tried to transform Ibsen's plays; rather they were pleased with adequate translation.

1952 was an important year in the history of Ibsen's plays in the field of Bengali literature. In this year, a famous, Bohurupree Group Theatre staged Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. Dramatic personnel and drama expert, Shanti Boss named this translated play, *Group of Conspirators* [my translation]. He transformed the dramatic personae, milieu and circumstances into Indian perspective from the Norwegian. A renowned figure Sombhu Mitra of Bengali drama was a director of this play. It is mentioned that the play was staged in 1962 and 1985 by the deviation of 10 to 30 years. Each time the script of the play was changed; and Sombhu Mitra himself acted as a protagonist.

Those who regard Ibsen as pertinent to contemporary environment and circumstances, Sombhu Mitra is one of them. He wrote a treatise on the play, *An Enemy of the People* that Indian democracy is a superficial democracy. As a result, an excitement between society and individual has reached at the point that each person, segregating himself from democratic people and the matter of manifesting a new horizon of truth was prevalent. In this way, Stockman's revolutionary

spirit has become pertinent to Indian context; his severe reproachable speech against the compact majority is not confined to reactivity, as some critics have commented regarding the matter. In rhythmic pattern, he has written another treatise on *Why Ibsen* that Ibsen's plays are not only the symbol of social document but also have presented all complexities of our modern life. He also has emphasized on the characteristics of Ibsen's symbolic plays which have given the poetic qualities. Actually, he has acknowledged the necessity of stage production of Ibsen's plays not only for his worldwide fame and reputation as a dramatist but also for pertinence to 19th century social problems in the outlines of his plays with great success and adroit. The producers who have not staged Ibsen's plays have appreciated the style of Ibsen's meritorious presentation which inspires them to stage a good play. Like Jogash Chowdhury, other dramatic personalities have charmed at the structural features of Ibsen's plays.

The image, which we may realize from translation and transformation is proved that how a Bengali as translator/transformer or producer has evaluated Ibsen. In some ways, we can realize apparently about the staging problems of his plays. But, *Group of Conspirators* and *Doll's Game* inspired the audience for the stage production, and *White Horse* is a recent Ibsen's transformed play on the stage. In 1952 *Group of Conspirators* appeared on the stage for the first time. It is necessary to mention that there was a big difference between the transformed text and performance text of Shanti Boss.

The scenes of Norwegian play have been changed into a growing small city of Bengal, where there is a suitable management to lead happy and beautiful life like clean drinkable water for the inhabitants. In Ibsen's play, the bath fascinates health-seeking travelers, but in the transformed play, it has been changed into a municipal water management. In the same way, the bed room of Dr. Stockman has been changed through creating a drawing room of the middle class family. Captain Hovstad of the original play has been shown to have appointed in a pharmaceutical company in the transformed play. To the Bengali spectators and readers, city council election of the original text has been transformed into a municipal council election of the transformed play. The play has been entitled in Bengali from a proverb: a god is thought to be a cannibal when he is victim of the conspiracy of the compact majority. In the original play, Peter Stockman is not only the chairman of the bath administration but also the mayor and the inspector general of police. In the original play, his great social self and power has been shown but in the transformed play, he has been transfigured into a chairman of municipal council. It is mentioned that Petra denies translating a book for the newspaper, *People's Harold* that has been changed a little; supernatural element has been cut out. Thus the translator decreases the burden of guilt of the compact majority with great ability, and he has emphasized on the so called cultured middle class society. He has limited the burden of a cherished criticism from a special class. In the 4th act, the word compact majority has been used in the maiden speech of Dr. Stockman, and the circumference of word has been shortened in using the words middle class. Dr. Stockman flogs the severe censurable speech of the compact majority, and the translator deducts it in the transformed play. Instead a devoted man has been emphasized in quest of a hidden mystery. The speech of Dr. Stockman has been deducted regarding indiscrimination from the lower class society to the higher class society. In the transformed play, Dr. Stockman's faith in the poorer class people has been emphasized in the last act of the play. Transformers have exposed carelessness towards the meaning of words like Swamp or Pulsating Heart regarding the speech of bath.

After staging *Group of Conspirators*, Bohurupee Group Theatre staged *Doll's Game* in 1958. This play was transformed by the director Sombhu Mitra. The play has been succeeded on the stage production, Like *Group of Conspirators*; this play is also regarded as milestone. But transformers have brought a significant change with a view to presenting the Norwegian play to Bengali spectators. The Durga Puja festival of September-October has been brought in lieu of Christmas day because in Bengali Durga Puja is a great festival like Christmas day. But, due to alteration, the story of the play has been unfitted at the time of Puja, nearest relatives and especially, children are given to buy cloths, but parents are very few in number who give doll to

their children as a reward. At the time of transforming the original incidence, the transformers have rejected the niceties matters. In the transformed play, subtle symbolic presentation of Ibsen has lost its excellence. The use of an important symbol, Stove of the original play has been avoided in Bengali drama. Because, there is no need to use stove for the inhabitants of the Torrid Zone like Bengal. In 1st act, Christmas Tree has been decorated nicely and in 2nd act, through cutting branches-leaves, Christmas Tree expresses symbolic meaning in the original play. But, in Bengali drama, Christmas Tree is not used reasonably. Instead, in 1st act, with fresh flower the room has been decorated in the flower-vase, and in 2nd act, dry flowers have been exposed in place of fresh flowers. Tarantella, a central and final symbolic presentation has been avoided in the transformed play; but instead, Bulu has been given to recite a poem by Rabindranath Tagore to manifest ego-conflict which has a symbolic meaning. Here, again situation has been ascribed though, at the last day of Durga Puja, the public function is arranged, the matter of recitation is rare in such a convention of middle class wife.

Some alterations are manifested in the transformed play besides all these alterations of Ibsen's symbolic presentation. Most of these alterations have become indispensable at the time of transformation from Norwegian perspective to Bengali perspective. At the time of amour-fun with Dr. Ray [Dr. Rank in the original play] Nora exposes stockings in the original play but in the transformed play, Bulu uses cholly. Cholly is a short blouse that Bengali girls wear with shari, and it is an important worn cloth of life-intimacy to Bengali women like the stockings of Europeans. Bulu wants to know from Dr. Ray regarding cholly, and tells him that when she wore cholly for the last time then her loins became slim. In the original play, Nora's relation with her children is expressed through her emotion and feeling. But, to a Bengali woman, motherhood is a holy matter. Therefore, children's presence is upheld through scenes, and mother's relation with her children is highlighted through the scenes. In the original play, Ibsen has focused on the indirect presentation of children, where they have become play-doll to their mother like Nora to Torvald Helmer. But, in the original play, the excellence has lost, and in the transformed play, children's active participation has been attributed and ascribed. The meaning of the original play has been shortened due to important change of different scenes. In this regard, the relationship between Krogstad and Mrs. Linde in the original play, and in Bengali drama it has been changed so that the matter of their relationship may be mentioned as an appropriate example. In Ibsen's play, the relationship between Torvald and Nora, where a woman bears all types of burden along with her economic responsibility and her children on her own shoulder. In the transformed play, by taking care of Krogstad and her children, Mrs. Linde's personal necessity has been emphasized on her own life. A woman becomes more graceful in embroidering than in spinning cloth in the transformed play, this type of dialogue has been rejected. But, we regard it as an important dialogue through which Torvald's attitude towards a woman is exposed. In the 4th act, at night scene, Torvald expects a sexual desire from Nora. The sexual right of husband on a wife has been shown as a trivial matter in the bourgeois society, the honor of relationship between husband and wife has been distorted. The main discussion of the play has been somewhat shortened to reduce the time of stage. In this act, Nora's soliloquy regarding her plan of self-suicide has been rejected. Many women have to sacrifice self-esteem for husband-this type of dialogue of Nora has been cut out. In another dialogue, Nora says, she wants to see, who is right either she or the world? A European married woman wears a ring in the same way; a Hindu Bengali woman wears vermilion in the parting of the hair on the head. There is a religious meaning in wearing vermilion; it is believed that vermilion of the parting of the hair on the head makes sure welfare. In Bengali drama, Bulu obliterates vermilion, but in the original play, Nora wears the ring out. This scene has severely made the spectators tragic and on the stage a severe reaction is created to focus on such type of scene.

However, the play has been succeeded on the stage. The transformer/director has connected something in the script of the play with a view to startling the story. Such as: a mirror has been used with other things of the stage, where Topan [Torvald in the original play] gets pleasure seeing his own reflection on the mirror. Through this part, it has been emphasized upon his

selfishness. A doll is kept with other utensils of the room in order that it may dance. This scene plays an important role in the symbolic presentation. In this play, a realistic set is used. The important development of stage-setting is to establish a fixed place for a letter box. Lighting plan is a right direction of Ibsen. Its excellent example is an amour-fun scene of Bulu with Dr. Ray because in this scene light becomes beam, and Dr. Ray is created for feeling and emotion to express love towards Nora. Action of this scene is a glaring example of contemporary reality.

A little known group theatre of Calcutta transformed and staged the play, *Rosmersholm*. Before transforming the play, the director considered some English editions of the original play. It is understood from transformation that it is a complex play because it has connected much subtle matter and an original sin for which the guilty characters especially, Rosmer are chased out. Conservative Hinduism is replaced in stead of Christian religion in the transformed play, *White Horse* and as a last descendant; a well-known, wealthy and famous landlord has been presented for his dogmatic judgment and behavior. Niran [Rosmer] decides to break an old temple of his own family in place of diverging himself, and he wants to establish a foreman for the landless refugees in that place, as a result, the landless refugees can be able to earn their livelihood. In the Bengali transformed play, a certain time of 1950 has been determined as a time, open and effusive days of Indian recent-earned freedom. In the transformed play, time is not highlighted much. Besides religious concept, another complex aspect of the transformed play is- the relationship between Rosmer and Rebecca West. The concept of Housekeeper in a Bengali family is not prevalent from Indian context, and in some matters, due to illness of a housewife, though a relative woman seems to be normal for looking after the task of the family, it is heard very little to grow a sexual relation with the decision-maker. Therefore, in the Bengali transformed play, the matter of Rebecca's socially advancement is not possible to perform on the stage. Still now, before a famous character Hedda Gabler of Ibsen, the relationship between characters Rebecca and her adopting father has been neglected. Consequently, the importance of the character has been mortified.

The fact is difficult to accept it on behalf of conservative Bengali spectators. The central symbol, *White Horse* for the Norwegian bears a special meaning as it is related to their folk-tale. In the transformed play, this symbol has lost the natural context. In the play, the political symptom is easily presented. The conservative and the radical political parties have occupied a special power in West Bengal like India since pre-liberation war period. Consequently, in the political courtyard, conservative and liberal politicians of Ibsen have resembled in the transformed Bengali drama. Transformers have bought about significant alterations of the play before protuberance-emancipation of the play. Some critics may regard *Rosmersholm* as the mutilation. The symbol of dualism suicide has been given at the end of the transformed play. Before going to the mill race holding hand in hand, Rosmer did not accept Rebecca formally as Eternal Wife. Madam Helseth did not enter the empty room addressing madam, or through the window she did not also witness dualism suicide. Perhaps, the director has changed a lot with a view to maintaining romantic and intimate feeling and emotion. Due to this alteration, the concept of despondency and negativism has concealed other matters that this type of concept bears a meaning for which an honest man's dream is compelled to fail. In the transformed play, the matter of redemption has been avoided through the demise of Rosmer and Rebecca.

By using set, music and light, the melancholic expression has been enlarged. Clearly, realistic presentation has been highlighted in the bed room of *Rosmersholm*. An ample densely gray scene, interior leaning wall of outer portion etc. has been used in mending wall in order that claustrophobic milieu may be created in the cocoon. All characters seem to be miniature on the stage due to narrow window in the middle of set. Effectively, light has been used to create dark environment in each place of stage. Real system is not followed in the gleam projection; this means that light is not enlarged on the stage in the very beginning of the day, or darkness does not come down with the arrival of night. Instead, emotion and dramatic milieu have been tried to create in the lighting projection. A very light music has been used except interval at the end of each act, but what is used is all overflowing music. A big change has been brought from the original play to the transformed play except Rebecca's white shawl. Consequently, dramatic

obsession has been mortified. Rebecca is found to spine a white shawl like shroud/coffin at the outset of the play, and The shawl which Rebecca uses as a veil of marriage while Rosmer's advancement towards death is absent in the play, and it is a great harm in the symbolic presentation of Ibsen. It is acknowledged that there is no meaning of shroud to a big portion of the Bengali spectators, those who are Hindu burn a dead body. The action of the play is realistic, though dialogue and action of Rosmer, Rebecca and Ulrik Brendal are more polite and acceptable than that of Kroll, Madam Helseth or Mortensgaard; but director fails to show a difference between dialogue and speech in different character. Ibsen was very conscious in the original play.

If we do not analyze a direct translated Bengali drama of Ibsen's play, the whole discussion will be uncompleted. It was mentioned ago that Ibsen's *Ghosts* is mostly staged play in Bengali literature. It is a matter of funny that each time the translation of the play, *Ghosts* is staged, so to say, it is not transformed. The transformed play of Ojitash Bandhapadaya fails, and is staged very little. To transform the play, *Ghosts* is a clear cut problem of the important role of Pastor. It is great difficult to find out a character like a Christian priest. And, another problem is that any Bengali character is difficult to find out a parallel past context like Oswald's character. It is difficult to find out a character from Indian perspective to observe a complete life in Paris, and the matter is also abnormal to send a young man of a middle class family with a view to learning art in Paris. Due to the Bengali transformed play, there may be of some problems; consequently, the producers are attentive to translation.

For our discussion, we will analyze the translation by Somitra Chatarjee; the translation is succeeded on the stage. Though it is translated from English translation, Chatarjee demands that he has discussed with a Norwegian expert to translate it very closely. Though it is translated, the play, *Shapele* has come through one or two alterations. For instance, some changes have been brought about in the dramatic milieu. Garret has been presented as glass room to be completely unknown as a big portion of a house due to Indian residence. Similarly, in the Bengali transformed play, the narration of Bay surrounded by Fjord has been avoided. Mist is found to pile beyond garret's wall, but in the transformed play, it does not seem to be trustworthy because such a natural matter is rare in India. Rozina has been sent to bring cloths of orphanage from the Wash House, but in the transformed play, it is a great problem. The translator is not able to solve the problem. Pastor as a padre has become easy to translate because this word is well known to the most of the Indian.

In the transformed play, it is difficult to find out a right character of Chamberlain. At the very outset of the play, when Rozina speaks of devil's rain, this word seems to be exotic in Bengali literature. The words, *White Sepulcher* are very appropriate for Mrs. Alving's leading a life with her husband. But the translator finds no alternative to use a prison of hidden sorrow in stead of this word because sepulcher is not at all known to the Bengali readers and spectators. The main symbolic title of the play, *Ghosts* has lost the poetic diction. Such as, the word, ghosts is not appropriate as translation of Norwegian word, *Gengangere*, which means the dead who walk again. The translator finds no an appropriate word in Bengali literature to express the original Norwegian word completely. But another important matter is that Rozina's character has lost its appeal in want of translator's inner attitude. Rozina's dialogue may be easily translated from French to English and Norwegian language with a view to focusing on the ambitious nature of Rozina. Translators can not change French word and phrases at the time of alterations. But this word and phrase have become less comprehensible to the Bengali readers and spectators. If Rozina would use English word and phrase in Bengali mixture for exposing her greatness in her own pedigree, it would be much meaningful to the spectators. Rozina exposes her own identity of pedigree through speaking Norwegian pledging expressive word, *Fi donc* in the Norwegian play. Without understanding this word, the translator has undistorted this word. Here a question arises; the translator has consulted the matter with Norwegian experts, and demanded that he did not translate the word into Bengali translation. However, from discussion it is seen that the literary translation of a play is not a better means to translate the play into a different culture.

This transformed play has been staged in the European costume, and set also has been used through following European family. The stage production has been tried to cope with the original play. The lighting direction of dramatic text has been minutely followed without using the target of the making of milieu in some place. The dramatic performance was very realistic. Actually, the director himself has personified Oswald as a Schizophrenic through the psychological analysis. This production has been performed for a long time in the theatre, and has occupied a prominent place as a remarkable play of Ibsen on the stage.

Now let us see how the dramatic critics have accepted such type of play. A drama-expert and critic of the Bengali play, Sushanta Boss opines that transformation of Ibsen's play is more important than translation. According to him, a transformed play upholds our society, our reality, different aspects of our culture which is difficult to express through translation. Therefore, a transformed play is better than a translated play by obeying social and national duty. Another literary scholar Omaledhu Chakrabarthee opposes on writing a contemporary treatise against a direct imitation of a western play. He says that this sensibility is created from the lack of national and historical consciousness. He also says that through this effort our dramatic personalities attended their attitude towards the western dramatists several years ago with a view to equalizing Bengali drama with the western drama. According to him, this tendency is deprived of our own time and of evaluation of circumstances. But he acknowledges that Indianization of a certain foreign play may be important if Indian existence is considered, and different aspects of foreign play are paid heed to inclusion through avoiding imitation in transformation. A famous Bengali novelist and dramatist Bonoful similarly comments on the subject of lack of better Bengali drama. *Group of Conspirators* is one of the transformed plays of Ibsen that dramatists regard the play as a proper drawing room drama. Realistic milieu is created through stage decoration, lighting plan and act for which the play has been appreciated. However, a dramatic critic has presented some questions regarding transformation of the play. According to him, the character that has triumphed our existence and freedom in Ibsen's plays, may be accepted as progression at the end of the 19th century in Europe, but his character has not signified in India of 1950. According to him, the opinion that opposes against the honest effort of Dr Stockman are not the representative of the compact majority, and wrong opinion and thought may be created regarding the modern people of today through satisfying them and by condemning Stockman due to ignorance. In the next decade, a critic comments on circumspection another play: the conflict of a conscious person has been expressed through social pressure. There is no any special aim of the play to fulfill the political object. In 1985 a dramatic critic spoke about the play: it is an expended allegory of progression and self-realization. Dr. Stockman's inexperience is not any special social class, rather is greater than wit and intelligence, and is authoritative from thought and sense.... It is expressed that critical attitudes have been changed in this play within several decades.

At the very outset, the critics have warmly congratulated the play, *Doll's Game* than *Group of Conspirators*. This transformed play has been appreciated by all and sundry and nobody has objected about recitation in place of Nora's tarantella dance or Durgapuja in stead of Christmas festival. How the dramatic critics have judged the act of the play from the 20th century perspective is noticeable. A critic wrote, it is true that female revolution is the theorem matter of the play, but not a final statement. The so called feminism has occupied a special place of the play in earning self-esteem...female situation is not solved in our society from that attitude the play seems to be obsolete. Similar comment is reflected by another dramatic critic, Sombhu Mitra's analysis and realization is very appropriate from today's Indian context. Mitra has not tried to analyze the play newly, but he has emphasized on Nora as a mother who lacks in the faith of her husband because of leaving her husband thus he has opined that married life is not for peace each other, rather to build up future is a means through family and children. How critics can give us a wrong meaning, is also a glaring example. According to many critics, Indian image has become more trustworthy than Nora of the original play. The discussion of universal problems has been accepted to the critics, and though the meaning of universality is different to many different critics. For instance, a famous critic says about the psychological analysis of the

play, again other critics have spoken of universal segmentation and mechanization as a reason of devastation between man to man. Further some say that the play deals with a complex relationship between male and female. Besides, they speak of basic human evaluation. Critics say that pioneers efforts are found to understand and invent internal attitude than external attitude in Bengali drama. A drama loving person has analyzed the play, *Doll's Game* from a psychological point of view. Society helps a man to build up as a player; similarly, he has accepted doll as a model allegory. Thus he has emphasized on doll symbol and its truth symbol in place of a person as these two conflicting sights. According to him, Nora is victim of social pressure, and she finds shelter within a doll figure existence. He witnesses that Ibsen has expressed how an artificial figure of a man grows up than his real image. Consequently, a doll plays a significant role as a self-existence of a man and cheats with others.

After one year of the stage production of *Doll's Game*, which is published in the journal of *Bohurupee Theatre* is necessary to mention here. It is the hypothetical discussion of an immortal heroine Sokuntalla of Kalidas and Ibsen's heroine Nora. Sokuntalla, leaving her husband, children and a heavenly cottage of eternal peace, enjoys beauty and loveliness, and meets Nora. Both of them realize that they have left their families, but in different reason. Nora, as a play thing in her husband's house, tells her openly regarding the past existence of worthlessness, and asks her when Dushanta leaves Sakuntolla in her family, how she feels. Sakuntolla exposes argument on behalf of seeing the argumentation of Dushanta's work, and asks Nora if Sakuntolla returns her husband's house whether Nora wants to return her husband's house. Nora replies in the negative that she can not be able to know her own identity. It is apparent from her reply that she is not a special dweller of a country; rather all the countries of the world where women are regarded as doll. At last, Sakuntolla, at the time of returning her husband's house, welcomes her new friend Nora; But Nora rejects her proposal that Bengali society wants her most. The writer, with his ready wit as well as intelligence, shows that Ibsen's heroine is more indispensable from modern perspective.

The play, *Rosmersholm* has been appreciated due to some features. But, according to dramatic critics, the transformed play can not be trustworthy. The main reason is that the last descendant of a Hindu landlord plans to break the inherited temple, and builds up shelters for the refugee in the same place. If we look at the theatre and dramatic expert, it will be seen that Ibsen has been appreciated more by the dramatic experts. Yet it is necessary to mention that some western playwrights especially, Bertolt Brecht has enabled to spread among our expert and scholar but Ibsen has failed. Writing about the age of Ibsen and realism, a Marxist actor-expert, Shatta Bandhapadaya was engaged in the People's Theatre of Uttpaul Datta for a long time. He denied that Ibsen was merely a realistic and an idealist playwright. He thought that Ibsen was able to break capitalistic enclosures with his inner attitude; Ibsen was able to grow as a revolutionary voice of his age. According to Bandapadhaya, Ibsen was one of the famous critics of petty bourgeois society. Despite his progressive attitude, he proposes question after question, and criticizes not to reply that question. To him, Ibsen has become very sensitive to focus on social problems in his plays. Depending on his morality, Ibsen has criticized the capitalistic society, but he has failed to realize eco-political concomitance and diffusion.

Another theatre expert Dhruva Gupta, writing about his tragic play, has designated Ibsen as a modern tragic dramatist. Considering Ibsen's play with classical standard as Ibsen's dramatic themes, Gupta finds the presence of Fate in the indispensable features of Greek tragedy between social destruction and individual problem. He sees Aristotelian unity of plot in Ibsen's plays. Though, according to Gupta, character is not at all an indirect matter in the outlines of Ibsen's plays. He has realized Dr. Stockman's character like the direct characters of classical drama. Expert like Steiner, who has mentioned the tragic end of the play of the modern period, Gupta's treatise is a powerful challenge against them. In *The Present Time and Our Theatre*, Dhruva Gupta believes that what happens in a Bengali drama after Rabindranath, Ibsen has become a great model than Kalidas. His faith is substitute to the hypothetical speech regarding Sakuntolla and Nora.

Commenting on a great treatise, Ibsen and Bengali Drama Movement, this dramatic expert says that Ibsen is mainly individualistic, and his struggle against contemporary society. To establish his comments, he has quoted Bentley's criticism regarding Ibsen's plays. Returning to structuralism from subject matter, Gupta finds a mixture of symbolic presentation and realism in the style of Ibsen's plays. Writing about relativism of Ibsen's plays from Indian perspective, he says that the play, *A Doll's House* is a very significant play for our society, because the relationship between male and female in our contemporary society has much prevailed like feudal behavior. Besides, *An Enemy of the People* is also a very significant play from Indian context. Democracy is lent from western world and importance of dimension is believed than qualitative value. Gupta means that Ibsen has opposed against cruel compact majority because the play is progressive- such type of criticism is as meaningless as for spreading the light of education of Dr. Stockman upon the street children, the dramatist who is regarded as progressive is meaningless. In the final analysis, he argues that if Bengali spectators, readers like western experts would consider Ibsen's profound humanism and powerful idealism with negligence, but that would be laughter. Rather to him, integrity and better concept like meaningless ought to be evaluated with the single minded devotion of Ibsen's plays.

Another critic Depandhu Chakrabartee means that Bengali dramatic critics can not develop the local criterion to determine performance potential or literary value of the play, and still they rely on established criterion of western playwrights including Shakespeare, Ibsen or Brecht. He also means that though Ibsen's plays are performed on the stage in Bengali theatre, except Ibsen's style in the original Bengali dramatic composition if any western style comes, it must be Shavian style.

In 1986 a literary expert published a large doctoral thesis on Ibsen and Bengali Drama, where the researcher tried to find out Ibsen's manifestation upon Bengali drama. In his research, even Rabindranath was not devoid of his research. He upheld some Ibsen's characteristics including-stage production, psychological complex; retrospective method, light projection and plan, and the Bengali dramatists have included these features of pre-liberation period. Actually, he emphasized on the pre-liberation dramatists than our modern dramatists those who have been influenced by Ibsen's psychological philosophy, because we get real evidence of consciousness regarding Ibsen through translation, transformation, treatise and criticism since 1940s. Emphasizing on cooperation of feminism everywhere in Ibsen's plays, he repeated so called universality of Ibsen's plays though it has been universally accepted that Ibsen himself said that at the time of creating *femme fatale*, he was engaged into feministic problem.

How a spectator has accepted a play or a playwright is difficult to ascertain. Because there is no any recognized means to collect such data in India. Success of box office is almost illusive. Therefore, Box office is not any criterion to make sure whether a play is spectator-gladdened or not. However, after first stage production, the producers get chance to witness the difference of reaction of spectators due to the performance of *Group of Conspirators* for two times. Group theatres want to know the opinion of spectators by post in the plays, *Doll's Game* and *White Horse*. Thus some data have been collected about the play. At the very outset, an aspect is necessary to clarify that the spectator of Bengali dependent play is mainly middle class educative family. When *Group of Conspirators* was performed on the stage in 1950, spectator's attitude was contradictory. Then India enjoyed the victory of recent liberation, and it was a recent established democratic country. In such a situation the play which summons individual liberation and apparently, is compelled to reject due to condemnation of the compact majority. But after one decade of liberation in India, novelty of democracy is decayed. Due to democratic stability those who were in power used democracy against the self-interest of the common people. Therefore, in this time the play got much appreciation from the spectator, and has been congratulated as a classical play. In 1980 again the play got classical honour, and the spectators would stand in row to see the role of a legendary figure, Sambhu Mitra as Dr. Stockman and to buy the ticket at night, who is a milestone in the history of Bengali drama.

The play, *Doll's Game* was performed successfully on the stage, but though the play was appreciated through letters from the spectators, there was a mixed reaction regarding the play. For instance, Anonda Shankar Ray objected about the transformation of the play that he mentioned *Doll's Game* as a distorted play of the original play. Another spectator demanded the deduction of the dramatic script. In some letters, the spectators reacted that they became tragic to see wiping out the Vermilion of Bulu. But, in another letter, congratulating the transformer/producer due to such an end, a spectator says that such type of end has created expected effect/influence among the dogmatic members of middle class. However, Swachindra Sen regards the last role of Bulu as reactive. According to him, the play was grandiloquence and verbiage; character can not be able to be trustworthy. Having demolished Torvald's idealism and later it turns into selfishness, it seem to be objectionable to him, and He regards Dr. Rank's disease as a complete meaningless. He feels abhorrence not to determine Krogstad as a good man or villain. Therefore, his allegation is on the subject matter more than the problem of the stage performance. When in a letter realistic presentation has been demanded with great appreciation, but in another letter, the producer has been congratulated with a view to focusing on realism and symbolic presentation.

In a letter, same type of whimsical and protesting reaction is found regarding the play, *White Horse* of the producer. Some spectators get dissatisfied about the final stage production of the story. To some spectators, it seems to be blatant and romantic, other spectators seem to be attributive and drastic conclusion of the play. In some letters, the political speech of the play seems to be contradictory. Such as, in a letter, we are told that the political speech of the play seems to be contrariety of liberal party. Analyzing the political problem, some spectators think that the dramatic and aesthetic excellence has been violated. Other spectators have complained for pessimism. It has been written in another letter a good play was feasible to write the same type of story. On the other hand, some praised the transformer/director for the themes of the play. Others have congratulated them for honest efforts. A student of 20 years reacted that he got a new idea after enjoying the play, again got nothing. What he got was a presentation of social problem of a long time. Again what he got was its solution. It is found from the attentive observation of spectator-reaction that today's spectators have expressed their contradictory attitude towards Ibsen. It is apparent that Ibsen has been able to spread enough influence. It is difficult to ascertain that an effect has spread or not in writing a modern play. Perhaps, it is true that the first naturalism has touched Bengali drama through Ibsen. Chekhov, G. B. Shaw or like Miller, other playwrights also have brought realism and naturalism of their style and structure. It is difficult to ascertain Ibsen's effect has been spread in the structural characteristics of naturalistic and realistic play of Bengali playwrights unless any definite evidence is found in the author's demand regarding Ibsen. It is more difficult to determine the influence of the story. It is, undoubtedly, expressed that Ibsen has influenced Bengali dramatic composition and stage performance. Through examining a play written by Sambhu Mitra, we will quit our discussion through transforming and directing two plays of Ibsen.

The play, *Reed* [my translation] was performed in 1950. Etymological meaning of the title of the play-wild, useless botany-though it's idiomatic meaning - mean and insignificant people. The play has been surrounded by a middle class. The decision maker of the family is a despotic father who is an uncorrected person for blooming idealism upon his obedient wife, daughter and revolutionary son. With the advancement of the play, his hypocritical behavior is revealed when he tries to appoint a praiseworthy person for his actress wife. It is revealed when he is responsible for the birth of an illegal son. At the tragic point of the play, the son who challenges with his father and mother commits suicide not to insult social stigma. The outline of the play is difficult and attributive but structural feature of Ibsen's plays may be easily identified.

Conclusion

To conclude, it may be said that Ibsen's influence on Bengali drama in comparison with western playwrights including Chekhov or Brecht is minute; the shadow of his thought is noticeable in social sense. His plays, especially his middle period prose plays are mentioned as social plays, his deep effect and influence have occupied a prominent place in Bengali dramatic composition and stage production.

Reference

1. Ibsen, Henrik. *A Doll's House*. Trans. William Archer. Dhaka: Friends Book Corner, 2006. Print
2. _____. *Ghosts*. Kolkata & New Delhi: Macmillan India Limited, 2003. Print.
3. _____. *The Complete Major Prose Plays*. Trans. Rolf Fjelde. New York: N.P., 1978. Print.
4. _____. *Rosmersholm*. Trans. Farquharson Sharp. Champaign: The Project Gutenberg, 2001. Print.
5. Johnston, Brian. ed. *Ibsen's Selected Plays*. London & New York: W.W.Norton & Company Ltd., 2004. Print.
6. McFarlane, James. *Four Major Plays*. Oxford University Press, 1998. Print.
7. Saclaen, Saidus (Trans.) *Ibsen and Bengali Drama* in Henrik Ibsen's *Wild Duck* transformed by Khairul Alam Swabuj & Directed by M.K. Raina. Dhaka: Centre for Asian Theatre, 1999. PP.12-24. Print