



Chronicle of Dhamergaan: An Intangible Genre of Folk Drama in the Northern Part of Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

The living folklore, dhamergaan has been held for ages in the northern part of Bangladesh. Like other elements of folklore, it has evolved out of a desire for humanism and is purely secular. It does not hurt or ridicule any religion in any way. As a result of the unification of all communities irrespective of caste and religion, on the one hand, such non-communal thinking is manifested. On the other hand, it became acceptable and popular with everyone. Music is dominant in dhamergaan; hence the common people consider it folk music. An attempt has been made to present it as a genre of folk drama. Important features like its origin, naming, format, purpose, story and language, content, dress, instrument, acting and presentation style have been explained here. The rules and regulations observed in dhamergaan are influenced by their religious beliefs and certain practices. A clown character is present. The dialogues are composed and practiced in regional languages. At present this living folklore is still lying in disrespect and neglect. Therefore, it is important to collect the turns, preserve this folk tradition and present it to the world court. This elusive dhamergaan of Bangladesh must be taken care of and preserved.

KEYWORDS: dhamergaan, dohar, rangpachali, mandira, mridanga, Vivek

INTRODUCTION

In the basin of the Mahananda-Karatoya-Tangun River, one of the valuable resources of Bengali folk culture, "dhamergaan" is found in the northernmost districts, i.e., Thakurgaon and Panchagarh in Bangladesh. These regions are the abode of folk music. Field after open field, habitat for cattle and goats, distant winding cattle cart roads, natural calamities, flooded lowlands, and the drought have fueled the different genres of folk drama, especially dhamergaan. The longing of the human mind and the complete biography are only possible in folk drama. The word "dhamergaan" means "dham's music." The Bengali word "Dham" means "holy place or elevated place" and "Gaan" means music or song. Hence, the local people of the northern part of Bangladesh call this type of folk drama music. Modern mechanical technology has not yet entered public life as it is isolated from the capital, Dhaka. Due to this, traditional folk dramas like dhamergaan are one of the main forms of entertainment for the people of this region.

Dhamergaan feeds the enjoyment of life and the soul for people who are deeply involved in their lives. The lives of the people here depend on agriculture. So, they pick up new crops at home and arrange dhamergaan. The main purpose of this music is to make everyone happy. The stories of Dhamergaan

are also amazing and full of literary poetry, dialogue, dance and music. Therefore, the main purpose of this introspection is to collect the turns and preserve this-worldly tradition and present it to the world. Razi (2010, p.1) says, "One of the great treasures of Bengali folklore is folk drama. In the general sense, those who are the bearers of this folk drama are the people of our agrarian society. Following the social cycle of beliefs, reforms, etc. prevalent in our tradition and culture, the folk drama of this country has taken the form of different genres and features".

Dhamergaan, i.e., the folk drama in Bangladesh, is deeply involved in the lives of the people from ancient times. Freed from all kinds of obscenities from the past till now, the only dhamergaan has survived in its glory. "Dhamergaan" is a joint effort of the Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim communities. The play of this traditional dhamergaan is the subject of interest of the people today, which has been hidden from the public eye for so long. In describing the inheritance of traditional drama, Islam, M. N. (2005, pp. 23-24) says, "The culture that has prevailed since time immemorial, the special culture that has been nurtured in the soil of the country despite many diverse influences and obstacles-the rich folk culture that combines everything, is an easy legacy of the people of today's Bangladesh."



This study is mainly an analysis of Dhamergaan from the point of view of indigenous folk drama and folklore. The argument of this paper is to try to show the similarities between folk drama and dhamergaan through some scholarly articles. Common people consider dhamergaan (a type of folk drama) a genre of folk music, but in reality, it isn't. This paper is also aimed at describing the various features of Dhamergaan.

Dhamergaan (folk drama) has been collected at the field level in different regions of Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, Rangpur, and Lalmonirhat districts in Bangladesh. At first, we contacted the program wing in Bangladesh, Betar, Thakurgaon, and Rangpur. Information regarding the composer and crew of Dhamergaan was collected from the officials of Bangladesh Betar (Bangladesh Radio). Then, Nurul Islam Dewan, Music Producer (contractual) of Bangladesh Betar, Thakurgaon, was contacted for further information. The performance of the composer and crew of dhamergaan in different districts was observed by him. Around 25 shifts of dhamergaan were recorded in the studio in Bangladesh Betar. The leader of the dhamergaan and the other crew members of the group are all of a simple, straightforward, and sociable nature. Their sincerity and heartiest reception fascinated us. The story, music, and its tuning, the stage, and total performance were analyzed. More than this, in-depth observation is another source of primary data.

Other than these, secondary data collection based on different documents, books, journal articles, records of government and non-government organizations, and media reports are the main source of data. The story of the dhamergaan is taken from the folk life of the rural area. The character of the turn is composed and practiced in society. Above all, this article will help inquisitive researchers open new horizons in research. On the other hand, we hope that the higher education level of folk music will be helpful. From a religious or historical point of view, it is noted that there is no truth to these stories or their characters.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dhamergaan, a genre of folk drama, is very popular in the region. During the dhamergaan season, the people of each locality become more and more cheerful. Regarding dhamergaan, Khan, S. (2014, p. 220) says, "Dhamergaan was performed on religious altars. But in the current social evolution chapter, it is no longer confined to religious drama. Now the songs of Dham are performed in the yard or the courtyard of the house or under the banyan tree, in the market, in the field etc. ... The people associated with this Dhamergaan belonged to the Hindu, Kshatriya, Rajbangshi, Palia, and Koch communities. But in today's reality, the joint efforts of both the Hindu and Muslim communities are remarkable. As a result of the unification of all communities irrespective of race and religion, on the one hand, non-communal thinking is manifested and on the other hand, it becomes acceptable and popular with all".

Various descriptions of dhamergaan come to light in the report published in many well-circulated daily newspapers in Bangladesh. Some important issues like 'the description of dhamergaan program'; 'communication of the artists with the audience'; 'the folk drama is a secular program'; 'the influence of satellite culture on dhamergaan'; 'the need for public and private sponsorship of the music'; 'the main preoccupation of this play is the decoration'; 'make-up of the artists'; 'the topics and theme'; 'naming and distribution of features' etc. have been well described in these national and local newspapers. In the eyes of journalists, the folk drama of Thakurgaon 'dhamergaan' has been highlighted in the newspapers. The few descriptions of dhamergaan are available in books or journals.

In a reputed newspaper, Khan, (2010) states "The dhamergaan festival in South Bathina is sitting in front of the temple (puja mandap). The four-cornered platform has been made by raising the ground about 2 feet high. Pandal pulling a cloth awning with a square wordier (jiga) tree. Surrounding the stage with a bamboo fence. In the middle of the stage, the musicians are playing the local musical instruments. Actors, actresses, and crews stand up and perform. Audiences enjoy the turn sitting or standing around the stage".

Dham's choirs are male-centric. Each group has 12 to 25 members. According to the character, the men acted like women on the Stage. (Sarkar, 2015) states, "Immediate relationship between the audience and the actor is the main force of Dham's music (dhamergaan). Due to the lack of demand, the once-popular and traditional folk drama 'Dhamergaan' (dhamergaan) of Thakurgaon is losing its glamour day by day. ... The influence of satellite culture and less honorarium are the main reasons not to be a huge gathering in dhamergaan. However, the district administration assured that efforts would be made to recognize and spread Dham's music (dhamergaan) through the Ministry of Culture".

Samrat, (2016) states, "The dhamergaan festivals are organized on various issues. Love-philandering, exploitation of moneylenders, and worldly tensions are easily expressed in this folk drama. In these shifts, the joyous anecdotes or various sorrows and pains of the marginalized people are presented fluently".

A three-day event started with the joint initiative of the BodaUpazila Administration and Hunger-Free World. A correspondent states, "Dhamergaan in Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, and Dinajpur districts is the perception of the soil-related life of the people of this region. This popular dhamergaan has been organized to create a vibrancy among the rural people " (Panchagarh Biluptir Pathe Dhamergaan o Pitha Utsab, 2016).

The artists are the poorest people in rural society, having been sharecroppers, van drivers, farm laborers, or blacksmiths in their professional lives. The turn of an impeccable dhamergaan is composed orally on the earthen stage. Juberi,

(2016) states, "Since the events that take place in the simple flowing stream of rural life or the various oblique phenomena of the village society are embodied in Dhamergaan. There is no precise manuscript of it. There is no prompter like Jatrपाला. The characters are taken from daily life. There is no such thing as a straightforward truth. Dham's choir is not run by professional actors. The demand of the mind does not compromise. The source of nourishment of the mind breaks the claws of the ruler. It does not wear the mask of politeness. As a result, there is a lot of humor".

A well-known writer in Bangladesh, Milon, (2016) says, "Dhamergaan is still very popular in rural society and provides entertainment for people of all religions. It's one of the means of celebrating the joy of the farmers after planting new crops in the area. ... even complex issues are made interesting through humor by acting. Three or four shifts were held in one night. The duration of the episodes varies from one hour to one and a half to two hours. ... Artists entertain the audience while maintaining a non-communal vibe".

It is a non-communal event. "In the villages and neighborhoods centered on Lakshmi Puja, the dhamergaan festival is in full swing. All Hindus and Muslims come to enjoy the dhamergaan at night. ... the festival is going on in a joyous atmosphere in every union of the district" (Thakurgaonedhumse Chalse Dhamergaan, 2016)

Describing several features of dhamergaan, Babu, (2017) says, "It is a crop-centric festival. Like other folk dramas, it also tells a story through dance, music, and acting; composing in regional language, and performing the turn immediately while sitting on the stage; communication with the audience; no notation. The lyricists create the plot, analogy, interpretation, and even tuning of the music from nature".

Artists have kept the group of dhamergaan in their minds and kinks. It states, "The dialogue is short and the language is completely regional. Dialogue is also in prose, but also in music. The stories and music of the play are made up of various aspects of daily life. Through these stories, joys, sorrows, pains, loves, strangers, exploitation of moneylenders, worldly misery, and various tensions are easily portrayed" (Thakurgaoner Dhamer Gaan, 2017).

Describing a lot of issues like- 'dhamergaan is male-centric folk drama'; 'the male character is full of humor and wit'; 'sometimes a talented boy, sometimes a laughing stock'; 'it is a part of the folk culture of the area but is on the verge of extinction today due to the financial crisis; 'Needed government patronage in conservation'; etc. the newspaper states, "At one time the dhamergaan was played in every neighborhood. Women, men, children, old people of all ages of the family used to sit in a row and enjoy it all night long. Everyone would shed tears over the tragic subsistence" (Thakurgaone Chalse Ottijjohabahi Dhamergaan, 2017).

The performance is held in different villages on the occasion of Goddess Lakshmi and Kali Puja. Jasimuddin, (2018) says, "Dhamergaan still survives in the villages as a means of entertainment for Hindus as well as people of different religions. In the autumn, this music festival starts in this region and continues till the arrival of winter. In dhamergaan, various developments, problems of society, and solutions are expressed through comedy and drama"

Men are the ones who wear women's clothes and wear long hair, coiffure on the head, nose flowers, and earrings to act in the folk drama. It states, "Dhamergaan is the basic medium of traditional culture in the rural areas of the district. Educated and uneducated rural youths create fictional characters of the shifts in the local dialect. Now dhamergaan are enjoyed by all the Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Christian, Santal, and Orao communities in the northern part of Bangladesh" (Thakurgaoner Grameen Shanskritir Pran, 2019).

In Thakurgaon, the entertaining dhamergaan is also organized to create awareness about contemporary social issues such as 'prevention of sexual harassment, 'prevention of violence against women, 'prevention of child marriage', prevention of dowry, 'prevention of acid terrorism', and cleanliness. Shamim, (2019) says, "Hundreds of students, men, and women from the area rush to enjoy dhamergaan. The name of the play is 'Pasando Pita and Kushand Beta' (Fiend father and bad son). It is the entertainment of the common people of the village. According to everyone, this entertainment will survive in this way for ages".

Folklore-rich rural artists satirically highlight the various inconsistencies of society through music and performances. District correspondent states, "To preserve the tradition, the young cultural activists of the village have been organizing this cultural program in collaboration with the locals in the guise of boys and girls. The artists do not have formal education. People of all ages gather in one courtyard to enjoy the dhamergaan, forgetting their differences" (Thakurgaon Oitijjohabahi Dhamer Gaan Utsab 2019).

Dhamergaan is getting lost as the organization becomes expensive and there is no government support. Adolescents of this generation are not interested in Dhamergaan in this age of the internet. Thakurgaon Correspondent states, "The people of this remote area used to organize dhamergaan on their initiative for entertainment even before the 19th century. But with the change of time, these festivals, including the traditional dhamergaan of rural Bengal, are gradually disappearing. Dhamergaan is getting lost due to the high cost of these events and the lack of support from the government. ... This culture needs to be retained. So, the government should pay attention to the betterment of it" (Gramanchale Probinra Ekhono Opekhaye Thake Dhamergaane, 2019). (15)

Traditionally, men play female characters; artists sit in a circle between the stage and the venue, and during Lakshmi

Puja, various events of life are brought to life through humor. Khan, (2019) says, "Artists get up and walk around the space around the circular part and perform music. During the performance, they look in the mirror, apply lipstick on their lips and powder on their cheeks and put on sari as well. Although there were female actresses in the village, traditionally men played the role of women in Dham music. This tradition is still being followed to retain the features of Dhamergaan. During the performance, Naresh Roy said, when I wear a sari, tie bangs and apply lipstick, many people think of me as a girl. In that case, I understand that acting is going well".

Dey, M. (2018, pp. 15-16) defines dhamergaan clearly in his book. He says, "folk drama i) not a complete drama, presentation is incomplete; ii) Weakness in terms of the theme can be noticed; iii) no specific author; iv) The form is oral and is composed instantly; v) not divided into episode or scenes, performs continuously; vi) Traditional musical (local) instruments are used; vii) Abundance of music and music often plays the role of dialogue; viii) The dialogue is short. because the actor and actress have to create a dialogue spontaneously; ix) the number of characters is less; x) Masks are also used; xi) Dance, music, acting, all these elements of entertainment exist; xii) men play the role of female characters; and xiii) In the dialogue regional language uses".

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In the past, researchers and academicians considered folk drama as music. Many have also discussed it as a dance. The folk drama consists mainly of characters, dances, instruments, stories, dialogues, performances, music, etc. Those who observed folk drama in the form of music at first emphasized the lyrics of the play, while those who saw it in the form of dance did not notice its theatrical form. For example, in 1956, Haradhan Dutta commented on Bolan (a type of folk drama) as the folk music of Nadiya in an article in Probashi. As far as is known, Ajitkumar Ghosh started a significant discussion on folk drama. He is said to have initiated the first discussion on this subject in the 1960s in an article entitled Bangla Lokonatto (Bengali Folk Drama) in the book 'Paschim Banglar Lokoshanskriti' (Folk Culture of West Bengal). Before that, Bengali folklorists have discussed other aspects of folklore.

The discussion on folk drama came after 1970 when Gaurishankar Bhattacharya published a large book called Bangla Loknatto Samiksha 1972. Many old and young writers, even university students, and teachers, have come forward to research folk drama. Scholars called folk drama a 'classical ritual'. Explaining folk drama, Turner, V. (1969, P. 50) says, "folk drama describes the ritual in terms of plot and theme". The myth-ritual theory that emerged at the beginning of the last century supports this idea of the origin of folk drama. According to the promoters of myth-ritual theory, stories, music, etc. have been created from

myths. These continuously stream the local culture in their respective regions. Regarding ritual myths, Wilson, G., and Wilson, M. (1954, p. 241) say, "Rituals reveal values at their deepest level ... men express in ritual what moves them most, and since the form of expression is conventionalized and obligatory, it is the values of the group that are revealed. I see in the study of rituals the key to an understanding of the essential constitution of human societies".

Western prominent researcher Abrahams, R. D. (1972) cited in Green T. A (1978, p.2) rightly says, "Approaches I have labelled 'life as theatre' and 'life is theatre". He means 'connected to ritual survivals'. Regarding dialogue and storytelling, Abrahams, R. D. (1972, p. 353), adds, "traditional play activity that relies primarily on the dialogue to establish its meaning and that tells a story through the combination of dialogue and action, the outcome of which is known to the audience ahead of time". Burns, E. (1972, p. 11) says, "behavior is not . . . theatrical because it is of a certain kind but because the observer recognizes certain patterns and sequences which are analogous to those with which he is familiar in the theatre". Besides, Burns, E (1972, p.12) adds, "The theatrical quality of life, taken for granted by nearly everyone, seems to be experienced most concretely by those who feel themselves on the margin of events either because they have adopted the role of spectator or because, though present, they have not yet been offered a part or have not learned it sufficiently well to enable them to join the actors".

To explain the actions of folk drama, in a book edited by Richard, M. Dorson, R. M. the author Glassie, H. (1972, p. 253-280), says, "The argument for folklore as performance, so vigorously supported by many contemporary folklorists, is particularly applicable to the present discussion; for ultimately any speculations on the folk quality of an example of drama must examine how received materials are modified in form and function by specific traditional performance contexts".

In observance of ritual in folk play, a story is created through a dialogue that is sustained through the interaction of the audience. Analyzing the structure of folk drama, Goffman, E. (1974, pp.128-129) says, "...this characterization excludes the 'presentation of self in everyday life, the dramatic metaphor of sociology, and most of the ritual enactments discussed as dramas in the anthropological literature. The former is eliminated because while we may understand the operation of specialized 'fronts' or facades".

The educated people first introduced the word 'folk drama' and it's only admired as music by the common people long before. Dennis, Philip, A. (1975, p.6) says, "I think, becoming widely recognized that religious beliefs and practices are something more than 'grotesque' reflections or expressions of economic, political, and social relationships; rather are they coming to be seen as decisive keys to the understanding of how people think and feel about those relationships, and

about the natural and social environments in which they operate". Some scholars believe that no mythological or historical story will find a place here. The language of the folk drama will be simple, attractive, and clear. In all these cases, the entertainment of the common people is more important than historical significance. So, it is not appropriate to judge folklore regarding its content.

It is said, folk education is the purpose of folk drama. However, it doesn't take the path of resisting protests. Regarding dialogue in folk drama, Veltrusk, J. (1976, p. 128) says, "... is a verbal utterance delivered by two or more alternating speakers; as a rule, they address their speeches to each other. Dialogue, therefore, differs from a monologue in that it unfolds not only in time but in space".

Giving an example from Brazil, a western researcher on folk drama, Gregor, T. (1977) says, "... the social interactions of the Mehinaku of Brazil as improvisational drama". Of justice and injustice, of sin and virtue, and the triumph of virtue are revealed in folk drama (Dhamergaan).

It's difficult to answer whether the writings of educated (sometimes urban) writers can be incorporated into folk drama. Since the 'oral transmission' of plays written in the vernacular by educated people is not possible, the debate continues. Taking an American example Mackaye (1928, p.xi) says, "Plays have been labelled as folk drama simply because an author endeavors to infuse his work with a regional or national character through an overlay of local dialect or custom. ... although they are not subject to the conventional alterations generally imposed by traditional means of transmission and performance. Despite the regional tone, these and similar works must be considered belletristic or sophisticated". Goffman, Erving, (1974, p.129) terms this type of folk drama a 'fictive' or 'scripted' identity. In this context, the participant in the folk drama only performs formalities. Regarding this, Brunvand, J. H. (1978, p.158) says, "The participant, as far as can be determined from the evidence presented, simply fills prescribed ceremonial roles. That is, the authors do not establish the fact that the personnel, within the frame of the festival, abandon ordinary personal identities".

These main features of folk dramas are noticeable in the comments of most researchers. Modern experts consider them not only entertainment but also a protest against injustice, exploitation, and oppression. Whether the subject of the folk drama is religious or secular, it has to be artistic and popular with the villagers. In this regards Bogatyrev, P. (1976, p.55) says, "it is necessary to consider, along with, as 'folk' plays even those plays that originated from the artistic dramas, whether religious or secular and, once having reached the village, became popular, were substantially changed and made proximate in their form to other folk plays".

Elsewhere, about the content of the folk drama, Renowned

folklorist Bhattacharya, A. (1976) says, i) "If there is any mythological or religious or religious preaching content, it can't be considered as folk drama" (p. 131) and ii) "its content must be based on the lives of the folk people. (p.2) 24. We have an irreversible reform in our minds about the mythical characters. Therefore, it is an obstacle to becoming a folk drama". Bhattacharya, A. (1982, p.129) says, "Folk drama is a play composed and performed based on the story of folk life". His definition emphasizes the story of folk life and the stories composed by them orally.

It is important to keep in mind that folk drama must be theoretically impartial. It must be acceptable in the wider social and cultural field. At the same time, the presentation should be related to the central issue of folk drama. In an article, Green, T. A. (1978, pp. 843-850) says, "... bearing in mind that any reasonable definition of folk drama must incorporate the following characteristics: freedom from theoretical bias, applicability across broad cultural areas, and appropriate use of pivotal terms (such as folk, drama, and role)".

According to Bhowmik, N. (1986) cited in Nath, S. (2003, p.4), "... it is a folk drama when it is reflected in the performances and dialogues of all aspects of the life of a group of people". Chakraborty, B. (1995, p. 519) says, "We can imitate the definition of democracy, folk drama is held by the local people, welcomed and performed by the folk people with the folk issues". In Handbook of Texas, Green, T. A. (1995) defines folk drama as, "Although the folk drama is performed by an ethnic or folk group that has developed traditional rules for time, place, and manner of performance".

Oxford Reference (2021) treats it as, "the folk tradition 'folk drama' as customs with a significant dramatic element (or "customary drama"), the 'mummers' plays...". In Encyclopedias, almanacs (2021), folk drama is explained as, "Non-commercial, generally rural theatre and pageantry based on folk traditions and local history".

Regarding folk drama, Banglapedia (2020) in Bangladesh states: "There are two levels in the presentation of a folk drama, the preparation phase, and the main phase. In the preparation phase, the main story is preceded by instrumental music and worship, while in the main phase, the main story is performed with acting, dance, music, words, and dialogues, instruments, company, or clowns. ... Folk dramas are composed and performed on mythological, historical, religious, political, and secular issues".

Majumdar, Manas (2010, p. 142) writes here as an example of this, "Folk drama is also added to the wedding ceremony. In the Bengal-Bihar area, when the bridegroom arrives at the bride's village, both sides fight. The purpose of the bridegroom is to defeat the maiden in the battle and take the bride by force. Forced abduction of daughters is an exceptionally primitive practice. It's about marriage. This performance is organized in remembrance of that tradition of the past".

According to Dey, M. (2018, Pp. 12-13) a folklore expert from Thakurgaon says, "Dhamergaan (folk drama) is a theatrical endeavor that is composed, performed, sung, and presented by the folk. By these people, we mean those who are rooted in rural life. Happiness-sorrow, joy-pain, and life-philosophy including dreams-imagination of the greater rural population are easily reflected in the folk drama". This folk drama is the result of the combined efforts of many people. One thing is clear that its form, like other genres of folklore, is only verbal. Dey, M. (2018, p.13) adds, "Mythological and historical subjects are also included in folklore, but they are never confined to mythology or history. It enters the realm of folklife and becomes worldly".

Dhamergaan is associated with popular religious folklore, folk festivals, and worship festivals. By analyzing the opinions of the renowned folklore scholars like Bhattacharya, A. (1976, p.2 & 131) and (1982, p.129), Ghosh, A. (1986), Mitra, S. K. (2000, p.4-5), Dey, M. (2018, pp. 15-16) and the above mentioned western folklorists' views, some important features of dhamergaan (folk drama) can be determined. In dhamergaan, a) The combination of dance, dialogue, and music are presented theatrically; b) The connection of folk drama with folk music is very deep; c) Rely mainly on verbal dialogue; oral transmission; d) Performance occurs on the open stage. The top is usually covered with a triple; e) Different types of indigenous musical instruments; f) Contemporary thinking is also reflected in religious and social stories; g) Must be a jovial person or doari; h) The audience is all around; i) Those characters are created from within society; j) Local cultural reflections occur; k) The role of the audience in acting is very important; l) men play the role of female characters; m) In the dialogue regional language (local dialect) uses and instantaneous; n) non-commercial; mythological, social issues centered, cherished and acted by folk people having short character, dialogue, non-institutional education, and traditional decorations and acting. o) it's a means of entertainment or a protest of the exploitation and injustice prevailing in that society; p) Defeat of sin and victory of virtue, the reward of principle and punishment of corruption are shown; q) There are five elements of the event, namely stage (Mancha), artiste (Kushilob), Instrumentalist, Audience, and Sponsor.

The descriptions of dhamergaan and folk drama remain the same. It is noteworthy that while talking about folk dramas, experts agree on certain things but find some differences in their definition or scope. For example- While Ashutosh Bhattacharya is silent about the purpose of folk drama, Ajit wants to see folk education as the purpose of folk drama. Ajit has no objection to pre-composed or mythological dramas. Where Ashutosh has not discussed the combined efforts of group life, Ajit and Dey want to see that feature embodied in folk drama. Ashutosh and Dey want to say that the dialogue is instantly composed, but Ajit evaluates some rhetoric or poetry in it. Ashutosh and Dey consider that folk drama

speaks of folklife and folk drama is based on folklore. Ajit did not do that. There is no difference among scholars regarding decoration, costume, open stage, theatrical, myth-ritual concept, dialogues, audience participation, presence of doari, local musical instruments, regional language, etc. Ashutosh does not want to call mythological or historical drama folk drama, but Ajit and Dey accept them as folk dramas. Ashutosh considers the story of folk drama, especially the love story between a man and a woman. On the other hand, Ajit, Dey, and many others have no choice in the matter.

It is not possible to constitute the main features of the folk drama or the overall picture through any specific definition. Because of the diversity of folk drama depending on the place, time, audience, geographical environment, situation, and society. From that point of view, the relationship of folk dramas with socio-culture is extremely close.

FOLK, FOLK MUSIC AND FOLK DRAMA

The words folk, folk drama, and folk music are described here subsequently. The word 'folk' is well defined by the folklorist. The word folk is traditional with the common people of a region and typically reflects their lifestyle as a folk hero. Ghosh, A, cited in Chatterjee, S. (2014, p.131) says, "It refers to a group of people who carry a prominent lineage in the rural areas. The play performed by the people is called the folk drama". The meaning of the word 'folk' in 'Cambridge English Dictionary' is "traditional to or typical of a particular group or country, especially one where people mainly live in the countryside and usually passed on from parents to their children over a long time". In this context, the analysis of Bhattacharya, G. (1972, p.17) seems to be much more plausible as, "The word 'Folk' has been used since the day when a particular part of social evolution was identified by another part as people. Despite the change of that particular part with the evolution of society, one part still identifies another part as folk".

Like folk drama, dhamergaan means non-profit-making, usually rural theatre, and pageantry-supported folks' societies and native antiquity. Happiness solely remotely related to oral literature is people's drama. The play performed by the folk people is called folk drama. The definition given by Ghosh, Ajitkumar cited in Das, D. (1992, p.9) is, "A play composed, acted and performed in front of the people is called the folk drama".

Students most frequently have outlined the genre in relevance to their theoretical issues starting from myth-ritual discussion to symbolic social science. Regarding folk drama, Ordies, T.F. (1893, pp.149-175) says, "The shaping factor in a folk drama was the shord dance with its circles, chorus, and carefully concerted movements". Sarker, M. (1976) defines folk drama as, "In common meaning, folk play is based on folk-tales, story-based characters with the expression according to the character. These are simple but strong with music-dance-short dialogue and the harmony of

folk musical instruments expressed straightforwardly and openly in the open space". Folk dramas are rather primitive. After reviewing a lot of scholarly research work on folk drama, Gabbert, L. (2018, p.1) says, "The term 'folk drama' is an etic term used by scholars in various disciplines to encompass different ideas and applied to a broad range of performance traditions. ... definitions and understandings of what constitutes folk drama have changed over time and this understanding is contingent upon a variety of factors that, themselves, have evolved".

The definition of folk music is almost like that of folk drama. It's unique and timeless. This music is the tune of soil and people. Folk music is the story of laughter, tears, happiness and sorrow, separation and pain of rural life. The three basic elements of folk music are rural life, nature, and the minds of rural people. Wahab, A. (2008, p.284) describes the special features of folk music as, "i) There is no statutory system for practicing folk music. Temperament skills are the characteristics of a singer. Only by hearing music is prevalent in people's mouths; ii) they are composed orally; iii) this music is closely related to the life of the rural society; iv) this music is varied in terms of content for different social life; v) this music is very simple and rich in terms of subject matter, mood, taste and melody; and vi) some are confined within regional boundaries". For a long time, this folk music, written or unwritten by the people, was propagated and circulated among the people through oral acceptance and rejection. Folk music is not a single creation, but a collective one. It is said, folk music evolves gradually as it passes through the minds of different people and different generations. In 1954, the International Folk Music Council put forward a definition of folk music, as Elbourne, R.P. (1975, p.124) says, "Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are (i) continuity which links the present with the past; (ii) Variation which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group; and (iii) selection by the community which determines the form or forms in which the music survives".

DHAMERGAAN- FOLK MUSIC OR FOLK DRAMA

In short, the essence of the common features of dhamergaan and folk music are- a) emerged in rural folklore; b) performance occurs to the common people; c) traditional story and theme; d) regional scene comes to life; e) the image of local nature and folk lifestyle becomes brighter; f) oral transmission and no single writer; g) no statutory system for practicing; h) composes orally; i) Bangladeshi local musical instruments; j) sometimes dance and music serve together; k) language is regional; l) in the early days, the content was mainly religious; m) defeat of sin and victory of virtue, n) the main goal is to entertain and educate; o) the purpose is to awaken people's faith, sacrifice, and devotion; p) performance on the open place; q) impact of nature is important; r) continuity, variation and selection by the community are essential; s)

composed, acted and performed in front of the people; t) temporarily invokes an alternate world to speak about and comment on the real one in aesthetically heightened ways; u) oral acceptance and rejection; v) both are involved in dynamic situations of contrast and process within cultures, etc. Due to these similarities of both dhamergaan and folk music, the people of the northern part of Bangladesh consider dhamergaan as music. But there is a basic difference between them. Dhamergaan is theatrical, containing short dialogues, the presence of a clown character, and interacting with audiences. These rural people used to call many genres of folk drama like Bolan, Gambhira, alkaf, etc., and even Jatra as music (gaan i.e. song). Having some exceptions, local print, electronic and social media also call them music. Many times, dialogues are delivered in the form of music as well. Indeed, there is no way to deny that like dhamergaan, there are many folk dramas hidden inside folk music in Bangladesh. It has been applied to a large variety of traditions that will or might not be connected, making it tough to define and universal conclusions unlikely. That is why many people call it folk music. It has gained more recognition as music to the common people.

Considering the importance of the role and consequences of music in folk drama, it was then evaluated as folk music. However, other folk dramas like dhamergaan have changed thematically and morphologically due to the evolution of time. Earlier studies did not emphasize the drama of dhamergaan, but now contemporary research seems to highlight it.

THE MAIN FEATURES OF DHAMERGAAN

i. The Origin of Dhamergaan

The origin of Dhamergaan is to please the adored deity. But lately, the theme of dhamergaan has become the reality of social life in the region. Various events of social and family life are highlighted in it. Various researchers and writers have explained the origin of folk dramas in various ways. Some say it is due to a variety of social activities or ceremonies; some say it is a variety of sports; again, some have suggested that folklore may have originated from the ancient practice of magic. As the origin of folk drama, there are several reasons for the origin of dhamergaan. One could be the magic combination with their ritual. The worship of the river as an aid to agriculture. The acting and performance of rain for the water of that river is a prominent aspect of this vow. The role of this magic show behind the origin of dhamergaan is a general perception of the common people. On the other hand, the human expression could be considered the source of dhamergaan. By imitating the opinion of Ghosh, (1986, p. 210), dhamergaan reveals the conflicting dynamic and excited state of the human mind. Wherever the form of this mood is manifest, there is the seed of dhamergaan. Regarding the creation of it, a general opinion is- folk people congregate to express their pain or joy and to express their nervous excitement only through acting or presenting to their community.

Like folk drama, dhamergaan is the prototype form of the modern drama that we find in the evolution of civilization. It's assumed that the thrust originates from within the community, hence the decision to perform dhamergaan. The bitter experience of life is also highlighted in the dhamergaan escape through laughter and jokes. That is why dhamergaan has become a reflection of the lives of marginalized people. With few exceptions, we do not know the names of any specific singers at the root of ancient Bengali theatrical origins. These theatrical forms could not have been developed by denying the influence of the customs and agriculture of the respective villages. In addition, all of these plays or drama samples contain inscriptions of myths or myths created by the society concerned. It is not known exactly when and how it originated. However, it is believed that in early or medieval times, socialized people used to perform various rituals in public life as part of entertainment, protests, public work, or religious prayers. These were held in different forms of folk culture. One such program or its variant is a dhamergaan. Folk drama has been created in different regions at different times, and formal dances have been promoted. It is believed that this formal dance has lost its formal significance. As a genre of folk drama, dhamergaan might have originated from these folk dances.

The combination of music, dance, dialogue, and acting creates dhamergaan. Most of the time, entertainment was expressed in a mixture of different proportions of dialogue, dance, and music. Dance was the common practice for winning battles, bringing rain, etc. Gradually, music was added to it. The movement of the limbs in the fast rhythm became restrained and gradually became conducive to expression. Recitation or dialogue comes in place of music or beside music. These build a narrative unity between the different characters by resorting to the expressive language of desire and emotion and the folk drama was born. It is easy to assume that the role of dance and music in these cases has evolved dramatically over time.

ii. Naming

Dhamergaan is known by different names in different districts in the northern part of Bangladesh. For example, dhamergaan and sorigan in Thakurgaon; maraghuragaan and palatia gaan in Dinajpur; gulirdham and hulirdham in Panchagarh; Laksmi Dham and Devi dhamergaan in Nilphamari district. Though folk drama is known by different names, its structure, content, and presentation style largely remain the same. Usually, dhamergaan is named after the names of the heroes and heroines. Such as 'Ambalshari-Pichla Baudia', 'Jalshari-ZulumAlsia', 'Haldishari-SonaiFatra', 'Hirashari-Ajla', 'Chalaki Shari Thubraghucha', 'Jhankar Fatra Jalashwari', 'ZulumAlsia Cycle Shari' etc. That is, the name of each turn is a combination of two names. One of these names is the heroine, and the other is the hero. The name with which the word 'shari' or 'shory' is associated is the name of the heroine. And the names that end in Baudia, Fatra, Ajla, and Alsia are the names of the heroes. 'Lakshmi's Banbas',

'Boumer Missed call', 'Paskara Kamaal', etc. are named after the theme of the story. The names of the heroes and heroines are also kept quite funny. Usually, the first part of the name is named after the heroine, and the last part is named after the hero.

The pala groups are named after their villages or neighborhoods. Such as 'Kachubari Palatia Dal' (dhamergaan or palatia team at Kachubari), 'Chuchuli Batali Palatia Dal' (Palatia team at Chuchuli Batali), 'Balvir Goalpara Palatia Dal' (dhamergaan or palatia team at Balavir Goalpara). Here, Kachubari, Chuchuli Battali, and Balvir Goalpara are the names of places, respectively.

iii. The scope and format of Dhamergaan

Since dhamergaan is a century-old resource, the scope of dhamergaan is also huge and wide. It is especially popular in the Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, Dinajpur, Rangpur, and Nilphamari districts of Bangladesh. It is known that more than 600 dhamergaan festivals were held in five Upazilas of the Thakurgaon district. Rangpur, Panchagarh, and Dinajpur are no exception. Like other folk dramas, it also tells the story through dance, music, dialogue, acting, and storytelling. According to the characteristics of folk drama, it is not a complete drama. The format can be termed as a sketch of a drama endeavor.

For hundreds of years, the people of this country have been introducing dhamergaan as folk music instead of folk drama. The idea of dhamergaan was probably not so prevalent long ago. And the drama has always been admired as a mixed and collective art. As it is developed through the combined efforts of many artists, actors, musicians, and producers, its stage is shaped and it has the position of the audience. Therefore, it is a joint industry as actors, producers, stage designers, and audiences all have a combined role. Researchers continue to expand the fields; new topics are emerging in the realm of folk drama. Along with some mythological turns and some romantic turns, dhamergaan is in a mixed format.

iv. The story of Dhamergaan

Love is an important subject in Dhamergaan. That love can be either worldly or spiritual. Folk love has found a place in Dhamergaan. However, one thing to be noted is that this music is different from other songs in folk music. The consequences of this love, in their turn, are also conciliatory. An opposite picture of Radha-Krishna's love (having a tragic end) is observed in it. Although there is a temporary separation in the episodes, in the end, the success of their love, i.e., their reunion, is inevitable. Dhamergaan reflects the simple life of the people. It acts as nourishment for their desires, hopes, and aspirations. Therefore, it has been given attention only as entertainment to satisfy the minds and souls of the people, without paying attention to the music experts or literary experts. To make them happy, folk people compose music with various humorous jokes and gestures, which is called Rang Panchali.

Bangladesh has been a country of many saints (preachers, i.e. pir-auliyas) at different times for centuries. Many Pir-Murshids have appeared in every age to guide the people on the path of truth and welfare. The place of all these saints has been found for ages in it. There are many more turns in other stories. The story of folklore is also particularly striking.

Though Ram-Sita, Arjun-Draupadi, Radha-Krishna, Nimai-Sannyasa, Behula-Lakshindar, Isa Khan Dewan, Firoz Dewan, Zainab-Hasan, Sakhini-Qasim, Hanifa-Jaygun, Sahim-Badsha, Rupban, Baidani, etc are performed, the common people of the village get happiness from these stories. The content is mixed with happiness-sorrow, joy-pain, oppression-struggle, struggle-conflict, love-hatred, greed-lust, etc., besides learning about honest-dishonesty, religion-action, sin-virtue, etc. stays.

The predominance of satire and humor can be seen in dhamergaan. Doari mainly plays this role. The audience is given pleasure through laughter, jokes, etc. Sometimes society is also criticized for satire. Since there is no written restriction in folk drama, sometimes irrelevant subjects and characters enter the acting arena. A lot of the time, it takes precedence. As dhamergaan is especially prosaic, non-communal and never commercial, its story is synchronized with it. Although there is talk of gods and goddesses, there is nothing communally unpleasant about it. The folk artist doesn't act to earn his living. They perform to give joy and intoxication to the audience. Each turn is long or short in volume. However, the composition is simple. The distribution and complexity of the storyline are less. Well-arranged stories are rarely seen in them. The plot is mostly relaxed. For example, the story of "Double Shallow-China Eri" is a love story. The heroine is a beautiful rural bride named China. Her husband is ill. So, she has had to shoulder the responsibility of the family. China sells cakes at village markets. The family lives on that income. One day, China met Shalo, a handsome young man from the neighborhood. At one point, they fall in love with each other and start talking to each other. China-Shallow goes to the river bank. Let's move forward with all this.

There are many shifts in dhamergaan which have an impact on the environment, soil, and human life activities in this northern region of the country. Rang Panchali, love-philandering turns, and some past stories are very nicely placed in it. It has been observed that the story of some of the shifts comes from the Puran (the holy book for Hindus), there is no mythological glory in their character. There is no difference between the characters of the plays and the folklife of this region.

v. purposes

The purpose of dhamergaan is to promote folk education through folk entertainment. Its purpose is usually simple living and socially approved policy. Not all of them are motivational. These are just the manifestations of folks'

longing. The character of Dhamergaan originates from folk society. It vividly depicts characters such as an oppressive zamindar, usurious moneylenders, a quarrelsome mother-in-law, and so on. Even in mythological characters, it unknowingly enters the character of folklife. The characters are flat. Sometimes it is seen that the same character has become a replica of different characters. It's an expression of folk culture. It is not always composed or performed merely for the entertainment of the people. Nowadays, some plays are being written that use the form of folk drama to promote various practical teachings, such as 'importance of universal education, birth control, public health, public awareness, or the local administration system. These are not traditional folk dramas. Protests against all types of injustice, exploitation, and oppression regarding social, political, and religious perspectives have sounded through Dhamergaan. News pieces from that year or the year before were also served. So, it can be said that folk journalism happens through dhamergaan.

vi. The event's duration and period

Dhamergaan is usually performed in autumn and fall. The biggest festival for Hindus is the Durga Puja in the autumn. This festival is followed by the worship of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. And the festival of Dhamergaan starts in the villages centering on Lakshmi Puja. Many times, it starts with Janmashtami and ends with Kali Puja. The people of the village do not have much work at this time. They want to spend this leisure time organizing festivals. The festival of Dhamergaan goes on all night in the light of Hare Krishna (Coleman light).

During this period, dhamergaan is arranged by the locals. Sometimes they raise money, or sometimes the performance is arranged under the sole management of a well-to-do household. Although the actors are ordinary people of the village, professional actors are frequently summoned from remote villages. There is a rule that requires you to pay a small fee in that case. Usually, the organizers also arrange competitions. One-turn actors took part in this competition as a team. The performance of each team is judged by the organizers. Prizes are also given in groups. Televisions, bicycles, cows, goats, or cash are given as prizes. While talking with the audience, artists and crew of dhamergaan, it is known that it is performing generations after generations. People of the area have been celebrating dhamergaan for hundreds of years, but it has been going on year after year without government patronage. It has not faded yet. Rather, it is being presented in a more captivating way in the mix of modernity.

vii. The content of dhamergaan

In living folklore, the content of dhamergaan has become a reflection of social life. The story and music of the play are made up of various subjects in daily life. In its content, just as there is the hard work of marginalized people, there

is also the presence of various sorrows and pains. Love-philandering, the exploitation of moneylenders, and various worldly tensions have come up very simply. In some cases, the complex themes of this music are presented humorously. Apart from the love or passion of the hero-heroine, dhamergaan is also performed in religious Panchali or social Panchali.

The sentiment of humanity is the main subject of these stories. Its contents are as follows: a. mythological, b. gods and goddesses, great men and saints, c. fairy tales related, d. Arab-Persian stories related, e. local history related, f. great heroic characters, g. humorous, h) social, i) allegorical, j) political events and folk deities of these have a wide range of content. It is noteworthy that in the present study, only the social story of illicit love is no longer accepted as the subject of dhamergaan. Nor is the religious context being considered outside the realm of it. The present point of view is much broader and tends to capture all the conventional tales within it.

There is no question of character building in Dhamergaan. All the characters are taken from the folklife of that region. No matter where the story is taken from, the idea of folklife is the main one. In it, worldly experience, folklife, and religion have all grown up. Instead of artificiality, it has become the reality of a simple life. Apart from mythology and fiction, there is no shortage of subjects. Dhamergaan adheres to traditional religion, ethics, and values. It has no political basis in that sense.

Its content is from traditional or everyday life. It has been observed that neither folk drama nor dhamergaan is composed for mere entertainment. It is a protest against the injustice, exploitation, and oppression of society. During the staging of folk drama, the audience and the hero-heroine communicate. In Dhamergaan, the audience confronts or participates. Exciting expressions and explicit lyrics arise in it.

viii. Dresses, stage, and instruments

In dhamergaan, men act like women. That outfit has a very rural touch but no elegance in dress or accessories. Long hair braids, bangs, combs, red ribbons in the hair, earrings in the ears, nose rings, and very simple makeup on the face. The role of folk instruments is important. Bangladeshi local musical instruments like a shield, drum, dhamsa, mridang, shinga, flute, sarinda, violin, tabla, jury, premjuri, nal, dotara, dhol, khol, flute, Kartal, shinga, sarinda, earthen pot, etc. are used. Nowadays, western instruments have also entered as musical instruments. However, their usefulness has not diminished as dhamergaan creates a direct connection with the people. Instrumentalists sit in a circle in the middle of the stage. The main singer, musicians, and crew stand up and perform when required. Sometimes actors and musicians also perform for the audience. The instrumentalist immediately starts a new dialogue. Usually, a mound of earth is made by raising a certain place next to the house; a stage is made in the

courtyard of a temple, or at the base of a big tree. There is no style at this stage. Dhamergaan is served by hanging a cheap shamiana (the top part of the stage) or an old sari as a tent. The entrance and surroundings of the stage are decorated with colored paper. The festival goes on all night in the light of Hurricane or Hajek (Coleman light). The audience enjoys it while sitting or standing on the grass lying on the ground around the stage. There is a seating arrangement for female spectators with a separate fence made of bamboo. There are various food stalls around the stage, and it turns into a small fair.

There is no style of aristocracy on the stage. It's presented on the general stage, under the open sky, surrounded by spectators. But nowadays, they are sometimes performed on the high stage under the patronage of the government. The new stage system has not yet created such innovation in applying to Dhamergaan. However, if this method of staging is to be effective, its traditional application system must be bound to change. The lighting on the stage has not changed yet. Artists sit there and do costumes or makeup. The actor performs only after wearing everyday clothes. If necessary, use a water hyacinth or shanpat wig. The list of cosmetic items includes chalk, vermilion, Alta, powder, bhusakali (very low-cost black powder), different colors, cheap lipstick, bangles, etc., which are readily available in folklife.

In dhamergaan, the widespread use of thick spots of masks, dances, and puppet dances are the main features. These masks were used according to the character. Animal masks have also been used as needed. The matter of facial expressions has not yet been discovered. So, the producers usually used the help of masks. Furthermore, in open spaces where there is no need to project light, this mask can play a special role in communicating the expression and character to the audience sitting far away from the stage. The musicians wore a ghungur on their legs, a scarf or towel (gamsa) around their necks, and a large handkerchief on their wrists.

ix. Acting and presentation

Acting and presentation styles are unique. The actors feel quite comfortable performing dhamergaan, as they have to create the dialogue themselves immediately. And because of this, an acceptable atmosphere is created in the presentation. However, since the dialogue has to be said immediately, the structure of the dialogue is not so strong. Sometimes, music also plays the role of dialogue, there is an artistic weakness in it. The dramatis personae present the details of their well-known village and rural society in it. And for this, the rural spectators and listeners are happy to see their reflection in it.

Sometimes the dance is the main thing; sometimes lyrics or sometimes prose is the main thing. Hence, the presentation style varies with an abundance of music. However, an acting posture can be noticed. Basically, it's an explained action, dhamergaan is seen in Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, or Dinajpur

districts. It is the overall creation of an integrated society, not the individual creation of a person. Some experts view that dhamergaan is the combined effort of thoughts, ideas, and customs of the integrated society in that region. The main trends and characteristics of dhamergaan are that its genre continues to evolve and its vitality and vigor are preserved through oral transmission and change. The interaction between audience and performer and the acting in Dhamergaan are interesting and significant. During performances, the audience remains rarely inactive but participative. The artiste, crew and audiences are not playing, entertaining, or performing in the usual sense but they are working, worshipping, and acting in their community. The presence of the “clown character” is a must.

dhamergaan also invariably had a key character called Vivek (conscience)—a style common in plays—who was a commentator on good and evil. Usually, the teachings of Vivek are spoken in the third person. It appears to the audience in ballad-like musicality at times. There is no causal order. There must be worship at the beginning. At the beginning of the event, the actor (bandana) greets the god and goddess and the audience. To make the female characters stand out, the man tries to make his voice sound like that of a woman. But now women are also acting in some cases.

The main actor doesn't dance properly while singing, but the rhythm of the dance is reflected in his gestures. Dancing uses simple rhythmic body language. Dhamergaan also has special features in the dialogue. The dialogue can be composed in full music, sometimes recitative. Dhamergaan features words, rhetoric, pronunciation, etc. in the regional language that complete the identification of Dhamergaan. It gives reality and liveliness. The speech is very simple and coarse, full of laughter. Emotion and joy play such a role in the dialogue that there is no other way but to be super dramatic. The dialogue in the same play can be changed a lot on different days due to the immediate interpretation of the actor or actress. Even the chronology of the story that is spread in the dialogue can be violated over time. “Unity of time” and “Unity of place” are not protected. They all spoke the dialogue aloud so that even the distant audience could hear it. Most of the characters are used to reciting dialogue or singing.

The observance of religious rites or folklore is a special part of performing. Since these folktales are observed with utmost care and deep attention, the spontaneous participation of the crew in the performance can be noticed. In our country, dhamergaan has been cherished by the common people for thousands of years as a means of entertainment on the occasion of any religious or customary festival or leisure. Among these folk dramas, dhamergaan is a popular genre. There is a singer who can capture the audience for hours on end by going from one character to another through narration, dialogue, and dance-song alone.

x. Language and script

Dhamergaan is mainly unwritten and composed instantly. The

episodes of this unwritten folk drama have an experience-driven discipline. Now, several shifts are available in written form. A few dhamergaan are also available in written form nowadays. Regardless of where the characters come from, it reflects folklife. It's accepted that, like mankind, the characters of dhamergaan originate from the soil and water of the country.

Dhamergaan in Thakurgaon is also known as palagan to the audience of greater Rangpur-Dinajpur. Some unfamiliar Arabic-Persian words were used in the daily life of Bengali Muslims. These words were also audible and were accepted by the neighboring Hindu society. It is a shining example of Hindu-Muslim communal harmony at that time, and for the same reason, this folk language is essentially mixed”.

Dialogues are dominated by regional languages. Dialogues are composed immediately, subject to the consequences of the dhamergaan. Prose, verse, dialogue, and music are repeated. The gidal (main actor) came from the rural masses. This mixed language has penetrated our peasant huts. In many dhamergaan, Urdu, English, Persian, Sanskrit, indigenous, etc. words, even sentences, in the local language are used. The words ‘Khazna’ (tax), ‘Jami’ (land), ‘Jabardasti’ (coercion), ‘Asman’ (sky), etc. are becoming words of the Bengali language alone.

xi. Non-communal character

The most important aspect of the features is the non-communal character of dhamergaan. Any form of folklore is secular. It's a creation of man, but it does not discriminate against people's notions of color, religion, and caste. Folk music of various genres (many of which are folk dramas) has been circulating in people's hearts since the beginning. In this country, Buddhist philosophy, humanity, “Vaishnava Sahajia”, devotionals, and later the propagation of Islam, the inspiration of the message of equality in Islam, have had a great impact on it. As a result, dhamergaan has found a place in people's hearts.

In the classification of the traditional drama genres of this country, the subject of religion-based drama comes up, but the dhamergaan do not speak of any single religion. Non-communal consciousness is observed here. All religions have equal rights in the content and style of this play, the audience. The people of this country have their own values of humanity and sense of religion, like Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, etc. Dhamergaan is a joint effort of the common people of Bangladesh.

CONCLUSION

Above all, various topics, including the origin, purpose, and staging of folk drama, have been presented with various statements by Eastern and Western researchers. Regarding the importance of the story, some people have called the folk drama a “gitika” (lyrics). The lyrics have a story and a dramatic essence, but they lack dialogue. So, whether the lyrics will be

or not, there is a piece of theatrical music in Dhamergaan. Dramatic characteristics exist in it. Dhamergaan moves forward quickly through dialogue and singing. There is no big organizational involvement or big teamwork. It has no role behind the scenes and is directed. The changed features of folklore will again form its basis in self-glory. Green, T. A. (1978, p. 128) says, "... to reach internal agreement on exactly where the limits of folk drama lie or else to risk having the term rendered meaningless by the unwarranted extension of its boundaries." In the introduction to his book, *Rethinking Folk Drama*, Tillis, Steve (1999, p. 11) says, "... given the nearly universal impulse toward drama, it might well be that folk drama can teach us something not only about particular cultures but about humanity at large."

Dhamergaan is a very popular and traditional folk drama but is losing its glory now (Sarkar, 2015). Due to electrification in rural areas, satellite TV channels, domestic TV, radio, and CD or VCR show challenges and destroy its monopoly. Lack of patrons and financial support for the team are the main causes of its decreasing glamor. For nostalgia and acceptance of dhamergaan, however, its popularity knows no bounds here. According to Poet Osman, Shawkat, cited in Dey, M. (2018, p.36, "If culture means an attempt to consciously bring life to a consistent destination, then this folk drama genre called "dhamergaan" is also engaged in trying to make folklife beautiful in many ways. Sometimes in the popularity of the content, sometimes in its style of presentation, and sometimes in the breadth of the organization, Dhamergaan has kept the human appeal-rich lifestyle flowing in the rural areas of Thakurgaon. And this is the success of it".

Though all members of the dhamergaan group are men, the popularity of dhamergaan is higher among women in the region. After taking care of the household chores, the teenagers and homemakers of the village come and sit around the stage before dark. Even the old woman of the house does not get left out.

The place of women has been evident in Bangladesh since time immemorial. The tendency to portray women as the subject of drama has been going on since the early stages of drama creation. Usually, the story revolves around girls. But until the turn of the century, women were deprived not only of their performance but also of their place in the audience. Women are gradually becoming aware of their rights. This renaissance also affected villages far from the city.

In some cases, it is observed that a writer, living in the city, writes scripts in the local language or local dialect on national or larger regional issues, also giving the name of the folk drama style. In this case, the special features, such as oral transmission or heredity, are no longer here. It is better to keep these issues out of the folk drama. However, in some countries, such a drama is included in the folk drama category.

Many people who have been practicing dhamergaan are

gradually moving away from this profession in pursuit of earning a living. The current dhamergaan is also changing from the beginning of the trend of changing social life. With the change in social life, many linguistic and material aspects of society are changing. The various materials used in the lyrics of the music are also changing in the continuity of cultural change. In this age of global culture, where the profession, standard of living, way of life, lifestyle, and thinking consciousness of people are changing. The wave of global change has touched on that continuous change in Dhamergaan as well. One of the main features of folk dramas is changeability due to natural reasons. As a result, the characteristics of the dhamergaan changed a lot in the previous era, so the folk people can accept this change and its spirituality. No culture can be stagnant; stagnation brings about its inevitable downfall. If the folk culture does not change, then its untimely end is death.

With the tune of the great folklorist Abrahams (1972), folk dramas like dhamergaan are involved in dynamic situations of contrast and process within cultures. It embodies what he calls "the conflict between stability (traditions) and change; it continually has to accept both innovation and stability." In other words, according to scholars' views, dhamergaan manages to be both conservative (clinging to older forms and themes) and new (incorporating present subjects and concerns), and it exists only in the context of specific cultural use by interacting groups. Like folklore, Dhamergaan is viewed organically as a living process. It lives and dies or mutates. Dhamergaan is a genre of the cultural heritage as well as the lifeblood of the people from ancient times in Bangladesh. Government patronization and corporate responsibility are needed to apply to the organizers and or team of Dhamergaan. Therefore, a conducive situation is needed for its preservation, practice, and development.

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