

## Syphilis in Henrik Ibsen's Ghosts

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### Abstract

In this paper, I would like to examine the dreadful impact of syphilis, a hereditary disease, on Henrik Ibsen's Ghosts through the characters of Captain Alving and Johanna on the one hand, as well as Oswald and Regina on the other hand. In this concern, I would like to argue why Captain Alving is sexually attracted to Johanna. Due to an illicit relationship between master and maid-servant, Regina was born in the Alving Heritage. This paper shows how Oswald is infected by venereal disease, namely syphilis, due to a sexual relationship with his half-sister, Regina. In terms of literary justice, why Ibsen's Ghosts is a domestic tragedy, I aim to investigate through applying the theory of syphilis made by some notable scholars and critics, including Hartl, Jones, King, and Nicol. Plus, this paper aims to look at the theory of hereditary disease made by Freud and Mencken with a view to exploring Ibsen's treatment of human characters. In this way, it would like to examine also Ibsen's thoughts of love and sex of 19th-century Norwegian bourgeois society in the light of syphilis affected-male and female. The play, Ghosts, continues to evoke a broader interest because the complex portrayal of the discourse of hereditary guilt remains a central theme in today's societies as well.

Keywords—Captain Alving, Hereditary Genetics, Johanna, Oswald, Regina, and Syphilis.

### Professional Biography

Mr. Hossain did complete his M. Phil research on English literature from Jahangirnagar University. Now, he is doing PhD on comparative study at Jahangirnagar University. As an Assistant Professor, he is teaching English at IBAIS University and Adjunct Assistant Professor in English at The University of Comilla as well as Enam Nursing College, Bangladesh. He also did serve

as a Research Associate at Uttara University, as a Lecturer of English at America Bangladesh University, BGIFT-Institute of Science & Technology, Tutor at Bangladesh Open University and 2 Colleges in Bangladesh. He authored a book on Ibsen Studies. He has written 80 articles and published 70 articles in the International Peer Reviewed Journals. He is a reviewer and editorial board member of more than 200 International Scholarly Journals and an editor of several books in Bangladesh. He has presented 25-papers in the International Conferences in Bangladesh, UK, South Korea, Turkey, Jamaica, USA, Macedonia, and India. He is a member of MLA, TESOL, ISA, BSA, ACSE, ASTR, ESRA, AARE, EASE, ILA, ASLE, MHRA, ALUS, MLPS, GRDS, ISDS, ISMTE, JDSA, MSA, DLS, GHS, WMSA, ATHRE, IRFELE, Hereditary Genetics, OMICS Publishing Group, AIRS, AHRA, and so on. As a curious researcher, he is always to have devoted himself to scholarly research projects on English literature, language, linguistics, social sciences, and medical sciences, including coronavirus crisis & public health concerns by applying his practical knowledge.

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