

# Ibsen and Costume

*A Case Study of the Rat Wife*

Sahar Ajami



Centre for Ibsen Studies, Faculty of Humanities

UNIVERSITETET I OSLO

May 2014



© Sahar Ajami

Year: 2014

Title: Analysing and Designing the Female Characters' Costume in Ibsen's Plays, A Case Study of the Rat Wife

Author: Sahar Ajami

Publisher: Reprosentralen, Universitetet i Oslo

[\(http://www.duo.uio.no/\)](http://www.duo.uio.no/)



# Abstract

The Rat Wife in *Little Eyolf* is a significant and atypical female character in the development of late nineteenth century theatre. The complexity of this character offers costume designers numerous visual possibilities.

This thesis uses conventional literary research, performance analysis, and a study of the creative design process to explore possible costuming approaches to the construction of the Rat Wife image. It traces the character's roots in folkloric, historical and biographical sources, and applies this knowledge to the creation of the Rat Wife's image. It argues that costume is an essential element in the defining of theatrical personae.

One of the objectives of this study is to analyse and compare the costuming of the Rat Wife and show the diversity of approaches used by designers in multiple international productions. Finally, this thesis contains examples of my own costume designs for the Rat Wife; my aim is to show how practitioners can use scholarly theatre research during the creative process of costume design.

**Keywords:** Ibsen's *Little Eyolf*, the Rat Wife, Costume Design, Appearance Analysis, Performance Analysis,



# Preface

This thesis will remark the end of a very exciting journey which I have started a few years ago and hopefully will be a source of inspiration for future journeys in which I will be able to explore the boundless world of the art. These years of study at the University of Oslo including all the enjoyable events, challenging time, inspiring experiences, acquaintance with knowledgeable people and caring friends, has been a life changing experience.

In addition to the academic aspects of this master program, it has been a great experience in many ways. I would like to use this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those who have helped me and showed interest in my work during my studies at the Centre for Ibsen Studies.

I am sincerely grateful to my supervisor Professor Julie Holledge for allowing me to take a different approach and for supervising me attentively with her comments, advices and word of encouragement in the process of writing this thesis. I also would like to express my immense gratitude to Randi Meyer the librarian at the Ibsen Centre for her most generous help.

On a more personal level, I would like to thank my friends who have motivated me during my study time. I would like to express my immense gratitude to Maryam Faghihimani who has sincerely supported me.

Last, but not least, I am thankful to my mother who always inspires and encourages me and to my father who has supported me.

Sahar Ajami

Oslo, May 2014





# Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>	1
1.1 Background and Context.....		1
1.2 Motivation and Rationale.....		2
1.3 Research Problem and Questions.....		2
1.4 Research Design and Limitations.....		3
1.5 Overview of the Thesis.....		4
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>	5
2.1 Costumes and Society.....		5
2.2 Costumes in Theatre.....		9
2.3 Costumes in Ibsen's Plays.....		11
Chapter 3: The Sources for the Rat Wife's Appearance .....		17
3.1 The Rat Wife in Ibsen's Text.....		17
3.2 Ibsen's Sources for Figuring the Rat Wife.....		21
3.3 The Rat Wife and Black Death in Norway.....		27
3.4 The Rat Wife's Folkloric Sources.....		29
Chapter 4: The Design Approaches to the Rat Wife's Costume .....		31
4.1 The Folkloric Rat Wives.....		32
4.2 The Maternal Rat Wives.....		34
4.3 The Animalistic Rat Wives.....		40
4.4 The Rat Wives as the Image of Death.....		43
4.5 The Young Sexualised Rat Wives.....		47
Chapter 5: New Costume Design for the Rat Wife.....		52
5.1 About the Costume Design.....		53
5.2 The Historical Costume.....		53
5.3 The Colour Palette.....		59
5.4 Personal Design Approach for the Rat Wife's Costume .....		61
Chapter 6: Conclusion .....		71
6.1 Reflection on the Research Questions.....		72
6.2 Reflection on the Research Problem.....		75
6.3 Conclusion.....		76
Bibliography.....		77
Appendix.....		79

# List of Figures

Figure 3.1: .....	18
Figure 3.2:.....	25
Figure 3.3:.....	26
Figure 4.1: .....	33
Figure 4.2: .....	34
Figure 4.3:.....	36
Figure 4.4:.....	37
Figure 4.5: .....	38
Figure 4.6: .....	39
Figure 4.7:.....	40
Figure 4.8:.....	42
Figure 4.9: .....	42
Figure 4.10: .....	43
Figure 4.11:.....	45
Figure 4.12:.....	46
Figure 4.13: .....	47
Figure 4.14: .....	48
Figure 4.15:.....	49
Figure 5.1:.....	54
Figure 5.2: .....	54
Figure 5.3: .....	56
Figure 5.4:.....	57
Figure 5.5:.....	57
Figure 5.6: .....	57
Figure 5.7: .....	58
Figure 5.8:.....	59

Figure 5.9:.....	59
Figure 5.10: .....	60
Figure 5.11: .....	62
Figure 5.12:.....	63
Figure 5.13:.....	64
Figure 5.14: .....	66
Figure 5.15: .....	67
Figure 5.16:.....	69
Figure 5.17: .....	70
Figure 5.18: .....	71
Figure 5.19:.....	71
Figure 5.20.....	71



# Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter aims to elaborate on the topic of this thesis. To clarify the topic, I will briefly review the background and the context of the study, and address its academic and practical relevance. I will review the research questions, the structural design and the limitations of the study.

## 1.1 Background and Context

Ibsen scholars have dedicated significant attention to the literary aspects of his dramas, but they rarely study the visuals in connection with the representation of the characters. John Northam stands out as one of the few scholars who has analysed Ibsen's text from the perspective of set design and characters' appearance in his book *Ibsen's Dramatic Method; a Study of the Prose Dramas* (1953).

Furthermore, in comparison with the numerous articles and studies that conduct close readings of Ibsen's texts, there are limited numbers of studies on the productions of Ibsen's dramas, particularly in connection with costume design. *Global Ibsen: Performing Multiple Modernities* (2011) is one of the few studies in this field in which there are several essays examining costumes, their meaning and function in different productions.

Although the primarily reason for clothing is to cover and protect the body, clothes have carried symbolic meanings throughout history, particularly in the modern era. Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) in his major work *Sartor Resartus* describes clothes as a significant part of the human culture and society, a powerful reflection of social conditions and historical forces. He puts strong emphasis on the significance of clothes as a descriptive narrative of the individuals' personality, and what they stand for in their society, culture and era of human history. He states that society is founded upon clothes. Carlyle theories about clothing are an important source for my thesis, when it comes to analysing the social, individual and cultural aspects of character's costume in Ibsen's text.

Among other sources on costume history, Doreen Yarwood's research on European costume has proved particularly relevant to my study on the Rat Wife's costume in historical context of the nineteenth century.

The costumes in Ibsen's prose plays frequently reference specific colours that give unspoken information about the characters. Moreover, these colours, described by Ibsen in his stage directions signify cultural meanings. "Ibsen has adapted his symbolism to accord with dialogue, plot and character portrayal in the individual plays" (Edwards 33); consequently, understanding this symbolism within costume descriptions is an important aspect of the design process. John Gage study on art, science, and symbolism of colour in different cultures is beneficial for examining colours and its meaning in the Rat Wife's clothing.

Based on the existing literature, my thesis provides a new narrative on the textual analysis of Ibsen's script with regard to the Rat Wife's appearance and Ibsen's possible sources for her image. My study aims to study and compare the Rat Wife's costume in a number of productions in Europe. Studying the Rat Wife's costume in different periods and contexts also uncovers an evolution in the perception of the character. Further, I will provide examples of my costume design renderings for the Rat Wife.

## **1.2 Motivation and Rationale**

Costumes are crucial visual elements in the embodying of dramatic characters in Ibsen's plays. In characterizing the Rat Wife as an atypical female, her costume appearance plays a significant role. Studies focusing on the analysis of the appearance of characters shed light on the meanings that artists or authors try to convey to their audiences. These messages are contained in the silhouettes, colours and the fabrics that the characters wear. Therefore analysing the characters' appearance will enhance our tools of performance analysis.

Because of the lack of existing research on analysing the appearance of characters in Ibsen's plays, this original research contributes to academic knowledge in the field of Ibsen studies.

## **1.3 Research Problem and Questions**

In order to understand the conceptual frame in which Ibsen has designed the Rat Wife's costume, it is important to find the appropriate meanings and symbols that the costume presents. Since that can define the reason that Ibsen chose to costume the character in that specific fashion.

This study focuses on a particular scope which has been stated in the following research problem:

*What is the significance of appearance in characterizing the Rat Wife in Ibsen's Little Eyolf?*

The research questions that I will answer in my thesis are:

1. What elements have had significant impacts on the way that Ibsen costumed the Rat Wife?
2. How have other designers made the costume for the Rat Wife?
3. How can I present my personal approach to design the Rat Wife's costume after analysing the Ibsen's script and other designers' Rat Wife versions?

To answer these questions I will analyse some of the related theories and apply several Ibsen scholars and designer's approaches in a comparative method.

## **1.4 Research Design and Limitations**

First, I will study how the Rat Wife is illustrated in Ibsen's text by examining stage directions and dialogues. Second, I will investigate biographical, historical and folkloric links to the Rat Wife's character and her appearance. Third, I will observe how costume designers visualized the Rat Wife in different productions. Finally, I will apply literary study to the Rat Wife's costuming practice and represent examples of my preliminary sketches and final designs. Within this perspective I will design historical and symbolic costumes for the character.

Due to lack of substantial existing studies on the case of costume, particularly on Ibsen's characters' appearance, this study cannot draw on a long tradition of Ibsen scholarship, but will refer to more general costume theory. In addition, performance analysis critics often have neglected to focus on costume design. Therefore there are not many scholarly articles on costumes that provide a basis for a broad comparative study. Nevertheless, this study can be a valuable source for the future research. It is one of the first steps in analysing costume in Ibsen's plays and provides some groundwork for those who aim at building upon the present study in the future. This research is a small but useful contribution to the ongoing and outstanding project of the National Library of Norway<sup>1</sup> that has built one of the most comprehensive and largest online banks of information on the Ibsen's works. This project was a great source of information for supporting this thesis.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://ibsen.nb.no/>

## **1.5 Overview of the Thesis**

This thesis has 6 chapters. This introduction chapter has described the topic of study, relevance and rationale, research questions, methodology of the study. In chapter 2, I will discuss the background of the research and literature review. Moreover, I will study the Rat Wife in Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* and character's possible sources in chapter 3. In chapter 4, I will look at different costume design approaches of the Rat Wife's costume in several performances of the play. In chapter 5, I will illustrate my personal approach and design for the Rat Wife's costume. In chapter 6, I will have an overview and reflection on what this thesis has tried to achieve and will have a discussion to answer to the research questions.



# Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I will briefly review the existing literature on the field of theatre costume in general. Afterwards I will focus on the costume design in Ibsen's plays and the influential elements that appear in the characters' appearance. To have a better understand about underlying elements that can inspire, influence and shape the designer' mind when designing a costume, we need to look at the social and cultural aspects of clothing in a historical perspective. This chapter will have a brief review about how women clothing has been evolved in the nineteenth century and how different movements had an impact on their costume.

## 2.1 Costumes and Society

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) in his major work *Sartor Resartus* perceives dress as a significant part of the human culture and society, a powerful reflection of social condition and historical forces. In *Sartor Resartus*, he also admits that society is founded upon clothes (59). If he is right(if we agree with his point and assuming that the clothing has such a significant role...), and clothing has such a significant role in representing identities, culture, society and history, Ibsen scholars have not paid – adequate attention to it.

Carlyle states that: “All that mankind does or beholds, is in continual growth...Cast for thy Act, thy World, into-the ever-living” (33). Like Carlyle states, individuals are actors and clothing indicates their roles in the drama of society. This is also true in representing characters in Ibsen's major prose dramas. Ibsen dresses his characters in a specific way to play their given roles. In addition, Carlyle shows the fact of clothing is not comfort but decoration (29). He argues that clothes are more often means for presenting the social, cultural and historical background of the character as well as the personality rather than being used for the sake of character's comfort (Hardy Aiken 102), Similarly, Ibsen has detailed costumes' description in his stage directions which represent much more than decorative ideas for designers. Furthermore, Ibsen uses the same method in his dramas and dresses his characters - to indicate their personalities, social and cultural positions. Carlyle theories about clothing, his clothes philosophy and its relation with society are still - imaginative and modern. \_Therefore, Carlyle fundamental principles of dress theory are an important source

for my thesis, when analysing the social, individual and cultural aspects of characters' costume in Ibsen's Plays.

Ibsen's era of the nineteenth century is a significant period in costume history \_in which great dress reforms -took place, -particularly in women's clothing. Diana Crane, a specialist in the sociology of culture, arts, and media, in her book *Fashion and its Social Agendas*, examines the changes in the fashion history and its relation to social status, class, gender and identity. According to Crane: "Clothing as a form of symbolic communication was enormously important in the nineteenth century, as a means of conveying information about the wearer's social role, social standing and personal character"(100). Moreover, Crane studies the relation between women's social status and their clothing style; she explains that women's lack of power in nineteenth century accounts for their use of fashion as a mean of self-expression (100). Throughout history, clothing has been closely tied to cultural identities, social status and political movements and increased visibility for marginalized groups. Clothing has the power to stoke the fires of revolution and it is observable in the woman clothing and their process of empowerment in Europe and elsewhere. Clothing allows us to express ourselves on an individual level and on a much larger scale, such as the prevailing dress codes of a culture, nation or religion (Pham 390). Therefore social changes in Europe had a significant impact on the everyday clothing of women during this era.

These clothing innovations are illustrated in several of Ibsen's works. Doreen Yarwood, who in her book *European Costume* (1975) studies 4000 years of fashion history in Europe outlines that in nineteenth century, the rapid changes in women's clothing, is remarkable. Moreover, Yarwood compares the transformations in men and women fashion in this period and claims that: "The history of women's fashion in the nineteenth century is totally different from that of the men. While men's styles changed slowly and became steadily more sombre and, towards the end of the century, more informal, ladies' changed even more rapidly as the years passed" (230). Accordingly, Ibsen's era is the time of dramatic innovations in women clothing style while changes in men's fashion are less noticeable. In addition, the women's clothing style, in the first half of the nineteenth century is uncomfortable and decorative further, this luxurious trend continues among the upper class in second half of the century. Yarwood describes 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s in European upper class costume history as "decades of prosperity and luxury; upper class dress evidenced this... the dress of the two sexes acted as a

foil, one to the other. Never can costume have been so over weighted and uncomfortable; yet elegant and impressive, it certainly was” (217).

In the second half of nineteenth century, besides this decorative clothing style another utilitarian clothing style appears in women’s fashion world. There were two completely different clothing styles for women; one was the popular luxurious and uncomfortable style, as opposed to another style, which was simple and comfortable. Diana Crane calls this unusual women’s fashion an alternative style and she argues that: “It was widely worn but has seldom been discussed. This style incorporated items from men's clothing... the alternative style can be understood as a set of signs, borrowed from male clothing and consisting of items that were used separately or together, that subtly changed the overall effect of female clothing”(102). In fact, the nineteenth century appears to have been a turning point in the history of women’s fashion. Obviously, these significant changes in women’s appearance are the result of rapid changes in women’s position and social life. As a matter of fact, the struggle for sexual equality has been reflected on various faces of culture. In the second half of the nineteenth century, this struggles showed itself clearly in the realm of fashion. Jeanette Lauer discusses that how social movements such as feminism which has aimed at empowering women had a strong influence on the clothing style (Lauer 585).

As mentioned earlier, the style of clothing for women associated with modernity came into view in the world of fashion in second half of the nineteen century. Also, a number of Ibsen's heroines are dressed in this modern style in his dramas. In Ibsen’s plays, female characters dressed in luxurious and elaborate costumes appear alongside with female characters clothed in an alternative style. Particularly, in Ibsen’s latest plays women are dressed in radically different costume styles. Hence, the variation of Ibsen’s female characters appearance and their unusual dressing style is a reflection of these major changes in this era of fashion history.

Costumes in Ibsen’s prose plays are frequently pictured by specific colours that give unspoken information about the characters. For example, in *Little Eyolf* the colour of each of the characters’ costumes is described in the stage directions. John Gage, the - art historian scholar, gives special attention to the art, science, and symbolism of colour in *Colour and Meaning* (1999). He reviews the meanings of colours, their -applications, codes and system in different cultures throughout history. Gage states that the same colour or combinations of colours can show antithetical meaning in various time period and cultures (34). In this book,

early and modern colour theories are reviewed. Later, in *Colour and Meaning*, John Gage examines colour and gender theories from eighteenth to twentieth century. Gage also argues that throughout history certain colours have been linked to the moral values. In his book *Colours and Cultures* (1993) he explains that philosophers in nineteenth century argued that "...the meaning of colours was by universal consent and that women were particularly able to respond to their moral connotations" (204). He explores the historiography of colour in the art of these centuries. In his research, Gage reviews major colour theories. He provides readers with an overview of the twentieth-century literature that deals with the historical meaning of colour in their art. Gage dedicated special attention to colour codes within literature. As Gage points out, colour and costume has not been -elaborately analysed by scholars: "Historian of textiles and costume have not yet given much attention to question of colour, and historian of art have so far used costume almost exclusively as an aid to dating. There has indeed been a tendency to treat the handling of colour-composition in painted draperies" (51). It is certainly true that the importance of the colour and its meaning in Ibsen's literature has not been widely debated. This aspect of Ibsen's art particularly with respect to its role in portraying of his -dramatic figures has not been a special focus of critics.

Costume is a remarkable informative visual element in theater. In drama, costume in association with the physicality of the actor, projects significant information about a character's 'social status and life style. Ibsen's art illustrates the nineteen-century Norwegian society. Although Ibsen scholars have dedicated great attention to the social aspects of his dramas, but they rarely have studied the visual details in connection with representing the characters and their position in the society.

In *Dressed to Impress: Looking the Part* (2001) sociologist William J.F. Keenan considers how individuals create their social self through clothing. Keenan considers the impact of society on identity and clothing style, he claims that: "How society 'covers' and leaves its impress upon our individual and corporate identities through dress signs and symbols ... Clothes are society's way of showing where we belong in order of things, our role and position in the social pageantry" (Keenan 4). According to Keenan, society creates identities that are mainly pictured by the clothing styles which make individuals visible in performance as well as on the street. Besides, first visual impressions are crucial, and project information about individual's roles both in communities and in dramas.

## 2.2 Costumes in Theatre

Keir Elam (1980) reviews the history of theater semiotics in *Semiotics of Theater and Drama*. Elam analyses theatrical semiotics, codes and early theories from 1900. In his book, he examines the semiology of theatrical systems and codes-and suggests a new way of reading plays. In addition, he shows how the production of meaning varies in different societies. Elam focuses on the role of costume as a code in theatrical system, and argues that costume may suggest socio economic, psychological or moral characteristics. In *Semiotics of Theater and Drama*, Elam outlines that how visual codes stands for several signifiers. Elam outlines the importance of understanding semiotics in a performance and text - while examining theatrical signs and their definition. Since, Ibsen's text illustrates characters via visual codes, I use Elam's theories within the costume analyses in this thesis to study the system of visual signs creates the Ibsen theatrical text or performance meanings.

In her book *The Semiotic of Theatre* (1992), Erica Fischer-Lichte considers the social signs of clothing and its meanings as a code in different cultural systems. She perceives a character's external appearance and costume as a significant part in the creation of a theatrical portrayal. In addition, she outlines the specific relation between clothing and social position and describes the role of clothes as theatrical costumes and their significance to identify an individual. She states that costumes are a particular system, which can create meanings in drama: "Units of which are formed by material, colour and form. With the help of these units, clothing and costumes can produce a series of different meanings which, however, are related to the identity of the person and/or the character " (86). Hence with the help of these units, it may be possible to establish and stabilize the person's identity. Also, according to Fischer-Lichte clothes which function as protection and decoration are transformed to carry symbolic and metaphoric meaning in theater; costumes function as a specific system to generate meanings in a performance or text. As a significant part of my study, I will rely on Fischer-Lichte statements on costume codes and their various meaning in different cultures in Ibsen's plays performances. Symbolic costumes and their meanings in Ibsen's play are transformed in the global productions of Ibsen's text, observing these cultural developments is important for my study when analysing the costume designs with international performances based on Ibsen's drama.

Aoife Monk, lecturer in theater studies, agrees that costumes play an essential part in performance. In her book *The Actor in Costume* (2010), Monk describes the role of costume in modern theater and shows the importance of costume as an object that has remarkable relation to actor and audience. Monk also outlines the role of costume in modern theater along with the role of actor in presenting theatrical costume on stage. Furthermore, Monk presents the understanding of theatrical embodiment and illustrates how costume shapes theatrical identity and how audiences understand the costume in a performance. In *The Actor in Costume*, Aoife Monk draws on theories by Bert States (1985), Michael Quinn (1990) and David Graver (2003) to study the relationship between actor's body and theatrical costume. She explains that in order to understand the complicated interaction between actors and their costume it is important to study the actors' bodies closely. Monk outlines that in a performance the border between actor and costume is unclear for the spectator. She concludes that audience can access the actor's body through costume and actor's body is connected to the world of performance by costume. (20). Additionally, Author explains various functions of costume: "Some costumes are designed to foreground the performer's work, while other costumes constitute the work, the appearance, abilities and dimensions of the working body are produced and rendered meaningful through costume"(21). Monk also studies the production of performer's body through the act of dressing-up and the changes that take place in theatrical bodies through the application of costumes. Monk argues that the role of the costume is an essential part of actor's inner and outer body and is not just a reflection of character's feeling or a decorative element of the staging. According to Monk, actors' work through costume, and their bodies are also used by costume; the audience observes the costume and actor's body as one entity (33). Her research focuses more on examples from paintings, photographs and performances rather than critiquing other theatrical costume theories.

In *The Cambridge Introduction to Scenography* (2009) Joslin McKinney, lecturer in scenography and Philip Butterworth theater scholar, focus on intention, identity, scope and theories of scenography. They study costume in a relation to the actor's body, text and space, together with the role of audience. In this book, the fundamentals of scenography are introduced through examples and the theories are explained in association with the work of directors, writers, and designers. They explore how theatrical design can produce modern perspective on classical texts, and outline the importance of connection between visual arts and performance in modern theater. They argue that: "Collaboration between designer and

playwright does not always lead to aesthetic fusion; it may lead to a different kind of interaction” (McKinney and Butterworth 83).

They suggest that the stage directions and character description in dramatic text provide portraits of characters’ social, physiological and emotional states. This significant information might eliminate or transform in the process of designing costume as a part of performed text especially in modern performances. According to McKinney and Butterworth, life-like and realistic presentations of scenes and costumes are common in theatrical designs at the end of nineteenth century.(89). For instance, in Ibsen’s text “explicit stage directions” and detailed notes on characters reflect the writer’s ideas about the costume and scenographic designs (McKinney and Butterworth 87). Reviewing scenography and contemporary approaches to classic texts, McKinney and Butterworth conclude that in modern productions the designers do not reflect the playwright’s ideas and stage direction; they produce new perception of the old text by scenography methods (99). They point out the major role of costume has become to improve the theatrical character representation by actor (156). Their work critiques new scenographic forms and the impact of new technology on traditional scenography (McKinney and Butterworth 196).

### **2.3 Costumes in Ibsen’s Plays**

In his plays, Ibsen gives us detailed description of the appearance of characters and their costumes. He visualizes and gives life to the written persona by describing their looks and way of clothing. Moreover, Ibsen illustrates his characters by his comments about their apparel and characterizes them visually. In Ibsen’s dramas, the characters interiority and beliefs are reflected by their external appearance hence costumes have a significance role in projecting a character’s personality. In his dramaturgy, Ibsen also uses costume to illustrate symbols and metaphors. Therefore, costumes not only signify characters’ moods, identities and social positions, but also they have wider meanings . Yet, Ibsen scholars have neglected the role of costumes as an important visual aspect of his theatrical art.

Ibsen’s dramatic world is highly visual. It might be explained by the fact that before he became a theatre director and dramatist, he dreamed of becoming a painter. Ibsen lived in Bergen (1851-57) as resident playwright and a stage director of *Det Norske Theater*. He made costume sketches for some of the productions he directed, including some for his own plays. Michael Meyer in his book *Ibsen: A Biography*, mentions Ibsen’s visual imagination as a

director during his work at the Bergen Theater. Moreover, he outlines Ibsen's special interest and talent in theatrical costumes: "... in advance of his time in his meticulous attention (when the theatre could afford it) to costume detail, all reports agree that he was not good instructor of actors" (106). In 1856, *Det Norske Theater* visited Trondheim local critics described Ibsen's innovative costume designs as "...the actors have abandoned the stiff and unnatural old-fashioned costume" (Meyer 1967:106). Toril Moi in her book *Henrik Ibsen and the Birth of Modernism: Art, Theatre, Philosophy* has done an extensive study on connection between visual arts and Ibsen's aesthetic education. She relates Ibsen's plays to his background as a painter and stage director. In addition, Moi suggest that: "Ibsen's wish to become a painter, his practice of painting, and his lifelong love of art is not just a curious fact about him, but evidence that he placed himself right at the centre of a living, productive aesthetic tradition in which painting and theatre were sister arts"(Moi 125). In - Moi opinion, Ibsen's visual world and attitudes may have been influenced by aesthetic ideals that were familiar to his critics and audience when they first encountered his drama (112). Moreover, Moi studies several Ibsen's plays stage directions and outlines their significant part in the plays. Also, Moi explored how Ibsen's plays scene and character were influenced by visual arts, for example she relates the Irne's looks and costume in Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken* to *The Island of The Dead* (1880) a well-known painting by Swiss symbolist painter Arnold Bucklin. According to Moi: "Ibsen obviously looked at the Island of the dead too, for there are references to the white figure in the painting in the appearance of Irne in Act I of *When We Dead Awaken*... Irne's appearance here is straight from *The Island of the Dead*, which also shows us a stiffly erect figure shrouded in white, with arms crossed high up over the chest... the connection between the sculptor-like immobility of the Bucklin's painting figure and Irne's past as a living sculpture is equally obvious" (137). Therefore, the study of possible sources for character's appearance in Ibsen's plays as well as tracing the connections between characters and Ibsen's visual experiences will be crucial in my study.

In 1953, John Northam, the major Ibsen scholar, analyses Ibsen's text from a new perspective. In his book, *Ibsen's Dramatic Method*, Northam studies stage directions in Ibsen's last twelve plays and earlier drafts. Furthermore, he examines Ibsen's scene appearance and dramatic technique. Northam considers costume as a key to characters in Ibsen plays (23).Northam's study shows that Ibsen presents his characters not only through dialogue but also through the visual details and stage directions. He argues Ibsen's visual suggestions add unspoken information to the characters and drama and should be considered as the vision of his text



(12). In *Ibsen's Dramatic Method*, Northam briefly focuses on costumes and their visual roles and meanings and outlines how using visual codes is as significant as verbal information and dialogues in Ibsen's literature. According to Northam symbols are represented by Ibsen visual suggestions about costume and scenery, he states that costumes represent not only the character outfit as a realistic dress; they also refer to meanings, symbols and metaphors. Therefore, theories established by Northam, who has analysed Ibsen's visual method and scenic aspects of his late plays, will be important in this thesis. Northam claims that in Ibsen's plays, the visual details indicated in the stage directions are as important as the dialogue to illustrate and identify the characters (11). Moreover, he adds " ... in spite of the illustrative actions dealt with above, it may be said that none of them tells us anything that could not be deduced intellectually from the spoken words of the play; on the other hand it is claimed that they emphasize points, present them visually and therefore more cogently than words can"(Northam 19). According to Northam in picturing his characters' appearance, Ibsen "generally conceived of his creatures as bundles of opposite qualities" (Northam 12). In his research on Ibsen's stage directions Northam shows the extreme difference between his major and minor characters by contrasting their looks and dressing style. In my thesis, I will examine visual contrast in a character's costume and focus on its meanings and Northam's theories will present an important support for this part of my study.

In comparison with the numerous articles and studies that conduct close readings of Ibsen's texts, there are limited numbers of studies on the productions of Ibsen's dramas. A significant study in this area is *Global Ibsen: Performing Multiple Modernities*, which was first published in 2011. *Global Ibsen* edited by Erika Fischer-Lichte, Barbara Gronau and Christel Weiler is a recent source that studies the productions of Ibsen's plays. This book is the publication of seventeen essays on Ibsen performances that were presented on Global Ibsen Conference 2006 in Berlin. According to Erika Fischer-Lichte:

There exist countless studies on Ibsen the dramatist and the significance of his plays within different cultures written mainly by literary scholars. However, none of them examine the ways in which they were performed or the impact of such performances on the theatre, social life and politics of these cultures. This is all more surprising when considering that, nowadays (Fischer-Lichte, Gronau and Weiler 1).

In introduction, Fischer-Lichte states that Ibsen's plays rank among the most performed plays in the world. Moreover, she points out that: "the reason that Ibsen's plays are performed

world-wide is that Ibsen's plays address modern society's problems all over the world ... it is evident that the performance of an Ibsen play not only referred to the ongoing process of modernization but also played a major part in advancing it (1, 3). –The content has been divided in 3 parts to address and analyse three plays by Ibsen. In Part I, essays examine the connection between global productions of *A Doll's House* and *Hedda Gabler* and "Women's Liberation Movement". Part II studies "Negotiating Cultural Identity" by analysing different productions of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*. Part III analyses the "Modernization of Society and the Emergence of a New Theatre, by analysing the productions of *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, and *Rosmersholm*. As Fischer-Lichte notes:

The relationship between text and performance is by no means determined solely or primarily by the way in which the text is used and appropriated. Just as or perhaps even more significant are the staging devices... This brief sketch of how performance and text can be related to each other clearly elucidates that a production and its impact in performance can never be appropriately judged by taking recourse to the used text alone. It is the creative use of the main material ... and their combination, synchronization or opposition that constitutes the production (6).

Further, in the introduction Fischer-Lichte outlines that it is crucial to examine the process of "interweaving performance" or theatre cultures in Ibsen performances (6). In several essays in *Global Ibsen*, there is reference to costumes, their meaning and function in different productions as well as investigating the various representations of Ibsen's stage directions. Providing this thesis will be study of costume in different global performances. I aim at analysing how the character is illustrated by the aim of costume in different cultural contexts.

Women in several Ibsen's plays appear in unusual clothing; these women usually arrive unexpectedly and have a significant influence on the dramatic action. This group mainly includes strangers or outsiders who are returning home. - Annegret Heitmann considers that "Arrivals are associated with the anticipation of youth and the future, justice and truth, communication and artistic productivity. This can be triggered off by a character returning home, usually unexpectedly but for all that attended by high expectations. Or it may be marked as a metaphor for a fresh start by new arrivals, who may appear to be strangers or intruders" (23). Moreover, these strangers are dressed in different type of costumes and are visually distinct from other characters because of their unusual clothing. As noted before, these characters are not only different in appearance, they are frequently atypical

personalities. Particularly, atypical female characters that appear in Ibsen's prose plays. In connection with Ibsen's atypical women, Tiina Rosenberg in an article entitled *Against love* published in *Global Ibsen* states that: "In a sense, Ibsen's women embody the very essence of modernity. At the same time and somewhat paradoxically, they come very close to fulfilling the romantic ideals femininity. Ibsen favours two principal types of women: one is sexually challenging, dangerous and demanding, while the other is amiable, pale and "feminine." This structure represents the classic dichotomy of good and bad womanhood" (92).

Among Ibsen's female characters, Lona Hessel in *The Pillars of Society* (1877), Hilda Wangel in *The Master Builder* (1892), and The Rat-Wife in *Little Eyolf* (1894) are notably for their unconventional costumes. In *The Pillars of Society* Lona Hessel returns home from America dressed in a modern or "alternative" clothing style. Other women observe Lona's appearance as very odd: Mrs. Rummel describes her as a "rowdy". From the other characters' perspective, Lona Hessel's in her modern grey travelling costume carrying a carpetbag, is illustrative of the circus woman and the ringmaster's wife with an uncouth appearance (36). According to George Bernard Shaw, Lona Hessel appears as a free woman who has always followed current ideals (Shaw 85). Michael Meyer describes Lona as a robustly returner (with a knapsack on her back) who lets the fresh air into the closed society in Norway (Meyer 433). Lona's characteristics as a modern, independent and free woman and her difference from other members of society are evidently projected in her dressing style.

Hilda Wangel in *The Master Builder* arrives at the Solness house in her hiking clothes. Ibsen describes Hilda's singular costume and appearance in details: "HILDA WANGEL enters from the hall. She is of medium height, supple and well-formed. Slight sunburn. Dressed in hiking clothes, with shortened skirt, sailor blouse open at the throat, and a little sailor hat. She has a knapsack on her back, a plaid in a strap, and a long alpenstock" (Ibsen 1960:800). Here again is a female character dressed in strange clothing: a mixture of sailing and hiking clothes. Ibsen's stage direction presents Hilda Wangel as an atypical figure: "her unconventional life style is signed through this unique and idiosyncratic appearance. "

In *Little Eyolf*, the Rat Wife appears in an old-fashioned floral gown, with a black cloak. The Rat Wife carries a large red umbrella and a black bag held by a loop over her arm. Ibsen's describes her appearance as "a thin little shrunken old woman with grey hair and keen piercing eyes". Of all Ibsen's female characters, the Rat Wife has the most bizarre appearance. Her strange costume pictures her not only as a different, but also as a symbolic or

surreal persona particularly when contrasted with the well-dressed and fashionable Allmers with their -modish house and furniture.

Northam analyses the Rat Wife's costume colours and argues that the black and red colours define ominous shades, in contrast to her weird colourful gown (Northam 189). Errol Durbach also studies the two main colours that embody Rat Wife's figure, he notes that the Rat Wife represents death-infected sexuality and her black and red clothing can symbolize these two aspects of her character (110).

In Ibsen's last plays, visual details play an increasingly significant role. The costumes have their own meanings and functions as clothing, but also reflect the character's personality. In this study, I will concentrate on the Rat Wife's appearance in *Little Eyolf* (1894) as one of the most significant atypical characters in Ibsen's plays. I will study Ibsen's text and stage direction regarding the Rat Wife's costume and -focus on its visual, symbolic and metaphoric aspects. As a part of my study I will trace the character 's roots in the folkloric, historical and biographical sources of Ibsen's own life. Moreover, I will study these possible sources in connection with the representing of the Rat Wife's appearance in a variety of productions to illustrate a clearer image of the character.

An audience's first perception of a character on the stage is through their visual appearance and costume. As mentioned earlier, critics in general have paid less attention to comparative studies of productions based on Ibsen's plays even though works, such as *Little Eyolf*, have been performed globally. In this part of my research I will observe a number of different approaches by designers that create particular interpretive strains. Later I will show how some strains appear frequently in different productions. Therefore, as an important part of my thesis, I will analyse the Rat Wife's costumes in some theatrical productions of Ibsen's plays to picture the development of text through costume in various cultures and through the history. This thesis is a study of a single costume and its contrasting semiology in multiple performances. I will rely on theatre semiotics, colour and texture theories to define the costumes meanings and codes in the drama and on stage. In this research, costumes are studied as an essential part of scenography. I will observe the process of picturing Ibsen's Rat Wife costume as a significant part of performances in different society and cultures. It is important to remind that the importance of appearance in understanding and picturing Ibsen's characters is central to my thesis, which provides a scenography analysis of the Rat Wife's costumes design as a part of visual drama. I will elaborate and trace the meaning and use of

costume to illustrate the Rat Wife's character in Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* through worldwide productions.

According to several reference and arguments among Ibsen scholars, the Rat Wife's costume is crucial to the portrayal of one of the most significant female figures in Ibsen's dramas. In the last part of my work I will thus, illustrate how various aspects of the Rat Wife's figure can be represented visually through clothing. Afterwards, I will present the Rat Wife's costume design ideas and sketches based on my perception of the character. Along with these designs, I will picture the Rat Wife's costume image that is represented in Ibsen's stage directions. The image will be presented in chapter 5.

# Chapter 3: The Sources for the Rat Wife's Appearance

This chapter is a detailed study on the Rat Wife's figure in Ibsen's *Little Eyolf*. First I will analyze the stage directions and dialogues in relation with the Rat Wife and her appearance. Later, I will examine biographical, historical and folkloric sources as the possible inspirations for modeling Ibsen's Rat Wife.

## 3.1 The Rat Wife in Ibsen's Text

Jon Nygaard observes that "from being few, short and rather scanty in his early plays, his stage directions swelled to become long and detailed texts in his modern dramas" (1997:95, *Ibsen and the Drama of Modernity*). Stage directions in Ibsen's modern dramas are detailed. Clearly, Ibsen dedicates special attention to his character's appearance, gesture and costume. John Northam in *Ibsen's Dramatic Method* (1953) confirms that: "A connection between visual detail and character is indicated in a remark by Ibsen (12)". In *Little Eyolf*, Ibsen projects a clear and detailed image of The Rat Wife: "The Rat Wife comes softly and silently in through the door on the right. She is a little, thin, wizened creature, old and grey-haired, with sharp penetrating eyes. She is dressed in an old-fashioned flowered dress with a black hood and cape. She is carrying a large red umbrella, and a black bag hangs by a string from her arm (Ibsen 1977:46)". Ibsen gives detailed scenic information on the significant scene of The Rat Wife's arrival, as he does in his last modern dramas. Before Ibsen gives the reader information about The Rat Wife appearance, he describes her motion as soft and silent. In other words, she -creeps into Allmers residence. Ibsen makes the written character dynamic by describing her movement. Thus, his description of the Rat Wife's looks along with her silent shuffle adds to the animal-like aspect of her character. - His description of *the* Rat Wife's costume creates a picture of a mysterious and bizarre old woman. Among all strange visitors in Ibsen's dramas, The Rat Wife is the most marvellous and intrusive guest to enter one of Ibsen's nineteenth-century bourgeoisie houses.

Ibsen gives great attention to facial features and hair. In *Little Eyolf* he particularly concentrates on characters' eyes -. He describes their eyes in detail. *The Rat Wife* has "sharp penetrating eyes" or "keen, piercing eyes" according to William Archer's translation.

Therefore, she has penetrant and intense look in her eyes that may be a projection of her character, and indicates her power to affect and fascinate others. Her piercing eyes can also refer to the supernatural aspect of the Rat Wife's characteristic. Later in the play when The Rat Wife describes the luring game, Ibsen pictures her eyes as "flashing eyes" (1977:48). The Rat Wife's keen, piercing eyes consider the most macabre part of her look, which is not possible to show on stage.

Ibsen portrays a particularly distinct image - by explaining The Rat Wife's costume in great details. In the English translation of *Little Eyolf* by James Walter- McFarlane, The Rat Wife's outerwear is described as "a black hood and cape" (Ibsen 1977:46). In another authorized English translation by Rolf Fjelde she appears in "a black, hooded cape" (Ibsen 1978:874). This image of The Rat Wife as stated by John Lingard looks exactly like Pesta in Theodor Kittelsen's "somber drawings called *The Black Death*" (227) and is shown in the figure 3.1. The English translations of the text depict The Rat Wife as the fictional character Pesta covered in a long black hooded cape, a scary old woman who looks like the Norwegian angel of death Pesta in her black hood while she is carrying a large red umbrella and bag instead of Pesta's rake and broom.

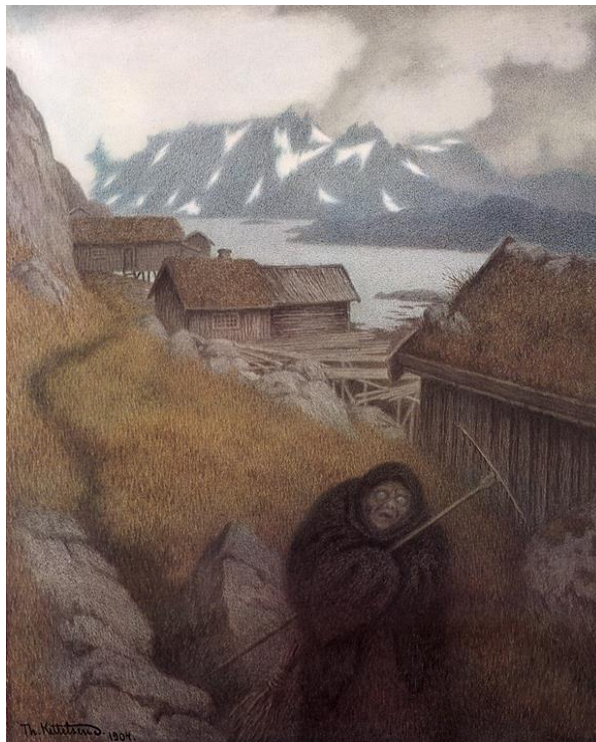


Figure 3.1: Pesta Roams the Land, Theodor Kittelsen , 1904

The Norwegian text does not create a dark image of the Rat Wife, she is wearing “*sort kysehat og saloppe*” (Ibsen: 1894) which is not a hooded cape. According to Norwegian dictionary Norsk Riksmålsordbok (vol.3 1329), a *salopp* is made of black silk or satin and it has long fringe, a *salopp* is short cape and it is made of a light and shiny fabric. The Rat Wife - is wearing a “*kysehat*” which is a type of bonnet that covers ears and neck and ties under the chin with ribbons (Norsk Riksmålsordbok 2826).

The Rat Wife’s cape is made of a light and shiny fabric and it is short, so the cape does not cover her colourful floral patterned gown. *Saloppe* used indoors as morning dress, outdoors as a light summer garment. The picture of an old and little, wizened woman dressed in a black, shiny and short summer cape, on a summer day is not as gothic as depicting her covered in a black long hood and cape. The type of cape or *Saloppe* that *The Rat Wife* is wearing or *Saloppe* was popular in the second half of the 1700's and early 1800's, which indicates that The Rat Wife’s old-fashioned flowered dress is not the only out of date part of her costume; she is dressed in a completely out-of-date style. Her old-fashioned gown and cape may indicate that The Rat Wife is dressed in an outfit from her youth, which may have been first decades of 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Rat Wife’s appearance as described by Ibsen in the Norwegian stage directions represents a peculiar old woman, while the English description of her illustrate a gothic and frightening character which is very close to Kittelsen’s angel of death *Pesta*. In Michael Meyer’s translation the Rat Wife is “Wearing an old-fashioned floral dress, with a black bonnet and a black cloak with tassels” (Ibsen 1980:233), which is closer to Ibsen’s portrayal of her in the stage directions.

When the curtain opens for the first act of *Little Eyolf* we see: “An elegant and richly appointed garden room well furnished with many flowers and plants (Ibsen 1977:39)”. Ibsen depicts a perfect home by his description of the luxurious house. Northam observes that the opening scene of *Little Eyolf* displays softness, comfort and luxury (1953:186,187). The Rat Wife’s strange appearance seems double antithetic when she is surrounded by Allmer’s luxurious artefacts and the young and well-dressed characters. - She is a dramatic contrast to her surroundings. As noted before, Northam claims that Ibsen usually represents his characters by contrary qualities (1953:12). Among Ibsen’s characters, the Rat Wife’s appearance makes one of the most complex scenes. For example, her character has a distinct contrast with young *Rita*, who is good-looking, blond, tall, young and dressed in light colours (Ibsen 1977:39) while, the Rat Wife is shrunken, ugly, short and old fashioned.



Therefore, the Rat Wife by her odd appearance and clothing is a visual distraction. According to Northam “She creates this disturbing effect, and physically disrupts the happy family circle (1973:190)”. So, the Rat Wife’s devastating image is supported by her destructive function later in the play and the images perform as a background for upcoming dramas.

In Ibsen’s stage directions both the Rat Wife and *Eyolf* are described as undersized. The Rat Wife’s shrunken body and *Little Eyolf*’s paralyzed leg and frail look project weakness, sickness and imperfection. These two characters’ fragile and infirm look makes a marked contrast when they appear among other young and healthy characters. In addition, *Little Eyolf*’s costume is “a suit looking rather like a uniform, with gold braid and lion-embossed buttons” (Ibsen 1977:42), *Little Eyolf*’s uniform pictures him as his dream character; a soldier. *Eyolf* is wearing a costume like uniform instead of everyday clothes. The Rat Wife’s old-fashioned clothing may indicate that she is dressed in a costume from her youth, when she was attractive enough to lure her victims without Mopseman’s help. Moreover, *Eyolf*’s and the Rat Wife’s costume depict power, youth and health while their figures show weakness and malady. An old woman in her springtime floral gown and a crippled boy in a soldier’s uniform both indicate the conflict between realities their ideals and desires. In other words, both of them are dressed in contrast with reality in their idealistic costumes.

In the earlier draft of the play the Rat Wife and *Eyolf* both appear in less strange costumes. The Rat Wife is dressed in a mottled old-fashioned gown (Ibsen 1977:109) and there is no specific description of *Eyolf*’s costume in the earlier draft, his appearance is described as “...small, delicate and looks somewhat frail (Ibsen 1977:107)”. This may indicate that *Eyolf* is dressed in ordinary clothing. The changes that Ibsen makes to these characters costumes transform them from realistic characters to atypical characters. Moreover, the Rat Wife’s and *Eyolf*’s inappropriate appearances change them from resemblance of real persons into purely fictional characters.

**The Rat Wife in Dialogues:** The stage direction in combination with the Rat Wife’s own monologues creates a vivid portrait of her personality. Asta introduces the Rat Wife before she appears in the play. Afterwards, Alfred Allmers says that her real name is Wolf, which is even a stranger name for an old woman. Later in the text, *Eyolf* mentions that “she turns into a werewolf by night” (Ibsen 1977:45)”. In the same way, other characters’ remarks about the Rat Wife and her past portraits an uncanny portrait of her, before she enters the Allmers house. Soon the strange old woman asks if she can help the Allmers to get rid of gnawing

things in their house. Then, the Rat Wife begins to fascinate Eyolf by telling stories and explaining her odd job, and she hypnotizes Eyolf with her small black dog Mopseman that appears from the Rat Wife's dark and mysterious bag.

The Rat Wife reveals another side of herself when she describes how she, accompanied by her dog Mopseman, plays the pipe to trap the rats. The story is very similar to the tale of The Pied Piper (Ibsen 1977:48). Later in the text, the Rat Wife tells the story of her sweetheart whom she drowned. Yet, she does not give any clues to why she lured her lover and the story remains unfinished. Moreover, her sudden appearance in and departure as well as her mysterious past creates her bizarre identity.

In act one, shortly after the Rat Wife's departure the other characters show different reactions. Eyolf is obviously fascinated by the Rat Wife and follows her shortly afterwards; "Eyolf slips out unnoticed" (Ibsen 1977:49). On the contrary, *Rita* feels sick and disgusted. Alfred Allmers also admits that she is horrific. Hence, the Rat Wife seen through other characters' eyes is a combination of fearsome, strange and fascinating characteristic. *Rita's* expression indicates that she is repulsed, while *Alfred* and *Eyolf* are fascinated by her. Alfred is also amazed by her stories and admits that: "I can understand something of that compelling power of attraction she talked about" (Ibsen 1977:50). In addition, earlier in the play, she says that she lures men, Northam claims that: "Rita is disgusted by her, but Allmers utters a remark which links him with his son and the dead rats who seek peace in the depth of the sea" (Northam 189). The Rat Wife has more power over her male audience.

### **3.2 Ibsen's Sources for Figuring the Rat Wife**

Are there any biographical links between Kirstine Ploug and the appearance and description of the Rat Wife in *Little Eyolf*?

It is significant that the Rat Wife entry scene is considered as a remarkable scene by theater scholars in nineteenth century drama. The important point about labelling this scene as remarkable by scholars is the fact that this scene is about to present a female character as a unique and significant part of the play, During an era when women were represented as stereotypes and defined through their sexual relationships with men or their role in the family, Ibsen introduced atypical female characters. Ibsen is a major innovator in creating uncommon female characters in his dramas. The Rat Wife in *Little Eyolf* (1894) is the most remarkable

atypical female character in Ibsen's dramas; he takes the Rat Wife out of family relationships and depicts her as an uncanny woman.

Several of Ibsen biographers state that the Rat Wife character is inspired by Kirstine Ploug who lived with Henrik Ibsen's family when he was a young boy. - Other critics claim that the Rat Wife is a symbolic and folkloric fictional character with no connection to Ibsen's childhood memories.

This research studies the links between Ibsen's life and experiences and the figure and description of the Rat Wife. However, little had been written about the Rat Wife character considering her appearance and its connection with real characters and their specifications in Ibsen's life. John Northam studies Ibsen's prose dramas in his book *Ibsen's Dramatic Method*, he analyses visual aspects of the Rat Wife briefly, but he does not focus on the characters' clothing and their possible biographical sources -. In an article titled *The Rat-Wife's Dress* (2006) Margit Sauar studies an old gown which is said to have belonged to Ibsen's Great Aunt Kirstine Ploug. Critics have dedicated great consideration to the Rat Wife character biographical sources in Ibsen's life. However, they have not study her appearance and its possible biographical connections in detail. A biographical perspective helps to gain a clearer image of the links between possible fictional character and a potential real model for shaping the Rat Wife persona. I think this study offers a new perspective of the Rat Wife as a major modern fictional character by -taking into accounts what we know about Ibsen's early life. In this paper I will, discuss what is known about Kirstine Ploug's life and characteristic. I also will investigate Kirstine Ploug's dress and compare it with Ibsen's Rat Wife's gown.

Faster Ploug is often presented as a mysterious figure by Ibsen scholars. Ibsen biographers, for example Robert Ferguson in his book *Henrik Ibsen: A New Biography* (1996), links the Rat Wife's physical form to Faster Ploug who lived with Henrik Ibsen's family when Henrik was a boy (386). Kirstine Catharine Ploug (1760–1837) known as Faster Ploug (faster meaning father's sister) Aunt Ploug was the sister of Johan Andreas Altenburg, Henrik Ibsen's maternal grandfather; he was a wealthy merchant in Skien.

In an article named "*Faster Ploug*": *The Rat Wife, or Merely an Old Aunt?* (2011), Jørgen Haave addresses Ibsen's genealogy , population censuses and church records to provide an image of the Faster Ploug's life and social standing. According to Haave's article, Kirstine Catharine was sent to live with her relatives in Kragerø at the age of 9, after her mother's

death. There she married Claus Plom Ploug who worked as a bookbinder when she was 29. They had four children, three of them survived. Her husband died after 10 years of marriage. The young widow had to sell her properties to repay her husband's debts. After her husband's death, she lived with his wealthy brother Johan Andreas Altenburg (Haave 177). Moreover, Haave mentions Faster Ploug's accommodation at Ibsen's Venstøp: "She reappears in a census from 1835. She is then living with the Ibsen family, but the entry beside her name does not state that she is living on charity, but rather that she is 'deranged' " (177).

A number of Ibsen scholars, for instance Oskar Mosfjeld and Einar Østvedt state that Kirstine Ploug managed a home for sailors and that she became engaged to a mysterious "Captain S". The captain abandoned her and as a result she lost her mind. Thus Kirstine could not look after her children due to insanity. For that reason, Henrik Ibsen's mother at Venstøp took care of her (Mosfjeld 233; Østvedt 96). Haave declares these investigations are more dramatic since they are based on the oral sources not primary sources (Haave 180). Oral information represent a more fictional character and life story by bringing in the Captain S story and Kirstine Ploug affair story, on the contrary written materials show sad but not strange and mysterious life story in that era. Both types of biographies claim that she had a depressing life story and that Aunt Ploug was insane when she was old.

According to Haave biographical research, Kirstine Ploug belonged to upper class of bourgeois society and there is no evidence to indicate that Kirstine had to support herself or was living on charity. In addition, in the early nineteenth century sharing the responsibility for children was usual among the upper classes in Norway (Haave 178-180). Thus the facts that Kirstine Ploug lived with Ibsen's family and gave up her children custody earlier after death of her husband do not mean that she was poor. On the contrary, she had her place in aristocratic class. Considering her social class, possibly she did not have to work in a sailor's home or be connected to a low-level occupation. Therefore, there is no evidence to link her background and occupation to the Rat Wife's mysterious background and profession.

Based on oral sources, Mosfjeld states that Faster Ploug wore strange clothes and went to bed wearing a hat (233). Østvedt also mentions her odd hat and style of dress: "hennes antrekk og opptreden var i høy grad påfallende. Hun gikk gjerne kledd i en fotsid, blomstret kjole, som fremdeles er i behold i Fylkesmuseets Ibsen-samling, og når hun gikk til sengs, tok hun ofte sin digre stråhatt på. Hennes tale var impulsiv, usammenhengende og for virret" (96). According to this, Faster Ploug wore unusual and old fashioned clothes and had an odd way

of speaking and attitude (Sauar 115; Templeton 367). Both the Rat Wife and Kirstine Ploug wear outdated and strange clothes, speak in an odd way and behave in a peculiar manner.

We do not know how Faster Ploug's looked like. However, since Kirstine Ploug's dress is preserved by Telemark Museum, it is possible to compare Faster Ploug's dressing style with the Rat Wife's old-fashioned floral gown.

In 1921 a dress was bought by Telemark Museum which is shown in the figure 3.2. According to the Museum's catalogue: "Empire-style gown, cotton, formerly belonging to (paternal) Great-Aunt Ploug, Ibsen's role model for the Rat-Wife in Little Eyolf" (Sauar 111). Faster Ploug's dress is made of pale yellow cotton fabric with a pattern of small geometric brown hearts. This faded cotton dress is presented at Telemark Museum as the Rat Wife's dress. Great Aunt Ploug's dress is a typical empire style gown (Sauar 112). The Empire style dates from the - late 1790's. Dresses in this style had a high waist and was made of lightweight material. Shades of white and pale pastel colors were popular for daywear; Empire-style dresses were most prevalent in Norway during the first two decades of the nineteenth century (Monet 1-2; Sauar 113). Sauar examines the dress biography in the article "The Rat-Wife's Dress". She claims:

"We do not know exactly when Great-Aunt Ploug wore her dress, but judging by the cut and stich of the gown, it is most likely that we are talking about her last years at Venstøp. Even though the sewn-on bodice is of a more modern cut than the former one, it is nevertheless an Empire gown. The dress must therefore have seemed very old-fashioned to a child around 1840 (113)."

Sauar states that it is possible that Kirstine Ploug used this outdated dress when she was living with the Ibsens. Thus, the old Faster Ploug wore this cotton gown in the late 1830's. The dress may have looked odd on a woman of Kirstine Ploug's social class.. But in the period that she lived with the Ibsens, they had financial problems, the family was forced to sell their major property in Skien and moved to their property at Venstøp, outside of the city. On one hand Ibsen's maternal family and Kirstine Ploug belonged to upper social class but according to costume history the Faster Ploug's dress style(Empire style) and high waist dresses wore by the lower classes until 1830 (Monet 2). Therefore, it is more probable that she wore this dress much earlier than her accommodation with Henrik Ibsen's family.



Figure 3.2: Great-Aunt Ploug's Dress at Venstøp , Telemark Museum

Faster Ploug's way of dressing may have inspired Ibsen to picture the Rat Wife in an outmoded costume. There is no indication of particular style of the Rat Wife's dress in the play; it is described as an old fashioned floral gown. By considering the fact that: "The Empire style at the beginning of the nineteenth century was made of a soft, light weight fabric ... Shades of white predominated, with the addition of pale pastel shades worn for day wear" (Monet). In contrast to Rat Wife's black cape, floral gown and patchy dressing style, the Empire style dress is usually plain and made of pastel and light colour textiles. Thus, it could be concluded that Kirstine Ploug dress style, color and pattern might not drive Ibsen's inspiration when creating the Rat Wife character outfit. As well as Faster Ploug dress pattern displays small brown hearts. Therefore it is a simple pattern with light colors, while the Rat Wife's dress is floral and perhaps colorful. However, Saunar's argues that "It is not inconceivable that Great-Aunt Ploug's outmoded costume has given rise to the role description of the Rat Wife. These casting notes, together with her old-fashioned and symbolically-charged choice of words, reinforce the impression of a very weird old lady" (Saunar 113). Consequently, Aunt Ploug's old-fashioned dressing style may have been instrumental in forming the Rat Wife's outdated Empire style costume.



Figure 3.3: Silhouette Made for the Altenburg Family, Before 1824

Another source that might show the popularity of Empire style years earlier is a silhouette made for Altenburg family by an unknown artist as it has shown in the figure 3.3. The silhouette pictures Henrik Ibsen's family members such as Hedevig Altenburg née Paus (1863-1848) Ibsen's grandmother and Marichen Altenburg (1799-1869), Ibsen's mother. The image is before death of Johan Andreas Altenburg in 1824. As illustrated by this silhouette women are dressed in high waist Empire style gowns. Therefore, Ibsen family image displays the popularity of Empire style in early 1820's among bourgeoisie class in Norway. Then again, Kirstine Ploug appearance and her gown style might prove that she had a very old-fashioned look as an upper class woman in late 1830's.

An earlier draft of *Little Eyolf* illustrates a less strange version of the Rat Wife's costume, to quote from Ibsen stage directions: "MISS VARG comes up the steps to the veranda. She is old and grey-haired has sharp penetrating eyes. A little, thin, wizened creature. Mottled old-fashioned dress. A black hood and a black cape. She is carrying a large red umbrella and on her arm is a black bag" (1977:109). Later, Ibsen changes the dress pattern from mottled pattern in the first complete draft to floral in the final version of the play. As mentioned previously, in the first draft the Rat Wife is represented as Miss Varg or Aunt Ellen then, Ibsen names her Miss Varg who is Rita's aunt and finally, changes her name to Rat Wife a mysterious old woman. Kirstine Ploug dress pattern comprises very small, angular brown hearts if one looks at the fabric closely. However, from a distance the fabric design appears

more similar to mottled pattern, which fits Ibsen's description of the Rat Wife's dress in earlier draft of *Little Eyolf*.

Thus, the description of the Rat Wife in the earlier draft may have connections with Ibsen's great Aunt Ploug. "Aunt Ellen" relation with Allmers' wife's family is parallel to great Aunt Ploug's relation with Ibsen's maternal family. Hence, Kirstine Ploug might possibly be Ibsen's model for the Aunt Ellen character in the earlier drafts. Yet in later stages of writing *Little Eyolf*, Ibsen reduces her connections with the Allmers. Moreover, these notable changes in the Rat Wife's costume as well as the changes in her relation to the Allmers transform her from a real character to a symbolic character. With evidence such as the earlier drafts and Ibsen's writing process may indicate that the author wants to transform the Rat Wife from a familiar figure into an uncanny woman thus eliminating the Rat Wife's potential links with real individuals and recognizable character types.

It has been shown that Henrik Ibsen might have used Faster Ploug or another old woman (rat-catcher) from Skien in his childhood (Haave 186; Weinstein 298) as a point of departure to shape the character in earlier drafts. As explained by Haave: "Very often it is also added that she was the source of inspiration used for the development of the Rat Wife in *Little Eyolf*. This connection is not evident, either in the oral version or in the written sources" (180). To conclude, perhaps Kirstine Ploug's strange attitude and old-fashioned dress was used by Ibsen as a primary model for the Rat Wife figure in the beginning but in the final version, her possible influence on the fictional character is almost removed.

Then again, it is significant to consider that the Rat Wife is a symbolic character who lures her victims: people and rats. Moreover, Ibsen aims to represent the Rat Wife as a symbolic and unreal character in a realistic play by creating such an uncanny woman. Tracing the links of a fictional creature through biographical sources does not illustrate a vivid image of the personage, although it may suggest the Ibsen's creative process and possible materials to create his plays.

### **3.3 The Rat Wife and Black Death in Norway**

As noted in *Norway: a history from the Vikings to our own times* (1998), between 1347 and 1351 most of Europe was infected by bubonic plague or the Black Death. Suggested by latter studies "the population of Europe as a whole could have fallen by 50 per cent in the second



half of the fourteenth century” (Danielsen 89). In Norwegian history, this period divides the high and late Middle Ages. In the summer of 1349, the pandemic Black Death reached Bergen from England (Danielsen 89). A number of Ibsen scholars observe, the Rat Wife personage illustrates death. Durbach comments that black colour of the Rat Wife’s clothing symbolizes death (110). Rita observes the Rat Wife as a horrible old woman who has brought a smell of death into the house (Ibsen 1977:50) and she is connected to Eyolf unexpected death. . Therefore, her function in the play as a fatal woman along with her appearance and black hood and cape remark her character as a symbol of death. Besides, the Rat Wife and her fellow travellers, the rats, may have some roots in Black Death catastrophe as it “usually spread to, and amongst, humans through the bite of the rat flea” (Danielsen 89).

Annegret Heitmann notes that the arrival of unexpected strangers and intruders such as the Rat Wife’s entry in Ibsen’s plays may symbolize a beginning of an event (23). In the same way, is the appearance of the Black Death in Norway which is sudden and disturbing “but in the long term people congregated in those areas offering the best economic opportunities” (90). Similarly is the Rat Wife function in *Little Eyolf*, at first her arrival creates a great crisis however, later it turns to be a new beginning in the Allmers’ life.

According to Ibsen’s stage directions, the dominant colour in the Rat Wife’s clothing is black. Black has a remarkable status in nineteenth century visual culture and arts. John Harvey explains why the plague was called the Black Death:

“The association in fantasy of black with evil is the light side of the profound link that has always been felt between blackness and the most terrible events –also the most terrible acts –which human beings may suffer or do. The Black Death was not called black only because it caused necrosis of the extremities, but because it was –or because it was thought to be –the most evil epidemic of all time (291).”

Thus, the Rat Wife’s fatal function as well as her black costume might have the root in the Black Death and its symbolic representation in visual culture.

### 3.4 The Rat Wife's Folkloric Sources

According to one of Alfred Allmers dialogues, the Rat Wife's real name is Miss Wolf. Eyolf also mentions a story about her: "There might be some truth after all in the story that she turns into a werewolf by night (Ibsen 1977:45). This information forms a supernatural identity for the Rat Wife. Werewolves are humans transforming into wolves during the night. Arnold Weinstein states that Ibsen is attracted to animals in his plays (1990: 293) Weinstein also claims that: "The werewolf adds immeasurably to the prestige and threat of the animal family, for it is an animal that batters onto human blood if it is to live. The werewolf devours in order to live" (299). The Rat Wife's features clearly picture animalistic roots of the character. Her piercing eyes together with her grey hair picture her as a rat as well as a wolf. Also she is said to transform to a wolf during the night. Therefore, her figure is a supernatural character with animalistic origins.

In addition, the Rat Wife has roots in other Scandinavian folkloric creatures; Norwegian Nøkken and Fylgja. Fylgja is a supernatural being or creature, which accompanies a person in connection to their fate or fortune. Fylgja usually appears in the form of an animal, and seeing one's fylgja is an omen of one's impending death. However, when fylgja appears in the form of women, they are then supposedly guardian spirits for people or clans. As mentioned above, the Rat Wife has inhumane identity. Her rat like figure and her appearing just before *Eyolf's* sudden death may indicate that she is the animal form of fylgja. On the other hand, she is an old woman who accompanies Eyolf, who is unwanted in his house to a destiny he had ever wished for along and sweet sleep (Ibsen 1977:49), therefore the Rat Wife projects the animal form of fylgja as well as the woman form of fylgja. The other folkloric character, which can be a source for the Rat Wife, is Norwegian Nøkken. Nøkken is the spirit of water and also a shape shifting being, that appears in human form. Nøkken attracts and lures its victims by playing enchanted music. Nøkken is also the omen for drowning accidents. In my opinion, the Rat Wife character according to her method of attracting and drowning her victims by playing on her pipe is close to Nøkken in Norwegian folklore. Like Nøkken she is connected to Eyolf's accidental drowning.

Another major source for the Rat Wife is the German folkloric character Pied Piper who leads the children away from their homes by playing his musical pipe. The Pied Piper is a symbol of the children's death by plague or catastrophe. Robert Ferguson indicates that "The Rat

Wife, though her functional origin is obviously the Pied Piper of Hamelin” (386). Similarly, Miglena Ivanova portrays her as a “Fair Fierce Woman” she claims that, the characterizations of the Rat Wife suggest “variations of the Pied Piper, a well-known Germanic folk figure, who lured the children of Hamelin away from their homes. According to a popular version of the legend, the Pied Piper led the children into the mountains and to a much happier life. The idea is “to combine Celtic and Germanic folk figure” (Ivanova 150). Furthermore, Weinstein points out that “critics mainly connect the Rat Wife to the Pied Piper folklore or Goethe’s poem” (297). *The Rat Wife* and Pied Piper are both dressed in the colourful, patchy and strange costumes. In addition, both characters have the similar function, method, and victims.

Ibsen himself outlines that although he knew the Pied Piper tale but his main sources for figuring the Rat Wife are similar women from Bergen and Skien:

“I don’t know Goethe’s poem. Of course, I know the tale about Hameln. But what I used as a source was a memory from Skien of a person who was called the “the Rat Wife”. She was also called “Auntie”. [Faster =Father’s sister]. Similar figures were known in other places. There was also a sort of ‘Ratwife’ in Bergen, whom street boys shouted at ... It’s quite possible I took some part of the idea from there ... But, as I said, I distinctly remember the figure from Skien”( *The Oxford Ibsen VIII*: 316).

Clearly, Ibsen’s *Rat Wife* has roots in folkloric and supernatural characters. Likewise, Weinstein outlines, “Ibsen [is] maybe touching here on the common Scandinavian folkloric tradition of the fylgja, or spirit in animal form, but his interests seems, above all, expansive and metaphoric. Hence, the profusion of names and labels endows the Rat Wife with multiple origins, makes her as a representative of multiple realms” (Weinstein 296). As critics such as Arnold Weinstein claim, the Rat Wife is metamorphic character or as stated by several critics a combination of several folktale figures as well as of Ibsen’s own life and experience.

# Chapter 4: The Design Approaches to the Rat Wife's Costume

According to National Library of Norway Repertoire Database, the number of registered productions of Ibsen plays on 3rd of May 2013 shows the number at 9310, of these records 214 belong to worldwide productions of *Little Eyolf*. The earliest production of the play was staged in 1895. *Little Eyolf* is one of the Ibsen's least performed of the later plays; as a consequence there are less scholarly studies of these productions. It is interesting to note that the National Library of Norway database shows that more than 60 of the 214 productions of *Little Eyolf* were produced after 2000. Thus it would appear that *Little Eyolf* has increased in popularity during this century ("Ibsen.nb.no").

Although, like other Ibsen dramas *Little Eyolf* has been staged globally, scholars have shown little critical interest in the work of designers in the re-creations of Ibsen's text. Julie Holledge writes that "There is comparatively little critical scholarship on the work of the designers who have created the fictional worlds of Ibsen's dramas ... Critiques of costume designs are an even greater rarity in Ibsen scholarship than analyses of set designs" (Global Ibsen 82-83), and these few costume design studies are mainly focused on Nora's clothing in *A Doll's House* (1879) which is the most performed Ibsen's play. For example, in *Global Ibsen* scholars such as Errol Durbach analyses Nora's clothing in several productions.

In this chapter, my intention is not to concentrate on costumes from Ibsen's best known or most performed drama, but to explore the significance of the appearance of the Rat Wife. Apart from examining a variety of designers' interpretation of Ibsen's remarkable female character, my focus is to trace the changing image of this character in different cultures and societies. Earlier in this study, I have discussed Rat Wife character at length by analysing character's appearance historical, biographical, symbolic and folkloric sources. In this chapter, -the aim is to look at the diverse methods that designers have applied to visualize Ibsen's Rat Wife.

Due to Rat Wife multifaceted characteristic, costume designers illustrate diverse perception of this figure. For example, numerous critics have argued her character is a symbol of the future while other scholars argue that she is a figure from past that brings to the surface past events

within the present. The Rat Wife has one of the most complex appearance among Ibsen's female figures. In this part of my research I am going to analyze a number of approaches that fall into particular dominant interpretive approaches. Further, I will argue that some of these approaches repeatedly appear in the shaping the Rat Wife's character in designers' creations.

#### 4.1. The Folkloric Rat Wives

John Reid in his observation of the Rat Wife's appearance states that "The semiotics of type description, costume, and props certainly suggest a Grimm/Andersen hybrid: thin, shrivelled, old, grey-haired, deep piercing eyes, black hood and cloak, black bag, and large red umbrella. In production, it is fatal, I think, to lose the stark, mythic bizarreness of her persona"(3). In a number of Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* productions, particularly recently, the Rat Wife is shown as a fairy tale figure. In these works the Rat Wife is portrayed as playful and as a less dark and gloomy character. By highlighting the folkloric aspects of the character designers represent her as a friendlier figure. This folkloric approach in the Rat Wife costume displays her in variations of a more unreal character through a more symbolic approach to costuming.



Figure 4.1: Småscenen at the National Theatre, Bergen, Norway, 2006

In the Norwegian production of *Little Eyolf* performed in Bergen, 2006, the designer Milja Salovaara creates a feminine image of the Rat Wife by costuming her in silky and shiny

textiles. In addition to the Rat Wife's lady-like dress, her tiara and pearl necklaces portray her as a fairy tale princess (see fig. 4.1). The designer's interpretation of the Rat Wife as a fictional figure is not a version of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, which is a potential folkloric source for the Rat Wife; rather she becomes a fake princess. This young princess image along with her vivid makeup colours and red nail polish creates a cartoon-like character. In Victoria H. Meirik version of *Little Eyolf*, the dark elements and colours are completely dropped from the Rat Wife appearance. For example, instead of giving the Rat Wife a scary dog as indicated in the stage directions, here the Rat Wife is carrying a stuffed toy dog. The designer also uses a frizzy and messy hairstyle to suggest that the character is a mad woman. In this production, the Rat Wife has a dark and oversized male cut coat over her silky feminine dress.

Applying dissimilar elements, for instance the light colored silky dress against the dark coat, creates an unusual outlook for the actor. The mixture of feminine and masculine costumes, the actor's age and her hairstyle create a bizarre combination. Therefore, the actor's appearance does represent a bizarre character, which is a significant quality in Ibsen's Rat wife. The design has a male cut large coat over a silken dress, but Merete Armand extremely feminine figure and face dominate to create a feminine and fragile portrait of the Rat Wife.



Figure 4.2: Divadlo v Dlouhé, Prague, Czech Republic, 2013

In Czech production of Ibsen's *Little Eyolf*, the portrayal of Rat Wife as an old woman is eliminated. In Jana Preková's design, The Rat Wife is not represented as Ibsen's old woman in dark costume. In this production, folkloric aspect of the Rat Wife character is strongly

indicated. The designer costumes the Rat Wife in a colourful and patchy costume playing musical instrument that clearly refers to the Pied Piper, which is one of the potential folkloric sources for Ibsen's Rat Wife. Here the Rat Wife is dressed in a colourful costume made of feathers playing a trumpet and can be considered as a modern version of Pied Piper (see fig. 4.2). Together with the colourful clothing, her red shoes, hat and the trumpet, portrait a carnival and musical character. In addition, this design approach visualizes the fascinating and amusing aspects of the Rat Wife, while the makeup and headwear pictures the dark and repulsive sides of her. Therefore, by this type of features she attracts and repulses, which is similar to Rat Wife's function in Ibsen's play. The Pied piper is usually represented in a colourful costume; red is the dominant colour in illustrations of this character. A hat decorated by feather is common in pictures of the Pied piper. Therefore, in Jana Preková creation the Rat Wife is visually close to a possible folkloric source; the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

The actress pale face and dark makeup displays the gothic and dark aspect of the personage. Jana Preková creations of Rat Wife as a mixture of different elements like gothic, carnival and folkloric shapes a strange and mysterious character. Moreover, the combination of Rat Wife's gothic makeup and her colourful carnival like costume creates a bizarre outlook

In addition, Rat Wife's outlook seems even stranger when she appears in her exotic carnival costume in a middle class family living room. The other characters costumes are not ordinary everyday clothing, but the Rat Wife's exaggerated costume is distinguished on stage by its style and vivid colours. The costume designer Jana Preková visualizes the Rat Wife's clothing by similar colour palette as in Ibsen's stage directions, which is mainly a combination of black and red. However, the balance between colours is different in her version. Unlike Ibsen's Rat Wife costume, here the dominant colour is red.

## **4.2. The Maternal Rat Wives**

Ibsen scholars for example James E.Kerans confirm that the Rat Wife is related to motherhood (197). Therefore, costume designers in both early and late representations of *Little Eyolf* have concentrated on the maternal quality as one of the significant elements in forming of her complex characteristic. For instance, In Tavistock Repertory Company production of *Little Eyolf* directed by Carol Allen in Tower Theatre, London (1973), the visualization of Rat wife is shifted from the common dark, mysterious old woman to a

grandmother. The figure 4.3 shows a photo of the production in which the actress is dressed in old clothing made of cheap patterned textiles. The long black hood, which is common in earlier productions, is replaced by an old and short shoulder shawl that illustrates the character's appearance in a less appalling and bizarre manner. In this production the Rat Wife's dark characteristic is eliminated from her appearance. On one hand, her outfit represents an ordinary old woman dressed in old clothing, and on the other hand her fingerless mittens could infer the animal aspect of character as the rat woman. In Tower Theatre production, costume designer, by applying lighter colors and patterned textile instead of the Rat Wife dark outer wear, suggests an ordinary grandmother. As the actress is dressed in worn out and simple clothing, her appearance indicates that her social class is different with Allmers and suggests that she is an outsider. Here the designer Jay Dyer perception of the Rat Wife as a grandmother is very strong and removes other qualities of the character particularly, the shadowy sides.



Figure 4.3: Barbara Waddell as Rat Wife, Tower Theater, London 1973

In *Klein Eyolf* (2007-2010) the German production of *Little Eyolf* directed by Thomas Langhoff the actors appear in contemporary clothing in a bourgeois interior and setting (see fig. 4.4). The Allmers family appears as a sensible middle class family while, the Rat Wife is dressed in old fashioned and worn-out clothes. Again, the old style of Rat Wife's costume visually displays the social class difference between her and the bourgeois Allmers and, portrays her as an outsider.





Figure 4.4: Thomas Langhoff production, Germany, 2007-2010

Costume designer Stefan Hageneier, drops the gothic aspects of the Rat Wife appearance in his work but keeps a few threads such as class difference and weirdness. In addition to the character outmoded dirty and ragged dress, her odd hairstyle has the major role in portraying her as an insane old woman. Thomas Langhoff's Rat Wife stands out among the well-dressed Allmers in their bourgeois setting.

In this production the Rat Wife is dressed in a mottled textile pattern which is very close to Ibsen's description of her costume in earlier drafts: "MISS VARG comes up the steps to the veranda. She is old and grey-haired has sharp penetrating eyes. A little, thin, wizened creature. Mottled old-fashioned dress" (1977:109). Instead of the Rat Wife's black outfit and red umbrella here the costuming of the Rat Wife in warm and earth tone colours with the mottled pattern of the dress reduces the uncanny aspects of the character. Here by eliminating the dark colours and the unusual hairstyle makes Rat Wife more like a comic crazy grandmother.

In *Drenkeldode naar Kleine Eyolf* one of the recent productions of *Little Eyolf* in the Netherlands (2008), the costume designer Bernadette Corstens, creates a contemporary image of Rat Wife or the Rat Lady (see fig. 4.5). This Rat Wife contrasts with the representation of the Rat Wife as an odd old woman from worker-class in Ibsen's text. In this work, Beppie Melissen dressed in her stylish clothes, projects a new image of the Rat Wife as a well-

dressed woman. Unlike the Ibsen's old Rat Wife, in this production the character is bright and delightfully dressed in fashionable clothes.



Figure 4.5: Opera O.T, Netherlands, 2009

Although, the designer exhibits a brand-new portrait of the Rat Wife, her main characteristic as an outsider is kept by contrasting her sophisticated clothing style with the modern relaxed setting and with the Allmers family less conservative clothing style. Unlike the common portrayal of the character here, the designer portrays a different image of Rat Wife who is sensible and well dressed. Her conservative costume is in sharp contrast with Rita's more vulgar and bizarre costume. Bernadette Corstens's Rat Wife appears as a young grandmother. Her costume still represents the maternal but also a wise persona.

Jermyn Street production of *Little Eyolf* (2011) represents a more conventional grandmother image of the Rat Wife. As shown by production's picture (see fig. 4.6), the Rat Wife follows Ibsen's stage direction and description of her appearance. Fabrice Serafino's costume dresses the actress in a black gown and cloak with tassels. She is also wearing a bonnet that covers



Figure 4.6: Jermyn Street production, London, 2011.

her ears and neck and ties under the chin with ribbon. This production is based on Michael Meyer's translation of Ibsen's text. Particularly, the Rat Wife costume follows the Meyer translation faithfully. Unlike, the majority productions of *Little Eyolf* here the Rat Wife's appears with her red large umbrella. Fabrice Serafino costume design for Rat Wife character references the first half of nineteenth-century European costume history and looks outmoded in comparison with Rita and Asta's late nineteenth century gowns. The Rat Wife's appearance creates a contrast on the stage as she is dressed in layers of black clothes made of thick textiles, while the other actors are wearing colourful and light summer clothing. Doreen Mantle as Rat Wife is completely dressed in winter clothes and is wearing gloves while the other characters wear light summer clothing. This suggests that she is a traveller as well as a mysterious and strange figure.

Black is the dominant colour in this costume that pictures the gothic and fatal aspects of this figure. However, Doreen Mantle friendly facial features are more dominant in characterizing the Rat Wife as a maternal figure. In addition, costuming the Rat Wife fully in dark colours, carrying a large red umbrella and stuffed toy dog in a bag, illustrates a comic character in Jermyn Street production. Thus, the Rat Wife appearance represents primarily motherhood quality along with secondary traits such as grief, death and humour.

In a performance of *Little Eyolf* at Brigham Young University (2012), Director Barta Heiner, figures the Rat Wife a friendly young woman (see fig. 4.7). Playing the Rat Wife as a young



woman is far from Ibsen's text. But the designer still uses several significant elements in the costume design to shape the character.



Figure 4.7: BYU's Margetts Theater, United States. 2012

Costume designer, Deanne DeWitt produces characters' detailed clothing based on the Victorian era. The social class of the characters is clear. The elegant detail of Rita's stylish dress is in sharp contrast to the Rat Wife's worn out, old fashioned and cheap outfit. Yet, on the other hand, the colour palette of both women's costume, which is a combination of rusty and warm colours, remains similar. This could refer to the concept that Ibsen intended Rita and the Rat Wife as two sides of the same coin, as is argued by some critics including Stephen S. Stanton:

“If Asta and the Rat Wife are circumstantially similar, Rita's relationship to the old woman is that of an obverse twin. While she radiates an open, benign, and lovely appearance, her troll - Rita's antipodal opposite - reflects the hidden, sinister, and loathsome depths. In manner and speech they are dissonant. The Rat Wife is Rita transformed into an animal” (569).

This production seems to support Barry Jacobs' perception of the Rat Wife as “distortion of Rita herself” (606).

Along with her old and patchy clothing style, her strange hairstyle contributes to her strange appearance. This unusual hairstyle decorated with feathers and furs has signifies that the Rat

Wife is an outsider among the other female characters with their Victorian fashionable hair styles. Instead of Ibsen's text Rat Wife's costume dark colours, designer Deanne DeWitt projects a friendlier image of the Rat Wife dressed in warm colour shades clothing. A colour has a significant function in shaping the Rat Wife characteristic here; applying warm colours and tones symbolizes a new vision of her. Unlike Ibsen's text even her hair colour, large bag and dog are illustrated in warm and earthy colours instead of shades of red, grey and black.

In this production, the animalistic trait as one of the multiple origins of the Rat Wife is shown by the fingerless gloves that suggest the Rat Wife is in fact a rat-woman. The appearance of the Rat Wife mainly illustrates a mysterious visitor and an outsider from worker class. Jennifer Chandler portraying the Rat Wife face and figure dressed in warm colour costume clearly pictures maternal and appealing portrayal of the character.

### **4. 3. The Animalistic Rat Wives**

In *El petit Eiolf* (2011) the Spanish production of *Little Eyolf* staged in Barcelona, the Rat Wife appears in dark shades that represent her mystical and fatal characteristic (see fig. 4.8). The photograph of the performance shows the actress Jesusa Andany dressed in leather and fur that identify her as a supernatural creature. The Rat Wife dressed in grey fur represents her as a werewolf similar to the earlier drafts of the drama. In addition to her wolf like outfit, the designer Miriam Compte portrays her as the Rat woman by using fingerless gloves as an element that visually suggests the image of the rat in popular culture. Thus, the animalistic quality of the character is the strongest element represented by costume designer. In this production, the style of the costume is in contrast with the Rat Wife's gender. Costuming the actress in old, patchy and oversized male cut clothing and hat illustrates a bizarre figure. On one hand applying dark colours, leather and fur in the Rat Wife's costume displays the gothic side of the character on the other hand the impact of these gothic features are eliminated by her oversized outfit and hairstyle. In this performance again, the features such as fingerless gloves, mad-witch hairstyle in addition to cross-dressing reinterpret the Rat Wife on the stage. The strongest trait in the Rat Wife look that represents the strangeness of the character is the cross-dressing which could be said to indicate her male dominated job. Further, costuming her in male clothing adds some comic aspect to the character and reduces the macabre quality of the Rat Wife's personality.



Figure 4.8: Sala Beckett, Spain, 2011

The pictures of staging *O Pequeno Eyolf* (2004), shows a different visualization of Ibsen's Rat Wife. Here, the male actor, João Vitti, performs the Rat Wife's role. Portrayal of the character as a young man dressing in strange female clothing creates a curious image of the character (see fig. 4.9).



Figure 4.9: Teatro do Centro Cultural da Justiça Federal, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil , 2004

In this production, the actor is dressed in layers of black long costume, wearing a short black hooded cape and a black hat over it. The dark colours of the clothing are based on Ibsen's stage directions and display the character's dark and fatal qualities.

Another trait in designing this costume is the suggestion of an uncanny or disturbing character through the combination of an unrealistic and oversized costume. The Rat Wife in Paulo de Moraes work appears in dark, old and peculiar clothing while other characters are dressed in brighter contemporary clothing. Moreover, the contrast in costuming the Rat Wife's and Allmers visualizes her as an uncanny and outsider.

Here again, in *O Pequeno Eyolf* the unusual clothing style together with, cross-dressing portrays a mad figure. Furthermore, in Brazilian production of Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* the image of the Rat Wife is represented by this costume as a mixture of gothic, crazy and uncanny qualities.



Figure 4.10: Théâtre National du Luxembourg, 2011

In Théâtre National du Luxembourg production, Ibsen's Rat Wife is portrayed as a man dressed in old and shrunken clothes (see fig. 4.10). The production photos show the actor dressed in a worn-out long coat and short pants wearing fingerless gloves and a ragged hat. By applying shades of grey to the character's costume, it visualizes him as a rat. In addition, the body language of the actor mimicking a rat together with the fingerless gloves creates a recognizable image of the animal for this production.

Another vibrant trait in costuming the Rat wife is to characterize her as an insane figure by strange, patchy and old clothing style. Moreover, actor's shrunken and tight outfit signify the character as comic one and reduce the gothic aspect of Ibsen's Rat Wife. In addition, the Rat Wife costume style obviously shows the social class difference between the rat man and Allmers family.

#### **4. 4. The Rat Wives as the Images of Death**

In Western visual arts and literature the Angel of death is represented in a black costume, usually a dark and long hood and cape. Figures dressed in dark outfits are symbolically linked to death and Ibsen scholars have interpreted the Rat Wife in this way. Kerans observes her as a "bewitching" women from the mountains of death (199). Similarly, Anstine describes her as "a being with some of one's own characteristics whom one would meet shortly before one's death" (232).

Concerning the Rat Wife's bizarre appearance Durbach declares:

"Whatever else she might incarnate in her macabre appearance, the old Rat Wife manifests more powerfully than any other of Ibsen's strange visitors the nature of death-infected sexuality – its seductive charm, and its dangers. Ibsen calls her *Rottejomfruen* – the Rat Virgin – an almost impressionistic, Munch-like amalgam of woman as goddess and crone, a young- old emblem of love and death in part defined by the red and black of her clothing. She charms and attracts, like the horrible – beautiful dog in her bag, compelling her beloved victims to yield to what they most resist (110-111)."

When costume designers focus on the dark aspect of Rat Wife, they mainly focus on these symbolic associations of death by dressing her in a black costume. They emphasize on worn out long black dresses, hoods and hats. The actresses often have grey hair, and represent a scary, distressed and dull woman.





Figure 4.11: The Daily Telegraph, 24 November 1896

In one of the earliest staging of the play, the British stage production of *Little Eyolf* in November 1896, Mrs. Patrick Campbell (1865–1940) the famous English stage actress played the role of the Rat-Wife. Clement Scott (1841–1904) the Daily Telegraph theatre critic describes Patrick Campbell’s performance as: “...the impressive and admirable Rat Wife of Mrs. Patrick Campbell — a very little bit, it is true, but as good as could be so far as it went? It was not Mrs. Patrick Campbell’s fault that the part suggested the old doubled-up witch in the pantomime ...” (*The Daily Telegraph*, 24 November 1896). Scott’s review of the Rat Wife’s costume shows that it was unprecedented for an actress, especially a major one, to appear in rags and an old-fashioned costume in late nineteenth century. Therefore this Rat Wife costume can be considered as innovative and atypical. In the production photograph published in the Illustrated London News dated 28<sup>th</sup> of November 1896(see fig. 4.11), Mrs. Campbell is a shrunken old woman dressed in a long black hood and cape: a symbolic image of death.

In the Dutch production of *Little Eyolf* staged in 1923, the actress Esther de Boer-van Rijk appears in similar costume of a black and ragged hood and hat (see fig. 4.12).

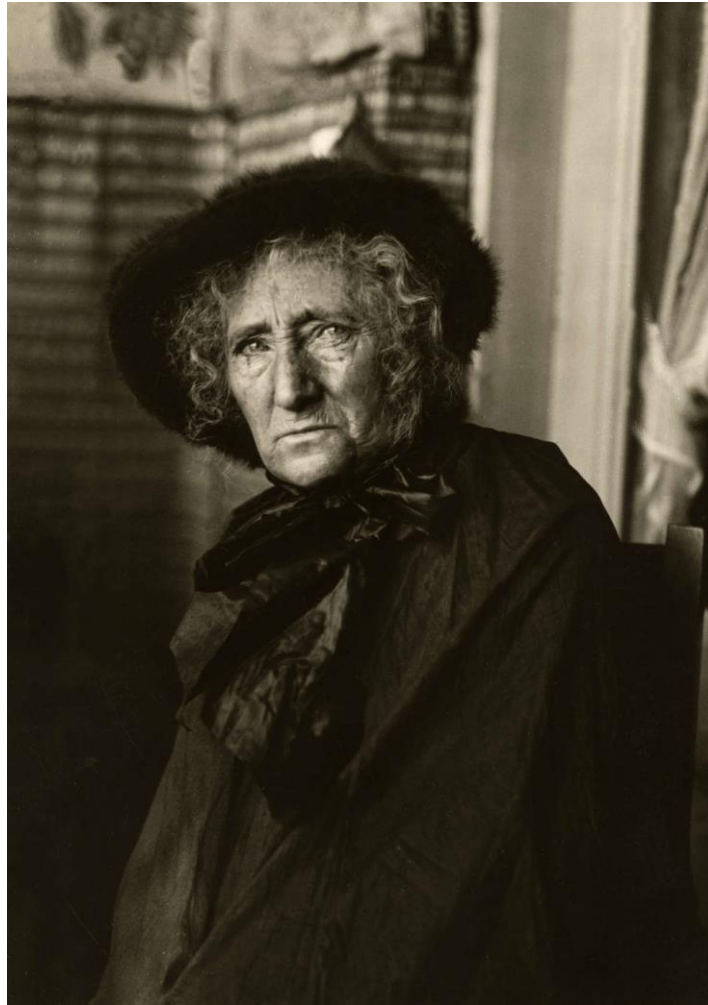


Figure 4.12: Esther de Boer-van Rijk, Netherland, 1923

Here again the costume designer shows the dark aspect of Rat Wife's character as the symbol of death. In this production the Rat Wife's outfit is closer to Ibsen's original text with a separate hood and cloak, whereas the British production used a hooded cape. Here, the hairstyle functions as a symbol that embodies a bewitched figure by its frizzy texture and style.

In the images of *Little Eyolf* from early performances, the Rat Wife is mainly illustrated in realistic costumes with the focus on the dark and deadly aspects of the character. She is a strange and scary old woman dressed in a long and dark outfit that highlights her black hood and hat. The other visual elements in her clothing such as the colourful flowered gown and large red umbrella have been eliminated.



Figure 4.13: Perpignan, France, 2013

In the recent French production of *Little Eyolf* (2013) the costume designer; Catherine Sardi references an element of the death portrait of the Rat Wife, but through the use of contemporary fashion for gothic imagery (see fig. 4.13). All the characters are dressed in casual and simple costumes using a combination of light and pastel colors, except the Rat Wife who is in a combination of black, deep purple and bright red. Moreover, The Rat Wife colorful and decorated appearance is contrasted with the simple and minimalist set design and its white furniture.

In Ibsen's text, the Rat Wife is wearing a floral gown under her black cape, but in this production the floral motif is represented by the- knitted flowers and lace around the neck. The red knitted flowers attract attention to the actor's face and add to the dark, gothic element of her clothing that represent the dark and fatal aspects of the character. Her costume is dramatically different to the other characters' simple and casual everyday clothing; this is particularly the case with regard to Rita who is dressed in pastel pink pajamas.

Catherine Sardi's design is a combination of antithetic styles and elements. The actor's long dark hair together with black lace and knitted flowers around her neck and the simple cut of dress, combines a dark gothic element with a colourful hippie style. This mixture of contrary elements and colors contrasts with the sensible middle class family. The high forehead and hairline of the actor is unusual in a woman, it could be the receding hairline of an older man.

By emphasizing this hairline, the actor's face takes on a masculine feature and when combined with the roses, creates a bizarre look. The face is focused by the costume, and plays a major role in characterizing the gothic and uncanny appearance.

#### 4. 5. The Young Sexualised Rat Wives



Figure 4.14: Edinburgh Fringe Festival, 2011

Ibsen's Rat Wife is a combination of contrary qualities in her function as well as, in her appearance. She enchants Eyolf and Alfred Allmers in like manner that she attracts her victims. As the Rat Wife says in her youth, she was attractive enough to lure people and "One in particular" without her black dog Mopseman's help (Ibsen 1977:49). According to Holtan "The little boy Eyolf is both fascinated and frightened by her. When she leaves he follows her down to the dock to watch her row away, becomes dizzy, falls in the water and drowns." (117). Thus, attraction is a significant feature of her function as a human-rat catcher.

Contemporary designers have begun to costume the Rat Wife in ways that emphasize her sexual feminine qualities. When the dominant feature of the Rat Wife is being a seducer, she is transformed into an image of beauty and youth. In the *Little Eyolf* directed by Julianne Just for the Edinburgh Fringe Festival (2011), the Rat Wife is an attractive young woman (see fig. 4.14).



Costume designer Asta Hostetter, creates new interpretation of Ibsen's character, clothing her in a fur trooper hat and fur stole embodying her occupation as a hunter, or the modern image of the rat catcher. The costume is a combination of feminine and masculine elements. For example, men's winter vest and combat boots, along with black fishnet tights and women's shorts. Genevieve Gearhart as the Rat wife appears with red lipstick and strong makeup to project a seductive female figure.

In this production the Rat Wife's identity as an outsider is made visible by her different clothing style. Her hunting-like outfit, flannel shirt and fur accessories link her to the wilderness, while the clothing of the Allmer family epitomises a domestic life. If Ibsen's Rat Wife is connected to the fjords, this interpretation places the origins of the character in the mountains and forests.

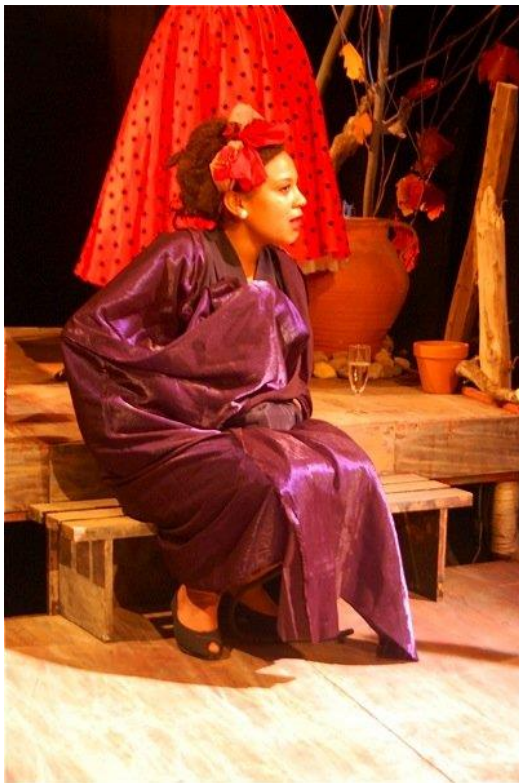


Figure 4.15: Linbury Studio, London, 2009

Another version of the young, sexualized, the Rat Wife can be found in the production developed by Norwegian director Ragnhild Lund which was performed in London at the Linbury Studio (2009). This is another example of a new version of Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* set in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

In Fi Russell costume design, the Rat Wife is a young woman dressed in contemporary clothing (see fig. 4.15). In contrast to Ibsen's description of an old woman dressed in out dated costume carrying a frightening dog, in this interpretation she is a well dressed woman with all the fashionable accessories of the period. The characters are all dressed in the style of the 1940s. For the female characters, this is interpreted in the manner of the New Look that was introduced to fashion world in 1947 by Christian Dior. This New Look emphasized luxury and extremely femininity (Dolores Monet, Fashion History - Women's Clothing of the 1950's). There is no social class signified through a difference between the Rat Wife and the Allmers family, as they all dressed in equally fashionable clothes. In Ragnhild Lund production the only signification of the outsider status of the Rat Wife is the casting of the actress Eleanor Fanyinka. She is the only Black English actress in the otherwise White English cast. The one aspect of the costume that is faithful to Ibsen image of the Rat Wife is the use of the colours red and black. In this production, the Rat Wife is a charming stranger who attracts and lures. The black of her dress and stockings are associated more with eroticism than death, but according to Harvey this "erotic black ....relates to the danger-loving side of sexuality perhaps ultimately to the dream, mixed in with a death wish" (Harvey 268).

These two theatrical representations of the Rat Wife as a sexualized young woman could be said to be a reinterpretation of the animalistic elements in the character. Critics have argued that the Rat Wife is a troll and symbolizes bestial traits of human in Nordic folklore, and as mentioned before, Ibsen scholars like Stephen S. Stanton suggest that the Rat Wife is Rita's troll or Rita transfigured into an animal (569). These costumes that project the seductive lure of the character could be interpreted as attributing a dangerous natural force to female sexuality.

This chapter has provided examples of costume designs for the Rat Wife drawn from different theatrical productions of *Little Eyolf*. The Rat Wife is a complex character, and costume designers have created very different images to represent her appearance. However there are some common themes in the designs: folkloric, maternal, animalistic, sexualized and symbols of death.

Designers have constantly invented new look for the character costuming her in an extraordinary diversity of garments. There is a broad spectrum of approaches. With regard to gender, the animalistic representations tend to use masculine imagery and costume styles,

whereas the maternal and sexualized imagery use feminine costume styles. Some designers draw directly on Ibsen's stage direction to create realistic period costumes, while others bring the symbolic qualities of the character to the surface and create unrealistic and mythical looks for the Rat Wife. In addition, it is possible to trace the transformation from a terrifying old woman to a sexualized young woman in the production history of the play.

Despite these wide differences in interpretation, there are certain elements that cross over the dominant interpretative strains. These include the decision to encode class difference through costume, the use of images of witches and wicked women popular at the time of the production, and the use of hairstyle, particularly to communicate wickedness or madness. One fascinating element that frequently appears in the designs is the fingerless gloves. They appear not only in the portrayal of the character as an animal where the fingerless gloves are metaphoric for the paws of the rat, but also in costume designs for maternal figures and in some of the folkloric images.

Applying the black colour to costuming is one of the most common features in the designers' creations. Black can be found in the animal, death and sexualized versions of the character. In nineteenth century visual culture "Death was also a large fact in the art, and fiction, of the time... in painting too, death was popular, and was the centerpiece of the popular genre of history painting (Harvey 246)." Additionally, black as the symbol of death "used to mark, mainly, the terrifying realms that lay outside human life" (7). In the early productions the *Little Eyolf*, black reflects the nineteenth symbol of death, but in contemporary productions black also represents "the demonic- sexy 'femme fatale'" which Harvey suggests that is-linked to older black form of demonized woman (Harvey 268). This appears to be the case in the black costume that displays erotic traits in the recent productions where the Rat Wife is portrayed as a sexualized young woman. This study illustrates how the dominant reading of a colour can change through theatre history.

Virtually all the designs considered in this chapter, the Rat Wife functions as an outsider. In the early realistic production, this is achieved through highlighting the differences in social class, but there are numerous ways in contemporary productions of creating her as the Other or as a stranger. In the earlier part of the production history of the play, the designers' use of historical period is common. This approach embodies more realistic and less symbolic figures. In contrast, in recent adaptations of Ibsen's text, designers add new traits to Ibsen's Rat Wife. These new creations are considerably freer in adapting and visualizing innovative

appearances. It is significant that the social perceptions of the Rat Wife character are transformed by changing social norms in different eras. Yet these dissimilar theatrical visualizations continue to picture the character as an atypical woman within each of these social contexts. These changing social values demonstrate that the reading of Rat Wife character has been capable of transforming from a dark, old and disturbing figure to an enticing, young, attractive or even comic figure in 21<sup>st</sup> Century productions.

Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* as the literary source for the Rat Wife character offers designers endless visual possibilities, particularly if the character is treated in an allegorical way. The final part of this study shifts from an analysis of previous productions, to my own experiments in the creation of the costume designs for the Rat Wife. It will be presented in next the chapter.



# Chapter 5: New Costume Design for the Rat Wife

Design processes are essential in the creative world. Documenting costume design procedures to visualize the dramatic character is important; however, limited work has been focused on this area. It is important to articulate the process involved in costume design, as this documentation can provide a better understanding of the relationship between the costume and character analysis. Moreover, it elevates the place of costume design research as a major part of theater. This study will show the connection between literary research and design research. Further, it demonstrates the use of critical work in theater design. This can be a useful source for researchers who are not practitioners, as well as directors and designers. Thus this work can be relevant for both the literary and the theater world.

The aim of this chapter is to study and analyze the process of costume design for the Rat Wife in Ibsen's late play *Little Eyolf*. In this part of my thesis, I will begin with the visual research to address the Rat Wife as she is presented in Ibsen's text, according to the historical period of the play. The second half of the chapter contains a study about the costume of the Rat Wife as a symbolic character. This chapter documents the creative process and cites design sources. In short, this part of the thesis elaborates the visual processes involved in creating a costume for the Rat Wife.

Earlier in this thesis I analysed Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* script, the textual analysis in the chapter two has provided a background and information for my costume design work. In addition, in chapter three, I studied several directors and designers approaches in staging the Rat Wife that can be useful for creating new versions and methods for costuming the Rat Wife. This chapter uses this provided research material to arrive at a design concept. It applies literary study to a costuming practice and gives examples of the preliminary sketches and the final designs. I will use visual documentations to illustrate the various phases of the process of creating a Rat Wife costume design. The literary research is particularly useful to assist the interpretation of the Rat Wife personality and her function in the script. I have also made an attempt to design a Rat Wife Costume based on Iranian folk culture. The main objective for designing this costume is to include cultural and folkloric elements into the design in a way that would represent part of Iranian society and its influence in the Rat Wife's costume.

## 5.1 About the Costume Design

The main purpose of designing a costume is to create clothing and accessories that illustrate a specific character and reflect the characteristic based on the literary source. In this paper, the term costume will refer to the clothing and overall appearance created for theatrical and performances including the hairstyle and make-up. Elam explains that costume is an icon that functions as clothing for theatrical figure and indicates the character's social position or profession (16). A successful design for the Rat Wife's character should aim at visualising her personality, her social status, and her role in the play.

## 5.2 The Historical Costume

This section of my study discusses the period costume design for the Rat Wife and is based on observation of the fashion history in the mid to late nineteenth century. I will use Doreen Yarwood book *European costume: 4000 years of fashion* as a key source, this book contains descriptions of fashion developments in Europe and detailed illustrations of original costumes. Other useful sources are photographs, paintings, illustrations and costume silhouettes of the nineteenth century.

I will costume the Rat Wife in the historical clothing and try to illustrate a faithful image of figure in Ibsen's text. I will keep to a realistic style with the costume, and period costume will represent my historical research inspiration. Textual analyses along with other visual sources provide the information and inspiration for this Rat Wife's historical costume design. Ibsen's stage directions on the Rat Wife's costume are the major source for period costume "... A little, thin, wizened creature, old and grey-haired, with sharp penetrating eyes. She is dressed in an old-fashioned flowered dress with a black hood and cape. She is carrying a large red umbrella, and a black bag hangs by a string from her arm" (Ibsen 1977:46). I will draw on Ibsen's text as well as historical information to design each piece of her costume. This design is shown in figure 5.11 and 5.12.

**The Rat Wife's Floral and Old Fashioned Gown:** I began by designing an old-fashioned floral gown. My first task was to figure out the historical period for the dress since it is stated that she is dressed in an 'old-fashioned' costume. As *Little Eyolf* is written in the late nineteenth century, the old style for the Rat Wife's costume is probably from the early to mid-

nineteenth century. I studied women's gowns types that were popular in the mid nineteenth century in Norway and other parts of Europe.

The Rat Wife's occupation indicates that she belongs to the working class, so I studied working class clothing history in the nineteenth century. For this part of my research I used Diana Crane's book *Fashion and Its Social Agendas* that contains useful information on the social significance of clothing in nineteenth and twentieth century. Crane describes the middle class clothing in nineteenth century and outlines that "Middle-class women dress was signified in several ways: first by specific details second by the use of expensive and fragile fabrics, third by the use of light and bright colors and forth by accessories such as parasol fan and lingerie like corset and crinolines"(50). In contrast with middle class clothing style, which includes fashionable clothes, the Rat Wife's costume should appear simple and out dated. In my design I dropped the clothing accessories such as corset and crinolines. In selecting the fabrics for her clothing, I considered that "Most of these working-class women wore wool or printed calico, which was easily washed" (Crane 51). As a result, Rat Wife's gown ought to be made of cheap and thick fabrics in darker colors with minimum decoration.



Figure 5.1: Ca. 1840,  
Culture:BritishMedium:cotton



Figure 5.2: 1840-1850,  
Norway, Hedmark, Norsk Folkemuseum

I studied the costume photos of the period to find a suitable gown for the character. Based on noted information about working-class women clothing and its material, I selected two pictures of different simple gowns from mid nineteenth century. The first is a simple cotton gown made in England during 1840<sup>th</sup> (see fig. 5.1). Second picture, shows a floral gown that was produced between 1840 and 1850 in Norway (see fig. 5.2). In creating the Rat Wife's dress, I made a few sketches and combined these two mid nineteenth century gowns as seen in these figures to create a new dress for Rat Wife. I merged the two costumes and made a modest top that contains less decorative details. The skirt was designed to be very simple, similar to the figure 5.2.

Ibsen's description of a floral pattern reflects the popularity of this fabric in women's dress between 1820- 1850 (Yarwood 234). But Crane states that "working-class women wore black and other dark colors almost exclusively. Black dresses were favored, because they could be used interchangeably for weddings, for mourning, and for Sunday best" (51). In addition to this, colors were stronger and darker in the mid nineteenth century (Yarwood 237). Ibsen did not specify a color palette for the gown but considering the costume history and popular fabrics in that era, I designed the Rat Wife's floral patterned dress in dark and strong colors. As her gown is old and worn-out I combined several textiles with different patterns to create a patchy and mended costume that illustrates her economic status as well as her odd outlook (see fig. 5.3 and 5.4).



Figure5.3: 1800's fabric prints





Figure 5.4: Different 1800s prints cut

**The Old-Fashioned Black Cape:** The Rat Wife’s outerwear is a “*sort saloppe*” (Ibsen:1894); as noted earlier, this is a black short cape. Saloppe was usually black, made of light fabrics such as silk or satin, and was decorated by long fringes or ribbons.



Figure 5.5: 1850-1896 Salopp,  
Norsk Folkemuseum



Figure 5.6: 1850-1860 Salopp,  
Norsk Folkemuseum

Wearing *Saloppe* was popular in the second half of the 1700's and early 1800's. Cloaks were still popular during the time between the 1820s to the 1850s, especially as the evening wear (Yarwood 234).

I researched capes and cloaks through silhouettes and photographs. I decided to rely on the pictures of costumes from that era in Norwegian museums. I used two photographs of *saloppe* that are preserved in Norsk Folkemuseum to design Rat Wife's cloak (see fig. 5.5 and 5.6 ). The images of *saloppe* that I found are decorated and are probably the eveningwear for middle class women. Therefore, I designed a simpler cloak to create a distinctive look from the other characters who are from upper class society. For the cloak fabric, I selected wool instead of silk, the latter being too expensive and impractical for a woman who has the Rat Wife's life style. In addition, the woolen outfit creates a stronger contrast to the light summer clothing of the other characters in the play.

**Black Bonnet:** The figure 5.7 shows another photograph that I used to design Rat Wife's "*kysehat*" which is a type of bonnet that covers the ears and neck and ties under the chin with ribbon (Norskriksmåls Ord Book vol.2 2826). In mid nineteenth century, two types of bonnets were popular in Europe, In the 1840s, and the poke bonnets that projected in front of the face and hid the face from the view and the other one by the 1845s; bonnets with shorter front parts and smaller bonnets were popular (Yarwood 238). The Rat Wife's bonnet comes directly from this photograph of *Kysehatt* from Norsk Folkemuseum dated mid 1800's (see fig. 5.7).



Figure 5.7: *Kysehatt*, Norsk Folkemuseum, Mid 1800's

My design for the Rat Wife's bonnet is inspired by the poke bonnets that hides the face and gives the character a more mysterious look.

The popular bonnets in mid nineteenth century had wide ribbons and were tied under the chin. They were made of different fabrics such as silk, gauze, crepe and straw according to the seasons. In addition, bonnets were decorated by flowers and ribbons (Yarwood 238). I am supposed to depict the Rat Wife's appearance to indicate her social class and make her to stand out from the other characters. I designed a bonnet which is different from decorated bonnets of the mid nineteenth century and looks like a bonnet that a working class woman might wear.



Figure 5.8: Production 1880 - 1920  
Gausdal, Norway



Figure 5.9: Production: 1850 - 1880  
Kragerø, Norway

Ibsen gives detailed description of Rat Wife's accessories. "She is carrying a large red umbrella, and a black bag hangs by a string from her arm" (Ibsen 1977:46). The designs for her bag and umbrella come directly from photographs of the similar objects that were used in in the late nineteenth Norway (see fig. 5.8 and 5.9). I made some minor changes to the bag to make it look older, less decorated and more practical. I am suggesting that her bag is made of old clothes patches and thick textiles.

### 5.3 The Colour palette

I finished the design by selecting the color palette for costume. Ibsen's script depicts specific colors for the Rat Wife's costume. She is grey-haired, wearing a black cloak, bonnet and a colorful gown while carrying a black bag and red umbrella. Therefore, the basic color palette for her look is a mixture of red and grey, with black as the dominant color.

My research into the Norwegian late nineteenth century paintings was inspirational for the choice of colors. I was particularly inspired by one of the paintings by Oda Krohg (1860 – 1935) the wife of Christian Krohg, the Norwegian famous artist. This painting *Rouge et Noir* (1895) pictures a late nineteenth century bourgeoisie interior (see fig. 5.10). I especially liked the combination of vivid colors against the dark dominant colors of the background. I also found the color palette and theme of the painting close to the mood of *Little Eyolf*. In my view, the colors and tone of this painting can illustrate the bizarre and tense atmosphere of the Rat Wife's entrance scene.



Figure 5.10 : Rouge et Noir, 1895 Oda Krohg (1860-1935), Private, Photo: O.Væring



Furthermore, the Rat Wife's costume has to look worn-out and old. Thus, all the fabrics have a shabby and scuffed look. By reducing the details, I made her image less feminine and more practical to indicate her status as a worker. I wanted to create a contrast with the more decorated costumes of the other female characters.

To design this period costume for the Rat Wife my intention was to be faithful to the costume history and Ibsen's stage directions. I tried to reflect traits of her personality, social status and exaggerate her difference from the other characters. In the designing process, I used my research, focusing on the material and images connected to the Rat Wife's appearance. My historical study helped me in focusing on each piece and its detail, which in turn made my next set of preliminary sketches clearer. As a final point, to portray the vibrant image of the Rat Wife, I include a color rendering to show the costume color palette concept.

## **5.4 Personal Design Approach for the Rat Wife's Costume**

In this part I will present the costumes which I have designed for the Rat Wife's character.

### **Description for Figure 5.11 and 5.12:**

These sketches illustrate the period costume design for the Rat Wife and are based on observation of the fashion history in the mid to late nineteenth century. In addition, I used other visual sources such as paintings and photographs to present my historical research inspiration.

In this costume rendering, I kept a realistic style with the costume. Faithful to Ibsen's stage directions, the historical design portrays a shrunken grey-haired old woman who is dressed in black bonnet and cloak. Moreover, I used Ibsen's description on the Rat Wife's accessories to design her large red umbrella and black bag.

As a result, the Rat Wife's gown ought to be made of cheap and thick fabrics in darker colours with minimum decoration. I designed the costume to look old, less decorated and more practical for a worker-class woman.



Figure 5.11: Costume Rendering for the Rat Wife



Figure 5.12: Costume Rendering for the Rat Wife





Figure 5.13: Costume Rendering for the Rat Wife

### **Description for Figure 5.13:**

For this costume rendering I figured the Rat Wife in over-sized patchy fur coat. Instead of Rat Wife's bag I designed large pockets where she keeps her little black dog and pipe. The large coat covers the Rat Wife's shrunken body and hides it gives the character a mysterious look as well as, a comic appearance.

The coat's grey shades in addition to its texture signify animalistic qualities in the Rat Wife's personality. I aimed to create a bizarre look for the character by using distinct textures, forms and styles. Therefore, I applied shades of grey in designing the fur coat which is in contrast with converse shoes and socks bright colours. Additionally, the luxurious ambiance of the fur coat (although it is ragged) is against the character's cheap and practical footwear.

In this design approach the character's hairstyle and features does not indicate to a specific gender which fashions a mysterious and complicated character. Moreover the messy hairstyle creates a curious look for the Rat Wife in this design.

### **Description for Figure 5.14:**

This design for the Rat Wife gown is inspired by Victorian costume style. It shows a highly decorated gown made of shiny fabrics. The costume ragged and worn-out material is highly distinct from its aristocratic style. In addition, while the dress style reflects Victorian fashion its dark colour is very different from the popular light colours that were fashionable for women in that era.

In symbolic context, the dark, shiny and reflective texture of the dress indicates dark waters and Rat Wife's relation with the fjords and portrays her as a mysterious persona. The water lilies in character's hair indicate her luring quality and are in contrast with her gothic like clothing and makeup.

The shades of blue in character's hair also symbolize Rat Wife's connection to waters as well as, soften her appearance. In figuring the Rat Wife look, I applied light blue and purple shades against dark colours to project positive and negative qualities in the character.

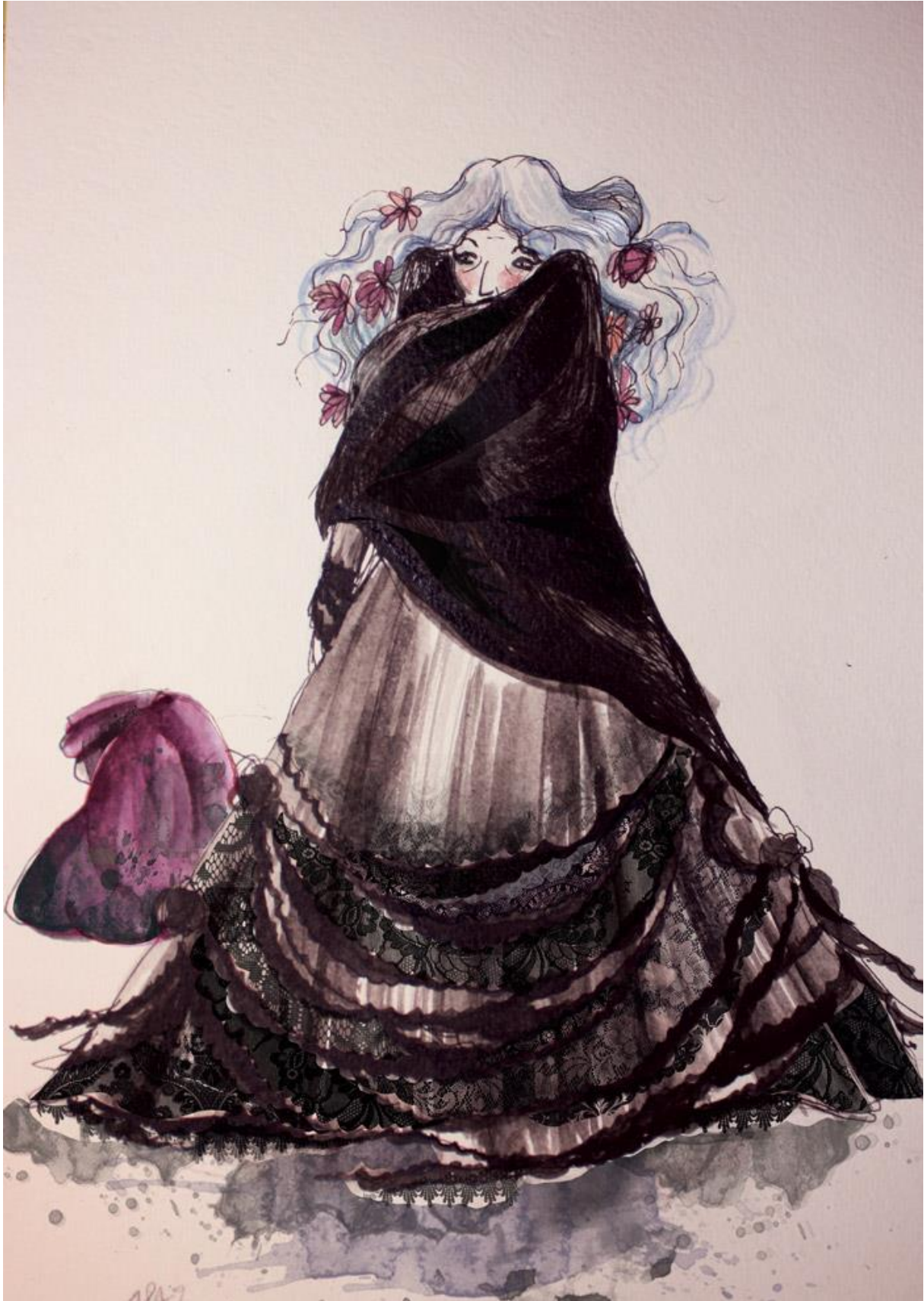


Figure 5.14: Costume Rendering for the Rat Wife





Figure 5.15: Costume Rendering for the Rat Wife

### **Description for Figure 5.15:**

In this design I illustrate the Rat Wife in contemporary setting. On one hand, My approach is to illustrate her as a sexualized character and focus on alluring aspects of her character. On the other hand, by costuming the figure in the rubber raincoat and boots along with her sleeping gown pictures a confusing portrait. Her tattoo serves as a gothic element as well as decorative based on its floral shape.

Her old-fashioned vintage hair style comes in contrast with her thick make up which is her attempt to present herself younger than her actual age.

The travelling, old leather bag in this design depicts her as a traveller, a person without any permanent abode.

The combination of red and black can suggest death infected sexuality as it is stated by some of Ibsen's critics. In this costume rendering black colour can signify two meanings one stands for death and the other one refers to erotic aspect.

### **Description for Figure 5.16:**

This costume rendering is designed to represent the Rat Wife in Iranian context. My source of inspiration for this costume comes from traditional women's costume in southern coast of Iran, Banda Abbas. This region's costume resembles the Rat Wife costume in Ibsen's play.

The type of mask that is used along with these costume portraits a mysterious character however; its purpose is protection against the sun and has its root in the culture.

This traditional costume is a combination of antithetical visual elements and colours which can portrait the Rat Wife's complex characteristic. In addition, traditions of henna and tattoo as body art are popular in this area which can suggest a bizarre look for the Rat Wife.

Costuming the Rat Wife in southern coast traditional clothing can also indicate the character relation to the sea similar to Ibsen's script. It is interesting to mention that some of the local folktale and beliefs are in line with Ibsen's description of the Rat Wife.

The figures 5.17 to 5.20 show the local costume from Bandar Abbas.





Figure 5.16: Costume Rendering for the Rat Wife



Figure 5.17: Southern Iran, Female Costume, Bandar Abbas





Figure 5.18: Southern Iran Female Costume, Bandar Abbas



Figure 5.19: Southern Iran, Female Costume, Bandar Abbas



Figure 5.20: Southern Iran, Female Costume, Bandar Abbas

# Chapter 6: Conclusion

In this chapter the research questions will be discussed and eventually the research problem will be reflected upon. In the closing remarks of this thesis, I will explain the aspects of this research which need more attention hence should be elaborated in the future research on costume analysing studies.

## 6.1 Reflection on the Research Questions

There are three main questions in this study that arise from the overarching research problem: ‘What is the significance of the visual image that characterizes the Rat Wife in Ibsen’s *Little Eyolf*?’ The findings are summarised below:

**Question One:** What were the sources that impacted on Ibsen’s visual description of the Rat Wife?

The Rat Wife character draws on sources that combine folktale figures with Ibsen’s lived experience.

The character’s connection with rats may have roots in the symbolic representation of the Black Death: an old shrunken woman dressed in black rags carries associations with death in Europe visual culture. The Rat Wife has roots in Scandinavian folklore. She is similar to Fylgja and Nøkken. Her method of luring and drowning victims by playing on her pipe is close to the figure of Nøkken.

The majority of Ibsen’s scholars connect the Rat Wife either to the Pied Piper folktale or to Goethe’s poem. Although Ibsen knew the Pied Piper story, he rejected the idea that it had any influence on the way that he depicted the Rat Wife. He stated that he used the memory of an old woman in Skien, who was called “the Rat Wife” as the model for his character. (The Oxford Ibsen VIII: 316). Ibsen suggested to his French translator, Count Prozor, that the model for the Rat-Wife was a “Little old woman who came to kill rats at the school where he was educated’ (Archer 275).

Although some critics, such as Haave, have suggest that Ibsen’s great aunt, Kirstine Ploug, had a strong influence on the Rat Wife’s character, there is no evidence that his description of her costume was based on Kirstine’s clothing. However certain elements in Kristin’s clothing do have similarities to the character description.

**Second question:** How have other designers interpreted the Rat Wife costume?

To answer this question, costumes from a number of productions were considered to reveal dominant trends in interpretation. Some designers follow Ibsen's stage direction closely to create realistic historical costumes as shown in figure 4.6, 4.11 and 4.12. Other designers highlight the symbolic aspects of the character to create non-realistic images for the Rat Wife as shown in figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.13. Despite these two divergent approaches, there are still common elements that can be observed across the range of design interpretations.

It is noticeable that the designers who emphasize a maternal quality in the Rat Wife have tended to remove the qualities in Ibsen's description that conjure up the uncanny and mysterious. In contrast, designers who highlight an animalistic approach tend to use a male actor to represent the Rat Wife. It is possible to see a transformation in recent productions from a frightening old woman to a sexualized young woman (see figures number 4.14 and 4.15). A transition from realistic costumes to images with more obvious symbolic meaning can be seen in the work of twenty-first century designers; they constantly add new qualities to Ibsen's Rat Wife.

**Third question:** How have I used my understanding of Ibsen's script, and the study of images created by other designers, as the basis for my costume designs?

From the analysis of Ibsen's text, I identified a number of significant elements: the dark colours associated death; the combination of unusual features suggesting a mysterious personality; the contrast between the Rat Wife costume and the clothing of the other characters; and the old fashioned style of clothing which makes the character seem out of place. Ibsen employs a series of contrasts in his description: the shabby black cloak, bonnet and bag are visually contrasted with the floral gown and red umbrella; the accessories are not proportionate to the body, she is described as a shrunken old woman carrying a large umbrella; the floral gown and bright coloured accessory are at odds with the social norms governing clothing of elderly woman in nineteenth century Europe.

Looking at various productions of *Little Eyolf*, I have observed an evolution in the design approach used to create the Rat Wife costumes. My suggestions for costume designs have been inspired by the work of the designers who have highlighted the animalistic and sexualized elements implied in Ibsen's text. I consider the animalistic approach particularly useful in linking the Rat Wife's character to other folkloric creatures, particularly those

popular today, such as the Werewolf. I explored the seductive quality of the Rat Wife in a present day context and tried to find ways of making her attractive to her victims by adding colourful elements such as socks, floral patterns, bright coloured accessories, and bright coloured rubber boots. These details were contrasted with the gothic and serious elements in her costume to create an unusual and bizarre character.

To explore the impact of society and culture on the costume design, I also created a version of the Rat wife based on the dress of women in the southern region of Iran. This costume is intended to communicate both mystery and insincerity.

## **6.2 Reflection on the Research Problem**

The overarching research question for this study was: ‘What is the significance of the visual image that characterizes the Rat Wife in Ibsen’s *Little Eyolf*’?

The Rat Wife’s appearance in *Little Eyolf* is the key to her complex character. It indicates her social status, as well as her symbolic function within the play. Ibsen portrays her multi-faceted character by applying antithetical elements in her clothing. She combines all the themes and concepts of *Little Eyolf*, within this one bizarre costume. “Typical of Ibsen’s ambivalence, the symbols are both negative and positive at the same time” (29).

The Rat Wife represents an innovation in the creation of nineteenth century female characters. Ibsen’s creation is very different from the common image depicted by other nineteenth century artists of working class women as “...poor, passive natural, and understood to be content with her God-given role as mother and nurturer ... embodied the positive image of working class” (Nochlin 84). In contrast, the Rat Wife is an independent woman living outside the societal norms of family life. The character is a bizarre, insane or terrifying woman in the script, and perhaps reflects Ibsen’s criticism of the social exclusion suffered by women who refuse to conform to social pressures. One might even argue that the struggle for sexual equality in the nineteenth century has been embodied within the Rat Wife’s curious costume.

## **6.3 Conclusion**

This thesis has focused on the complexity of meanings contained in a single costume description written by Ibsen; and it has traced the diversity of approaches used by designers to

realise this vision. It is one of the first studies to concentrate on Ibsen's dramatic use of costume design and is intended to open up the possibility of future studies into this aspect of his dramaturgy. Hopefully, the findings of these thesis and the original costume designs that it contains, will be of use not only to scholars, but also to directors and designers embarking on new productions of *Little Eyolf*.

# Bibliography:

- Anderson, B., & Anderson, C. (1999). *Costume Design* (2nd Edition ed.). Philadelphia: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Archer, William. *The Theatrical World of 1896: With an Introduction: On the Need for an Endowed Theatre*. London: Walter Scott, 1897. Print.
- Archer, William, and Thomas Postlewait. *William Archer on Ibsen: The Major Essays, 1889-1919*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1984. Print.
- Carlson, Marvin. *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 2001. Print.
- Carlyle, Thomas. *Sartor Resartus, Etc*. Ward, Lock & Bowden: London, 1896. Print.
- Cirlot, Juan-Eduardo. *A Dictionary of Symbols*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971. Print.
- Danielsen, Rolf. *Norway: A History from the Vikings to Our Own times*. Oslo: Scandinavian UP, 1998. Print.
- Edwards, Angela B. "Water in the Landscape Symbolism of Ibsen's Late Outdoor Plays." *Ibsenårbok* 1981/82 (n.d.): 23-46. Print.
- Ferguson, Robert. *Henrik Ibsen: A New Biography*. London: R. Cohen, 1996. Print.
- Gage, John. *Colour and Culture: Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1993. Print.
- Gage, John. *Colour and Meaning: Art, Science and Symbolism*. Berkeley: U of California, 1999. Print.
- Hardy Aiken, Susan. "On Clothes and Heroes: Carlyle and "How It Strikes a Contemporary"" *Victorian Poetry* Summer Vol. 13.2 (1975): 99-109. *Jstor*. Web. 23 March. 2014.  
<<http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/40001799?uid=2&uid=4&sid=21104002447897>>.
- Harris, Kristina. "FLIRTATIOUS FASHIONS." *Victorian Decorating & Lifestyles* June/July (1998): n. pag. Web. 02 April 2014.  
<<http://www.victoriaspast.com/Parasols/parasols.htm>>.
- Holledge, Julie, and Joanne Tompkins. *Women's Intercultural Performance*. London: Routledge, 2000. Print.



- Hunnisett, J. (1986). *Period Costume for Stage & Screen : Patterns for Women's Dress 1500 - 1800* . London: Bell & Hyman.
- Ibsen, Henrik, and James Walter. McFarlane. *The Oxford Ibsen, Volume VIII*. Oxford [Eng.: Oxford UP, 1977. Print.
- Ibsen, Henrik, and Rolf Fjelde. *The Complete Major Prose Plays*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1978. Print.
- Ibsen, Henrik. *Plays: Three*. London: Eyre Methuen, 1980. Print.
- Ibsen, Henrik. "Little Eyolf." *Project Gutenberg*. Trans. William Archer. N.p., Aug. 2009. Web. 10 May 2014.
- "Ibsen.nb.no." *Ibsen.nb.no*. National Library of Norway, n.d. Web. 11 May 2014.
- Ivanova, Miglena. "'Fair Fierce Women' : From the Rat-Wife and Peg Inerny to Cathleen Ni Houlihan." *Text & Presentation, 2004*. By Stratos E. Constantinidis. Jefferson, NC: McFarland &, 2005. N. pag. Print.
- Jacobs, Barry. "Ibsen's *Little Eyolf*: Family Tragedy and Human Responsibility." *Modern Drama* 27.4 (1984): 604-15. Print.
- "Kategori:Klær." *Lokalhistoriewiki.no*. Ed. Chris Nyborg. N.p., 11 June 2008. Web. 12 May 2013.
- Knudsen, Trygve, and Alf Sommerfelt,. *Norsk Riksmålsordbok*. Vol. II,III. Oslo: Kunnskapsforlaget, 1991. Print.
- Kurland, J., Foreword. In D. N. Landis, *50 Designers/50 Costumes* (p. 2). Beverly Hills: Galleries of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 2004.
- Lauer, Jeanette C., and Robert H. Lauer. "The Battle of the Sexes Fashion in 19th Century America." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 13.4 (1980): 581-89. Print.
- Lingard, John. "Known of Old and Long Familiar : Norwegian Folklore and the Uncanny in Ibsen's Little Eyolf." *Proceedings: IX International Ibsen Conference, Bergen 5-10 June 2000*. By Pål Bjørby and Asbjørn Aarseth. Øvre Ervik: Alvheim & Eide, 2001. N. pag. Print.
- Lingard, John. *Known of old and long familiar : Norwegian folklore and the uncanny in Ibsen's Little Eyolf, I*: International Ibsen Conference (9 : 2000 : Bergen). Proceedings. - Øvre Ervik : Alvheim & Eide, 2001.

- Meyer, Michael Levenson. *Ibsen, a Biography*. New York: Doubleday, 1967. Print.
- Moi, Toril. *Henrik Ibsen and the Birth of Modernism: Art, Theater, Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006. Print
- Monet, Dolores. "Fashion History - Women's Clothing of the 1950's." *HubPages*. HubPages, n.d. Web. 09 May 2014.
- Mosfjeld, Oskar. *Henrik Ibsen Og Skien; En Biografisk Og Litteratur-psykologisk Studie*. Oslo: Gyldendal, 1949. Print.
- Nochlin, Linda. *Representing Women*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1999. Print.
- Northam, John. *Ibsen's Dramatic Method; a Study of the Prose Dramas*. London: Faber and Faber, 1953. Print.
- Pham, Minh-Ha T. "The Right to Fashion in the Age of Terrorism." *Signs* 36.2 (2011): 385-410. Print.
- Reid, John. "'Biting the Sour Apple': The Nietzschean Undertow in *Little Eyolf*." *Modern Drama* 52.1 (2009): 1-18. Print.
- Russell, D. A. (1985). *Sate Costume Design: Theory, Technique, and Style*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: PRENTICE-HALL, INC.
- Sauar, Margit. "The Rat-Wife's Dress." *A Thing or Two about Ibsen: His Possessions, Dramatic Poetry and Life*. Ed. Anne-Sofie Hjemdahl. Oslo: Andrimne, 2006. N. pag. Print.
- Schechner, Richard, and Willa Appel. *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*. Cambridge: U, 2001. Print.
- Stanton, Stephen S. "Trolls in Ibsen's Late Plays." *Comparative Drama* Winter 23.4 (1998-1999): 541-80. Print.
- Synnott, Anthony. *The Body Social: Symbolism, Self, and Society*. London: Routledge, 1993. Print.
- Weinstein, Arnold. *Metamorphosis in Ibsen's "Little Eyolf"*. Menasha, Wis: n.p., 1990. Print.
- Østvedt, Einar. *Henrik Ibsen: Studier Og Streiftog*. Skien: Oluf Rasmussen, 1978. Print.

# Appendix

## About the Photos:

The photos in this thesis have been mostly obtained from online sources which are shown below. As I mentioned earlier, still there is not any comprehensive data bank for Ibsen's plays which could make an easy access to all the productions and sources. The list below is a collection of public links, photos from social media pages and a few books.

- Figure 3.1: <http://legendsofthenorth.blogspot.no/>
- Figure 3.2: Saunar, Margit. "The Rat-Wife's Dress." A Thing or Two about Ibsen: His Possessions, Dramatic Poetry and Life. Ed. Anne-Sofie Hjemdahl. Oslo: Andrimne, 2006. N. pag. Print.
- Figure 3.3: [Marichen Altenburg - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)
- Figure 4.1: [http://www.pluto.no/kulturspeilet/faste/dns\\_eyolf.html](http://www.pluto.no/kulturspeilet/faste/dns_eyolf.html)
- Figure 4.2: <http://www.festivaldivadlo.cz/en/predstaveni/124/>
- Figure 4.3: <http://ibsen.nb.no/id/110117.0>
- Figure 4.4: <http://ibsen.nb.no/id/11152993.0>
- Figure 4.5: <http://ibsen.nb.no/id/11183141.0>
- Figure 4.6: <http://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/review.php/32068/little-eyolf>
- Figure 4.7: <http://news.byu.edu/archive12-feb-eyolf.aspx>
- Figure 4.8: <http://ibsen.nb.no/id/11199640.0>
- Figure 4.9:  
[http://www.terra.com.br/istoegente/323/diversao\\_arte/teatro\\_pequeno\\_eyolf.htm](http://www.terra.com.br/istoegente/323/diversao_arte/teatro_pequeno_eyolf.htm)
- Figure 4.10: <http://www.tageblatt.lu/kultur/story/Die-Unmoeglichkeit-der-Befreiung-27538166>
- Figure 4.11: <http://www.amazon.com/Little-Theatre-Bat-Wife-Patrick-Campbell/dp/B00BN740X2>
- Figure 4.12: <http://www.geheugenvannederland.nl/?/nl/items/SFA03:SFA022004091>
- Figure 4.13: <http://unfauteuilpourlorchestre.com/critique-eyolf-quelque-chose-en-moi-me-ronge-dapres-ibsen-au-theatre-de-laquarium/>
- Figure 4.14: <http://blog.calarts.edu/2011/08/22/fringe-festival-2011-student-works-impressive-in-edinburgh/>

- Figure 4.15 : [https://www.facebook.com/norwegianqueen/media\\_set?set=a.138209616345.143520.531256345&type=3](https://www.facebook.com/norwegianqueen/media_set?set=a.138209616345.143520.531256345&type=3)
- Figure 5.1 : [http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/84523?rpp=20&pg=8&ft=\\* &deptids=8&when=A.D.+1800-1900&what=Dresses&pos=154](http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/84523?rpp=20&pg=8&ft=* &deptids=8&when=A.D.+1800-1900&what=Dresses&pos=154)
- Figure 5.2: [http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/kjole/NF/NF.05003-075?query=kjole+1840&search\\_context=1&page=2&count=70&pos=34](http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/kjole/NF/NF.05003-075?query=kjole+1840&search_context=1&page=2&count=70&pos=34)
- Figure 5.3: <http://www.homesteadhearth.com/shop/Special-Programs-and-Blocks-of-the-Month/Clubs--Programs/p/1800s-Bundle-of-Fun-Club-sku-1800sclub.htm>
- Figure 5.4 : <http://aloosebobbin.blogspot.no/2012/12/tst-40-mackenzies-heritage-and.html>
- Figure 5.5 : [http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/cape/NF/NF.1919-0649?query=saloppe&search\\_context=1&count=5&pos=1](http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/cape/NF/NF.1919-0649?query=saloppe&search_context=1&count=5&pos=1)
- Figure 5.6: [http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/cape/NF/NF.1919-0649?query=saloppe&search\\_context=1&count=5&pos=1](http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/cape/NF/NF.1919-0649?query=saloppe&search_context=1&count=5&pos=1)
- Figure 5.7: [http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/hatt/NF/NF.1929-0350?query=Kysehatt+&search\\_context=1&count=29&pos=10](http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/hatt/NF/NF.1929-0350?query=Kysehatt+&search_context=1&count=29&pos=10)
- Figure 5.8 : [http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/paraply/NF/NF.1979-0032?query=Paraply+Betegnelse&search\\_context=1&page=3&count=90&pos=59](http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/paraply/NF/NF.1979-0032?query=Paraply+Betegnelse&search_context=1&page=3&count=90&pos=59)
- Figure 5.9 : <http://www.digitaltmuseum.no/things/veske/TEM/BKM.005237>
- Figure 5.10: <http://www.ovaering.no/filer/ImageArchive/image.asp?imageid=184519>
- Figure 5.17: <http://sana22jonoob.blogfa.com/post/99>
- Figure 5.18: <http://www.iranneeds.com/upload/modules/iContent2/Files/1916.jpg>
- Figure 5.19: <http://rasekhoon.net/userfiles/Article/1392/02/06/00342993.JPG>
- Figure 5.20 : [http://images.persianblog.ir/478731\\_tMMcJpLS.jpg](http://images.persianblog.ir/478731_tMMcJpLS.jpg)