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Introduction

Recently, a renaissance of the dirndl, traditional costumes and fashion in a country style is emergent in Austria. It is a renaissance which is strongly linked to events and parties. New events with a strong connection to tradition and traditional dresses are created, such as the Wiener Wiesn, and already existing events are given a fresh “traditional” shape.

The formative element in all these occasions is the dress – blindingly obvious, nevertheless overlooked – a thing like many more which in many respects actually create us in the first place and make us the people we are (Miller 2010:53). “Culture comes above all from stuff,” Miller (2010:54) states. This holds true especially in the consumer societies of the Western countries, where we depend on goods in order to define ourselves, make choices and give meaning to our lives, as it is the objects which contain meaning in our material world (McCracken 2005:3–5). Thus, “the best way to understand, convey and appreciate our humanity is through attention to our fundamental materiality” (Miller 2010:4) – a field, social sciences and particularly anthropology have looked down upon as somehow trivial or missing the point (Miller 2010:4). But it is anthropology, which may have to offer new insights into the study of objects and commodities to its neighboring disciplines (Appadurai 1986:5). Hence, it is things themselves we have to follow, “for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories” (Appadurai 1986:5).

The main thing, literally speaking, of this study is the dirndl – Austria’s proclaimed traditional dress, in one of its many settings, the city of Salzburg, its surrounding areas and its – in an Appadurain (2005) sense – landscapes. This is the place, where “the hills are alive,” as Julie Andrews used to sing in 1965 in the nowadays out of Austria famous movie *The Sound of Music*, and it is the birthplace of the musical genius Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Every year, many tourists from all over the world set off for Salzburg to trace the origins and paths of the Trapp family and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The statue of Mozart, enthroned in the heart of the old town, which once heralded the commencement for tourism in Salzburg (Mielichhofer 1843), now is the starting point for a virtual walk through the town. The lead of this stroll is the dirndl and its manifold trajectories, because “it is only through the analysis of these trajectories that we can interpret the human transactions and calculations that enliven things” (Appadurai 1986:5).

Standing in the middle of the Mozart’s square right in front of the statue, we can catch sight of the Heimatwerk, which is a cooperative referring to itself as non-profit-oriented, promoter of

regional culture and publisher of the new dirndl style sheets. In front of its doors, the Rupertikirtag, a fair in celebration of the city's patron Saint Rupert takes place every September. 150 years ago, wild animals were presented and in panopticons Indians and natives fought wars (Altstadt Salzburg Marketing Ges.m.b.H. 2014a). Back then, the “exotic” and “bizarre” were the attractions (Featherstone 2008:675–676). Today, it is just the other way round as only old fun rides can be found on the market and the spotlight is on Austrian costumes and handicraft. Following this trend, its fashion changed, too. Young people can't wait to wear their dirndl and lederhosen at the next Rupertikirtag and to enjoy the feeling of togetherness with a drink or two in the beer tent – this absolutely new attitude toward traditional dresses wasn't imaginable a few years ago.

Departing from the square of Mozart, we turn into Judengasse and walk along until we reach the end of Getreidegasse, which is the most famous shopping street in Salzburg. Only on our walk through the old town we have the chance to shop in thirty different shops for traditional fashion (Altstadt Salzburg Marketing Ges.m.b.H. 2014b), leaving the myriad of souvenir shops uncounted. Every year, new shops open up and try to capture the already highly contested market of traditional dresses. Even bigger companies like Tommy Hilfiger, S.Oliver, New Yorker and Hofer enter the markets, presenting new forms of traditional dresses and trying to get their share of the cake.

At the end of Getreidegasse, we can board the bus which will take us to one of many events with a traditional dressing theme. There is the Edelweißkränzchen, launched 118 years ago, distinctive with its strict restrictions of attendance, or the Wildschütz, a ball which since its inception in 2010 attracts more and more guests each season. Under the slogan “Tradition meets emotion!” mainly young people dressed up in dirndl and lederhosen meet to party at the brewery of Stiegl. At the same location, an erection of the maypole takes place, too. This festivity recently experienced a bigger popularity with young people, as well. Apart from these institutional celebrations, more and more events and parties with an emphasis on traditional dresses came up in about the last eight years.

The patron and the underlying motif of all these festivities, shops and objects is “the” tradition, being reiterated like a mantra and affixed like a label, so that it gets barely questioned in daily life. Vivienne Westwood, the fashion icon from the United Kingdom and recent messenger of the dirndl, believes in tradition rather than change for the sake of change: “I don't believe in progress. People don't understand where ideas come from. They come from tradition. They don't come out of the air” (Langley 2004:102). In the social sciences, Westwood's stance corresponds to a naturalistic idea of tradition, which contains a designation of old or new, traditional or

modern. For Handler and Linnekin (1984:273), this contains two problematic implications, namely that (1) this leads us to see tradition and culture as bounded entities, which (2) have an essence apart from our interpretation. In lieu of this naturalistic perspective, they promote a different concept of tradition. For them, it is “a process of thought – an ongoing interpretation of the past [...] in the present” (Handler and Linnekin 1984:274, 1984:276). In this sense, they contradict Shils (1988), who was the first to question the dichotomy between tradition and modernity (Shoham 2011:324–325), as his concept implicates “a real essential existing tradition apart from interpretations of traditions” (Handler and Linnekin 1984:276). However, Shils (1988) recognizes that traditions usually have ideological content, a view which Handler and Linnekin (1984:277) adopt, as “shared culture and traditions establish the nation as bounded unit, creating national distinctiveness which in turn both demonstrates and guarantees national existence.” Another aspect of their concept of an invention of tradition is that this process is also selective. Some things are integrated in the canon of tradition whilst others are ignored. They stress that “to do something because it is traditional is already to reinterpret, and hence to change it” (Handler and Linnekin 1984:281). Further, they state: “The origin of cultural practices is largely irrelevant to the experience of tradition; authenticity is always defined in the present. It is not pastness or givenness that defines something as traditional. Rather, the latter is an arbitrary symbolic designation; an assigned meaning rather than an objective quality” (Handler and Linnekin 1984:286). Hobsbawm and Ranger (1996:1) state that “‘traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes even invented” and they define tradition as a repetitive practice implicating a continuity with the past. The function of invented traditions is to “use history as a legitimator of action and cement of group cohesion” (Hobsbawm 1996:12). However, history is “an imprinting of the present on to the past” (Friedman 2000:118) and thus a way of producing cultural heritage and identity through its relation between the mythic past and the present state of affairs (Friedman 2000:118; Girke and Knoll 2013:9). Therefore, invented traditions are rather determined by present social and political interests like boundary-making than by their past.

The whole history of the dirndl refers to reinventions of tradition (Scope 2004). When there were no models from previous times, new patterns were created with the help of scientific folkloristic research (Tostmann and Hausherr 1998). However, Kammen (1991) notes that “we need not be overly cynical about societies that ‘invent’ traditions. What ultimately matters most, [...] is not the comparative newness of most so-called traditions, [...] but the uses to which those traditions are put, and by whom” (Kammen 1991:31, 59). In relation to this, Soares (1997:12) highlights that “whether an invented tradition unites disparate social groups around established powers, or

whether it enables a subordinate group to acquire a distinct sense of its identity and interests, depends on who creates and controls the tradition.” Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ask, how the tradition of the dirndl is interpreted, constructed and deconstructed by its agents and what the underlying dynamics in the discourse about tradition are. And most of all, who claims to define “the” tradition in Salzburg and its surrounding areas?

The previous focus in research on invented traditions was on the past, thus the approach was a historical one. Anthropology might gain new insights through bringing the concept into the present days and shifting the focus from invented traditions to the process of inventing traditions, which above all takes place in times of rapid transformations which weaken the society and destroy the social patterns (Hobsbawm 1996:4).

One of these social patterns is gender, which is indicated and produced among others by dress (Barnes 1992:5). The dirndl often is praised for its quality of giving the perfect hourglass figure to the female body and making the best of every woman. Thus, the dirndl helps to preserve the former gender roles and their differences. This attribution is encapsulated by Vivienne Westwood’s statement that “there would be no ugliness in the world if every woman wore a dirndl” (Holzapfel 2013).

Tradition often is opposed to fashion (Shils 1988), but it is actually fashion which holds the dirndls’ traditions in the palm of its hands, since they don’t constitute a trade by themselves but belong to the fashion system. Thus, there are no records about the market developments, the volume of sales or market leaders. However, at about the same time of the financial crises in 2007 and 2008, the market of traditional costumes started to flourish again. In periods of crises, neo-traditionalism statistically sees a boost (Friedman 2000). “This is due to the security and even salvation provided by traditionalist identity in times of crises. It is fixed and ascribed, provides a medium for engagement in a larger collectivity, and provides a set of standards, values and rules for living” (Friedman 2000:243). As part of the increase of supply and demand, more and more competitors in trade set up a business in the name of tradition, thereby turning it into a fiercely contested field. In this field, claims to tradition are made constantly on all hands, as something first has to be owned in order to be commoditized, even if this just happens on the basis of assertions (Girke and Knoll 2013:9). Appadurai (1986) discerns two different strategies in regards to the state and flow of commodities – enclaving and diversion. Politically and economically powerful groups pursue the enclaving and restriction of commodities, whereas diversion, which is often to be found in the domain of fashion, is frequently the recourse of entrepreneurs (Appadurai 1986:25–26, 28).

From the viewpoint of an economist, commodities simply exist. Characterized by their use and exchange values, traded in return for money, they circulate through the economic system (Kopytoff 1986:64). “From a cultural perspective, the production of commodities is also a cultural and cognitive process: commodities must be not only produced materially as things, but also culturally marked as being a certain kind of thing” (Kopytoff 1986:64). The modes in which they are marked cannot be conceived solely in acts of exchange and consumption, as they refer to larger social processes. Thus, the ways in which meaning is attributed to the goods and not the goods themselves need to be traced (Friedman 1994:8–9).

By an oversupply, the rapid growth of the dirndl market involves a risk of inflation, which has “the danger of threatening the readability of goods used as signs of social status” (Featherstone 2008:672–673). It is thus compromising one of the main features of dress, which is to act as an indicator of pecuniary strength, demonstrated by “the visible ability to spend, to consume unproductively” (Veblen 1894:200). The “display of wasteful expenditure” (Veblen 1894:200) is one way of maintaining one’s social status. Distinction, however, is not solely achieved by the display of one’s economic capital (Bourdieu 1984) through conspicuous consumption (Veblen 1953 [1899]). The elite utilizes the incessantly change of fashion to set itself apart. The upper class initiates a fashion and abandons it, as soon as the mass imitates it. Fashion “is a product of class distinction” (Simmel 1957:544), driven by the endeavor of emulation and distinction. In this system, the body of restriction and control becomes taste (Bourdieu 2008), which keeps up “the illusion of complete interchangeability and unrestricted access” (Appadurai 1986:25). The discriminatory judgment and the cultural capital enable particular groups to understand and classify new goods in this ever-changing flow of commodities (Featherstone 2008:671). In this way, “groups are able to objectify their status and social standing in the eyes of others, to confirm and reconfirm the boundaries of what properly constitutes the ‘tasteful’ and the ‘tasteless,’ and in so doing to situate themselves on the ‘right’ side of such a boundary” (Lee 2003:xv). Consumption is a means to group cohesiveness, inclusion and exclusion, but also a place where we can find, determine and change our identity. It is, thus, soever a consumption of identity (Friedman 2000:104). This is not to say that we as consumers “buy” identity through our appropriation of certain goods and services, rather we “discover” it in our reaction to them. Our likes and dislikes responding to goods tell us who we “really are” (Campbell 2004:32) and “brings together things and people that go together” (Bourdieu 1984:241).

Fashion and its reproduction, as well as the reinvention of tradition respond to social and political changes, and they even have the power to cause changes. These two processes coincide

in today's renaissance of the dirndl, which occurs in the name of "the" tradition. On the basis of participant observation and interviews, the trajectories of the dirndl, namely events and parties, the market and its dynamics, the Heimatwerk Salzburg, wearers and their tastes are followed in this study. In this way, new insights about different dispositions of tradition, underlying power struggles and various identities relating to dirndls and tradition shall be gained.

The fact that I as a researcher am native to the world I am studying is just partly true, as a society is differentiated and a culture is not homogenous (Narayan 1993:671). This and the fact that I, before I started "the cognitive and emotional journeys" (Amit 2000:8) involving fieldwork, never was affiliated to the dirndl spheres, makes the ascription of me as an authentic insider questionable (Narayan 1993:671).

All these insights make no claims to completeness, since, ethnographic truths are "inherently *partial* – committed and incomplete" (Clifford 2010:7) – and "positioned truths" (Abu-Lughod 2006:469). Following the trajectories of one good, that is the dirndl, ushered me to the particular. By giving way to the discrete and the specific, and by not letting the whole appear to be more than the sum of its parts, I evade "the most problematic connotations of culture: homogeneity, coherence, and timelessness" (Abu-Lughod 2006:476). Nonetheless, putting together some of the pieces in the puzzle of the dirndl's renaissance in the name of tradition still may reveal a significant picture.

1 The dirndl in times past

Let me do the first steps into the world of dirndl with a journey into the past. I consider recalling the past of importance for the very reason that the history of traditional costumes in Austria is often covered by the widespread belief that the dirndl has a rural provenance and that it existed all the while. This mythical belief fosters the idea of “the” tradition. Furthermore, in a large section of the population the historical occurrences, especially in social and political regards, pass into oblivion, given that any awareness of the past ever existed. This chapter, however, is not a history of costumes, but rather more an outline of the political and social cornerstones of the dirndl in times past.

The German word for traditional costume is *Tracht*. Its etymological root is the Middle High German word *trabt(e)* or the Old High German word *draht(a)*. Until the mid-eighteenth century, *Tracht* signified *to wear* (compare the German word *tragen*) and it also designated the things that were worn (Dudenverlag 2014) in the sense of garb. Furthermore, hairstyles, gestures and the appearance of a person were embraced by the term *Tracht* (Egger 2014:167).

In the course of the French Revolution, the time of the sumptuary laws (*Trachtenregeln*) came to an end, and fashion, providing the possibility of revealing one’s individuality and personality, superseded (Weissengruber 2004:21–42). In the following time, the aristocrats and bourgeoisie rediscovered the rural population, bringing in its wake a romanticizing and an idealization of the rural life. The bourgeoisie started to take a great interest in the folk culture and used the rural way of living as an inspiration for their lifestyle. The European aristocrats, especially the Habsburgs and the House of Wittelsbach, started to foster traditional costumes (*Tracht*) by wearing seemingly rural costumes on special occasions. In these distempered times, they were driven by a steering towards an idyllic rusticity à la Rousseau, a strengthening patriotism, a sense of nationality, and a search for identity (Weissengruber 2004:21–42). It was a time of intense nation-building, in which “nations were increasingly seen as organic wholes, nourished by the pure lore, tradition or rural virtue of the peasant, yeoman or farmer not yet afflicted by cosmopolitan modernity” (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002:314). These national concepts also emerged in the folklore studies in Europe. The rediscovery and commitment to folk culture spread from the elite and the academics, thereby inducing a contemplation of tradition on behalf of the wearers, who as a consequence started to emphasize their traditions. In the nineteenth century, thus, folk culture became fixed like a snapshot in time and its image was endorsed with the quality of historicity and value. As a consequence, garb turned into *Tracht*, that is, *traditional* costume (Grieshofer

2012:86). Along the lines of the aristocrats, the urban middle-class intellectuals started to show interest in the rural traditions, which were deemed to be ideal. At this time, the townspeople rediscovered the working clothes of young peasant women. They refined their styles and materials and started to wear them at different occasions (Tostmann 2012:150) – thus, the *dirndl* was born. With the advent of tourism, which heralded in the dedication of the statue of Mozart in 1842 (Mielichhofer 1843:18, 31), traditional costumes became attractive for holiday visitors. They used it as an inspiration for their creations of traditional fashion, which they invented as a popular variety for themselves (Scope 1993c:172). Art and culture, tourism, and folklore struck up their to the present day existing symbiosis (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993b:13).

In the new industrial centers, above all in Salzburg and Vienna, social clubs were initiated, where like-minded people could meet in the name of traditional costumes. In 1881, the social club *Edelweiß* was established (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993b:15). Ten years later, in 1891 and based on the model of Bavarian societies, *Alpinia*, a society for traditional costumes, was incorporated in Salzburg. Between 1905 and 1911, it became fashion to parade on occasion of congresses and conferences in traditional costumes. *Alpinia*, which played the leading role in this regard, distinguished itself from following social clubs by its playful and confident approach to traditional costumes (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993b:16–17). At this time, traditional costumes served them as an indicator for a national or local attitude aware of tradition (Weissengruber 2004:21–42).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the state and the economy exploited customs and traditional costumes as a reaction to the industrial revolution and the misery of the peasantry in order to prevent social conflicts and unemployment. Plenty of new styles of traditional costumes emerged. In places without any old traditional costumes to foster new styles were created on ideological motives. This endeavor was especially successful in places supported by economical associations (Tostmann and Hausherr 1998:39). The aim was to promote the local industry, to renew the arts and crafts, to pay tribute to the farmers who moved to the city and to satisfy the tourists' expectations of folklore (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993a:30, 1993a:32; Scope 1993b:121).

Before the First World War, traditional costumes remained reserved for the members of societies for traditional costumes, who wore them on hiking tours. The majority of the urban population didn't associate with traditional costumes, as the target groups for traditional costumes were the affluent urban upper class and summer visitors (Scope 1993c:179–180).

In the course of time, more and more social clubs came up. They appealed to people from the working class who tried to escape their daily routines and to compensate the longing for a lost home through romanticizing the country life (Grieshofer 2004). They became a gathering of

people who were easily affected by social changes and financial problems and who were not used to adapt themselves to new conditions. The societies for traditional costumes attracted people, whose minds were geared to follow norms and who only accepted changes within the boundaries of these norms (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993c:266). At this time, diminished Austria was looking for a new collective identity, even with the aid of folklore studies (Tostmann 1999:126). Thus, a search for the “true, real and genuine” began and an imperial federation of societies for traditional costumes was established in 1908. In consequence of the increasing demand the quest for “original Salzburg traditional costumes” and the struggle against traditional fashion started, also driven by folklorists.

As early as 1913 the polemic against Jewish textile traders and producers was triggered. The societies for traditional costumes fought against “the foreign”, which was blamed for the changes taking place since the nineteenth century. They opposed the artists of the Salzburg festival, visitors, and everybody who wore traditional fashion vigorously. In the circles of traditional costumes a German National and racist attitude emerged, accompanied by the hope for the annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993c).

Notwithstanding, traditional fashion continued to flourish internationally. The 1920s witnessed the biggest boom in traditional fashion. Concurrently, the Salzburg Festival gained international fame. The fashion of the summer visitors previously confined to the German and Austrian area became popular among the artists of the Salzburg Festival and tourists from other European countries and the United States (Scope 1993c:187). During this time, the firm Sporthaus Lanz, which was incorporated in Salzburg in 1922, became very successful with selling traditional fashion in the United States (Weissengruber 2004:153–155). Carl Mayr, a painter and designer of traditional costumes, worked for Sporthaus Lanz. He and his brother enjoyed popularity in the upper social circles in Salzburg. They rated many celebrities among their friends, who all were influenced by the drafts of Carl Mayr. During the daytime, the visitors of the Salzburg Festival paraded their traditional costumes and dresses, whilst in the evening only evening attires were accepted. At this time, traditional dress turned into costume and the enthusiasm for traditional fashion spread from the inhabitants to the visitors of Salzburg (Scope 1993a:246–249).

In the 1930s, the dirndl dress perfectly corresponded with the expected image and role of women. Hair in braids and feminine dresses signaled the women’s return to privacy, domesticity, and motherhood, which was expedient in view of the tense labor market situation (Scope 1993c:192). Traditional costumes, regardless of whether fashionable or “authentic”, worn by Austrians and visitors, became more and more a symbolic confession of Austrian identity (Scope 1993c:190).

Concurrently, folklorists started to show interest in the research and cataloguing of traditional costumes. One of the key players was Dr. Viktor von Geramb, a folklorist with a German National attitude, in Styria. In 1934, he founded the first Austrian Heimatwerk in Graz with the objective of fostering traditional costumes and promoting the regional businesses (Grieshofer 2012:87–88). Geramb realized that the old ways of production were not sufficient for the maintenance of traditional costumes. Therefore, he started to cooperate with companies from the textile sector. Based on old patterns which the companies adopted they created a certificate of authenticity, so as to set themselves apart from the cheap tourist attire (Tostmann 1999:129; Tostmann and Hausherr 1998:27–40). In collaboration with Geramb, Konrad Mautner, a descendent of a Viennese Jewish family of big industrialists who had gotten interested in traditional costumes during a summer holiday, published the Styrian style sheet for traditional costumes (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993c:267).

Subsequently, under the direction of Kuno Brandauer who was an important figure in the renewal of traditional costumes, the first Salzburg style sheet for traditional costumes was published in 1935 (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993b:18–19).

In March 1938, the at least on behalf of the societies for traditional costumes desiderated annexation of Austria under the dictate of Hitler came true (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993c). During the time of National Socialism, the conservative Nazi faction endorsed the idea of traditional costumes and deployed it as a propaganda tool. Publicly, Hitler appeared enamored with traditional costumes (Guenther 1997:33).

According to the Nazi ideology, the cloths had to be attached to one's native soil. Peasant women were emboldened to manufacture their "authentic peasant dresses" out of home-grown cloth by hand (Gaugele 1998:137). The idea of the new peasantry asserted. Already at the May Day celebrations it was important to the operators to have the erection of the maypoles in Vienna and Berlin, and to have young women dancing in their dirndl dresses underneath the trees in order to induce the allegory of the German blood (Wallnöfer 2011:156–157).

In the same year, Kuno Brandauer published the following prohibition from the Salzburg police authority in the *Gebirgstrachtenzeitung* (nr. 7, p. 7):

Auf Grund der Verordnung des Bundesministeriums für Inneres und Unterricht vom 28. Juni 1922 verordnet der kommissarische Polizeidirektor von Salzburg, Doktor [Benno] Braitenberg: „Juden ist im Bereiche der Polizeidirektion Salzburg das öffentliche Tragen von alpenländischen (echten oder unechten) Trachten, wie Lederhosen, Joppen, Dirndlkleidern, weißen Wadenstutzen, Tirolerhüten usw. *verboten*. Übertretungen werden mit Geld bis 133 Reichsmark oder Arrest bis zu zwei Wochen bestraft. Diese Kundmachung tritt mit dem Tage ihrer Verlautbarung in Kraft.“ Diese Verfügung wurde durch Verordnung des Landeshauptmannes von Salzburg auf das ganze Land (Gau) Salzburg erstreckt. Die Verfügung (Anm.: 1938) wird zweifellos von allen Kreisen begrüßt werden, die es seit langem hinnehmen hatten müssen, daß z.B. das Dirndl - man erinnere sich nur an Bad Ischl früherer Jahre! – geradezu als ein jüdisches Nationalkostüm erschien. (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993c:273)

From this time on, Jews were not allowed to wear any traditional costume or fashion publicly, otherwise they would be fined. Furthermore, scientific research was used for legitimizing the fostering and renewing of traditional costumes on behalf of the Nazi regime. Two ideological fundamental ideas predominated in integrating traditional costumes into the propaganda campaigns. Firstly, the aim was to retrieve the costumes from everything which could have been considered as Jewish or foreign. Secondly, traditional costumes were supposed to become the collective garb expressing the common identity. In order to concentrate the ambitions of the various custodians and reformers of traditional costumes, the *Mittelstelle Deutsche Tracht* was established under the guidance of Gertrud Pesendorfer in 1939 (Weissengruber 2004:21–42). Pesendorfer served in the Tyrolean museum of popular art, was a member of the NSDAP and worked actively as commissary for traditional costumes for the Third Reich. In her work, she drew on encountered styles collected at the museum and proposed their renewal. Her activities caused a fundamental change in the female figure, for the simple reason that she uncovered the lower arms and displayed naked skin by shortening the sleeves of the blouses. What is more, the white blouse became the general blouse for traditional costumes and dirndl dresses. Furthermore, she created the nowadays so typical feminine waist, bringing along new constraints on women's bodies. At the hands of the Nazi-secretary Pesendorfer, a tamed and controlled eroticization evolved in female traditional fashion, bringing in its wake a new corporeality, underpinned with the argument of down-to-earthness. Besides, she deliberately set up new regions for particular traditional costumes which hadn't existed before then (Wallnöfer 2011:156). Pesendorfer's work had a lasting impact on the style of traditional costumes, as her designs are nowadays taken for granted and go unquestioned. Although she actively worked for the Third Reich and created traditional costumes without any scientific basis, Pesendorfer received a badge of honor from Tyrol and is considered as a researcher for traditional costumes (Wallnöfer 2008b:26–34).

In day-to-day life, however, traditional dresses for women didn't become prevalent as female plainclothes (Gaugele 1998:138). More and more women started out to work in factories and industries – wearing pants and working clothes thus became a necessity (Guenther 1997:40).

After 1945, a new start quickly was made with the help of preservation societies and their attempts. The agenda was to disentangle culturally from Germany, to avert the American influence and to find a distinct Austrian identity. Here, the handed down costumes from the time before the Second World War proved to be useful in expressing a regained independence and a growing confidence. Opposed to that, many people totally rejected any traditional clothing (Weissengruber 2004:21–42).

In response to the heavy destruction and social consequences of the Second World War, Heimatfilme experienced a boom. They provided an anchor for many people, simulating an ideal

world nestled in the mountain sceneries where the world was still in order. In the 1950s, which were the heydays of Heimatfilme, the life of an Austrian family conquered the screens of the theatres all over the world. It was the story of the Trapp family immigrating to the United States, which had a huge impact on Salzburg and its costumes. The movie portrayed the desperately needed good examples among the “beastly Germans” from the Nazi period (Strasser 2000:272). Three films basing on the biography of the Trapp Family were shot: *Die Trapp-Familie* (1956), *Die Trapp-Familie in Amerika* (1958) and *The Sound of Music* (1965). The German film became a huge success in the German-speaking countries, whereas the American film achieved a big hit in the rest of the world. Although Americans, Japanese, Australians, Chinese and many other learned of the Trapp family only through the American film, this version remained a footnote in Austria (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 2000b:10). Nonetheless, the film *Sound of Music* had a huge impact on the tourism industry in Salzburg (Strasser 2000:284) and helped to construct a certain cliché of the city and its inhabitants. Aside from the movies, the exhibition about the Habsburgs in New York in 1979/1980 popularized traditional costumes across the world (Tostmann and Hausherr 1998:37).

Concerning Austria, in the last 50 years the misconception arose that every region has to have its own traditional costume (Tostmann and Hausherr 1998:39). In addition, it took a long time to reconsider the ambivalent role of fostering traditional costumes, as these activities actually created new forms in the first place (Grieshofer 2012:87–88).

In the last twenty to thirty years, traditional costumes got rid of their ideological attributions. However, this doesn't preclude that there are individuals or groups who still adhere to the former ideologies (Weissengruber 2004:21–42). Nevertheless, the valuations of Salzburg traditional costumes are manifold. Many consider them as the embodiment of a vivid Austrian garb, for others they represent a great example of the renewal of costumes, for still others they form an important feature in the tradition- and status-conscious casual wear. Furthermore, they build an influential element in the international haute couture and in the Austrian economy (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993b:9).

In the present, traditional costumes experience a boom, again. Still, they express homeland ties, a loyalty to tradition, communal spirit and individuality, often carrying the connotation of exclusiveness and elitism. It seems as if the growing impression of the evermore connected and globalized world and the opening of Europe arouse the need for the identification and preservation of parochial and manageable areas (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993c:274; Weissengruber 2004:8). In this endeavor, myth often seems to be more attractive and stronger than truth, despite the accessible bodies of factual information (Kammen 1991:26).

2 The myth of Austrianess

“Why is Austria a state and not a nation?” Renan (1990:12) asks in his essay about the being of a nation. According to him, “a nation is a soul, a spiritual principle” (Renan 1990:19), which is not bound to a language, geography, religious affiliations or military necessities, but constituted by a shared past and its remembrance, and the present belief in a shared future, in which the heritage is venerated. It is humankind, who forms and creates a people (Renan 1990:20), a common cultural identity, which provides us with a solid reference system and a fixed meaning, the inconstancy of the actual history notwithstanding (Hall 1998:223). This is one way of thinking about cultural identity, in terms of “one, shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self’” (Hall 1998:223).

After the end of the First World War and the decay of the Danube Monarchy in 1918, Austria lacked a collective identity, thus, the Alps became the projection surface for a new identity. This new identity, rooted in the Austrian Alps, became synonymous with women wearing dirndl dresses, cozy mountain cabins and schnapps (Binder 2001:198, 200). During the annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany in March 1938, any sense of an Austrian identity vanished (Bruckmüller 1998). In 1945, it was the state which created the Austrian nation and provided national symbols (Johler and Tschöfen 2001:189). Inasmuch as Austria as a nation could not draw on any origin myth, expeditions of conquest or other ancient legends, similar images like in the time before the rise of National Socialism were revitalized. Regarding the politics and the production of symbols, thus, no new beginning took place, which is to say that the state unreflectingly maintained the symbols dating from the times of the monarchy, the first republic and National Socialism (Johler and Tschöfen 2001:192). Again, the landscape, the Alps and the nature became crucial elements in the establishment of Austria as a bounded unit. The message they transmitted was not so much “nation Austria” but rather “native Austria” (Binder 2001:200). In recent decades, the population of Austria created the “kind of moral conscience” which Renan (1990:20) calls a nation. In the mid-1950s, less than half of the population believed in Austria as nation. Nowadays, the majority of Austrians share the idea of a collective, national identity (Tributsch and Ulram 2008:4). They, thus, formed an imagined community (Anderson 1991) bound together by imaginative projections of national identities resulting from the influence of books, newspapers and television. The initial question, hence, is no longer tenable for most of the people. Friedman (2000:96) goes one step further in the discussion about an Austrian national identity. He states that the great political and economic changes which Austria is experiencing in recent decades – the decline of the Austrian economy, the financial crises, the increasing unemployment rate and the concomitant insecurities – cause a return to the roots and a revitalization of traditionalism “tinged with racism” (Friedman 2000:96). The “increasing

ethnification of national identities” (Friedman 2000:96) comes along with a renaissance of ethnicity on the sub-national level and is based on a rhetoric of heritage, identity, and authenticity (Upton 2001:304). This rhetoric serves to highlight the uniqueness of a nation and its people and helps to create national distinctiveness; thereby it demonstrates, justifies and guarantees its existence (Handler and Linnekin 1984:277; Mayer 2000:10). Heritage, identity and the question of authenticity are highly contested fields, which don’t inherit any essence on their own and thus cannot be affirmed by an “objective truth”. The evocation of this rhetoric is a way of claiming and challenging distributions of power, where the elite possess a high potency in the construction of a nation and its narratives. Thus, the nation and the principles for the members of the nation are established in ways that serve “the aspirations of the elite” (Mayer 2000:10). In Austria, however, the state is not any longer in charge of the production of national symbols (Binder 2001:205). Other areas such as tourism, the economy, the media, and by association the advertising industry took the helm in using and (re)producing national symbols and references for their own purposes.

In modern merchandising, the trend is towards making use of images which allude to traditions, myths, and nostalgia. In this regard, tradition is in great demand and never has been as common as nowadays. Everybody and everything refers to tradition in such a way that it has become a buzzword. Wherever tradition is brought into play, feelings are prompted and promises of quality, home, and identity follow in the wake. We experience a renaissance of tradition (Grieshofer 2012:89–90) and an era in which imaginary bygone times come to life again. The glory days seem to be over and thus are wished back. This nostalgia, however, is not the attempt to inherit the past time as a “received truth”, but rather the yearning to return to a past time, “to live and be engaged creatively in that past time” (Grabrun 2001:71). That is not to say that the past time must have taken place the way it is portrayed in mass merchandising, thus representing something that is lost. Rather, following Appadurai (2005:76), consumers are taught to miss things they have never lost (Halbwachs 1980). “In thus creating experiences of losses that never took place, these advertisements create what might be called ‘imagined nostalgia,’ nostalgia for things that never were” (Appadurai 2005:76). Similar motives are discernable in the current desire for modern myths, which is comparable to the concurrent need for history, tradition, regionality and authenticity. These sensations don’t reflect actual facts or echo real happenings, but rather what we wish for to take place, what – according to our present state of mind – should be true (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 2000b:9).

There is a significant overlap between the two words *tradition* and *myth*, as they interrelate and often act in concert. Still, the words are not interchangeable (Kammen 1991:25). Barthes describes myth as follows:

Myth is a system of communication, that it is a message. This allows one to perceive that myth cannot possibly be an object, a concept, or an idea; it is a mode of signification, a form. [...] Since myth is a type of speech, everything can be a myth provided it is conveyed by a discourse. Myth is not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message: there are formal limits to myth, there are no “substantial” ones. (Barthes 2006:293)

Myth belongs to the science of semiology (Barthes 1991:88) and consists of a signifier, the signified and the sign. It is constructed from a preexisting semiological chain, hence it is “a second-order semiological system” (Barthes 2008:683), based on a linguistic system, language, or similar modes of representations such as images. The initial point of myth is the consolidated signs of this first language. Myth, thus, is a “*metalanguage*, because it is a second language, *in which* one speaks about the first” (Barthes 2008:683). A myth can be manifested visually or verbally, it cannot be defined by its object or matter, since every thing can be given any meaning arbitrarily. Written discourses, sport, photography, film, acting and advertising can be the carriers of a mythical message (Barthes 1991:86–87).

In order to analyze and decode myths, we have to bring the signs together (Turner 1996:20–21) and designate the concept, which is the signified. In this connection, neologisms bear a helping hand, especially when they convey an ephemeral meaning (Barthes 1991:101).

In the course of the last decades, the dirndl accomplished to become a crucial identifier for Austrianess. Nowadays, it is profitably employed in the tourism industry, the world of advertising, ceremonial occasions and public events. Wherever the dirndl comes into the picture, it is surrounded by myth. To this day, it is said that the Austrian or Bavarian dirndls have a rural background, that they represent regional diversity and an emancipatory eroticism. However, today’s designs of dirndl dresses are an invention of enthusiastic female National Socialists (Wallnöfer 2011:157). The point here is not whether or how the dirndl was a creation of National Socialists (on this see Guenther 2004; Wallnöfer 2008b, 2011 or chapter one) but the omnipresent myth depicting the history of the object and emptying its reality (Barthes 1991:141). Myth, hence, plays an important role, inasmuch as “it points out and it notifies, it makes us understand something and it imposes it on us” (Barthes 2008:685). In the case of the dirndl, it is this double function of myth which turns it into the accomplice of tradition, as it helps to sustain the idea of the dirndl’s tradition as a given Austrian thing enveloped in timelessness. The myth surrounding the dirndl echoes roughly the same symbols deployed in the formation of the Austrian nation. It is composed of images of mountain sceneries, green meadows, romanticized peasant life, alpine huts and freely grazing animals and highlights women, portrayed as natural beauties, often putting their femininity center stage.

These mythical images are deeply entrenched in the world of advertising, as advertisers and marketers constantly draw on the abovementioned pictures in a similar manner. This way of

representing is not confined to advertisements for traditional costumes only, but rather a general trend, increasingly emerging in the food sector, too. This trend is revisited and fostered by a current back-to-nature- and back-to-the-roots-movement.

The world of advertising doesn't exist by itself and on its own, but is "culturally constituted" (McCracken 2005:167). Advertisements draw their content from a culturally constituted world and transfer its meaning to a certain good. Individuals who look at the images or any other form of stimuli "interpret it according to cultural conventions" (McCracken 2005:167). The aim of advertising is accomplished, once the consumer identifies the properties of a representation from the world with the advertised good (McCracken 1989:77). Modern advertising thus teaches its recipients to consume the sign and not the product. It fulfills its task best when the customers purchase the product for what it stands for and not for what it is. It is completed, when they take the sign for what it signifies, which means that the product and the image created through the advertisements appear to be congruent in the consumer's eyes (Goldman 1992:19).

Let me illustrate the power of myth, its function in the world of advertising and its impact on images in the minds of people by an example. In 1957, the all-rounder Erwin Klein founded the beverage manufacturer Almdudler. He derived the company name from the phrase "auf der Alm dudeln," which means "singing in the alpine meadows." The soft drink was originally created and marketed as a mixer for alcoholic drinks, especially for white wine. Almdudler consists of water, sugar, citric acid, carbonic acid, caramel color, and 32 Alpine herbs blended according to a secret recipe. In Austria, Almdudler is bottled by the Coca-Cola Company and Vöslauer and stands out by its unique glass bottle form.

In celebration of its fiftieth company anniversary, the owner Thomas Klein, who acceded to his father at the age of twenty, launched the Almdudler Trachtenpärichenball taking place in the Viennese town hall in 2007. The dress code for the ball is traditional clothing, interpreted in a creative and crazy way. Within a few years, the ball turned into a successful event, attracting more than 3.500 guests, among them also celebrities and politicians (Almdudler Pressestelle 2014).

According to a market study (market Marktforschungs-Ges.m.b.H. & Co.KG 2013) conducted in 2013, Almdudler is the most likeable beverage in Austria, ahead of Coca Cola and Sprite. In Austria, the consumer recognition of Almdudler makes up 99 per cent (Böck 2014). This extremely high brand awareness is achieved by a corporate identity especially geared to the Austrian market and a smart advertising strategy. The heart of the brand builds a couple in traditional Austrian costumes, named Marianne and Jakob. In the course of time, the couple slimmed and their costumes became more colorful and revealing (Holzer 2006). The pictorial design is characterized by the Alpine world, the great outdoors, and the unspoiled countryside, often staged in the look of old Heimatfilme. The colors of the Almdudler logo and the main

colors of all campaigns are red and white. All these features help to construct the image of Austrianess in the commodification process of this lemonade, which doesn't really differ in taste from other soft drinks. Packaging and myth, thus, are more relevant in the competence for customers than the taste itself. This becomes evident considering the merchandising products, which are offered online and range from key chains to sun beds. The commodification of the label itself is consummated through the commodification of the myth of Austrianess, as these days Almdudler is regarded as an Austrian cultural asset. The company perfectly uses the implemented images to evoke a certain image of natural Austrianess and to construct the image of a drink composed of herbs from Alpine meadows, originating in the seemingly unspoiled Alps. Thereby, it masks the physical realities of the production, using images where there is not a soul to be seen, enlisting myth and image, ancient story forms and the current popularity of Austrian goods. The secret recipe heightens the mythical character of the product. Besides secrecy, history is used to create certain images, too. Besides emphasizing the company's trustworthiness, giving the year of the company's establishment helps to evoke a never changing image of the product, as if the conditions of production haven't changed since the year dot.

In this way, the beverage manufacturers promote the myth of Austrianess and furthermore, shape its future, as a myth is communication and simultaneously a statement (Barthes 1991:105). The vigorous effect of myth lies in its blatant inconspicuousness. Recipients consider myth as an inductive system, whereas it is just of semiotic nature, thus a system of values. They regard the equivalence between myth and the signified as a causal relationship based on a natural cause (Barthes 1991:115). That is to say that myth smoothes away the complexity of human actions, it gives them the simplicity of essences, it declares and arranges a world without contradictions. Things give the impression as if they matter all by themselves (Barthes 1991:131–132).

This illustrates how Almdudler could succeed that much in Austria. In the eyes of the public, myth turned into a fact and the lemonade became the bottled up Alpine meadow. The sparkling yellow drink turns into the reification of childhood memories, of the holidaymakers' fond memories of Austria, or of a hiking day in the last days of autumn, which hence substantiate the claim that Almdudler is Austria's national beverage. However, this claim is not based on facts, but on a perfectly established myth which has turned into a fact, as consumers treat the meaning of myth as a system of facts (Barthes 1991:115). In exactly this way, myth becomes the accomplice of tradition. It assists in the subsistence of tradition, which is just as little an essentially existing fact by itself.

Myth, however, "remains in fact essential to the life of the nation, for it is by embracing myths [...] that members perpetuate not only national myths but also the nation itself" (Mayer 2000:3), even though the state doesn't hold the reins of the creation of myth anymore.

3 From tradition to taste in theory

These days, we are facing a renaissance of tradition. In the popular belief, tradition is something that is handed down from preceding generations to their successors, often since time immemorial. Its conceived location is rather in the past, from where it reaches to the present. Tradition presents itself as something given in every sense of the word. That is, it appears to be delivered from previous times, often with its origin unknown. Further, it is hardly challenged in its existence, character and history. The word tradition is a positively loaded term, highly valued, linked to ideas of permanence and changelessness. Tradition usually presents itself as a sign of quality, since there must have been a reason for its preservation.

3.1 Tracing traditions

In the world of science, historians and anthropologists have not been reflective about tradition for a long time either (Shils 1988:10). Across disciplines, the idea of traditions as produced, perpetuated and enacted elements of bounded entities in confined geographical spaces has been predominant (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:38). These attributions and the static notion of tradition are still existent in some concepts of culture and identity (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:22). Also, they fostered the assertion of regional costumes in the first half of the last century. The Swiss folklorist and writer about traditional costumes Richard Weiß (Weiß 1946) considered traditions as the binding element in the constitution of communities. According to him, the belief in traditions (*Traditionsgläubigkeit*) – that is the appreciation of any traditional material due to its conventionality and transmission – is a mental human feature (Weiß 1946:15). The belief in progress, on the other hand, threatens traditions and leads to mass culture. Progress dissolves communities and nations, who find their right to exist and their meaning in traditions (Weiß 1946:22–23). Traditions and by association traditional costumes are, according to him, the essence of a community. Only twenty years later, a paradigmatic change took place in folklore studies. Grieshofer (2012:83–84) links this change to Bausinger's *Kritik der Tradition* (1969), in which he reconsidered the crucial terms of folklore studies (*Volkskunde*), the discipline itself and its relations to neighboring disciplines. Bausinger (1969:237) stated that the one-sided conception of tradition concealed the relationship of function and value. Furthermore, it blocked the question for the actual cultural configurations, just as the idea of *Gemeinschaft* obscured the actual social differentiations. Consequently, Bausinger (1969) set in motion the discussion about renaming the discipline (Grieshofer 2012:83–84).

Tradition meets modernity

In common sense, tradition often still is opposed to progress, innovation, and modernity. This distinction has a long history in the academic world. For a long time, scientists like Durkheim, Mauss and Parson with their functionalist approaches distinguished between modern and traditional societies (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:11). Weber (1964) was the first to discern the traditional and the modern as two ultimately opposed ideal-types for social action, whereby tradition came across as legitimizing practices (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:23). Shoham (2011:318) criticizes Weber for not explaining how a culture is handed down from generation to generation, or how the construction of identity takes place. Further, Weber treats tradition as a static habit. Weber's approach to tradition responds to Shoham's (2011:313–314) description of detraditionalization, that is the demise of tradition as a necessary consequence for the advance of modernization. As a second approach to tradition in sociology, he determines the 'totality-approach', meaning tradition as the core element of social and individual life and a central source of knowledge, institutions and values.

The opposition of tradition and modernity forms one part of the classical theory of modernization. The second component is "the inevitable triumph of modernity over tradition" (Shoham 2011:317). According to Chevron (2012:216), the terms modernization and traditionalization simply serve to characterize essential tendencies in the cultural development. Thus, the terms don't designate clear-cut phenomena, but rather more human perceptions and needs, which oscillate between the belief of the new as progress for the better, and the old as the tried and tested, thus eternal.

Friedman (2000:225), however, discerns two usages of the term modernity which both relate to the capitalist framework, that is, "the accumulation of abstract wealth as a dominant process of social reproduction." Modernity in a contemporaneous understanding describes the integration within the capitalist world economy and by implication, to varying degrees within the capitalist world as such.

In the structural sense, modernity refers to the cultural parameters of capitalist experience space and the commodification of the social field (Friedman and Friedman 2008:16). Modernity, thus, doesn't represent a specific "culture" and cannot be understood in a substantive sense. "It cannot flow and it cannot be reduced to the idea of a set or collection of differences by which traditions have often been described" (Friedman 2000:213). Modernity is an emergent identity space and not a trait of progress. The emergence of modernity is characterized by a rise of individualism, linked to the increasing decentralization of access to wealth, involving a distinction between the private and public (Friedman 2000:213; Miller 1987:141). Further indicators of a rising modernization are the specification in material culture use and a scientific-rational order (Miller

1987:141). Modernity is a self-referential term used to designate a state of identity, historically bound, linked to the present as the cultural form of life and opposed to “tradition” as the preceding era (Friedman 2000:214). In this sense, modernity is not the opposite of tradition, but rather just another tradition, “labile and fragile, that has emerged, however partially, and disappeared numerous times on the stage of human history, as if to document the truth of the repetition compulsion” (Friedman 2000:229–230). Friedman, however, doesn’t provide an explanation of his understanding of tradition, as in his works he doesn’t particularly deal with tradition but with the construction of histories as “products of particular social positions” (1992:194).

Following Upton (2001:298), the adjectives *traditional* and *modern* are themselves results of the emergence of modernity, for a tradition didn’t exist before it became the defining complement of modernity. The terms *traditional* and *modern* are just in the vanguard of a range of other dichotomous adjectives, all referring to similar conceptions of identity ascriptions: “ancient and modern, indigenous and cosmopolitan, hidden and transparent, mysterious and known, obscure and legible, pure and impure, substantial and ephemeral, and most of all authentic and inauthentic” (Upton 2001:298–299).

Tradition bounded by essence

Approaches to tradition go hand in hand with conceptualizing culture. Here, too, conceptions have changed in the course of decades. According to Friedman (2000:72–73), culture has been used in two broadly different ways in anthropology. Generic culture refers to the specificity of human behavior, pointing out the formulation and framing of plans and intentions in semantic constructs, that is, language. Generic culture, thus, describes the organization of human behavior into meaningful schemes. The second conception of culture enables the identification of “the other,” inasmuch as it consists in the attribution of differential patterns to each and every population. Every member of that population inherits the same characteristics of their culture and these properties, corresponding with the individual, the culture, and the population, serve as an explanation for their behavior, mindset, actually their whole being. This – more common – conception and usage of culture signify essentialism par excellence. Both of these usages, however, share the assumption “that culture is somehow a real existing entity, object, system of relations, bounded in some way” (Friedman 2000:73).

The first treatise about tradition, written by Shils in 1981, is premised on similar assumptions as former conceptions of culture. Shils (1988:3) acknowledges the existence of tradition. According to him, tradition is “anything which is transmitted or handed down from the past to the present, [and] includes material objects, beliefs about all sorts of things, images of persons and events,

practices and institutions. It includes buildings, monuments, landscapes, sculptures, paintings, books, tools, machines” (Shils 1988:12). Shils notes that traditions do change and states that the temporal chain of tradition with its steps of transmission and possession still needs to be recognizable as such by an external observer. According to him, traditions occupy essential elements which don’t change dramatically. Differences in perception might happen as recipients of changing traditions might overlook these modifications (Shils 1988:13–14). Traditions depend on humans, as they have to be enacted and re-enacted, and their development is advanced by the human need “to create something truer and better or more convenient” (Shils 1988:14–15). A tradition has to last over at least three generations, no matter what their duration is (Shils 1988:15). In this regard, fashion is distinguished from tradition as long as it lasts only one generation, although the boundary between these two is indistinct (Shils 1988:16). The only distinction Shils draws between fashion and tradition is the duration of these two phenomena, as a fashion might become a tradition in the course of time. “Nonetheless, despite the vagueness of the boundary, the difference is real” (Shils 1988:16). However, the distinction is not given by the object or theme itself, as it is the people who distinguish between fashion and tradition. Furthermore, the criterion of three generations – no matter how long or short they might last – hardly is sustainable as a marker of tradition. Moreover, Shils states that traditions possess essential elements which can be discerned by outsiders. In this respect, Shils’ conceptualization objectively points out to an essentializing approach to tradition. Nonetheless, he (Shils 1988:26) ascertains that traditions undergo a selective process, as elements of traditions fade into obscurity. A finding which recent conceptions of tradition still share is that traditions might have ideological content. Also, the interpretation of the past might change through self-conscious interpretation (Shils 1988:246).

Tradition reinvented

The meaning of history and the valuation of the past form a crucial element in the approach of Hobsbawm and Ranger, whose publication *The Invention of Tradition* caused a significant shift in the conception of tradition in 1983. The starting point here is that “‘traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes even invented” (Hobsbawm 1996:1). The phrase “invented traditions” has to be grasped in a broad sense, as the term designates traditions which are actually invented and traditions which emerged in a short period with striking success (Hobsbawm 1996:1). Invented tradition doesn’t denote things that are handed down, as Shils (1988) conceptualized it, but a set of social practices, which are guided by accepted rules in the present in order to establish a continuity with a historic past. Its purpose is to impress certain values and ways of behaving by repetition (Hobsbawm 1996:1). Inventions of

traditions emerge in times of rapid transformations and present a way of responding to novel situations by apparently referring to old situations in order to establish the image of unchanging and invariant parts of social life. They are thus a reaction to the destruction of social patterns (Hobsbawm 1996:2). Precisely in times like these, traditions can become a resort for those that associate with them, as they can serve as a “normative benchmark” (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:23), a guideline for ways of behaving and a foundation of values.

The means of this process is a constant repetition, often in a ritualistic or symbolic manner and the resource for the construction of invented traditions is ancient materials, which can be found in any society and which become the hooks for novel interpretations (Hobsbawm 1996:6). However, there are also genuine traditions and not all traditions are invented, as “where the old ways are alive, traditions need be neither revived nor invented” (Hobsbawm 1996:7–8). Hobsbawm (1996:9) discerns three types of invented traditions, which are not mutually exclusive. These types also point to some functions and purposes of invented traditions.

The first type serves the establishment or symbolization of group cohesion, which entails the dissociation from others. The second type assists in the legitimization of institutions and in the establishment of relations of authority, and the third type encourages socializations and the implementation of beliefs, value systems and ways of behaving. Traditions, thus, might very well serve ideological purposes in any society, be it for the distribution of power or the enforcement of certain societal norms. Mückler (2012:18–19) adds another function of traditions, namely the legitimization of novelties and the enforcement of change. “For all invented traditions, so far as possible, use history as a legitimator of action and cement of group cohesion,” (Hobsbawm 1996:12) whereby Friedman (1992:194) stresses that the making of history itself always is a positional endeavor.

As a historian, Hobsbawm directs his research interests to the historical past of societies, such as the turn of the century in Europe and the rise of mass production. Shoham (2011) expands Hobsbawm’s conception of invented traditions to the future. He adds that “modern traditions are often invented not only out of an imagined continuity with the past, but also for the sake of an imagined continuity with the future” (Shoham 2011:325).

A similar conception of tradition can be found in the article of Handler and Linnekin, which was publicized in 1984, just a year after Hobsbawm’s publication. In their work, the moment of time and its importance shift into focus. They state that “tradition cannot be defined in terms of boundedness, givenness, or essence” (Handler and Linnekin 1984:273). The Western notion of tradition, which echoes in Shils’ exposition of tradition, has to be dismissed, as it doesn’t constitute an appropriate scientific concept. Taking a similar approach as Hobsbawm and Ranger (1996), they conceive tradition as an interpretive process characterized by continuity and

discontinuity (Handler and Linnekin 1984:273). Taking their lead from Smith (1982), they argue that all cultures change ceaselessly, so that the question of “traditional” and “new” becomes obsolete, especially because this division of cultural traits fosters the notion of culture and tradition as bounded entities which have an essence apart from our interpretations (Handler and Linnekin 1984:273–274). By contrast with Hobsbawm’s (1996) conception of tradition as a set of social practices, Handler and Linnekin (1984:274) define tradition as “a process of thought – an ongoing interpretation of the past.” Tradition cannot be grasp without considering its today’s interpretation, for it is “a model of the past,” continuously reconstructed and “symbolically constituted” (Handler and Linnekin 1984:276) in the present.

The process of inventing traditions is selective, as only certain items form part of representing traditional national culture, whilst other parts of the past are ignored. Usually, the selected pieces can be associated with the rural, pre-industrial, and “natural” village life. These elements are placed in unfamiliar contexts, in which they then take on new meanings for the involved persons. Tradition, hence, is not something inherited from the past, which is preserved in the world of today, but rather an ongoing process of reinvention in the present (Handler and Linnekin 1984:280). The only place to conceive tradition is at the moment, as that is the point where “tradition is done,” which means reinvented and put into shape. According to Handler and Linnekin (1984:281), it is thus impossible to distinguish both empirically and theoretically between spurious and genuine traditions.

The same applies to the concept of heritage, which is the political governance of culture, tradition and history (Girke and Knoll 2013:8). It is thus “a social, political and economic phenomenon within a particular historical context” (Harrison 2013:4). Harrison (2013:3) criticizes that the definitions of heritage have become too expansive for that nowadays “almost anything can be perceived to be ‘heritage’.” A diversity of material and immaterial phenomena fall within the term of cultural heritage. Craft and handwork, monuments and memorial sites, as well as festivities, dances, rituals, languages and dialects, national parks, rivers, food, cloths and aspects of the *habitus* can be considered as cultural heritage (Schnepel 2013:24–25).

Heritage neither can be defined by pastness, givenness or other essential traits. It is not a useful scientific concept, as it is always ambiguous and never certain (Harrison 2013:6). The timeline of heritage directs rather into the future than into the past, which is comparable with the trajectory of tradition. “Heritage is primarily *not* about the *past*, but instead about our relationship with the *present* and the *future*” (Harrison 2013:4). Just as tradition, heritage arises from a selective and active process, in which objects, places and practices that appear valuable to us, shall be preserved for the future (Harrison 2013:4).

3.2 Placing objects

Our lives are embedded in materiality, but the way we handle the objects close to us is led by such a self-understanding, that we barely try to get to the bottom of all those things surrounding us and shaping our lives. In our daily routines, objects mainly make themselves felt in moments of absence or defect. Even then, in many cases it is not the object itself attracting our attention, but the stain on our shirt or the nerving sound of our mobile phone hiding in our bag when we are in a crowded tram. Beyond that, for the individual the condition of lack is more conspicuous than the possession of a thing – usually it is the things that we want and not the things that we have that we pay regard to.

Considering objects in their entirety, we come upon our favorite things, things that others have and we don't, things we have lost, purchased, created and given away. More often than not, they enter our lives, we award them with our attention, but sooner or later they fade into inconspicuousness. They belong to us, we tend to think. And usually that's how far our thoughts go. But what if we trace back their trajectories, and reconnect them to the people who lined their way? Moreover, what if we turn it upside down and dare to ask in which way do we appertain to things?

The relation between it and us

Basing his argument on Hegel, Miller (1987:35) states that humans have to create an objective, external world in order to recognize themselves as human beings. As Hegel remarks, only through the contemplation of things outside of ourselves we begin to create a consciousness – a process which he called self-alienation (Miller 2010:59).

Perhaps the earliest and most influential sociological account of the social character of objects is to be found in Marx's discussion of the fetishism of commodities. Taking up the lead from Hegel, Marx extends the concept of self-alienation to the context of labor and the ways in which humans relate to the objects they produce. In the words of Marx (1975:328–329), “the practical creation of an *objective world*, the *fashioning* of inorganic nature, is proof that man is a conscious species-being.” Humans, hence, find their species-being in the creation and most of all production of objects. However, “the object that labour produces, its product, stands opposed to it as *something alien*, as a *power independent* of the producer” (Marx 1975:324). These objects, which can be distinguished from objects of nature only by the invested human labor power, then appear detached from their producers, and nothing indicates that they are in actuality achievements of human labor. The products of labor, hence, appear to relate exclusively to each other, hiding the relations of the people who actually brought them into being (Marx 1982:164). The fact that the particular relationships between the producers are masked behind the relations between the

objects and that the objects thus stand for the labor power is what Marx (1982) designates as the fetishism of commodities. “Through this substitution, the products of labour become commodities,” however, “the commodity-form, and the value-relation of the products of labour within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material relations arising out of this” (Marx 1982:165). That is to say that the relation between the commodity-form and the value relation is not constituted by any physical properties but solely by a definite social relation between each and every human being and their labor power. Fetishism describes this lack of consciousness of the social relations and the consideration of objects as results of other forces, such as the political economy, in which the capital itself appears to work independently in the worker’s eyes. Objects, thus, turn into the mysterious other, present themselves as having an external reality and distract society’s critical self-awareness (Miller 1987:44). Miller (2010:59) refers to this condition as *objectification* and notes that it cuts both ways. Every human creation, be it the film industry or cars, possesses the capability of enhancing or oppressing humans, if the created object develops interests on and for its own. To put it straight, “it is human labour that transforms nature into objects, creating this mirror in which we come to understand who we are. So labour produces culture in the form of stuff” (Miller 2010:58).

The anthropologist Douglas and the economist Isherwood (1996) made an important contribution to the relation between goods and culture. According to them, goods “are needed for making visible and stable the categories of culture” and “all material possessions carry social meanings” (Douglas and Isherwood 1996:38). Goods are used as communicators; they discriminate, mark and structure the world in classifying categories in accordance with the social purposes of humans. “Goods, then, are the visible part of culture” (Douglas and Isherwood 1996:44, 50). Douglas and Isherwood (2003) suggest that commodities should be treated as a non-verbal medium. Concerning this, Miller (1987:101) contradicts that language anchors in the conscious and explicit world of knowledge, whereas objects constitute the unconscious. He states that “objects as frames play an inconspicuous and normative cultural role” (Miller 1987:101). Objects don’t signify or represent us and they are no signs or symbols that stand for persons (Miller 2010:10). On the contrary, Miller (2010:53) argues, objects in their collective form create us and make us the people we are. Following this, McCracken (2005:3–5) disapproves of the condemnation of consumer goods, since we, the consumer society, depend on them in order to define ourselves, make choices and give meaning to our world, as it is the objects themselves which contain meaning in the material world.

Basing his argument on Braudel, McCracken (1989:130–137) claims that the West's social change in part consists in its use of consumer goods as instruments of change and continuity. As an instrument of continuity, goods serve in two capacities. They create “ballast”, serving as a “concrete public record of the existing categories and principles that make up culture” (McCracken 1989:131), thus working against cultural drifts. The other capacity is that goods create an “object-code”, absorbing change and helping “to configure it according to the existing terms sanctioned by culture” (McCracken 1989:131).

As an instrument of change, goods serve in two capacities as well. “They serve as an opportunity to fashion a new cultural concept through the selective use, novel combination, and premeditated innovation of existing cultural meanings,” they thus represent a platform for creativity and experimentation. Secondly, “goods serve as an opportunity for a group to engage in an internal and external dialogue in which changes are contemplated, debated, and then announced” (McCracken 1989:135). This implies that they hold up a mirror to human's creative processes, shape and formalize them. Goods and their consumption hence are essential for the reproduction, representation, and manipulation of our societies (McCracken 1989:xi). They are the anchor points in our lives, as we construct our lives on the basis of the meanings carried by objects. Furthermore, they are an important playground for the experimentation with and the organization of the meanings with which we construct our lives (McCracken 2005:164). To put it briefly, the world of goods is where “culture is constantly being played out” (McCracken 2005:164), since they are both “the creations and the creators of the culturally constituted world” (McCracken 1989:77). Bearing in mind these descriptions of goods, let's make a little digression to a reconsideration of ethnic dress, whose academic conception shares some commonalities with the popular perception of the *dirndl*.

Dressed in ethnicity

In her book *Dress and Ethnicity*, Eicher (1995) defines dress as a “coded sensory system of non-verbal communication that aids human interaction in space and time. The codes of dress include visual as well as other sensory modifications (taste, smell, sound, and feel) and supplements (garments, jewelry, and accessories) to the body which set off either or both cognitive and affective processes that result in recognition or lack of recognition by the viewer” (Eicher 1995:1). Furthermore, “the body modifications and supplements that mark the ethnic identity of an individual are ethnic dress” (Eicher 1995:1). Eicher (1995:2) remarks that ethnic dresses undergo modifications, which causes a contradiction to the term “traditional”, when this is to indicate a lack of change. All those items and modifications of the body which occupy the past

and the tradition of the members of the group fall within the notion of ethnic dress, whose purpose is the display of cultural heritage (Eicher 1995:299).

The idea of simply representing the past and the tradition of bygone times points to an essentialist conception of tradition and cultural heritage, since it ignores the fact that the construction of history is always “linked to the establishment of an identity in the present” (Friedman 1992:195). Furthermore, Eicher conceives of tradition and ethnicity as something given, which is solely *marked* by the members of a group through the dress. Her essentialist basis for argumentation arises from the comparison of dress with a non-verbal communication form, that is, language. It is carried forward by her reference to Shils’ conception of tradition (Eicher 1995:299) and continues in the simple opposition of world fashion and ethnic dress, which are, according to her, inter-related phenomena, but differ from each other for ethnic dress is worn for the purpose of group differentiation (Eicher 1995:296, 300).

Aside from the arguments already mentioned, further arguments contradict this essentialist approach to ethnic dress. Barth (1998:14) states that the actors themselves choose the items put to display. In their personal choice, they don’t follow “objective” criteria, as some cultural features are ignored and others are even played down or denied. That is to say, dresses are adjusted to the needs of a group for the purposes of differentiation and identity marker. In other words, it is not the dress that displays ethnicity, but very often ethnicity that is built by virtue of features such as dress. Ethnicity as a group identity is ascribed by the actors themselves, performed and established by means of overt signals, signs and value orientations (Barth 1998:10, 14). It is a mode of organizing the interaction between people and building the foundation for social systems (Barth 1998:10). Goods, thus, “that are so often identified as the unhappy, destructive preoccupation of a materialist society are in fact one of the chief instruments of its survival, one of the ways in which its order is created and maintained” (McCracken 1989:xi).

The consumption of goods

It follows that “consumption is thoroughly cultural in character” (McCracken 1989:xi). Or, as Douglas and Isherwood (2003:74) put it, “consumption is the very arena in which culture is fought over and licked into shape”, as “all the social categories are being continually redefined” (Douglas and Isherwood 1996:45). According to them, the essential function of consumption is not the fulfillment of needs but its capacity to make sense. It is a ritual activity which gives individuals the possibility to say something about themselves and to make and maintain social relationships (Douglas and Isherwood 2003). Goods show us what particular social categories are relevant in a given culture and stabilize these categories in quite concrete ways (Douglas and Isherwood 1996). However, these social categories are never fixed or stable, as the manipulation

of cultural meanings forms an important part in the symbolic actions related to goods (McCracken 1989:84–87). By means of symbolic actions, the meaning moves from the consumer good to the consumer, often in an affirmed, evoked, assigned, or revised mode. McCracken (1989:84–87) discerns four types of rituals, which contrast with the ritualistic definition of consumption by Douglas and Isherwood (2003). He names exchange, possession, grooming, and divestment. In his account, consumption is not a ritual but a process, by which consumer goods and services are created, bought and used (McCracken 1989:xi). At another point, Douglas and Isherwood (1996:37) refer to consumption as the use of material possessions, which indicates a narrower approach to consumption.

A quite different approach to consumption can be found in the works of Veblen (1953 [1899]), as his starting points are affluence and pecuniary strength. According to him (1953 [1899]:35), wealth lies at the basis of social honor and is a means to marking one's social status and bringing honor. Therefore, one must demonstrate the possession of wealth, which can be accomplished on the basis of two modes, namely conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption. The ostentatious ability to consume unproductively and the abstention from labor both indicate pecuniary strength, hence they mark the social standing (Veblen 1894:200, 1953 [1899]:44). Besides idleness, Veblen (1953 [1899]:chap. 3) mentions further evidences of leisure. Those are “immaterial” goods in the form of knowledge with an end in itself (e.g. learning dead languages), manners, good breeding, polite usage, decorum, properties as expressions of status, and personal service. Furthermore, one can expand one's prestige by employing other people, like servants, who also indulge in faineancy. In a similar vain, conspicuous consumption can be extended to others, who may represent the pecuniary strength of the rich person through relating to them. To give an example, a wife, and in this case especially her dress, can increase the prestige of her husband, as it demonstrates his ability to pay.

The effectiveness of conspicuous leisure and consumption lies in the element of waste, “in the one case it is a waste of time and effort, in the other it is a waste of goods” (Veblen 1953 [1899]:71). Consumption as a means to repute is more relevant to the urban population, for it is a much more efficient communicator of pecuniary standing in overcoming the anonymity of the urban masses. This implies that the claim to consume is more imperative in the cities and that it uses up a larger portion of the income of the urban (Veblen 1953 [1899]:72).

Veblen (1953 [1899]) tends to assume that all classes imitate the higher ones and that consumption first and foremost is conspicuous. However, the fact that this may be the case sometimes, “should not tempt us to regard it as always being so, not least because various forms of abstinence can be equally conspicuous and socially consequential” (Appadurai 2005:67).

In his works the French sociologist Baudrillard (1988, 2003) conceives consumption in a broader perspective, as he includes the field of production. According to him, consumption is something that is tightly linked not to the individual consumer but to the overall economic system as a whole. Consumption is part of a communication system, but not one tied to individuals. People are “endowed” with needs which “direct” them towards objects that “give” them satisfaction. Since they are never really satisfied, the same history is repeated indefinitely. For him, “the system of needs is the product of the system of production” (Baudrillard 1988:42). Putting it slightly differently, the need to need is created, which is to say that it can be attached to any object. The purpose of commodities is to communicate, as they “constitute a global, arbitrary, and coherent system of signs, a *cultural* system which substitutes a social order of values and classifications for a contingent world of needs and pleasures, the natural and biological order” (Baudrillard 1988:47). Baudrillard disagrees with Marx and suggests that commodities don’t hold any “real” values. Rather, he argues that the exchange value depends on the use value but that there can be a use value without exchange value. Moreover, Baudrillard (2003) states that the use value is a social determination and not an innate function of the object.

Until the 1980s, the focus in sociological literature was on production, which now has lost its dominant position in the discussions about commodities. In the context of the debate on postmodern society, consumption gained center stage for a long time. In the wake of this paradigmatic shift, production and consumption started to be considered as a whole and not any longer as processes independently of each other. In line with this, Baudrillard (1988:50) points out that “production and consumption are one and the same grand logical process in the expanded reproduction of the productive forces and of their control.” Thus, people serve the system by producing *and* consuming. As a consequence, the two forces of production and consumption must be seen as constantly interactive and not largely autonomous as implied by Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1984; Miller 1987:168), who considered the field of consumption exclusively. Therefore, “in order to understand consumption we must also understand production. In the clothing system, fashion is primary the link between them, driving both demand and supply” (Miller 2004:116). Likewise, the meaning of goods is not produced at a certain moment, but shifts and is constantly in debate by the various actors. “Time is reversible and each stage in the sequence (production – mediation – consumption) can predominate at different times in determining meaning” (Hebdige 2003:129).

Friedman broadens the perspective on consumption, as he remarks that it is “part of a larger socially and culturally constituted project” (Friedman 1994:22). According to him, (2000:151), consumption is a “particular means of creating an identity, one that is realized in a material

reorganization of time and space.” Therefore, “the understanding of consumption cannot be separated from the question of the way in which consumers are constituted” (Friedman 1994:22), as their modes of self-construction are dependent higher-order modes, which channel and regulate the availability of goods (Friedman 2000:151). Hence, in order to understand consumption, we have to take into consideration “the specific way in which desire is constituted” (Friedman 2000:103).

Following the lead of Veblen, Douglas and Isherwood, and Baudrillard, Appadurai (1986:31) adopts a broader, more systematic perspective, as he detaches demand from desire and conceives demand as “the economic expression of the political logic of consumption.” Demand, hence consumption, forms an aspect of the overall political economy of societies and doesn’t necessarily have its source in the emanation of human needs, desires or social manipulation. He suggests that “consumption is eminently social, relational, and active rather than private, atomic, or passive” (Appadurai 1986:29). Appadurai bases his argument on Simmel’s (2011) account of how economic value is best defined. Simmel (2011:65) states that „value is never a ‘quality’ of the objects” but rather more a judgment made about them by subjects. According to Simmel, economic objects exist in the space between desire and immediate enjoyment, with some distance between them and the person who desires them – a distance that can be overcome through economic exchange, in which the value of objects is determined reciprocally. For Simmel, thus, economic value is generated by this sort of exchange of sacrifices. Appadurai (1986:4) supports Simmel’s analysis of economic value as follows: Economic value constitutes a definite sum of value, which results from the commensuration of two intensities of demand, namely the exchange of sacrifice and gain. It is the demand, which bestows the object with value and it is the exchange that is the source of value and sets the parameter of utility and scarcity. “In a word, exchange is not the by-product of the mutual valuation of objects, but its source” (Appadurai 1986:4), and it is the key factor in turning objects into commodities.

The commodification of goods and the circulation of commodities

As soon as we talk about the consumption and production of goods, we enter the capitalist world and hence are confronted with commodities. In regard to the capitalist world, which is “a complex cultural system with a very special history in the modern West” (Appadurai 1986:48–49), Marx (2003) argues that workers become a commodity. Through the objectification of labor, products become alien to their producers and start to exist outside of them. Following this, an estrangement of human from human takes place (Marx 2003).

Talking about things, the difference between an object and a commodity is not visible to the naked eye. Things can turn into commodities through a change of their status caused by the

imputation of value as an objective quality of that product. That is to say that use value doesn't belong to objects, but is solely attributed (Marx 2003). As commodities possess a use value, they can be exchanged for something else usually possessing an equivalent value (Kopytoff 1986:68). In the West, the fact that something can be bought for money often is understood as the indicator for a commodity status, while the lack of salability bestows a thing with a special aura of exclusivity (Kopytoff 1986:69). However, it is not the salability of an object, as commodity exchange also exists in non-monetary economies, but the plain possibility of exchange at any time in the past, present or future, which becomes the relevant criterion for the social life of a thing. In this regard, Appadurai (1986:11–12) makes no distinction between exchanges in the form of gifts and purchase, as only the lapse of time conceals possible calculations in the act of giving a present and hence enabling it to be considered as a deed of generosity. In the commodity situation there can be discerned different moments of a thing, as there are the commodity phase, the commodity candidacy and the commodity context (Appadurai 1986:13).

In every society, there are some things which never become a commodity and others with changing statuses. Some things are held to be sacred and thus have the property to resist commodification. In other cases, several ideas might exist about the ideal career of certain things, as the popular opinion about proper commodification might differ from the view of certain groups or individuals. However, the purchase of an object says nothing about its subsequent status, or whether it may be ceased to be treated as a commodity (Kopytoff 1986:69, 76). Kopytoff (1986:68) compares the biography of a person to the biography of a thing, as both are enlivened in psychological, political and economical regards.

A somewhat different perspective on the life of things can be found in the work of Appadurai (1986). He states that Kopytoff's *cultural biography* and his *social history of things* differ in terms of temporality, class identity and the levels of social scale. Kopytoff's approach is appropriate to specific things, which can be traced and grasped in their individual biography and more short-term trajectories. Looking at a certain class or type of thing, another point of view is needed, as long-term shifts and larger-scale dynamics become the focus of attention. In this way, shifts in the meaning of types of things come to the fore (Appadurai 1986:34). Still, the social history of things and the cultural biography are interrelated, as the former can become the governing factor in the biography of things. At the same time, many small shifts in the cultural biography of things may cause a change in the social history of things (Appadurai 1986:36).

Commodities don't have a character by themselves, which is to say that they are "not inherently good or bad" (Miller 2010:63). However, with all their benefits, goods always entail the risk of oppressing us (Miller 2010:63). Therefore, the crucial question is what is being commoditized and

what is the context of the commodification process? According to Appadurai, things, their exchange and with that their value is embedded in politics. “This argument [...] justifies the conceit that commodities, like persons, have social lives” (Appadurai 1986:3).

In all societies, exchange and by association the social lives of goods and their commodity status are restricted, controlled and channeled. It is thus building a counterbalance to the commodities’ tendency to dissolving the links between the persons and the things (Appadurai 1986:24). Following the idea of the perfectly commoditized world and the totally decommodified world and relating it to the concept of culture, Kopytoff (1986:70) states that “both individuals and cultural collectivities must navigate somewhere between the polar extremes by classifying things into categories that are simultaneously neither too many nor too embracing.” The only moment when the status of a thing is beyond question is the moment of actual exchange. Apart from that, the status of a thing and its possible diversion are in constant negotiation (Kopytoff 1986:83). In the modern, capitalist societies, consumer demand is guided by various – the media, advertising and the impulse to imitate are not the sole stakeholders. Direct political appeals such as calls for a boycott can give direction to demand, as well as more subtle forms of protectionism (Appadurai 1986:32–33). Miller (2003:111) notes that “one group may dominate large areas of cultural production, whilst another, through lack of access to cultural form, may be less clear as to the nature of its own interests.” Consequently, “if a group is unable to objectify its interests in certain domains it may attempt to create its own cultural forms in some other field, although some groups without any resources are bereft of both power and prospects in virtually all spheres” (Miller 2003:111). Again, we can adhere to the idea that consumption is the arena of culture and by association the arena of power plays in which objects and their possible diversions take the center stage. The dirndl as a type of thing belongs to the domain of fashion and clothing, which represents one of the best examples of the diversion of commodities (Appadurai 1986:28).

3.3 Commodities in the realm of fashion

In the field of fashion, the diversion of commodities such as the dirndl and the actions of the involved parties are driven by various social forces and dynamics, for “dress is one of the most fundamental fields of social expression and aesthetic taste, a universal form of expressive communications and a subtle and protean indicator of identity” (Wilson 2001:50).

Fashion as nonverbal language

The work of linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and his theory of language built the basis for one of the major approaches to fashion in the twentieth century (Corrigan 1997:172). Furthermore, it

paved the way for many other models for understanding cultural systems, such as the conception of goods as a nonverbal medium (Douglas and Isherwood 1996).

Saussure's theory of language is based on the idea of the sign, which can take the form of a word, an image, a sound, or an item of clothing. This sign is composed of the signifier, which is its physical form, and the signified, which is the mental concept it represents. The relationship between the signifier and the signified is referred to as signification, a process which communicates the meaning of the sign. This relationship between the signifier and the signified is usually arbitrary and culturally relative (Breward 1998:306). The semiotic approach to fashion, thus, bases on the assumption that fashion and clothing are organized in a formal way and that they use a definite grammar and syntax (Corrigan 1997:172). Barnard (2002:29) considers fashion as a form of nonverbal communication, in that it is not expressed in spoken or written words. According to the structuralist Barthes (1985), fashion has to be understood as a way to communicate within a system of institutions, organizations, groups and conventions. In his work, Barthes (1985) examines the translation of clothing into language, whereby the former already forms a sign system on its own.

McCracken (1989) argues against the usefulness of the idea of clothing as a language. His argument (McCracken 1989:62-66) is that fashion and language differ in their combinatorial freedom. The meanings linked to clothing are relatively fixed, whereas language can generate all sorts of new meanings. McCracken acknowledges that clothing communicates, however, not in the same way as language. Based on McCracken's remarks, Davis (1995:6) goes one step further in his critique on the fashion as language approach. For him, there are at least three other distinguishing features. Firstly, fashion depends on the context, as for instance one suit may mean one thing at the barbecue and another thing in the office. Secondly, there is a high social variability in the signifier-signified relationship insofar as the signifier, such as a tangible (dirndl) dress, can be the same for everyone, but the signified, that is, the connoted, understood is different for different publics, audiences, and social groupings. Lastly, there is the aspect of undercoding, which may occur when in the absence of decoding rules persons presume certain meanings (Davis 1995:8-12).

Miller (2010:16) discerns another problem with a theory of semiotics, in that it suggests the idea of clothing as being something superficial. This includes the assumption of a certain relationship between the interior and the exterior, meaning that our true human being is considered to be located deep inside ourselves and that the surface doesn't tell anything about who we truly are (Miller 2010:16). According to Miller (2010:40), the self-awareness and the concept of the person change at different times and in different places. This change of self-conception relates to differences in clothing, meaning that "clothing plays a considerable and active part in constituting

the particular experience of the self, in determining what the self is” (Miller 2010:40). The phrase “Clothes make people,” hence is to be taken literally, in that clothing shapes the personal experiences and individual expectations. As a consequence, there is a big range of possible relationships between the concept of the self, the person and clothing (Miller 2010:17) – relationships that cannot be grasped by a theory of representation, because it tends to reduce clothing to persons (Miller 2010:48).

Simmel’s theory of fashion

A somewhat different approach to fashion can be found in Simmel’s sociological essay on fashion, which was published in 1904. His approach to fashion puts the phenomenon in a social context and is based on the assumption that fashion is driven by the human dualism of imitation and differentiation. This dualism is a catalyst for various actions and reactions, which keep repeating themselves incessantly. Fashion as a form of imitation could serve as a mode of social equalization, “since it now becomes possible to mistake a poor nobleman for a wealthy trader” (Miller 1987:135–136). However, as fashion changes all the time, it becomes the means for continuing the differentiation of one social stratum from another. Fashion, thus, includes those of one social class and excludes them from all the others at the very same time (Simmel 1957:544). The process of imitation and differentiation emanates from the elite, who initiates and sets up a fashion in order to retain differentials. As soon as the mass imitates the fashion with the aim of overcoming the external class distinction, the upper class dismisses it for a newer one. The motivation for imitation is not solely to obliterate the distinctions of class, but also to hand over the responsibility for personal actions. In a condition of imitation the individual is united with a group and freed from the agony of choice (Simmel 1957:542–543). With the increase of wealth, the process of inclusion and exclusion speeds up. Fashion, thus, “is a product of class distinction” (Simmel 1957:544). Nowadays, these remarks are known as Simmel’s trickle-down theory, which says that after the elite brought a fashion into being it trickles down to other classes.

Simmel’s theory of fashion experienced criticism from different quarters and calls for reconsiderations came up. Davis (1995:112) criticizes Simmel’s trickle-down theory for its inability to account for the fashion pluralism and polycentrism. Simmel overlooks various agencies that shape the fashion process, such as the media, competition among designers and big fashion buyers. According to Davis (1995:120), Simmel doesn’t consider the institutionalization and its role in the fashion process. The flow of fashion in apparel is not the same as in other areas, like gardening or cookware, where there is less institutionalization. This recognition challenges those who would totally reduce fashion to the economic apparatus of its manufacture

and promotion. Furthermore, he comments (1995:112), society is much more fragmented into groups and fashion is not solely concerned with symbolizing social class. Gender, sexuality, age ascriptions, leisure inclinations, ethnic and religious identifications, political and ideological dispositions, and still other attributes of the person can be in play in the clothes we wear (Miller 2010:12).

McCracken (1989:93–103) notes positively that Simmel's trickle-down theory allows the consideration of the fashion behavior of various social groups as driven by the same underlying logic. However, he reconsiders "trickle-down" not as a downward movement but as a "chase and flight" and with that as an upward moving pattern. In addition, Simmel ignores in his explanation of the trickle-down effect intermediate groups. McCracken states some theoretical revisions of the trickle-down theory. In the first place, groups shall neither be distinguished by relative status nor be defined as social strata – instead other demographic dimensions should be taken into account. Furthermore, the cultural context has to be taken into consideration. Lastly, he notes that imitation also could be merely a selective borrowing. However, Simmel's work had a lasting effect on approaches to fashion, inasmuch as the aspect of imitation, differentiation and group cohesion remains an important contribution to fashion theories.

The conspicuousness of dress

For Veblen (Veblen 1953 [1899]), dress is one of the crucial components in displaying pecuniary strength, as it provides an excellent way of expressing ostentatiously how wealthy the wearer is. Dress has an advantage over any other good, because we carry it on our bodies and take it with us wherever we go. Dress, thus, indicates our wealth clearly to everyone at first glance – even to complete strangers (Veblen 1953 [1899]:119). The most suitable dress not only demonstrates its expensiveness, but also the fact that the wearer is not engaged in productive labor of any sort (Veblen 1953 [1899]:120). Consequently, "apparel is incurred for the sake of a respectable appearance rather than for the protection of the person" (Veblen 1953 [1899]:119).

Veblen (1894:202–204) names three principles of dress. Those are conspicuous expensiveness, the requirement for novelty and the abandonment of anything which is out of date, which includes that a garment may not be worn more than once on similar occasions, and thirdly, ineptitude or the conspicuous abstention from useful effort. An example for this is the skirt or the constricted waist, in that "it hampers the movements of the wearer and disables her, in great measure, for any useful occupation. So it serves as an advertisement (often disingenuous) that the wearer is backed by sufficient means to be able to afford the idleness, or impaired efficiency, which the skirt implies" (Veblen 1894:203).

For Veblen (1953 [1899]:38–39) the change of fashion results from a competition of class on the level of appearances, as “it is extremely gratifying to possess something more than others.” However, as soon as an acquisition is made, the owner becomes accustomed to the new standard of wealth, which then loses its satisfactory condition. The present or shortly obtained standard becomes the departure point for a new augmentation of wealth. Therefore, Veblen (1894:200) suggests that dress can be grasped as a “display of wasteful expenditure.”

However, Veblen doesn’t explain in concrete terms his conception of conspicuousness. Let me illustrate this issue with the example of Wilson’s (2001) considerations about the designs of Chanel, which aimed to dress not only a hundred but thousands of women. Wilson states that a widely repeated fashion must start from luxury, an argument which relates to Simmel’s trickle-down theory. However, she notes that Chanel pursued a design arranged by a simplicity of style and perfection of cut, which according to her constitutes the very opposite of conspicuous consumption (Wilson 2001:55). Wilson thus thinks of conspicuous consumption as a certain kind of style and not necessarily as the pure display of wealth. This ambiguity originates from the fact that Veblen didn’t consider other aspects in the sphere of fashion, such as the importance of taste, the required knowledge about materials and production methods, exclusiveness, material classifications and the possibility of understatement. Through considering those issues among others, Bourdieu (1984, 2000) provided an important sociological account of conceptualizing fashion and the flow of commodities.

Habitus, Taste and Distinction

Bourdieu’s account to the reality of the social world focuses to a great extent on struggles related to social positioning, in that agents struggle for “the representation of their position in the social world, and consequently, of that world” (Bourdieu 1984:253), whereby “the site par excellence of symbolic struggles is the dominant class itself” (Bourdieu 1984:254). Bourdieu’s (2000) concept of the habitus links the individual to social structures. In short, the habitus of a person describes a socially structured and internalized system related to the subject’s class position, which can dictate the whole being of a person, that is, body movements, education, speech, and dress. Above all, taste is one obvious and crucial manifestation of the habitus.

The formation of habitus is determined by the structures constitutive of a particular type of environment, such as the material conditions distinctive of a certain class. Those structures produce systems of durable dispositions, which are structured structures destined to function as structuring structures in the future. They are deeply entrenched in the environment, so that as soon as these structured structures become structuring, they are enforced without any force,

orchestrated without any master and adapted to their purpose without any lead. The practices that the habitus forms, hence, are a product of the past conditions, as it is them which produced the principle of their production. However, those practices serve as a “strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations” in the future (Bourdieu 2000:72). The habitus, hence, is “the precondition not only for the co-ordination of practices but also for practices of co-ordination” (Bourdieu 2000:81). All members of the same group or class share the habitus, hence it is not an individual but subjective “system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action” (Bourdieu 2000:86).

In short, the habitus, the product of history, produces individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by history. (Bourdieu 2000:82)

According to Bourdieu, personal style is not an individual feature, but solely a deviation in relation to the style of a period or class – a structural variant “expressing the difference between trajectories and positions inside or outside the class” (Bourdieu 2000:86). However, “social identity is defined and asserted through difference” (Bourdieu 1984:172), that is, a distinction between the different practices and the perception of other practices and opposition to the relational properties which classify the individual’s social position. The habitus, thus, generates the diversity of forms and classifies these same diverse fields (Miller 1987:153). This process emanates from the dominant class, that is, the class which possesses the highest economic and cultural capital defining its structure. Thereupon, each class fraction is characterized by a certain configuration of the distribution of the capitals to which there correspond certain life-styles, which are “the different systems of properties in which the different systems of dispositions express themselves” (Bourdieu 1984:260). Worlds that depend on highly specific combinations of the two capitals appear perfectly natural to those who belong to them. However, referring to the significance of habitus in this day and age, Appadurai notes a change in the global conditions of life-worlds.

Put simply, where once improvisation was snatched out of the glacial undertow of habitus, habitus now has to be painstakingly reinforced in the face of life-worlds that are frequently in flux. (Appadurai 2005:56)

Taste is one crucial feature of habitus – it is “the generative formula of life-style” and “a unitary set of distinctive preferences” (Bourdieu 1984:173). The forming of taste is determined by the social position and judgments of taste are an act of social positioning. “Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier” (Bourdieu 1984:6). In order to distinguish oneself from somebody else, one has to make a difference. Judgments about the beautiful and the ugly, the exceptional and the mundane serve the positioning of a social subject (Bourdieu 1984:6). Taste, for it is subject to habitus, corresponds to the educational levels and social classes (Bourdieu 1984:16). One’s

aesthetic disposition thus unites all those who are the product of similar conditions and distinguishes them at the same time from all others. According to Bourdieu (1984:56), it does so in an essential way, for taste is all that one is for others and the basis of all that one has. It is the most fundamental classifying criterion in the social world. To put it straight, “tastes (i.e., manifested preferences) are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference” (Bourdieu 1984:56) and it is that which “brings together things and people that go together” (Bourdieu 1984:241).

Concerning the flow of commodities and the determination of their trajectories, taste plays a prominent role. In comparison with stable status systems, where the supply of new goods is protected and reproduced by restricted exchange modalities, other societies handle the apparently unrestricted commodity flow by means of legitimate taste. The complete changeability of goods, hence, is controlled by “knowledge of the principles of classification, hierarchy and appropriateness” (Featherstone 2008:670). Appadurai (1986) stresses that this holds true especially for the fashion system in more complex societies.

In a fashion system what is restricted and controlled is *taste* in an *ever-changing* universe of commodities, with the illusion of complete interchangeability and unrestricted access. (Appadurai 1986:25)

In the Western societies, the readability of a person’s status becomes more complex, for that it requires the knowledge or cultural capital to make appropriate judgments about new goods (Featherstone 2008:671). Furthermore, distinction is achieved through the knowledge about and consuming the appropriate goods, as each act of consumption reproduces social difference. However, a person can distinguish oneself through consuming in a rare manner, meaning one that is inaccessible to those with less cultural capital, which is especially relevant for fields in which there is a great communality in the objects consumed, considering that the rarity of high cultural capital needs to be protected (Bourdieu 1984:282). As soon as goods or cultural practices become accessible to other groups, they or their consumption strategies need to be changed in order to maintain distinction. “In other words, to express distinction through embodied tastes leads cultural elites to emphasize the distinctiveness of consumption practices themselves, apart from the cultural contents to which they are applied” (Holt 2008:710).

On the other hand, advice books on manners and taste serve the subjects in establishing and naturalizing their dispositions and to substantiate them. Furthermore, those books illustrate the necessity to detect imposters. This way, the newly arrived, those who attained their capacities and capitals, will stumble over the incompleteness of their social practices. Hence the new rich are always discernable by the established upper classes, which are those rich in cultural capital. The

nouveau riche may adopt conspicuous consumption strategies, a social practice which runs the risk of being dismissed as vulgar and tasteless (Featherstone 2008:673 about Bourdieu 1984).

Miller (1987:154) discerns some weaknesses in the works of Bourdieu. First of all, he criticizes the methodology of Bourdieu, in that he used a lengthy questionnaire. More importantly, in the work of Bourdieu the sphere of production, as well as the marketing and the role of designers, is not incorporated. Furthermore, Miller argues that Bourdieu falls back to an economist model, and that the aspect of mass consumption as an historical phenomenon is not taken into consideration. Lastly, he criticizes that problems of alienation and estrangement are reduced to problems of access to knowledge.

The realm of fashion

To sum it up, fashion is a diverse field, in which various social and economic factors meet. By means of dressing, we communicate, if not in the terms of language. However, we tell something about ourselves through the way we dress, and as Miller (2010) argues our clothes and appearance constitute our selves in each and every particular context, just as they shape our individual experiences. Fashion is the playground for group cohesions, imitations and differentiations. Being a part of it or ostentatiously distancing oneself from a group can be achieved on the basis of fashion and modes of dressing (Simmel 1957). Fashion provides the possibility of imitating others, which might give us the chance of belonging – a condition which can be immediately dissolved by others through creating and adopting another fashion. Dress suites perfectly the conspicuous display of pecuniary strength for that we carry the fashion items on our bodies wherever we go. It, thus, is a symbol of our economic position, in that it advertises our wealth, idleness and capacity to purchase every novelty brought on the market (Veblen 1894). First and foremost, it is “an indication of the general social position of the person in the society” (Barnes 1992:1) and the field of distinction. Distinction, may it be at the hands of affluence, taste, style or modes of dressing, only takes place in relation or opposition to other social agents. That is to say that the fashion victim, the *Modemuffel*, that is a person who is indifferent to fashion, and the fashionista all relate to each other and obtain their particular social positions through the existence of the others in the field (Bourdieu 1984).

Time plays a crucial role in the realm of fashion, which is a process involving change (Eicher 1995:299). In fashion, objects and time come together, for the objects stand for time whilst the time controls what the objects stands for. An object is fashionable when it signifies the present; it is thus always designed to become unfashionable. Differentiation and by association the stability of the social positions in the field are provided by the speed of access to knowledge about object

change (Miller 1987:126, 153). In regard to the works of Simmel, Veblen and Bourdieu, Davis (1995:57–66) states that fashion and finery are not solely about status claims and status differentiations on behalf of the higher class. He adds other relevant aspects, that is, ostentation versus understatement (pretend to be poor or proclaim to be wealthy) and overdressing versus underdressing (in order to get attention or disregard).

In Western countries, fashion acquires a position that is comparable to sumptuary laws in other societies. This comparison might seem hard to uphold, as the term fashion “suggests high velocity, the assumption of a democracy of consumers and of objects of consumption”, whereas sumptuary laws are associated with “hierarchy, discrimination, and rank in social life” (Appadurai 1986:32). But as Baudrillard and Bourdieu (1984) have illustrated, fashion is equipped with features to achieve the same ends. Among them, taste is one key factor in “limiting social mobility, marking social rank and discrimination” and putting consumers in their place. At it, “demand is a socially regulated and generated impulse, not an artifact of individual whims or needs,” (Appadurai 1986:32) which “may flourish in the context of ambiguity in social hierarchy” (Miller 1987:136).

3.4 Advertising as a world-to-good meaning transfer

Advertising forms part of the culture industry and constitutes an important factor in the creation and flow of commodities, as its task is to enhance the exchange value of commodities through transferring meaning from one meaning system to another (Goldman 1992:5). According to McCracken (1989:72), there are three locations of meaning, namely, the culturally constituted world, the consumer good, and the individual consumer. Advertisements, which belong to the commodity-sign production (Goldman 1992:5), “are deliberate attempts to put meaning into goods” (McCracken 2005:167). They work “as a potential method of meaning transfer by bringing the consumer good and a representation of the culturally constituted world together within the frame of a particular advertisement” (McCracken 1989:77). Through advertising, those two elements should be conjoined in such a way that the consumer reckons an essential similarity between them. The meaning transfer is accomplished, when the consumer attributes not only the intended meanings borrowed from the culturally constituted world to the consumer good, but also the known properties of the world, which then “come to be resident in the unknown properties of the consumer good” (McCracken 1989:77).

Advertising is the arena where constant experimentation takes place, as meanings are suggested and revised, combined and recombined (McCracken 2005:165). Before creating an advertisement,

advertisers have to choose “from the alternatives that have been established by the network of cultural categories and principles in terms of which culture has constituted the world” (McCracken 1989:78). In the course of this, they choose these categories and principles which are in line with the clients’ projected meaning for their products. As a third step, the advertisers must decide in which way the culturally constituted world is to be portrayed in the advertisement. At the end of this process “meaning has shifted from the culturally constituted world to the consumer good” so that the good then “stands for’ cultural meaning of which it was previously innocent” (McCracken 1989:79). Goldman (1992:19) argues, that “modern advertising thus teaches us to consume, not the product, but its sign. What the product stands for is more important than what it is.”

The final authors in the process of advertising are the consumers, for they have to decode the provided information and transferred meanings. Thus, the individual “is participating in the assignation of meaning to consumer goods” (McCracken 2005:167). Consumers pay interest to advertising, because they are searching for small meanings and concepts of life. They use advertisements and their transmitted meanings as a tool in the project of self-definition (McCracken 2005:165). Individuals who are looking at advertisements, “are looking at material that has been culturally constituted and they are interpreting it according to cultural conventions” (McCracken 2005:167). Thereby, the visual aspects of the advertisements are more important than the verbal material. Texts and headlines back the image and convey instructions on how the image is supposed to be read (McCracken 1989:79). As advertising draws its contents from the meanings of the culturally constituted world, it “serves us as a lexicon of current cultural meanings” (McCracken 1989:79). Furthermore, it can act as a kind of dictionary in that it informs on the new consumer signifieds and signifiers, hence it contributes importantly to the context of consumption (McCracken 2005:165).

One of the engines of consumption in modern society and an important feature of advertisements is to evoke hopes and play with the dreams of the consumers. Thereby, advertising professionals take advantage of a special characteristic of goods, that is, their capacity of carrying “displaced meaning” (McCracken 1989:104). Advertisers constantly promote their goods as bridges to displaced ideals, which have been removed from the daily life and relocated in a distant cultural domain, and which now can be obtained through purchasing the advertised good.

Examples of “displaced meaning” are the golden age, in which life is imagined to have conformed perfectly to cultural ideals, or the future, onto which the perfect democracy is projected. Objects, hence, can be future- and past-oriented “as when an object comes to

represent a happier time,” that is a condition, in which “an object comes to concretize a much larger set of attitudes, relationships, and circumstances, all of which are summoned to memory and rehearsed in fantasy when the individual calls the object to mind” (McCracken 1989:110).

Goods serve both individuals and cultures as bridges to displaced meaning in two situations – before the act of purchase and as possessions. Goods that are not owned yet serve as projection surface, helping the individual to contemplate an emotional condition, a social circumstance or a whole way of life. They can establish access to imagined realities without undoing the work of displacement. When individuals purchase objects of “displaced meaning,” it is usually beyond their purchase power and part of an aspired life style. But when the purchase does evoke the displaced system of meaning, meaning can be endlessly transferred to another object. All this, “commits us to a consumer system in which the individual always achieves sufficiency as a temporary condition, no sooner established than repudiated” (McCracken 1989:115). Part of the process is the advertising industry, as it promotes and boosts the continuous creation and succession of “displaced meanings”.

Advertising is a component of the marketing process of companies. Marketing, in general, generates value partly because it generates meaning. Marketing managers thus are managing meaning in accordance with the brand philosophy and the clients. Consumer goods can draw upon a range of meanings. Well-managed brands will claim meanings from most, if not from all domains, that are: gender, lifestyle, decade, class and status, occupation, time and place, value, fad, fashion and trend, and age. All these domains relate to meaning sources (e.g. advertising, product placement, websites, and promotions) and delivery devices (e.g. movies, television, radio, magazines, and blogs). One single product can cover various meanings for different target groups. Hence, it has to speak to several segments. The channels of marketing have the capacity to add meaning or to take it away. Furthermore, music is an enormous opportunity to add value by adding meaning (McCracken 2005:175–191). All these features play an important role in the commodity sphere of dirndl dresses, as the advertisements and marketing strategies for products form a crucial way of creating certain commodities and attaching meaning and with that value to them. Furthermore, they are a means to positioning the products in the consumer society and embedding them in the culturally constituted world.

4 Reinventing the tradition

Today's big hype of traditional costumes and dirndl dresses is accompanied by a renaissance of tradition. Usually, where traditional costumes or dirndl dresses are put into play, tradition comes into the picture as well. Depending on the context and the purpose, tradition can manifest itself in manifold ways, be it the patron of traditional costumes, the opponent of fashion and modernity, the marker for quality and timelessness in the commodity sphere, an ambassador of history, a feature of Austrianness or a catchword in the world of advertising. The increased popularity of tradition and the current phenomenon of traditional costumes concur, meaning that whenever traditional costumes and dirndl dresses emerge on the market, a commodification of tradition goes hand in hand with it. Although the dirndl appears in the name of tradition, it belongs to the commodity sphere of fashion. Tradition is not a per se characteristic of traditional costumes which distinguishes them hence from fashion, even though they may be treated that way in popular and scholarly literature. It is rather a specific ideological meaning, derived from the past, assigned in the present and negotiated for the future.

4.1 Existing body of literature

Concurrently with the increasing popularity of traditional costumes, the body of literature on traditional costumes expanded, including scholarly pieces, publications in a popular scientific way and books for the general public. The popular literature consists both of books describing the phenomenon and presenting various facets and stakeholders of the dirndl, such as producers, events, and historical excursus (Hollmer and Hollmer 2011; Müller and Trettenbrein 2013), as well as guides with sewing instructions and etiquette manuals (Kühnle 2011). The idea here is to inform the audience and to explain the diverse features of this item of clothing. In many cases, these books try to familiarize their readers with the dirndl in a personal way without questioning the phenomenon and its further implications as such. The role of tradition usually is less of an issue.

Likewise in scholarly literature, the concept of tradition as a matter on its own hitherto hasn't been the gist of treatises on traditional costumes. Despite the correlation of tradition and traditional costumes, the meaning of the term *traditional costume* (*Tracht*), as well as the role and impact of tradition and traditionality barely have been scrutinized on their own in a non-essentialist way. In many cases, the notion of traditionality is implied in the term *traditional costume* (*Tracht*) and emphasized by an opposition to fashion. By way of illustration, the term

Tracht wasn't explicitly addressed at a convention on the topic "Kleiderfragen: Mode und/oder Tracht?" which was held by the Universität Mozarteum in Salzburg in April 2014.

Interestingly enough, a core body of scholarly and popular scientific literature – especially that with a general view – was produced by people who have a folkloristic background, but are also otherwise engaged in traditional costumes. A collection of essays on traditional costumes in Austria was published by Franz C. Lipp (2004), a studied folklorist and historian, who founded the Upper Austrian Heimatwerk in 1939. Another important figure in the realm of traditional costumes is Gesine Tostmann, who also contributed an essay to *Tracht in Österreich* (Lipp and Bakos 2004). Tostmann studied folklore studies at the University of Vienna, published several books and papers on traditional costumes and dirndl dresses (Tostmann 2012; Tostmann and Hausherr 1998) and owns the Tostmann Company with its two stores in Vienna and Seewalchen. Köhl (2004), the head of the *Heimatwerk* Salzburg, states that Dr. Gexi Tostmann was one of the masterminds in liberalizing the renewal of traditional costumes who also researched the interplay of fashion and tradition. In the media, Tostmann often is referred to as the grande dame of traditional costumes (Götzl 2009).

Furthermore, the Tostmann Company on its own constitutes a core element in a book on traditional costumes. In her thesis in folklore studies, Weissengruber (2004) researches the relationship between the commercialization and maintenance of traditional costumes. Her methodology consists of accessing the archive of the Tostmann firm, participant observation, interviews, and surveys. According to her, traditional costumes are a non-verbal means of communication that can be conceived of as a sign of a possible differentiation. Weissengruber discerns three types of traditional costumes, namely historical-renewed, traditional fashion, and garment with traditional elements (Weissengruber 2004:18–19). However, in her work she doesn't apply any sociological theories or provide any social context. Hence, the adjectives "authentic" (with quotation marks) and kitschy are ascribed by the author (Weissengruber 2004:176), meaning that she occupies the prerogative of interpretation. This implies that the hegemonic structures are uncritically reproduced.

Hastrup (1993) offers an explanation for this epistemological approach. She discerns a fundamental difference between anthropology and folklore studies, which goes beyond a reduction to one method with divergent levels of otherness.

The folklorist records tradition and casts reality as text; as a kind of archivist, the folklorist is wholly external to the text he files. By contrast, the anthropologist is part and parcel of the field, and can never assume an external standpoint of knowing. (Hastrup 1993:149)

Other works examine the phenomenon of traditional costumes in historical terms. Hereby, two central themes are discernable. One core deals with the time of National Socialism and its impact on traditional costumes (Guenther 1997). Wallnöfer (2011) studied the role of traditional costumes as a propaganda tool for National Socialism. Furthermore, she investigated the history and impact of research on traditional costumes with its female key figures during the Nazi era (Wallnöfer 2008a). Additionally, Wallnöfer collaborated in the movie *The fabric of home* (Schmiderer and Wallnöfer 2011), which depicts individuals and groups outside the mainstream and investigates the phenomenon of traditional costumes in all its facets, including its historical background and the sometimes conflicting approaches to tradition.

Another focus is on the time before the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany. Hereby the Salzburg Festival, its visitors and the circumstances for the Jewish population are central (Kammerhofer-Aggermann, Scope and Haas 1993). Kammerhofer-Aggermann, who is the head of the Salzburger Landesinstitut für Volkskunde published further papers related to traditional costumes (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 2002), in particular on *The Sound of Music* (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 2000a). She also collaborated with Scope, who researched the historical origin of the Henndorf dirndl, asking whether it was an invention of Carl Mayr (Scope 1993b, 2004).

In her master thesis in European ethnology, Egger (2008) addresses the current phenomenon of traditional costumes by focusing on the Oktoberfest in Munich. In her research work, she considers the reasons for and the dynamics behind the popularity of traditional costumes among young people at the Oktoberfest. According to her, the high demand for traditional costumes goes beyond being a fad or fashion, but rather has to be grasped as a postmodern quest for identity and sense of belonging, which is strongly linked to the habitus of its setting, that is, Bavaria's capital Munich.

Her latest publication deals with the concept of home and how the idea of home constantly is reinvented. One chapter covers the role and importance of traditional costumes in terms of home. Egger (2014:187–188) states that discussions about matters of taste are actually debates on who knows best how to deal fairly with home. Furthermore, she stresses that no matter the differences in quality, no piece of clothing is more authentic than any other. Besides that, she addresses the concept of tradition in reference to Hobsbawm (1996). In her words, traditions bear a meaning, are passed on and have to be conceived of as a process, just as culture and home (Egger 2014:194–195).

What is indicated in the publication of Egger hasn't been the focus of research on traditional costumes so far, neither in historical nor in current terms. This is even more notable since "the" tradition seems to be one of the core features of traditional costumes – be it in the world of

advertising, where tradition dogs traditional costumes, be it the person's motive for putting on the recently purchased dress, or be it the theme of an occasion which brings together like-minded people.

4.2 Tradition just now

As a historian, Hobsbawm (1996) studied the phenomenon of reinvented traditions from a historical point of view. According to him (Hobsbawm 1996:12), studying invented traditions implies a wider study of the history of society; otherwise its significance can not exceed the mere discovery of such phenomena.

Reconsidering the approach to the invention of tradition

In the words of Hobsbawm (1996:10), “anthropology may help to elucidate the differences, if any, between invented and old traditional practices.” However, this approach to invented traditions engendered lots of criticism from different sides. Neveling (2010b:59), for instance, argues that studies which trace invented traditions with a focus on marginal groups or practices often fall victim to some sort of essentialism. Moreover, the invocation of traditions within mainstream social and cultural practices hasn't become the gist of studies on invented traditions. More importantly, the American anthropologist Jonathan Friedman (2000) passes severe criticism on this kind of approach for offering the problem of an unequal distribution of power. In particular, he criticizes that this point of view on invented traditions only can be adopted by the “scientifically knowing subject”, who hence “ascribes truth and therefore authority to itself” (Friedman 2000:136). As a consequence, the world of representation is divided into objective truth, which only can be affirmed and realized by the scientist, and the folk or ideological models of the world. This diversion implies a claim to truth on behalf of the scholar, whose evaluation exposes the falseness of all other representations and constructions of the world. In circumstances of hegemony, when the others can't raise their voices, anthropologists can occupy this prerogative of interpretation without attracting criticism. In times of dissolving hegemony, however, conflicting identity constructions and struggles for the authority to define the other must arise (Friedman 2000:136). Those periods of general identity crises foster studies on the invention of tradition discovering the past and debunking the inauthenticity of all people's histories (Friedman 1992:194).

This raises the question as to the character of authenticity. The issue at stake here is that the idea of authenticity often comes up in the context of traditional costumes. Especially in discussions

about the traditionality of dress it is urged as a substantial argument for claims to tradition. As is the case with tradition, authenticity doesn't exist by itself, meaning that it cannot be discerned by means of its essence. Authenticity has to be searched for, it has to be found and created. It is the result of socio-cultural and political processes and subject to particular interests which are pursuing authentication (Schnepel 2013:34). As Hebdige (1996:55) argues, historical authenticity may serve as the criterion for differentiating between acceptable and unacceptable forms. The point here is that authenticity is related to values which may be conflicting in periods of power struggles. For this reason, framing tradition in terms of authenticity on behalf of the scholar is the wrong approach (Upton 2001:304).

From reinvented traditions to reinventing tradition

Concerning the invention of tradition, starting the endeavor with times past and turning the spotlight on *invented* traditions entails the risk of muting the others and demolishing their construction of reality. Looking at the notion of authenticity still doesn't offer an appropriate way to conceptualizing tradition, but brings the present into focus. To view the matter in current terms puts another complexion on things and paves the way for different – maybe more fruitful and less objectivistic – approaches to the phenomenon of tradition. Relating to this, Handler and Linnekin (1984:281) state that “to do something because it is traditional is already to reinterpret, and hence to change it.” Traditions, hence, are not established facts but contemporary processes. Considering that, the judgmental question of whether a practice is invented or old becomes less of an issue, since all traditions are realized and enacted in the present and can be altered at any moment by those in power.

Nonetheless, we must not lose sight of the past, since it plays an important role in the scope of traditions. In order to conceptualize traditions in the present, it is important to keep in mind that “the present is shaped by an understanding of the past and by an idea of what the future should be like” (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:30). Only in the light of past times traditions may emerge. In terms of tradition, it is the past or even just the myth of the past which may be “mobilized to serve partisan purposes, [...] commercialized for the sake of tourism” and applied as a means to “resisting change *or* of achieving innovations” (Kammen 1991:10). In this way, tradition as well as history can become “an essential ingredient in defining national, group, and personal identity.” However, the past never can be contemplated from a neutral point of view, as “we have highly selective memories of what we have been taught about the past” (Kammen 1991:10). To come full circle, this also supports the argument for approaching traditions in present terms.

Coming back to the materiality of our lives and taking into consideration the notion of tradition, it becomes evident that time forms a crucial element in our relation to objects. It is time that shapes our interpretation of the objects' meanings. Tradition often is conceived of as being handed down from the past and the dirndl hence as symbolizing the simple life in the good old days. Just as the dirndl "may come to symbolize time so time is the context in which the symbolism of the object must be understood" (Miller 1987:125). Regarding time, "the past, present and future cannot be distinguished as self-contained entities, because they are part of a constant process of evolving into the contemporary and the future" (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:37). Approaching traditions in present terms, hence, still means to deal with all facets of temporality.

Nonetheless, all this suggests an approach to the tradition of the dirndl which cuts into the phenomenon through the present. Only in this way, I as a researcher may avoid falling into the trap of objectivist science, muting the other and dismissing their constructions and representations of the world. It enables me to remain part of the field without setting myself apart from the others. Thereby, I don't turn into an authority, which may discern the "authentic" tradition, debunk the tradition of the dirndl or dismiss other interpretations of tradition but rather focus on the ways in which tradition is brought into being. Thus, the endeavor is not a one-dimensional, that is, backtracing the genesis of a tradition in ascendancy. The task is rather to move in a multidimensional field consisting of a network of relationships and to collect the various threads that lead to the notion of tradition.

Since the book *The invention of tradition* (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1996) was a collaboration of historians, anthropology might provide new insights and different approaches to tradition through bringing the concept into the present days, meaning that the focus then shifts from *invented traditions* to *inventing traditions*. The task then becomes studying the renaissance of the dirndl not as a reinvented tradition, but rather conceiving it as the process of reinventing it. In this manner, the emphasis changes from the static noun *tradition* to the active verb *reinventing*. This means that the focus is not on the outcomes of human actions, which implies the risk of losing sight of the agents, but on the humans' actions and the dynamics behind "doing tradition."

Questioning the reinventing of tradition

According to Friedman (2008a:89), histories are produced from particular social positions.

These social positions constitute the conditions of existence and formants of identity spaces or habitus, which in their turn select and organize specific discourses and organization of selfhood, including histories of the self. It is not my intention to pass judgment on the truth of such histories but, rather, to understand the interplay of factors involved in their production. (Friedman 2008a:89)

Concerning this study, replacing histories with tradition in the foregoing quote may provide a useful scheme for my approach to tradition. I don't pose the question of whether a tradition is authentic or real or try to discern *the* tradition, but rather focus on the ways in which stakeholders experience, interpret and produce tradition. The approach of this study, hence, does not question tradition as a lived and experienced social reality. However, Friedman's (2008a:90) focus on the relation between making histories and constructing identity may be somewhat too narrowly conceived, for it is not all about identity – especially not in the big business of traditional costumes and fashion in a country style.

As mentioned earlier, individuals, groups and societies “reconstruct their pasts rather than faithfully record them” (Kammen 1991:3). A society, however, is not homogenous and the distribution of power is not equal. Traditions possess both emancipatory and oppressive potential, meaning that they may enable “a subordinate group to acquire a distinct sense of its identity and interests” or unite “disparate social groups around established powers” (Soares 1997:12). The issue at stake here is who creates and controls the tradition and who is “manipulating the past in order to mold the present?” (Kammen 1991:3) Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ask: How is the tradition of the dirndl interpreted, constructed and deconstructed by its agents and what are the underlying dynamics in the discourse about tradition? And most of all, who claims to define “the” tradition in Salzburg and its surrounding areas? This implies the question of how is tradition made to appear that way?

Tradition and the demand for it can be manipulated by direct political appeals, as for instance in the time during National Socialism, when the regime prohibited Jews from wearing traditional costumes, or it can be governed “in the generalized forms of protectionism, either ‘official’ or ‘unofficial’” (Appadurai 1986:32–33). How, then, is tradition – a in itself protectionist phenomenon – protected in the realm of fashion, which constitutes a structured social space in which various social and economic forces and interests meet. Over and above that, the notion of tradition depends on the dirndl – an object which in itself is constrained in form and style in order to be recognized as such.

As *the* tradition per se doesn't exist but is continuously in the making, various groups and class fractions compete to establish their conception of tradition as *the* tradition and in doing so, “name and rename, classify and reclassify, order and reorder the field” (Featherstone 2003:96). In

this field, power is not possessed by one group or class – on the contrary, it has to be conceived of as a network of practices and institutions that sustain hegemonic positions in particular domains (Foucault 1990:92–94).

Through looking at the ways of how the notion of tradition is constructed, by whom and in what contexts, whilst taking into account how it circulates, diffuses and is naturalized in different situations provides further understanding of our contemporary society. However, in order to answer the question of how tradition is constructed, one needs to deconstruct it. It is important mentioning that “to deconstruct is not to negate or dismiss, but to call into question” (Butler 2006:199). The deconstruction of perfectly established conditions, conditions that have no need of words, offers the possibility of revealing their ideological content and their legitimizing discourses (Bourdieu 2000:188–189). Therefore, the deconstruction of tradition often goes along with calling into question “identity politics and genealogies of presumably homogeneous groups” (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:8).

Purpose of studying “the” tradition

Even though the dirndl goes under the name of tradition, economy-wise speaking, it actually belongs to the realm of fashion, as traditional costumes don’t constitute a trade by themselves. However, the notion of tradition and the dynamics of the fashion market may conflict in several aspects for the very reason that the agents and stakeholders behind those two phenomena may not always share the same interests. Ironically, it is exactly this conjuncture which provides the basis for both the commodification of tradition on a grand scale and the tendency of reverting back to tradition. Beyond that, it points to the political character of goods, that is, “in the broad sense of relations, assumptions, and contests pertaining to power” (Appadurai 1986:57). The renaissance of the dirndl, hence, brings in its wake conflicting approaches to the maintenance of its tradition and “when such conflicts occur, we find ourselves tracing the politics of culture” (Kammen 1991:5). That is to say that on the one hand, there are those who may consider the dirndl as the profitable commodity for sale, which might be more successful with a touch of tradition. On the other hand, there may be those who treat tradition as something unique, unexchangeable, or even exclusive (Kopytoff 1986:69). As Appadurai (1986:57) puts it, “not all parties share the same *interests* in any specific regime of value, nor are the interests of any two parties in a given exchange identical.”

Appadurai (1986) characterizes those two divergent aspirations as the diversion and enclaving of commodities. Diversion, that is, the removal of things from an enclaved zone to one where exchange is more profitable, is frequently “the recourse of the entrepreneurial individual.” By contrast, enclaving is “in the interests of groups, especially the politically and economically

powerful groups in any society” (Appadurai 1986:25). According to Appadurai, the big difference between the two tendencies is not whether the agents are individuals or groups, but rather the fact that enclaving pursues the plan to protect certain things from commodification, whereas diversion seeks to draw protected things into the zone of commodification. Beyond that, diversion can also constitute strategic changes of direction within the zone of commodification (Appadurai 1986:25–26). The diversion of commodities, hence, may stray from various paths. The task for the anthropologist is to identify the relevant ones, so that the dynamics and the logic of diversions can be understood and meaningfully put into relation (Appadurai 1986:28–29). It is about figuring out the politics of commodities, which can take many forms: “the politics of diversion and of display; the politics of authenticity and of authentication; the politics of knowledge and ignorance; the politics of expertise and of sumptuary control; the politics of connoisseurship and of deliberately mobilized demand” (Appadurai 1986:57).

To sum it up, identifying the paths of those commodities that make a difference is important for the simple reason that both, the flow of commodities and tradition, are political phenomena (Appadurai 1986; Kammen 1991:5). However, determining the mere existence of the commodities doesn’t go far enough, for it is their purpose and their use that ultimately matter. Therefore, one has to trace back the sources of the commodities and to ascertain the people who are in control of their production, diversions and enclaving. As Marx and Engels (2006) point out, the class which exercises control over the materiality of our society also sets the predominant ideas of our epoch.

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. (Marx and Engels 2006:68)

This indicates that the production of the dirndl and the conception of *the* tradition are intrinsically interwoven and that the struggle for being in control of its social life (Appadurai 1986) arises from both the mental and the material sphere. Therefore, the striving for hegemony underlies tradition-related discourses (Neveling Patrick and Klien 2010a:25). For the reason that the stakeholders of a tradition are never homogeneous, conflicts about the modes of representation, profit and other particular interests may arise (Girke and Knoll 2013:10). To put it the other way round, “cultural process in global systems cannot be understood without considering the phenomena of hegemony, of countervailing identities, of dominant and subaltern discourses” (Friedman 2000:25).

Coming back to Marx (1975) and Simmel (1957), goods also have the capacity to become oppressive, distinguish us and exclude others. Therefore, the question of how particular social interests [are] ‘written-into’ consumer goods while others are systematically ‘written-out’” (Lee 2003:X) becomes more pressing. And moreover, who is the writer of the ruling ideas? (Marx and Engels 2006:68)

The current popularity of the dirndl and the associated discourses about tradition has a wide influence. The conception of tradition and the politics of the dirndl make an impact on the dynamics of the big markets, the structure of the geographical space, and the formations of the social life. They even affect the shape of the individual body.

What is more, studying conflicts about the diversion and enclaving of commodities that are involved in discourses about traditionality provides further knowledge about societal processes. Claims to tradition and a renaissance of consciousness of tradition usually come up when the involved things and practices “are considered to be threatened or at risk” (Harrison 2013:7) or when “the need to compete for attention with other interests that are perceived to be detrimental to them” (Harrison 2013:18) arises. However, the diversion of commodities also can be related to periods of creativity. As Appadurai (1986:26) states, “the diversion of commodities from specified paths is always a sign of creativity or crisis, whether aesthetic or economic.” A broader perspective can be found in the works of Miller, as he suggests that “capitalism, or more generally modernity, will bring new homogeneity, but equally spawn new heterogeneity” (Miller 1997:15). Relating that to the idea of the diversion of commodities, it can be argued that some paths will coalesce and broaden, whilst new, thin ones emerge at the same time. Concerning the economic framework of our times, that is, capitalism, Friedman (2000) discerns modernism, postmodernism and traditionalism as the three poles of cultural space of identity. Modernism, which is the dominant one, “is an identity without fixed content other than the capacity to develop itself, movement and growth as a principle of selfhood” (Friedman 2000:91). The individual is constrained to keep moving continuously and to accumulate wealth, knowledge and experience in order to survive. Friedman (2000:94) argues that modernism, for it depends on the expansion of a hegemonic center, declines in the West as soon as the center turns to shrink. This turn gives rise to myriad expressions of ethnicities, religious cults and various traditionalisms (Friedman 2000:96). Hence, it can be argued that invented traditions indicate problems “which might not otherwise be recognized, and developments which are otherwise difficult to identify and to date. They are evidence” (Hobsbawm 1996:12).

5 Researching the world of dirndl

The main thing of this study – literally speaking – consists of a piece of colorful cloth which is covered by an apron and draped on a blouse: the dirndl. Due to a huge boom in traditional dresses and fashion in a country style, within less than ten years the dirndl again became a down-market product, made up of textiles, materials and working hands from all over the world. It asserted itself on all levels of the market, for it is displayed in the shop windows of second-hand shops, big fashion chains, and fashion boutiques. Moreover, it captured the dump bins of all sorts of discounters, found its way into the online stores and can be seen in catwalk shows of Haute Couture designers, such as the fashion show by Karl Lagerfeld who presented his collection in the heart of Salzburg in December 2014. If you go for a stroll through the town on a sunny Sunday, the chances of spotting an elderly woman dressed in one of her dirndls are pretty big. Anyway, it is safe to say that you'll pass by any souvenir shop, which sells little dirndl dresses for babies or magnets in the shape of teddy bears dressed in traditional costumes.

For natives of Salzburg, traditional costumes and dirndl dresses belong to their town and for many of them they are part of everyday life. Choosing it as the starting point for an anthropological analysis probably isn't the first thing that may cross their mind. Taking seemingly trivial phenomena as foci of serious research endeavors entails the risk of putting one on the fringe of academic respectability, even though the body, clothes and material culture are getting more centrally positioned (Tseëlon 2001:237). Nonetheless, researching popular phenomena might involve surprising insights, as in mass culture we can find “texts’ rich in ideology” which “tell us much about our own culture” (Wilson 2001:8).

5.1 Dirndl's tradition: the object is the starting point

The two pivotal components of this study are the dirndl, that is a material object, and tradition, that is a conception and likewise in many cases the significance of the material object. The question arises, what is the appropriate starting point for the empirical journey?

“The dominant theory and approach to the study of things was that of semiotics” (Miller 2010:12). According to Saussure (Culler 1976; Saussure 1960), it is language that determines how we experience, construct and structure our material world. On the basis of language we decide whether something constitutes an object. Following that, language provides the pillars on which we construct our material world. Beyond that, language is our window on the world, our only access to reality.

However, language is not natural but cultural, just as the meanings it generates. Meaning is culturally grounded and culturally specific. That is to say that different language systems may

create different worlds and realities. As a consequence, there is not just one version of truth but many different ones which come into being by means of various linguistic worlds. Language consists of meanings which are created internally within the language and which are organized in a system of relationships, categorized and distinguished from each other through difference and similarity. Therefore, an analysis of language actually means analyzing “social facts, dealing with the social use of material objects” (Culler 1976:51).

Miller (1987:99), on the contrary, distinguishes the world of objects from that of language. He argues that language and objects are inherently different, for the objects possess a concrete nature which doesn't have the same arbitrary and abstract capabilities as language does. Moreover, language appertains to the consciousness and the explicit world of knowledge. Objects, conversely, may have a hold on the unconscious world. Even though they are determinant of our behavior and identity, they barely attract our attention – be it in everyday life or in the academic world. According to Miller (Miller 1987:85, 2010:51), objects have been overlooked in academic discussions for a long time and considered as trivial phenomena. Despite their presence in modern life, objects managed to sink into insignificance and to appear effectless. Within anthropology, objects became “blindingly obvious,” meaning that a thing can reach a point where “we are blinded to its presence, rather than reminded of its presence” (Miller 2010:51). The problem with it is that we as human beings cannot apprehend ourselves outside of the material world, within which we are constructed (Miller 1987:86). Therefore, “the best way to understand, convey and appreciate our humanity is through attention to our fundamental materiality” (Miller 2010:4). As an anthropologist, hence, one has to focus not on the humans or their languages but on the object itself and assign it as the starting point for the empirical endeavor.

We have to follow the things themselves, for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories. It is only through the analysis of these trajectories that we can interpret the human transactions and calculations that enliven things. Thus, even though from a *theoretical* point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a *methodological* point of view it is things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context. (Appadurai 1986:5)

Tracing the trajectories and uses of the objects in motion automatically leads to considering all areas and agents that are involved in the social life of a thing. That way, the meaning of a thing, which is neither fixed nor fully established at any time but constantly in transit, can be traced in its various flows in the social world (McCracken 1989:71).

These include forms of production and commerce and the demands of profit, the interests of and constraints on manufacture, design, marketing and advertising, whose role it is to create the images of industrial goods in relation to specified target populations, and the interests of and constraints on the consumer population, who use and in their turn manipulate the meaning of these forms through differential selection, placement, use and association. (Miller 1987:158–159)

In this manner, the areas of production, distribution and consumption are not considered as particular fields which are studied separately in a hierarchic order, rather they all equally form part of the object's trajectories, which then become the determinant guides for the researcher's movements in the field. Shifting the focus from the producers or the products of meaning to *the ways that meaning is attributed* circumvents choosing one of those three monuments as the "determining instance" (Hebdige 2003:128) in the creation of the object's meaning. That vantage point implies taking into consideration "larger social processes that cannot be grasped in acts of exchange and consumption," (Friedman 1994:8f) that is, processes and larger networks of relationships which have a bearing on the ways meaning is attributed to things. This implies that the focal point doesn't rest on the owners of the goods and that they are not the only key informants about the objects' meanings, for they may not be aware of the meaningful properties of their goods, even if "they serve to inform and control his or her action" (McCracken 1989:83). Choosing the object in motion as a starting point for the empirical endeavor turns the research project itself into a dynamic process, in which the ways by which "realities are realized, objects objectified, classes of persons and things classified, and so forth" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2003:159) are pursued.

5.2 The dirndl – a cultural costume

The general public, just as the media, often treats the dirndl as an element and symbol of "their" culture, which is also upheld and marked by "the" tradition. That idea is underlined by the dirndl's designation as a *traditional* costume. The purpose of this study is not to search for a confirmation of those notions, as that would simply endorse and reproduce the hegemonic positions, but rather to retrace the processes that lead to those findings. Beyond that, the question of whether something is traditional or not must not be ascribed on behalf of the researcher, as their task is to scrutinize the ways and reasons behind the processes which may enable tradition and culture to appear as facts and intrinsic entities. That is to say that the questions of whether the dirndl is a traditional costume and of what is behind the term only can be answered by means of ethnographic fieldwork. Tradition and the dirndl, however, are both pointed out in discussions about culture and reasons for conflicts about the being of "their" culture. Therefore, it is important to briefly dwell on the notion of culture in relation to tradition, especially since the conception of culture informs the epistemological framework.

The previously mentioned notion of culture is, according to Friedman (2000:206), "a typical product of Western modernity that consists in transforming difference into essence," instable in its character and made up of the practice of meaning to the world (Friedman 2000:74).

It is a product of stabilizing properties in social reproduction itself, tendencies to the production of similar kinds of experience of the social world or worlds, to the production of similar frameworks of interpretation of the world and similar structures of desire and motivation (Friedman 2000:76).

The starting point for the creation of this kind of conception of culture rests in the perception of difference, that is, the awareness of people doing similar things in different ways. The notion of a culture can be established where the attributed differences coincide with demarcated populations. Hereof, difference easily may be converted into essence, code, paradigm or race, disregarding the processes by which specificity and difference come into being. Culture, that is, a product and a tool of Western modernity, applied to the global context in which both of them emerged, hence creates an essentialist world view of different cultures (Friedman 2000:207). Friedman (2000) argues that specific practices become more or less homogenous in a population, which raises the question as to the reasons and dynamics behind the specificities. Thus, “cultural specificity can never be accounted for in terms of itself”, for “culture is practiced and constituted out of practice. It is not a code or a paradigm unless it is socially employed as such, to socialize or otherwise transmit a set of rules abstract from the context of their production” (Friedman 2000:207).

Likewise, Appadurai (2005:12) considers the most valuable concept of culture as the concept of difference. He argues that when a practice, a distinction, conception or an ideology implies a cultural dimension, the idea of situated and embodied differences is stressed. Therefore, he prefers the adjective *cultural* to the noun *culture*, since the noun implicates that culture is some kind of object, thing or substance. The adjectival sense of culture, conversely, moves on into a realm of differences, contrasts and comparisons. However, not all differences are cultural in their character. Thus, we should only use the term cultural when some sort of group identities are expressed or mobilized (Appadurai 2005:13). Concerning the identity of a group, conceptions of culture may go so far as to become a “process of naturalizing a subset of differences that have been mobilized to articulate group identity” (Appadurai 2005:15).

In any case, Appadurai (2005:12–13) suggests to focus on the dimensionality of culture rather than on its substantiality. That way, culture appears less as a property of individuals and groups but “more as a heuristic device that we can use to talk about difference” (Appadurai 2005:13). Relating to this, Neveling (2010a:18) argues that if culture is not used as an analytical category but treated as an ontological and ideological category means to invent difference. Hence, culture shouldn’t be considered “as a primary entity, but as a particular analytical perspective” (Hastrup 1993:148).

However, in the realm of anthropology the concept of culture forms the basis for the anthropological distinction between self and other. In brief, “culture is the essential tool for

making other” (Abu-Lughod 2006:470). It is this kind of segmentation of the world into different cultures, areas and sites which enables fieldwork (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:5). Therefore, it has to be stressed that every anthropological account of cultural differences at the same time helps constructing, producing and maintaining the differences (Abu-Lughod 2006:470).

Concerning concepts of culture in connection with the materiality of our world, it has to be noted that hereof further criticism is offered. To give an example, Miller (1987:11) argues that culture often is identified with a set of objects, such as the definition of culture on the basis of the arts in themselves. Instead, Miller (1987:11) suggests that culture is always a process, which “is never reducible to either its object or its subject form.” Thus, culture should be conceived of as an “evaluation of the relationship through which objects are constituted as social forms.” (ibid.) This implies a dynamic research approach which doesn’t focus solely on the mere things.

Doing research on the dirndl, hence, doesn’t mean to deal with a substantial Austrian object or to study one phenomenon of Austria’s culture, as that approach would be based on the notion that there is *the* Austrian culture, which would clear the way to *the* tradition. The outcome of such a research work would also be just the product of a Western country’s modernity. Rather, the aim is to research the cultural dimensions of the dirndl, in the sense of how it produces or is used to produce differences and specific practices. From this it follows that tradition is not considered as a part of the culture, but as an important cultural dimension of the dirndl, as it provides the platform for conflicting (group) identities. For now, the dirndl should be conceived of as a primarily *cultural* costume, which informs a cultural perspective on the question of the extent to which it is a *traditional* costume.

5.3 Escaping methodological nationalism

The Western notion of culture, in the sense of being a property of individuals and groups, goes hand in hand with the classification of the world into nation-states, for the establishment of the notion of a culture requires demarcated populations, such as a people. Hence, the division of people into cultures is equated with particular nation-states, which in many cases results in the essentialist conception of a culture being in accord with a nation-state and its people.

Methodological nationalism, then, denotes “the assumption that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world” (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002:302). Furthermore, it “is an ideological orientation that approaches the study of social and historical processes as if they were contained within the borders of individual nation-states” (Glick Schiller

2013:28). The members of nation states are not only assumed to share a common culture, but also “a common history, set of values, norms, social customs, institutions, and identity,” (Glick Schiller 2013:28) which hence unite them and simultaneously distinguish them from all “foreigners.” This implies the negation of all kinds of internal differences within each nation-state.

According to Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002:304–308), there are three modes of methodological nationalism, that are, ignorance of the national framing of modernity, naturalization of national discourses, and territorial limitation on the nation-state. The three modes intersect and form “a coherent epistemic structure, a self-reinforcing way of looking at and describing the social world” (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002:308).

Concerning this study, escaping the three modes of methodological nationalism is of importance for various reasons. Most importantly, the dirndl and the discourses about traditional costumes are often conceived of as a national phenomenon and the dirndl is often treated as a symbol for Austria(ness). Only through taking a stance outside the national framing, thus, the naturalization of the national discourses with its therein contained demarcations can be brought to the fore. This becomes even more relevant in consideration of the close entanglement between the Austrian and Bavarian market of traditional costumes, the global interlacing of the modes of production and the notion of globalization as a crucial factor in the popularity of traditional costumes. Therefore, a reduction of the analytical focus to the boundaries of the nation-state would foreclose important aspects of the current renaissance of traditional costumes.

Geographically speaking, the pivotal point of this study is the city of Salzburg and its surrounding areas, for it is one of the strongholds of the boom in traditional costumes. For the very reason that the city of Salzburg borders on Germany, limiting the topic of the study to Austria would create a field totally detached from the actual situation. Confining the focus of interest to the city of Salzburg and its Austrian vicinity would draw a fictitious line, as goods, services, labor and capital are entitled to move freely between Austria and other European countries.

Choosing the object as the starting point for the empirical journey automatically avoids the notion of the nationally bounded society as a naturally given (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002:304). Putting the analytical focus on the things in motion, their trajectories and uses automatically eclipses the boundaries of the nation-state. As soon as the researcher is under the guidance of the trajectories of the assemblage of various dirndl dresses and the people they relate to, the risk of losing sight of the connections between all kinds of nationally defined territories vanishes.

5.4 Doing ethnography

The starting point for the empirical endeavor is that of tracing the things in motion with the aim of illuminating their trajectories and the dynamics and processes behind their paths. This approach already indicates a participatory element in the research process, in which seeing and listening become pivotal tasks. Burawoy (2009:23) refers to “writing about the world from the standpoint of participant observation” as ethnography. In this regard, Miller (1997:16–17) designates four commitments of ethnography. The first one is to be in the presence of the people one is studying and not to focus merely on the texts and objects they produce. The second commitment is that people shall be evaluated in terms of what they actually do and not of what they say they do, in short, action speaks louder than words. The third one is a commitment to time, in that the researcher fades into the background through the length of investigation. Finally, there is the commitment to holistic analysis, which is to say that the actions of the people are considered within a larger framework, which cannot be observed but conjectured on the basis of the researcher’s observations (Miller 1997:16–17). All these elements of ethnographic fieldwork point to one crucial characteristic of ethnography, namely, “ethnographic truths are [...] inherently *partial* – committed and incomplete” (Clifford 2010:7). Beyond that, the impact of power and changing power relations play an important role in the process of ethnographic work.

Ethnography is actively situated *between* powerful systems of meaning. It poses its questions at the boundaries of civilizations, cultures, classes, races, and genders. Ethnography decodes and recodes, telling the grounds of collective order and diversity, inclusion and exclusion. It describes processes of innovation and structuration, and is itself part of these processes. (Clifford 2010:2–3)

In its relation to power, the function of ethnographic work is “often ambivalent, potentially counter-hegemonic” (Clifford 2010:9). Ethnographic work is a process in which the researcher moves in four dimensions, including the virtual one (Comaroff and Comaroff 2003:164), which tends to take on greater significance in the Western world.

Besides seeing and listening, there is another important activity in doing ethnography, and that is writing. For the researcher, there are two distinct types of writing. The writing which is done “in the field” in order to collect data differentiates fundamentally from the process of writing the ethnographic paper “at home,” as this activity is much more reflective and theoretical in its character (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:12). However, “field work and writing proceed together as a process of continual reconstruction of the past in the light of the present with a view to anticipating the future” (Burawoy 1991c:294). Relating to this, Appadurai (2005:64) notes that ethnography needs to be sensitive to the historical features of present events, which also involves comparison. However, he suggests cutting “into the problem through the historical present” (ibid.).

Applied methods

On the basis of primarily participant observation, informal interviews in the field, interviews with experts and an analysis of different media, such as advertisements, catalogs, TV shows, films, news articles, the trajectories of the dirndl, that is, the events and parties, the market and its dynamics, the Heimatwerk, the wearers and their tastes are followed in this study.

The pivotal point of this study is my hometown, the city of Salzburg and its surrounding areas, for the very reason that it is one of the strongholds of the boom in traditional costumes in Austria. The different sites in the surrounding areas, which shifted into focus during the time in the field, were chosen not by me as a researcher, but by the objects, meaning that the dirndl dresses and their agents took me to those places. Since designating the things in motion as the leitmotif of one's study implies an open and dynamic research process which doesn't pursue predetermined destinations, the field changed during my ethnographic work. The things in motion not only brought me outside the city of Salzburg, but also back to Vienna, the place where I currently live.

Besides moving physically and participating in other people's lives through talking to them and more importantly listening to them in interviews and informal conversations, surfing on the internet constituted another important part of my ethnographic work. I collected data from the homepages of important stakeholders, followed them on Facebook and took into consideration their online public relation activities. There are a number of incidents which only took place virtually or in the media, but which nonetheless had a huge impact on the current discourse about traditional costumes. Moreover, I couldn't gain access to all important informants personally, so that I had to confine myself to other sources, such as TV-shows and websites. The combination of these different methods is aimed at gaining new insights into the different dispositions of tradition, the underlying power struggles, and the various identities relating to dirndl dresses and tradition. For the reason that participant observation and interviews with experts constitute the two major methods of this study, they are outlined in detail in the following section.

Participant observation

One of the major methods of this study is participant observation, which is also one of the key methods in anthropology. It can be distinguished from other techniques of social research, as it consists of studying "people in their own time and space, in their own everyday lives" (Burawoy 1991a:2). According to Burawoy (1991a:3), participant observation is the paradigmatic way of studying the social world, for it "best exemplifies what is distinctive about the practice of *all* social science" (Burawoy 1991a:3). From this argument, it follows that anthropology is the paradigmatic social science (ibid.).

Nonetheless, each research technique has its virtues and downsides. One major advantage of participant observation is that the researcher not only has the possibility to look at the actions of people, but also experiences the contexts of those acts, which reveal the ways people understand and experience their actions. Furthermore, it enables the researcher to gain insight into the differences between what people say they do and what they actually do. On the downside, participant observation involves the risk of losing objectivity. Too close contact with participants not only might entail a loss of objectivity, but also a limited range of validity, that is, the incapability to make generalizations on the basis of participant observation. As Burawoy (1991a:2) puts it, “it is sociology’s ‘uncertainty principle’: the closer you get to measurement on some dimensions – intensity and depth – the further you recede on others – objectivity and validity.”

In the moment of participant observation, the roles of being a participant and an observer are inherently in conflict. Participant observation requires the researcher to adopt their balance, so that participation doesn’t turn into immersion and observation not into marginality (Burawoy 1991a:5). However, it is the moments of crises, anxiety and tension which form an intrinsic part of fieldwork and hence make up the quality of participant observation. Burawoy (1991c:293) suggests that the greater tensions between the roles of participant and observer the better the product. Moments of crises, no matter whether they are generated by oneself or others, are an important resource of revealing the true interests of the participants, which might bring new refutations and conjectures to the fore (Burawoy 1991c:295). Anyway, it is important to note that “observation is never neutral; the gaze is directed from a particular point of view” (Hastrup 1995:4).

Concerning this study, participant observation forms an important method for collecting data, for the very reason that the aim is to understand and explain the ways people interpret, and most importantly, construct and deconstruct the tradition of the *dirndl*. Tradition, however, is not a meaning floating in *vacuo*, but the object’s significance, a concept which only can be enacted in conjunction with the appertaining object. Therefore, the concrete materiality of our world shifts into focus. In order to conceive the trajectories of the things in motion and to understand the ways of how the notion of tradition circulates, diffuses and is naturalized in different situations one has to participate and observe the behavior of the involved parties. People may say one thing about tradition, but their modes of doing and reinventing tradition may put another complexion on things.

I started doing participant observation at the beginning of the year 2014 and left the field at the end of September the same year. A description of the different sites of research follows in the next chapter. For now, I confine myself to some peculiarities of my fieldwork and sketch one type of writing intrinsic to ethnographic fieldwork that is taking notes in the field. I did participant observation in many different settings, which all bore their particular challenges. Whenever I had the chance to, I took notes in the field, usually handwritten in a little notepad. In any case, I recorded the information resulting from my participant observations in detail in documents on my computer. Besides that, I also had a thick book, in which I wrote down new insights, thoughts and points of view, usually in connection to the theory I dealt with at the time. This book hence represents the continual process of mediating between the data from the field and existing theory, which also constitutes the first step of analysis.

My task as a researcher was to observe and to *participate*, an activity which in my case often involved adhering to a certain dress code, for I did most of my participant observation during festivities and parties. For this reason doing ethnographic fieldwork often turned into an intense bodily experience. As I never was affiliated to the dirndl spheres, wearing a dirndl – a conspicuous dress which usually shapes the female body in a certain manner – primarily was an unusual experience for me, which I have become more accustomed to in the course of time. During my time in the field, growing into the dress went hand in hand with me growing into the role as a researcher. Wearing the dress helped me in my fieldwork, since it provided an insight into experiences I wouldn't have made in my casual clothes. It gave me the chance to become “one of them”, and to experience what it feels like being a young woman dressed in a dirndl walking down the street, attracting the attention of others.

Expert Interviews

In addition to participant observation, I decided to augment my collected data by means of semi-structured interviews with experts. The determination of who can be considered an expert depends on various factors. First of all, the status of an expert is relational, as it arises from the research question and the scholarly interest (Bogner and Menz 2005:45). Secondly, their knowledge and actions have to differ from those of others, especially from others common knowledge and everyday actions. Their knowledge doesn't necessarily have to be exclusive; however, they have to possess an advance in knowledge which isn't accessible to everybody in the field of action (Meuser and Nagel 2009:467). According to Meuser and Nagel (2009:468), it is not the qualification but the activity which provides the experts with special knowledge about groups of persons, decision-making processes, policy fields and so on (Meuser and Nagel

2009:470). Beyond that, their expertise is socially institutionalized and bound to a certain functional context (Meuser and Nagel 2009:468).

What ultimately matters most is the effectiveness of their knowledge (Bogner and Menz 2005:45). That is to say that the knowledge and the action orientations of the expert have to be capable of becoming hegemonic in a certain organizational context, in other words, experts have the possibility to enforce their orientations. As a result, they carry responsibility for problem solving (Meuser and Nagel 2009:470) and structure the action conditions of other agents in their sphere of activity in a relevant way (Bogner and Menz 2005:46). Therefore, talking of the expert on one's life makes no sense (Meuser and Nagel 2009:468). However, the status as an expert cannot be dissociated from the interviewee as a private person, for their knowledge can be differentiated into three varying kinds of expert knowledge, as Bogner and Menz (2005:43f.) argue. Experts possess professional, practical and interpretive knowledge, which bears upon their specific professional field of action and refers to their subjective relevance and ways of seeing.

Concerning this study, all of the five interviewed persons are in the position of making important decisions which in further consequence affect the actions, experiences and notions of other people. All of them undertake management tasks, are the heads of creative processes and have an effect upon public life. They are in a hegemonic position, albeit to various degrees, since in some cases the experts and their actions are interrelated. Due to their societal and professional positions, they all possess specific knowledge about design and decision making processes, which usually take place without the presence of the general public. Therefore, I decided to conduct interviews with the experts of those sites in which I also did participant observation. Hereby, the aim was to point out the background of the sites and to gather information about the things that couldn't be learned by means of participant observation, for they happen at other places or at another time.

According to Meuser and Nagel (2009:472f.), a semi-structured interview with an open interview guide is the most suitable method for exploring the topics which concern the experts' field of action. Applying an interview guide in this context makes sense for two reasons. First of all, doing the interview without having an interview guide prepared might involve the danger of appearing as an incompetent interviewer. Secondly, the interview's focus is not on the biography of the expert, but on their strategies for action and their decision criteria related to a certain functional context (Meuser and Nagel 2009:472f.), which hence sets a framework of themes to be explored.

During the interview, the interview guide should be handled flexible, so that the interviewer has the freedom to tailor their questions to the interview situation. Under these circumstances, narrative passages may be brought about, which may reveal essential points for the reconstruction of the expert's actions and orientations (Meuser and Nagel 2009:473f.).

In my case, I prepared separate interview guides for each expert interview, because the persons I interviewed acted in different spheres. Hence, their field of action set the range of topics which were to be covered during the interview. Three of the experts belong to the branch of production and design, and two experts worked as event managers.

The location for the interview was chosen by the interviewees, however, one preferred to do the interview online via Skype, as he had little time and often was away. Conducting the interview online without any face-to-face contact had some impact on the quality of the interview, for it didn't encourage narrative passages or lapses in the conversation. Furthermore, the involved risk of a bad connection caused some tension on my behalf.

Two interviews took place in restaurants and cafes, the other two at the work place of the experts. I recorded four of the interviews in order to transcribe them afterwards. In one case, the background noise was too loud so that I could take only handwritten notes. Apart from that, all the interviews were conducted in a relaxed and open atmosphere and all the experts were welcome to support me and my research project.

Besides doing participant observation and conducting both informal interviews as part of the participant observation and expert interviews, I also analyzed the web presence of companies and public figures. The aim was to take into consideration parts of the public discourse about tradition and traditional costumes, for important opinion leaders use the publicity of the internet in order to spread their message. Moreover, I analyzed two TV-shows, namely, a Saturday night show and a documentary about traditional costumes. For both of them, I compiled a shot list, which is an indispensable presupposition for a scientific analysis (Korte 1999:38).

5.5 Positionality

Doing ethnographic fieldwork implies that the data and information collected in the field are not depicting an objective world of which the researcher is the representative. As Hastrup (1993:154) puts it, due to the characteristics of fieldwork "there is no absolute, objective world to be reported." The hereby applied methods and methodologies are not a neutral medium that function as a tool for gathering objective data from the non-scientific world, because the data is

always collected from a specific position, which also determines the vantage point (Amelina et al. 2012:14).

We all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always “in context”, *positioned*. (Hall 1998:222)

Among other things, our positions and locations have a huge effect on the knowledge which is produced in ethnographic representations.

Ethnography has always contained at least some recognition that knowledge is inevitably both “about somewhere” and “from somewhere”, and that the knower’s location and life experience are somehow central to the kind of knowledge produced. (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:35)

For this reason, I consider it important to illustrate my position related to the field I studied and the thereby arising contexts. I was born in a little town near Salzburg, which back then was a village. My parents chose a place 20 kilometers away from home for the simple reason that it had the reputation of being the best maternity clinic. I grew up in the town of Salzburg, which has about 150 000 inhabitants, and lived a probably pretty average middle-class life which didn’t differ much from the lives of other white girls in that town. I never really was affiliated to the *dirndl* spheres; however, living in that town might put you in a position to wear a *dirndl* once in a while. In my case, those situations were attending the maypole festival with acquaintances a few years ago, being a member of the school choir which traveled to Italy and France, and working as a hostess at an art fair. After some semesters abroad and doing my master in Vienna, this study brought me back to the town that once used to be so familiar to me.

Doing anthropology in familiar places

Hastrup (1987:95) argues that one of the motives for doing research at home is “the implicit search for ‘roots’ and for cultural authenticity.” In my case, this doesn’t hold true for various reasons. First of all, the source of inspiration for doing research on traditional costumes leads back to even another continent, that is, Africa. During my traineeship for teaching German as a foreign language in Ghana, I learned from my students that the government urged the Ghanaians to swap Western attire for local garb each Friday. The idea here was to diminish the influence of Western styles, which are in full vogue, and to help the local textile industry, which almost collapsed due to the great amount of imported second-hand textiles from Europe (Crawley 2004).

Coming back to Austria and witnessing the popularity of traditional costumes arouse my interest for the tradition of “local” attire in relation to global processes, since globalization apparently was a motive for the involved parties in both cases. I wondered how it was possible, that in a Western country people were fond of celebrating tradition by wearing their *dirndl* and *lederhosen* whilst at

another place the government intervened in the appearance of its people in order to preserve their former way of dressing.

Setting Salzburg as the pivotal point of study meant doing research in my hometown, however, in areas of society I never associated with, and which always somehow seemed suspicious to me. After coming back to Europe and moving to Vienna, I considered doing anthropology “at home” as more challenging. In my situation, choosing a research topic which had to be located in my hometown gave me the chance to do something “new,” as funny as it may seem. Nonetheless, spending time abroad not only inspired me to do research on that topic but also had another effect on me doing anthropology at home. Albeit I didn’t work as a researcher there, my experience abroad aided “the ‘distanciation’ process that is necessary if *we* are to see ourselves as others see *us*” (Jackson 1987:14).

However, as an outsider I probably wouldn’t have chosen a power political point of departure but a different research question, maybe one which would have described the phenomenon rather than asked for the underlying processes and dynamics. According to Alvarado Leyton (2009:19–20), choosing a power political oriented research question is in the nature of doing anthropology at home, since researching one’s own easily may become a political issue. He argues that doing anthropology at home can’t be overtly politically neutral, for anthropologists involuntarily participate in power struggles and conflicting prerogatives of interpretation. Furthermore, publications of the indigenous researcher are conceived of as political statements. Anthropology at home or native anthropology thus is an important venue for cultural criticism (Alvarado Leyton 2009:111).

In scholarly literature, there are various terms for describing anthropologists who are engaged in research in their own society. Native anthropology, anthropology at home and insider anthropology can be reckoned among them. All of them have their own genesis and underlying theoretical considerations.

The idea of native anthropology is strongly influenced by the discipline’s history and its colonial roots. The Latin etymon of the English word *native* is *nativus*, meaning ‘born’ or ‘innate’. In the fairly neutrally etymological sense of the word, hence, everyone can be considered as a native of one place or another (Kuwayama 2003:8), just as I am native to Salzburg, meaning that I was born there. During the colonial era, however, the term *native* has acquired pejorative connotations (Kuwayama 2003:8) which it carries down to the present day. In actual fact, anthropologists tend to use it as a “respectable substitute for terms like *primitive*, about which we now feel some embarrassment” (Appadurai 1988:36). Furthermore, the word *native* usually is used for persons and groups “who belong to those parts of the world that were, and are, distant from the

metropolitan West” (Appadurai 1988:37). As opposed to this, studies that deal with the complexities of the history and the diversities of the societies in the West usually are labeled with the less derogatory term *folke* (Appadurai 1988:37). Relating to this, North American anthropologists designate themselves as insider anthropologists, whilst non-Western researchers rather appear as native or indigenous (Alvarado Leyton 2009:31).

According to Appadurai (1988:37), the term *native* not only means that people are from certain places, to which they also belong to, but that “they are also those who are somehow *incarcerated*, or confined, in those places.” The incarceration of the natives takes place on various levels, namely, a physical immobility through belonging to a place, ecologically through being confined to what the place permits which also entails a language of incarceration, and on a moral and intellectual level. On this basis, Appadurai (1988:39) argues that “natives, people confined to and by the places to which they belong, groups unsullied by contact with a larger world, have probably never existed. Natives, thus, are creatures of the anthropological imagination.” Referring to this, Narayan (1993:676) suggests that the same critique applies to the notion of a *native anthropologist*, for they are “assumed to be an insider who will forward an authentic point of view to the anthropological community.”

Kuwayama (2003), however, has decided to use the term native exactly for those reasons, as it is a “testimony to the colonial roots of anthropology”, which nowadays is incited by their subjects, which also “signals a radical change taking place in the structure of anthropological knowledge” (Kuwayama 2003:8).

A somewhat different line of reasoning can be found in the works of the Northern European anthropologist Kirsten Hastrup, as she edits out the colonial history of the term *native*. She argues that natives are people “who at some point are studied by social anthropologists as inhabitants of a particular social space” (Hastrup 1995:147). Following this, all persons are natives in some world and culture (Hastrup 1995:4), “in the sense that they *know* the social space – if they do not actually *understand* it” (Hastrup 1993:153). The difference between knowing and understanding is what distinguishes the native knowledge from the external and explicit understanding of the expert (Hastrup 1995:148). “The point of anthropology is to bridge the two” (Hastrup 1993:153). According to Hastrup (1993:154), native voices never tell the full story about the world, for their stories are expressed from a certain position which constitutes their native point of view. The task of ethnography is not only to record the native voices, but also to contextualize and question their points of view on the world.

However, in the words of Hastrup (1993:157), native anthropology is impossible, since the native and anthropological position are mutually exclusive. “It is logically impossible to speak from an

inside and an outside position at the same time” (Hastrup 1993:157). Therefore, “we cannot assume continuity between the native and the anthropological knowledge project,” since the process of analyzing and writing requires a step out of the local discourse and the social space studied (Hastrup 1993:152–153).

Instead of submitting to a kind of auto-anthropology, which is unable to distinguish between ethnographic *sources* and ethnographic *descriptions*, we must meet the challenge posed by the discontinuity between local knowledge and anthropological understanding. Only then can we expand the field of significance of anthropology. (Hastrup 1995:158–159)

Relating to this, Hastrup proposes to turn the concept of othering upside down, so that anthropology takes up the position of the “radical other” (Hastrup 1995:7). In her former works, she even suggests that anthropology actually constitutes a third culture in which the ethnographer turns into a third-person character (Hastrup 1987:105). In any case, Hastrup notes that the discontinuity between the native points of view and the anthropological understanding is a crucial factor.

While we must certainly pay attention to the ethics of fieldwork, and still have to establish canons for this, the idea that natives must be pleased by our results is not only a theoretical dead-end, but clearly at odds with attempts of cultural critique. [...] Critique, precisely, is a mode of questioning what is taken for granted (Hastrup 1993:153).

As opposed to this, Narayan (1993) proposes to neglect the dichotomy of “native” and “non-native” anthropologists, for “a culture is not homogenous, a society is differentiated, and a professional identity that involves problematizing lived reality inevitably creates a distance” (Narayan 1993:671). As far as I am concerned, I can only support this claim for various reasons. Even though I grew up in Salzburg, I hadn’t known most of the people before I became acquainted with them in the course of fieldwork. I knew most of the places, the restaurants, the bars, the streets and the squares. However, visiting a restaurant on the occasion of a friend’s birthday party or attending a Trachtenclubbing may tell two very different stories of one and the same place. This shows that people may resort to the same places without even meeting once. And if this is the case with a bar, it probably also holds true for a town. Hence, if I had to label the ethnographic work I did, I’d name it “doing anthropology in familiar *places*”. I am not a native to the people, nor am I an insider of their conceptions and lives.

For this reason, “we might more profitably view each anthropologist in terms of shifting identifications amid a field of interpenetrating communities and power relations” (Narayan 1993:671–672). Instead of narrowing the focus on the question of insider and outsider status, other factors, such as education, gender, sexual orientation, class, race, or sheer duration of contacts should be taken into consideration, too. The impact of these factors is in flux and thus may outweigh in positioning and dissociating us in the field. Even so called insiders may

experience varying levels of closeness in the field (Narayan 1993:676). Personally, I remember situations during my fieldwork in which I really merged in; however these moments mostly happened at the end of my fieldwork, which rather indicates that I learnt about my field than that it confirms that I was or am an insider. At the same time, I recall a public presentation, at which I unfortunately stood out of the crowd for I was the only one not wearing a traditional costume. The reason behind was that I just didn't know the implicit dress code. Apart from that, I consider the question of whether I am an insider or not less of an issue, for I claim that the fact that I am a woman has a lot bigger bearing on the results of this study. If a man had done research on a traditional woman's dress, the conditions in the field and by association the findings probably would have changed enormously.

Distance and being an outsider, however, appear to remain essential ingredients in doing anthropology. Löfgren (1987:89), for example, argues that "people seldom view themselves as culture builders in their everyday task of integrating new experiences or giving new meanings to old knowledge." Therefore, she argues, only an outsider can see the structure and direction of the participants' cultural activities. Gaining distance, thus, seems to be a core problem when studying one's own society, even though this argument contradicts the notion that the task of the anthropologist is to bridge the gap between him or herself and the other. Concerning this, Abu-Lughod (2006:468) argues that "what we call the outside is a position *within* a larger political-historical complex." For this reason, we should rather focus on the ways in which each anthropologist is situated in relation to the people studied.

Similar to Hastrup (1993), Narayan (1993) argues that narratives are not records of what actually happened, but are told for particular purposes and from particular vantage points. Hence, they are "incipiently analytical, enacting theory" (Narayan 1993:681). Therefore, she proposes the "enactment of hybridity", that is, "writing that depicts authors as minimally bicultural in terms of belonging simultaneously to the world of engaged scholarship and the world of everyday life" (Narayan 1993:672). However, studying one's own society may involve an inverse process, in that the conceptual categories are not applied in the field, but they "rather rename and reframe what is already known" (Narayan 1993:678).

Alvarado Leyton (2009:24–28) discerns various advantages and disadvantages of doing anthropology in one's own society. The advantages are the language skills, knowledge of local conflicts, empathy with the others, a network one can draw on, and a higher disposition to collaborating through a shared identity. On the downside, there is a pressure to conform, the danger of "blind spots" and an idealized representation, and the possibility of getting into local

interests. Furthermore, the local anthropologist is assumed to possess certain knowledge which otherwise would be explained explicitly.

In my case, people often explained their professional knowledge, which gave me the chance to learn a lot about traditional costumes and the associated terminology. In the course of fieldwork I acquired knowledge about different patterns, frills and couture. That is to say that in many cases people didn't assume certain knowledge. However, sometimes my role as a researcher and my research question were misconceived, for people considered me as an expert of tradition, as if I were to judge whether something is traditional or not. The assumption hereby was that tradition lies in the past and can be ascribed by an authority. People almost never understood my research question and couldn't imagine my how-question; they rather expected a where-question, in the sense of where is the border between tradition and modernity, old and new and so on.

There is also the argument that "the anthropologist researching at home cannot get on to a plane after fieldwork and disappear into the academy" (Okely 1987:70). That is to say that the dialogue does not terminate with fieldwork, which implies, that the production of ethnographic texts takes place under specific circumstances (Mascarenhas-Keyes 1987:192). However, "in an interconnected world, we are never really 'out of the field'" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:35). Moreover, knowing that your informants might also read your findings raises the level of scrutiny on behalf of the researcher, as it reveals power relations and prevents the possibility of muting the others totally.

The question of whether the anthropologist is an insider, native or "at home" becomes less of an issue when we focus on Abu-Lughod's (2006) argumentation regarding anthropology in general. She argues that the self is always constructed, and never a natural or found entity, which might oppress or ignore other forms of difference if it is created through opposition to the other (Abu-Lughod 2006:468). Therefore, she proposes a focus on practice and discourse as they work against the notion of boundedness, and on connections and interconnections between the people studied and the anthropologist (Abu-Lughod 2006:472).

By focusing closely on particular individuals and their changing relationships, one would necessarily subvert the most problematic connotations of culture: homogeneity, coherence, and timelessness. (Abu-Lughod 2006:476)

What is more, writing "ethnographies of the particular" helps unsettling the culture concept and subverting the process of "othering" (Abu-Lughod 2006:473). Relating to this, Appadurai (1988:46) suggests that it is important to keep in mind "that ideas that claim to represent the 'essences' of particular places reflect the temporary *localization* of ideas from *many* places," which proceeds to the issue of analysis and significance.

5.6 The links between macro and micro – the extended case method

Burawoy (2009) discerns two modes of science in the world of social sciences. On the one hand, there is the positive approach, which is based on the premise that there is an “external” world which can be construed detached from the researcher and studied by means of data-collecting procedures that keep the researcher distant and put him or her in an outsider position (Burawoy 2009:31). On the other hand, there is the reflexive model of science, which “starts out from dialogue, virtual or real, between observer and participants, then embeds such dialogue within a second dialogue between local processes and extralocal forces that in turn can be comprehended only through a third, expanding dialogue of theory with itself” (Burawoy 2009:20).

Relating to this, Burawoy (2009:23) distinguishes between the scientific models, the techniques of empirical investigation (in this case participant observation, interviewing and media analysis) and the research method, which here is the extended case method.

The extended case method applies reflexive science to ethnography in order to extract the general from the unique, to move from the ‘micro’ to the ‘macro,’ to connect the present to the past in anticipation of the future, all by building on preexisting theory. (Burawoy 2009:21)

The starting point is a stock of academic theory on behalf of the researcher and existent narratives on behalf of the informants. The interaction between these two begins from real locations and “takes context as a point of departure but not a point of conclusion” (Burawoy 2009:25-26, 38). Hereby, four principles of reflexive science can be stated. They are intervention, as the interview intervenes in the life of the interviewee, process in the meaning of aggregating situational knowledge into social process, structuration of the everyday world and reconstruction of theory (Burawoy 2009:39–42). Thereby, reflexive science seeks to reduce the effects of power; that are domination, silencing, objectification, and normalization (Burawoy 2009:72).

The basis for reflexive science is theory, be it a folk theory or an abstract law, which then is reconstructed on the grounds of anomalies or refutations, internal contradictions and theoretical gaps or silences (Burawoy 1991b:10). Hereby, the “intent is not to reject bad theories but to improve good theories” (Burawoy 1991a:7).

Theory is essential to each dimension of the extended case method. It guides interventions, it constitutes situated knowledges into social processes, and it locates those social processes in their wider context of determination. Moreover, theory is not something stored up in the academy but itself becomes an intervention into the world it seeks to comprehend. (Burawoy 2009:55)

However, this still begs the question of the generalizability of ethnographic findings, for participant observation suffers from two fundamental problems, namely the problem of significance and the level of analysis. The first problem refers to the incapability to generalize when working with participant observation. Hence, the case study remains very particular unless its results are tested in a sample of cases. The second problem denotes participant observation as

micro and ahistorical, meaning that it is confined to the short term and limited geographical space (Burawoy 1991d:271–272).

The extended case method, which constitutes a methodology, bursts the limits of participant observation by examining how social situations are shaped by external forces. Burawoy (1991a:6) argues that “participant observation can examine the macro world through the way the latter shapes and in turn is shaped and conditioned by the micro world, the everyday world of face-to-face interaction.” This endeavor is realized by means of existing theory, which hence is reconstructed, rebuilt and adapted to the new findings. The findings rely on the “interesting” and “surprising” in social situations, which emerge from theory, and then are considered as an anomaly (Burawoy 1991b:8–9). The extended case method thus doesn’t seek generalizations about social situations and their actors, but generalization through “reconstructing existing generalizations, that is, the reconstruction of existing theory” (Burawoy 1991d:279).

The extended case method constitutes a suitable methodology for this study for various reasons. First of all, there is the reconstruction of existing theory. Theories about tradition and especially the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1996) focus primarily – often from a historical perspective – on nation-states, political interests and ethnicity. At the present day, however, tradition is also an economic factor and a phenomenon which cannot be considered with a disregard for (mass-)consumption. The commercial relevance, the custodians of tradition in conjunction with their sphere of activity and the thereby arising dynamics barely have been taken into account in existing theories about the concept of tradition. Furthermore, considering the concept in the present puts another complexion on the matter, for it directs the focus on theories about social positioning, distinction, the dynamics of fashion and the thing itself. In this study, tradition is conceived of as a social action, an activity and a process, which is enacted here and now, and which is looked at on the micro level by means of participant observation. What is more, “the extended case method leads directly to an analysis of domination and resistance,” (Burawoy 1991d:279) two issues which are at stake when it comes to debates about tradition. Finally, the extended case method offers the possibility of taking into account other forces on the macro level, which is relevant for the very reason that the general public often considers tradition as a counterweight to globalization and an answer to its effects.

In highlighting the ethnographic worlds of the local, it challenges the postulated omnipotence of the global, whether it be international capital, neoliberal politics, space of flows, or mass culture. (Burawoy 2009:72)

Therefore, the extended case method provides the possibility of taking a vantage point which enables the contemplation of micro processes in relation to macro forces, in a manner which

doesn't solely focus on tradition in the sense of distribution of power in ethnic, political, or national terms. In the course of this, it is important to keep in mind that science is a never-ending process, which doesn't provide final answers as its findings are continuously revised (Burawoy 2009:44).

6 Sites of research

Doing anthropology often stands for ethnographic fieldwork, denoting the concept of doing research work *in a field* – usually by means of participant observation. Due to the changing circumstances of ethnographic work, however, Gupta and Ferguson (1997) propose other conceptualizations of ethnographic research in terms of its space and place. In “an interconnected world in which, people, objects, and ideas are rapidly shifting and refuse to stay in place” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:4), alternative approaches have to be considered in preference to the dominant concept of doing ethnography in “the field.” Rather, ethnography should be conceived of “as a flexible and opportunistic strategy for diversifying and making more complex our understanding of various places, people, and predicaments through an attentiveness to the different forms of knowledge available from different social and political locations” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:37).

Therefore, instead of portraying “the field”, I prefer to depict “the interlocking of multiple social-political sites and locations” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:37), which came into focus in the course of this research work. There are a number of issues to look at here, however, this chapter is supposed to provide a brief glimpse of the sites of research in order to give an insight into how and where the data was collected. The locations and social sites of this study are intertwined and connected with each other in various ways. They range from public open spaces in the center of Salzburg to restaurants on the countryside, from placid stores to huge fairs, from face-to-face conversations to profiles on Facebook, and from private pre-parties to great festivals. The dynamics and connections between the various locations are presented in detail in the following chapters, for they represent the results of this study.

The first focal point of my research work was the *Tracht & Country Frühjahr 2014*, which took place in the beginning of March 2014 at the exhibition center in Salzburg. *Tracht & Country* is one of the biggest trade fairs for the market of traditional fashion and takes place two times a year with a premiere one month ahead in order to provide a little overview for buyers and retailers. I

attended both events, which gave me the possibility to gain insight into the dynamics of the markets, learn about seasonal trends and get to know various producers, sellers, retailers, buyers and designers, for more than 3.500 trade visitors attended the fair, which showcased the traditional fashion of more than 250 Austrian and foreign exhibitors (Reed Messe Salzburg). For the majority of the retailers and sellers, the fair is one of the most important events, because it offers a great possibility for networking, keeping pace with the trends and working up a great amount of the annual turnover.

Other important locations are the various parties, festivities and festivals, which differ from each other in terms of size, popularity, entrance fee and location but share their dress code. One of the pivotal occasions was the Almrausch-Trachtenclubbing which takes place a couple of times each year at Die Weisse. The event location is an alehouse in Salzburg which also brews its own beer, attracts both tourists and locals and organizes various events throughout the year. Besides the alehouse, there is another location for their clubbings with a traditional dress-code, namely the Zistelalm, which is a hotel and restaurant on the top of one of Salzburg's local mountains, the Gaisberg. However, this year they had to change the party location so that they staged a Trachtenclubbing at the rockhouse, a music club which usually hosts bands and singers belonging to the music genres pop, rock, jazz, folk, blues, metal, hip-hop and reggae. I attended this clubbing and two of the Trachtenclubbings at Die Weisse. Unfortunately, nobody ever responded to my interview request so that I couldn't gather more information about the location's heads and their corporate philosophy.

The second festivity is the Wildschütz, a ball which takes place once a year at the Stiegl brewery under the motto "Tradition trifft Emotion." The organizers are the two Salzburg friends Florian Deinhamer und Lorenz Forstenlechner. Besides doing participant observation at the ball and analyzing their Internet presence, I conducted an interview with Lorenz Forstenlechner, whose parents also own a shop for traditional costumes located at the heart of Salzburg.

The third occasion is the Edelweißkränzchen, a huge ball which takes place every year at the Salzburg Convention Center. The Edelweißkränzchen is organized by the alpinist club Edelweißclub Salzburg. The Edelweißkränzchen and its club have a long history for the first Kränzchen launched in 1882. Due to its strict restrictions of attendance and the short time, my request didn't arrive in time so that I couldn't attend the ball personally. However, Haimo Falkensteiner, one of the club's heads, helped willingly by answering all my questions in the course of an interview. Besides that, I analyzed news articles, their Internet presence and videos shot at the ball.

The festival of setting up the maypole also forms part of this study. On the first of May, associations for the preservation of local customs and societies for traditional costumes erect a decorated tree in their villages and neighborhoods. On this occasion many festival-goers dress up and parade in their most beautiful traditional costumes. The celebration starts in the morning and takes the whole day, for many men wearing their lederhosen set up the tree whilst attendees listen to the music being played and consume one or two beers. In the early afternoon, the tree is set so that again usually young men or little kids try to climb the tree in order to catch the goodies which hang on the top. Since the festivities take place during the course of a single day, riding a bicycle enabled me to attend three different spots in the town of Salzburg. The first one was located in Maxglan and was organized by Die lustigen Salzburger, the second feast was made by Jung Alpenland in Nonntal, and the organizers of the third one were the Prangerstutzenschützen in Aigen.

When it comes to traditional costumes, the Heimatwerk is an important stakeholder, for it is a cooperative which promotes regional culture and publishes the dirndl style sheets. As chance would have it, they produced a new style sheet just at the time I conducted my study. Therefore, I could lay the focus on the creation, distribution and promotion of the new book on regional dirndl styles. I approached the Heimatwerk the first time in the course of a promotion of Altstadt Salzburg Marketing. The publicity agency in charge of the marketing for the city of Salzburg organized an event called Hand.Kopf.Werk. with the aim of promoting the arts and crafts of Salzburg. On that account, craft enterprises, agencies, museums, galleries and others held open days and workshops. As part of that, the Heimatwerk provided an insight into the shortly afterwards appearing style sheet and into the work of the dressmakers. Besides attending this event, I also went to the Landestrachtenschau, which took place at the Salzburg Convention Center. Three months after the guests of the Edelweißkränzchen took to the floor, the same halls welcomed the spectators of the fashion show which presented the newest styles of regional dresses. On top of that, I had the chance to conduct an interview with Hans Köhl, the head of the Heimatwerk. Additionally, I analyzed the recently published book on regional dirndl styles, which lead to further research activities.

The book on dirndl style sheets covered many of the lately emerged regional dresses, which shifted the focus to the relation between dirndl, tradition and regionality. Starting from Lamprechtshausen, little by little almost every village nearby designed its own traditional costume on the countryside of Salzburg. Therefore, I conducted interviews with two women who are responsible for the design of their village's regional dirndl. The book contains only one of the

dressess, namely the one from Michaelbeuern, because the one from Nussdorf was created after the data collection for the book had been carried out by the Heimatwerk.

Music plays an important role in the boom in traditional costumes, for all the parties and festivities are accompanied with music. However, music doesn't solely entertain people but also can be a crucial element in the establishment of an identity. One of the key-figures in this regard is Andreas Gabalier, an Austrian singer and musician who in the last few years made it to the top of the Austrian and German charts. He designates himself as the *Volks-Rock'n'Roller*, as he combines folk music with other elements. On stage he is often backed up by female dancers who wear a dirndl so that they round out the picture of the *Steirerbua*, whose stage outfit consists of lederhosen, a white shirt, knee socks and an Elvis-inspired hair quaff. In the course of the Tracht & Country he launched his own collection of traditional fashion at the M32, which is a restaurant on the Mönchsberg and the event location for the exclusive get-together of traditional fashion's representatives. For this research work, I examined his Facebook activities, lyrics, album covers, newspaper articles, his clothing line, and his TV-show *Gabalier - die Volksrock'n'Roll Show*, which aired on the public service broadcasters of Germany, Switzerland and Austria (Gabalier 06.09.14).

Concerning my research work, the probably most important social location was a shared apartment in the town of Salzburg in which a few girls being about 30 years old lived. They are all related to the dirndl sphere in one or the other way, as they all own several dirndls, attend festivities with a traditional dress code and listen or play music which relates to that sphere. Therefore, they provided a great opportunity for doing participant observation on a personal level. I made contact with the roommates through a mutual friend of ours a few years ago. As we attended most of the festivities together, I could do participant observation with an eye to the festivities and to the dynamics, individual positions and actions of the group, even more so by staying over.

The dynamics of the market extended my research focus to Vienna. However, the locations I examined in this context are supposed to provide solely an outlook of future developments. One could probably do the same study with the same research questions in Vienna and would be occupied for the next two years, as the Wiener Wiesn and other occasions constitute interesting starting points. In the course of this study, I confined my research work to attending just one Trachtenclubbing at the Bergstation in Vienna, which is a bar near Karlsplatz. Besides that, I examined a special offer by the private railway company Westbahn, which runs between Salzburg and Vienna.

Lastly, I slipped in the results of participant observation of a wedding and a flea market for traditional costumes. However, it is hard to discern all locations, for they are intertwined and not totally definable. What can be stated though is that societies for traditional costumes are definitely beyond the scope of this study. Due to the fact that they all have their own agenda, a study on its own would have to be conducted in order to examine this issue.

Nonetheless, this chapter illustrates the most important sites of research and the following chapters convey the results of this study, which offer more insight into the different conceptions, relations and networks existing in the markets and realms of traditional costumes.

7 Girls' night out

“Original Trachten-Clubbing – Almrausch im Rockhouse, 30.4.2014,” is written on our tickets. On the corresponding poster of the event a young blond woman dressed in short lederhosen, a tight vest and a revealing blouse smiles at the beholder.

It is the evening before May Day and we meet at the shared apartment of Miriam, Sarah and Judith in order to pre-party. Hana and her Bosnian cousin, who visits Austria for the first time, just arrived perfectly dressed up for the clubbing. While we all enjoy our spritzer, Hana makes us up and does our hair. In turn, I iron the dress of her cousin and try to help her tying the apron correctly, for the bow of the apron strings tells the others – depending on the side of the knot – whether the wearer is single, married or widowed. In the meantime, Sarah takes care of the beverages and entertains us. After suiting up, Miriam pops up with her Styrian harmonica and starts to play. Quickly, Kathi brings her cajón and Hana joins them playing the ukulele. The rest of us start to dance, sing along and drink a toast to the evening. Before we leave, we make a little photo shooting, capturing our beautiful dresses and our wanton mood on camera.

Spending a girls' night out like we did is one crucial motive for girls and young women to don their dresses and attend an event under the motto of traditional costumes. It is the dirndl – a piece of clothing – which gives occasion to be at an event and enjoy company. Therefore, the dirndl, respectively traditional costumes in general, offer a platform to socialize and by the same token prompt customers to attend these events and parties. Many girls and women go to the parties and festivities for the simple reason that they give them the opportunity to attire in their dresses, as the following statements of two young women show.

I bin do, weil I moi wieda mei Dirndl tragen wollt und weil da Almrausch immer lustig ist.

In der Stadt kann ma's ned so oft tragen, deswegen gfrei i mi, wenn i's moi wieder tragen kann.

In many cases people even look for occasions in order to parade in their dresses. Likewise, a group of teenage girls told me that they wanted to spend a girls' night out and that these events provide an opportunity to dress up as a group and wear something chic and special.

This shows that dirndl dresses are a medium for sociability, that is, "the art or play form of association", which "can occur only if the more serious purposes of the individual are kept out, so that it is an interaction not of complete but of symbolic and equal personalities" (Simmel 1949:254). Traditional costumes as a dress code create a common ground, foreground a collective identity and thus eclipse the individual's peculiarities. Through being alike in appearance, "the solitariness of the individual is resolved into togetherness, a union with others" (Simmel 1949:255). That is to say that wearing similar costumes immediately creates a sense of cohesiveness among a group of guests. Moreover, being associated with others who equally identify with their dresses evokes a strong sense of belonging. Traditional costumes, thus, encourage sociability, as they provide a common thread and set a collective framework.

Even though sociability requires a lack of individuality for the sake of amusement, there is this strive for distinction. As Wilson (2001:51) puts it, "we dress to be part of the crowd, yet to stand out from the crowd." By way of illustration, a young girl told me that she wanted to purchase lederhosen. That way, she would belong to the others, yet stand out: "Das ist etwas Anderes, was nicht jeder hat."

In this regard, however, the personal style of an individual is according to Bourdieu (2000:86) never more "than a *deviation* in relation to the *style* of a period or class so that it relates back to the common style not only by its conformity, [...] but also by the difference which makes the whole 'manner'." Variations in style, hence, don't represent a person's individuality, but primarily approve traditional costumes as a current fashion. As long as the personalities don't emphasize themselves too individually, their personal styles foster the sociability within their group.

The other side of the coin is that fashion functions not only as a medium for sociability but also as a means of exclusion. Traditional costumes, thus, on the one hand signify "the uniformity of a circle characterized by it, and *uno actu*, the exclusion of all other groups" (Simmel 1957:544). Take, for example, the case of Judith and her roommates. After asking many questions about the *Trachtenclubbing*, Judith finally decided to join us on a girls' night out. Even though she wasn't really affiliated with the dirndl sphere, she owned a dirndl. At the beginning, however, she didn't want to don the dress; instead she simply put on her white dirndl blouse. Underneath the blouse, she kept her green shirt and her blue jeans. As soon as she presented herself to Miriam and Sarah,

they both started to laugh at Judith, because they didn't like her appearance at all. Miriam even would have gone that far as to totally exclude Judith for the way she dressed. Moreover, she recounted the story to the other girls several times, for Judith's outfit truly left a bad impression with her.

I moa, i bin ja normalerweise echt ned so ... oba die hot ausgschaut, des konnst da ned vorstellen. Die Blusn über dem grünen Leiber!! I glaub, des warad des erste Moi g'wesen, dass i mit wem ned fuatgonga warad. I warad mit ihr echt ned zum Almrausch gonga. Zum Glück hot sa se nu umzogen.

In the end, Judith changed her mind and donned her dirndl dress and the others even helped her choosing matching shoes, so that her outfit became consistent. Finally, she looked from head to toe “*urig*”, as Miriam designated her look.

This shows that individuality and personal peculiarities in terms of traditional fashion are restricted, as they interfere with sociability. Moreover, the standards of good taste and the dominant style decide on an individual's exclusion or inclusion and may exert a pressure to conform.

Apart from this, pure sociability only is possible between members of the same social stratum. Sociability between members of different social classes may be “burdensome and painful” (Simmel 1949:257) for wealth and social position spoil the pleasure of sociability. In this regard, it has to be noted that according to Simmel (1957:544) “fashion [...] is a product of class distinction.” With the boom in traditional costumes and the full range of products in terms of price and style, traditional costumes *per se* don't serve as a status symbol. Nowadays, traditional costumes form part of the fashion system, meaning that they belong to a system which protects its status system by means of taste (Appadurai 1986:25). That is to say that it is the restriction and control of taste which serves as a tool for distinction.

In this connection, it should be stressed that taste is the dominant feature of the individual's buying decisions when it comes to traditional costumes. If we take the following case, it becomes apparent that taste is the key factor. Miriam is a member of the *Musi*, that is, the local orchestra of her village. These musical societies usually have their own traditional costume, which they don whenever they parade. To Miriam's mind, however, the black regional costume of her municipality was ugly and very uncomfortable. Thus, she refused to purchase the dress in order to fit in. In her opinion, a normal black dress would have sufficed. This shows that for her, belonging to the others was less important than her personal taste.

According to Bourdieu (1984:6), it is taste which classifies and structures the social world. People “distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar.” (ibid.)

In the discourse about traditional costumes, the mechanisms of distinction and identification find expression in various classifications. On the whole, these classifications all draw a similar line between what is “tasteful” and “tasteless”. In the majority of cases, a distinction is made between “genuine” traditional costumes and kitsch dresses, as the statement of the event organiser Lorenz Forstenlechner shows.

Mittlerweile gibt's sehr viel moderne Tracht, die ich wiederum ein bissl schwieriger finde, weil ich find, die Tracht per se modern zu machen, finde ich nicht unbedingt den richtigen Ansatz [...] diese ganz moderne Tracht, die teilweise bissl ins Kitschige geht, finde ich, die hat eben dann wirklich die Tradition eigentlich ein bissl verloren.

Likewise, the organisers of a flea market for traditional costumes advertised their event with the hint that no kitsch dirndl would be accepted, as they affect dresses which symbol down-to-earthness and naturalness. More specifically, they prefer garments made out of cotton or linen, restful colours and less “pomposity”, as they described it.

The denigration of kitsch appears in the guise of various terms. By way of illustration, a photographer, whom we met at an Almrausch Trachtenclubbing, told us that he had attended the Edelweißkränzchen the day before. There, he was shocked by the great amount of girls who wore cheap dirndl, all those “Hofer-Dirndl”, as he put it. According to him, many hadn't worn such beautiful dresses as we did that night. In fact, our dresses cost only ninety euros and were purchased at an outlet-center for traditional costumes. Thus, they were just as cheap as the ones you can purchase at grocery chains. However, the distinction he drew wasn't based on the price or financial worth of the dresses, but on a certain kind of look, for the style of our dresses was simple and plain. They were made out of cotton and didn't have any adornments or zippers.

The classification between genuine and kitsch thus is based on an aesthetic evaluation. According to Törrönen (2005:31–32), they are typically loaded with values, meaning that “one pole takes on a positive value, the other a negative value”. In this context, kitsch not only represents the negative value, but also conveys the idea of inauthenticity and spuriousness – in the eyes of the classifier it signifies exactly the opposite of tradition. In this context, kitsch is the expression of a taste which takes a liking to accessories, adornments, rhinestones, concrete forms and gaudy colors. Taking his lead from Bourdieu (1984:34–41), Miller designates it as the anti-Kantian aesthetic, that is, an aesthetic of popular culture in which “beauty is created through the mode of representation” (Miller 1987:150).

However, the classification of kitsch is not confined to an excessive use of adornments. What makes a dress also kitsch is the notion that it is a cheap, mass-produced copy of some original model. This encourages the idea that these dresses are superficial and artificial. According to Veblen (1953 [1899]:114), we consider expensive things to be more beautiful. Therefore, hand-

made dresses are more valued than mechanically produced ones, as hand labour is a more wasteful method of production. From this it follows that mass-produced dirndls are less honorific. To put it another way, what is cheap and thus available to anyone, is considered less beautiful. The categories Hofer-Dirndl and Billig-Dirndl – categories which both are classified as non-traditional – refer to this kind of judgement of taste.

Another reason for the devaluation of mass-produced commodities lies in the fact that they don't provide the possibility for distinguishing oneself from others. Miriam, for example, possesses about eight or nine different dirndl dresses, some of them are very cheap and others are more expensive. Whenever she dons one of the cheaper ones for a party, she sees other girls wearing the same dress. This shows that they eradicate modes for individuation and by association class distinction. Tradition's emphasis on individuality, authenticity and claim to originality is in opposition to mass-produced dresses. The classification between mass-produced dirndls and genuine ones thus is a means to protecting them from diversion and upholding their value.

Friedman (2000:104) argues that "consumption within the bounds of the world system is always a consumption of identity, canalized by a negotiation between self-definition and the array of possibilities offered by the capitalist market." Consuming traditional costumes in many cases involves the consumption of a collective identity, in that the garment constitutes a symbolic membership of a local community, region or Austria as a nation. These identities are often proudly presented to others, as the following statement of a young woman shows.

I moa, es schaut an a jeda bled o, wonn ma in da Tracht durch Soizburg geht, oba i bin stolz drauf und i trogs gern. I bin stolz drauf, weil i aus Salzburg bin.

Apart from this, people feel attached to their dresses, even if they designate differing meanings to them. On the whole, there are multiple interpretations of traditional costumes both within society in general and between devotees of traditional costumes. By way of illustration, one woman told me that a dirndl is something special and chic whilst another one said that it is something wild, or as she puts it: "Es ist a wengal frecher halt." The meaning of things is "constantly in transit" as there are "three locations of meaning: the culturally constituted world, the consumer good, and the individual consumer" (McCracken 1989:71–72). Nowadays, people attribute all kinds of meanings to traditional costumes, as the following example of two girls at a maypole festivity shows. The first one preferred to dress in a pair of jeans, a black shirt and a red bandana wrapped round her head, even though she attended the festivity with friends who all wore a dirndl. Despite that, she openly condemned people who identified with traditional costumes. She said that she would never put on a traditional costume, for that was reserved for all the „reaktionären Kronezeitungskokser." To her mind, people who wear traditional costumes are backward-

looking, ignorant and have an anti-foreign and anti-feminist attitude of mind. By designating them as cokeheads, she considers them as wealthy people who lack of education. She expresses her dissent through refraining from the dirndl as she ascribes a certain meaning to the dress and by association to its wearers.

At the same occasion, a girl who really felt attached to her dress told me the following:

Ich finde Tracht einfach schön. A jeder sieht in Tracht gleich ein Stück weit besser aus. Vor allem Frauen sehen in Tracht einfach besser aus. Außerdem ist es einfach österreichisch. Und es kennt jeder ... man gehört einfach dazu.

In the words of Douglas and Isherwood (1996:45), “the individual uses consumption to say something about himself, his family, his locality, whether in town or country, on vacation or at home. The kind of statements he makes are about the kind of universe he is in, affirmatory or defiant, perhaps competitive, but not necessarily so.” However, the consumption and the meaning of goods are also contingent on their locality and environment. One woman, for example, told me that she liked to don her traditional costumes during the week. She enjoyed to be complimented by others and to stand out. During a weekend trip to Vienna, however, she didn’t want to attire in traditional costumes, for she would have felt awkward and weird in that situation. In her opinion, it didn’t feel right to wear a dirndl when you are out of your region. On the other hand, an art student chose to wear traditional costumes at university, because in that environment they symbolized a defiant and provocative attitude.

In terms of place and locality, a recollection of traditional costumes as a reassurance of belonging to a particular community may become an issue when people are abroad. By way of illustration, a girl decided to put on her dirndl during her stay in China, as she wanted to shoot a photograph of her dressed in her costume standing on the Great Wall of China. She said that she liked the dirndl, because everybody knew the Austrian dress and whenever she put it on she attracted attention. Moreover, she appreciated the regional belonging the garb expressed and that this was also part of her identity. Traditional costumes thus may relieve people’s uncertainties about who they are as the garb creates a collective identity and a sense of community to hold on to.

8 Festivities in the name of tradition

“Tradition meets emotion,” it says on the cover of the Wildschütz magazine, which young people dressed up in their traditional costumes distribute in the city of Salzburg. They carry along a black vintage bike decorated with a wicker basket, fir branches, antique wooden skis and an old lantern, walk through the old town and advertise the upcoming Wildschütz ball.

It is the time of carnival reaching its peak in January and February with various events, among them also parties and balls with a traditional dress code or a party theme which is related to tradition in one form or another. A week before the public Wildschütz campaign, the Edelweiß-Club Salzburg celebrated its Kränzchen, whose history dates back to the nineteenth century. Even though the ball attracts more than 1,700 customers every year, the only advertising effort of the organizers is to announce the date of the event on their website.

The Salzburg alehouse Die Weisse pursues a quite different advertising strategy in order to promote its free Almrausch-Trachtenclubbings, which take place several times a year. A young, attractive woman dressed in a short dirndl is featured on the poster announcing the *Original Trachtenclubbing Almrausch im Sudwerk*. The model sits on a stool placed in front of a plain wooden wall and reveals her naked legs and black suspenders. Her facial expression intends to convey to the beholder that she is caught in an indecent moment and her body axis point to her lap and crotch. By means of an overtly sex sells strategy, Die Weisse invites young people to go clubbing dressed up in dirndl and lederhosen. As a result, the Salzburg Watchgroup against sexist advertising appealed against the advertising strategies of Die Weisse to the Austrian Advertising Council (Salzburger Watchgroup gegen sexistische Werbung 2013). Nonetheless, many female guests approve the marketing strategies, for they willingly make full use of the temporary tattoos displayed in the women's lavatories and gladly apply Almrausch-Trachtenclubbing logos on their décolleté.

As Simmel (1949:256) points out, only in the artificial world of sociability a woman would want to dress that revealingly, "for she is, in the larger company, herself, but not quite completely herself, since she is only an element in a formally constituted gathering." Correspondingly, coquetting and flirting with others are an important motive for attending the events, for they also provide the opportunity to escape the frictions of real life and experience the "impersonal freedom of the mask" (Simmel 1949:256). By way of illustration, a young girl explicitly told me that she came here just because she was single and enjoyed getting to know other people.

As dirndl dresses are a medium for sociability, corresponding venues have followed in the wake of the boom in traditional costumes. On the face of it, most of the events seem to be alike in terms of dress code and party theme. Under close scrutiny, however, varying styles and restrictions become apparent. For they are all important arenas of sociability, they define, select and address specific target groups not only in terms of differing advertising methods but also on the basis of music, dress codes, admission, locations, and the clientele itself. By means of these features, the events become socially differentiated venues which hence enable genuine sociability among social equals.

The same cultural objects, namely lederhosen and dirndl, serve as the basis for various social gatherings. According to Entwistle (2000:34–35), dress is a “situated bodily practice”, for “when we dress we have to orientate ourselves to the implicit norms of these [social] spaces.” By way of illustration, the girls and I once took along spare clothes to an Almrausch-Trachtenclubbing, for we intended to attend an electro-music-party taking place at an underground club afterwards. That is to say that every event requires a certain kind of dress or style. Even though you can see all kinds of dirndls at the events, many women choose their dresses in accordance with the occasion. Consequently, differences between the various events in terms of their prestige are also reflected in the ways people dress. Two women, for example, conceived the maypole festivities as “more traditional,” meaning more significant and socially relevant, thus they chose longer dresses made of high-quality fabric. Accordingly, events with strong claims to tradition have the strictest and most distinguished dress codes.

As part of the boom, occasion-related fashion has become strongly influenced by traditional costumes. Be it weddings, graduation ceremonies, baptismal services, or family celebrations, many people attire for those occasions in traditional costumes. A few years ago, this was unthinkable, for people in traditional costumes would have stood out and thus felt uncomfortable. In the wake of the boom, the widely held view arose that traditional costumes are always appropriate and presentable, no matter what the festive occasion. By way of illustration, girls at the Almrausch-Trachtenclubbing told me the following:

Wenn ma ned was, was ma oziagn soid, a Dirndl passt immer.

In the words of Simmel (1949:254), pure sociability “is a departure from reality,” for the worlds of pure interaction are ideal worlds and in this sense “artificial” (Simmel 1949:256). In the sphere of traditional costumes, all events and festivities which strongly refer to tradition create similar ideal worlds and thus share a certain setting. Primarily by means of decoration and interior design, the myth of bygone times and a life of simplicity in unspoiled nature are evoked. Moreover, the whole setting often consists of objects suggesting a reminiscence of the rural life, the hunting seasons and the alpine world. Miller (2010:50) argues that objects work most effectively, “when we don’t actually look at them, we just accept them.” Concerning the events related to traditional costumes, certain objects are even taken for granted to the effect that they go unquestioned, meaning that the setting appears to be a natural, uncontrived and genuine scenery. Old photographs and paintings, antlers and old figurines, evergreens and wooden planks arouse a feeling of nostalgia for past times and the romantic idea of a life in the countryside.

By way of illustration, the Kränzchen makes huge efforts in order to create the greatest possible image of the alpine world, as eighty to ninety freshly cut fir trees from Weithwörth, which is located about 15 kilometers away from Salzburg, are used as a decoration. According to the organizers, they need to be fresh, for that is the only way that their smell is shed. Besides that, they decorate the premises with spruce garlands and huge paintings (7,5m x 5m) of the Matterhorn. All this shows that the aim of the organizers is to recreate an accurate atmosphere of the alpine world which appeals to all senses.

However, this ideal world “does not principally involve the evocation of a sentiment to which consumers who really have lost something can respond” (Appadurai 2005:76). Rather, the settings arouse feelings of losses that never took place, they thus create “‘imagined nostalgia,’ nostalgia that never were” (ibid.). Nevertheless, the myth of past and scenery take the guests into a world apart where traditional costumes perfectly fit the mold. In this way, the setting and atmosphere give the dresses the impression of authenticity and mask “the artificial structure of sociability” (Simmel 1949:256).

It is a world which functions only within itself, meaning that different social positions spoil the pleasure of sociability (Simmel 1949:257) just as the disruption of myth. Hence, taste plays a pivotal role, for it structures the social space and “brings together things and people that go together” (Bourdieu 1984:241). From this it follows that besides dress, location and music are of importance, especially considering that it is only the form that matters in sociability. As Simmel (1949:256) points out, “at the moment when people direct their association toward objective content and purpose”, sociability is no longer the main principle. A case in point is an Almrausch-Trachtenclubbing which had to take place at another location.

In April 2014, Die Weisse learned at short notice that they couldn't host the Almrausch as intended at the Zistelalm. Therefore they had to change the venue spontaneously to the rockhouse. The Zistelalm is located on the Gaisberg, has a long history as chalet and corresponds perfectly to the myth of Austrianess. By way of illustration, their image folder (Zistelalm) is composed of pictures of impressive mountain sceneries, green flower meadows, unspoiled countryside, ancient ploughs and antique furniture. Most of the people portrayed on the photos wear traditional costumes, be it the guests on the terrace, the happy family running down the hill, or the chambermaid making the bed. The history of the rockhouse, on the other hand, dates back to the early 1980s, for back then, a protest against the bad conditions for local musicians raised. In the wake of that, the rockhouse was launched in the early 1990s. Since then, it has been one of Salzburg's hotspots when it comes to music, concerts and parties. Thereby, the focus lies mostly on pop music, rock, hip hop and blues. Unlike the free Almrausch events at Die Weisse, the admission ticket for this clubbing cost twenty euros, because special bands like the makemakes

and the saubartln gave concerts in the big concert hall. Both bands come from Salzburg, yet their style of music is very different. The makemakes are a pop rock band that represented Austria in the Eurovision Song Contest 2015. The saubartln, on the other hand, are a live band, meaning that the musicians don't produce their own music but rather cover party songs, Schlager music and the biggest hits from the last few years. They usually play at corporate events, firemen's parades, après-ski parties and the Oktoberfest and wear dirndl and lederhosen. Unlike them, the three band members of the makemakes don't associate themselves with the traditional garb sphere. Many young people came to the clubbing just for the rock band. Just like the musicians, they were dressed in the latest fashion, which strongly contrasted with all the attendees who donned traditional costumes. Consequently, there was a huge discord – not a musical one, but one between the material objects which created the setting and positioned the people. Their voices didn't chime together, for there was a strong part chorusing: "This is a rock concert just like any other," and another part evoking connotations of the rural life and the hunting seasons accompanied by an Oktoberfest atmosphere. Consequently, the skater look didn't blend in with the traditional costumes; the antlers hanging from the ceiling clashed with the rundown brick vault, and the plastic cows standing on front of the stage didn't match with the outfits of the band members.

In juxtaposition with the hip hop clothing, the traditional costumes made the wearers aware of their dresses and by association of themselves, their peculiarities and their individuality. The associated distinctions between these two social groups thus inhibited the pleasure of sociability for both sides, for they couldn't experience a feeling of pure togetherness. Moreover, the change of venue disrupted the myth and created a setting out of context. A feeling of authenticity couldn't arise, for the premises and the decoration didn't construct a world without contradictions. For this reason, the attendees noted that the premises were strange and that they enjoyed neither the ambience nor the atmosphere. For "the pleasure of the individual is always contingent upon the joy of others," (Simmel 1949:257) most of the attendees decided to leave the event early.

Aside from the fact that all these features, namely music, location, dress code, advertising methods, admission, and the clientele itself, are means of distinction, they contribute to the conception of tradition and provide the basis for "doing tradition." Event organizers interpret and construct tradition by means of these features, as they draw on these distinctive attributes in order to express their idea of traditionality and establish new notions of tradition. For this reason reinventing tradition and embedding traditional costumes in the sphere of festivities, which implies giving a meaning to them, is related to comparable social barriers as fashion, for all these

features ultimately concern the individual's taste, cultural capital and economic capital. To put it another way, bringing tradition into play, that is to say reinventing tradition in the realm of events, may be another, superordinated mode of positioning and distinguishing. From this it follows that the politics of tradition are contingent on a struggle for the prerogative of interpretation, a striving for hegemony and the ruling ideas of our time (Marx and Engels 2006:68).

A number of events and festivities with a traditional dress code came up in the last few years, among them also the Almrausch-Trachtenclubbing and the Wildschütz ball. As opposed to this, other festivities like the Edelweißkränzchen originated decades ago and have stood the test of time. Apart from different years of existence, all these events vary strongly in how they address the issue of tradition.

The Almrausch-Trachtenclubbing doesn't make any reference to tradition (Die Weisse, 2015). Correspondingly, from the attendees' point of view, the event has nothing in common with tradition. Rather, meeting like-minded people and unwinding after a busy week are central reasons for attending the event. Mainly people in their twenties and thirties attend the clubbing for amusement's sake and partying among their own kind. The event is open to the general public, for there is no entrance fee and no dress code. Nonetheless, most of the attendees dress in traditional costumes. Concerning the concept of the event, the setting may be divided into two areas. On one side, there is the rustic beer parlor, where a brass band plays live music all the evening. On the other side, the Sudwerk, which is a big and modern bar, can be found. There, Schlager and pop music such as songs from Andreas Gabalier dominate.

A more elaborate concept can be found at the Wildschütz, which is a ball taking place at the Stiegl brewery in Maxglan once a year. Unlike the Almrausch-Trachtenclubbing, its floors have various names, as there is the tradition-floor, the Woodstock-floor and the emotions-floor. Here, too, music proves to be a key distinguishing factor, for the names of the dance floors refer to different musical genres. Correspondingly, the attendees are between twenty-five and fifty-five years old and usually spend the evening in one area.

In order to attend the ball, guests have to purchase a ticket which costs about thirty euros. The ball is organized by the two Salzburg friends Florian Deinhamer und Lorenz Forstenlechner, who after studying economics in Vienna returned to their hometown Salzburg. Due to their affinity for traditional costumes, they hatched the idea of making a ball in Salzburg. Especially Lorenz Forstenlechner has been affiliated to the sphere of traditional costumes before, for his father owns a shop for traditional costumes in the old part of Salzburg.

According to Featherstone (2003:102), “newcomers adopt subversive strategies, they seek difference, discontinuity and revolution or a return to origins to detect the true meaning of a tradition.” In order “to create space for themselves and displace the established” (ibid.), Forstenlechner and Deinhamer came up with the idea of the Wildschütz, whereby they first hit on the idea for the name and then defined the meaning of the word the following way:

Wildschütz/Wildschützin, der, die
[Wortart: Substantiv, maskulin/feminin, Trennung: Wild | schütz/in]

Semantische Bedeutung nach Deinhamer/Forstenlechner (© 2013):
Einerseits Traditionen schätzen, andererseits offen für neue Einflüsse sein.
Freigeistig denken, eigene Wege gehen, hohe Affinität zu Natur und Kultur haben.
Wüde Hasen in Dirndl, wüde Hund in Lederhose.

Herkunft und Verbreitungsgebiet:
Aus und im Salzburgerischen Althochdeutschen.

Aussprache:
Wildschütz/-in [ˈvɪltʃʏt͡s/-ɪn], laut und deutlich betont!
(Forstenlechner and Deinhamer 2013)

In order to set themselves apart from other events with a traditional costume dress code or party theme, Forstenlechner and Deinhamer aim at creating identification between themselves and their patrons. For this reason, they attempt to embody the Wildschütz and represent the idea behind wherever possible. In this way, they seek to evoke authenticity, that is, realness which in a second step often is used as a basis for further marketing operations. By means of social media, the organizers construct the myth of the Wildschütz and foster the image of his pioneering spirit. Thereby, the messages conveyed consist of a new mixture of attitudes. The revolutionary spirit of the young, wild and free cosmopolitans who make their way off the beaten track is juxtaposed in opposition to a return to nature and recollection of regional and national traditions. In the words of Forstenlechner:

Wenn wir bei der Golden Gate Bridge mit der Lederhose davorstehen, dann ist es genau das, was wir eigentlich cool finden und zum anderen passt es natürlich auch zum Wildschütz, quasi, dass der überall auf der Welt unterwegs ist.

This shows that their image of the Wildschütz is created out of their needs of the present with a regard to their market positioning, for only certain items, in this case all those which can be associated with hunting or a natural, preindustrial life, are chosen to represent the idea of the Wildschütz, while other aspects of the past are ignored (Handler and Linnekin 1984:280). The motto of the ball raises the question of what to understand by tradition. Forstenlechner conceives tradition in the following way:

Die Traditionen bei uns sind vor allem natürlich die Volksmusik, die Tradition von der Lederhose und von am Dirndlkleid. Die Feierkultur, also das darf auch a bissl rustikaler sein, sag ich einmal, bissl traditioneller.

From Forstenlechner's point of view, the tradition of dirndls and lederhosen is self-explanatory, which shows that the myth of tradition is above everything and thus often goes unquestioned. To put it another way, the myth of tradition gives traditional costumes "the simplicity of essences" with the result that they "appear to mean something by themselves" (Barthes 2006:301).

Concerning the Wildschütz and its organizers, their underlying conception of tradition is based on its opposition to modernity. Forstenlechner talks about his style of clothing and the dress code of the ball as follows:

Wir persönlich stehen sehr auf den Crossover, einfach wo man sagt, man versucht vielleicht was wirklich ganz klassisch Traditionelles mit neuen Sachen zu kombinieren [...] einfach wirklich eine klassische schöne Lederhose mit einem coolen Hemd, mit einem modernen Hemd kombiniert – saugeil.

However, as Upton (2001:298) states, this kind of conception is an outcome of modernity, for the notion of tradition did not exist until it was imagined as the opposite of modernity. Nonetheless, the long-term objective of the two organizers is that the Wildschütz becomes a tradition, meaning that the attendees don their traditional costumes just for the occasion, even if the boom in traditional costumes may subside in the future.

The history of the Edelweißkränzchen dates back to the nineteenth century, as in 1881 the Edelweiß-Club Salzburg was founded. Originally, the club was conceptualized as a social club; however, quickly two tendencies within the club became apparent. One part of the group had a preference for alpine climbing, whilst the other members wanted to dedicate themselves to the preservation of traditional costumes. Consequently, in 1891 the club split up into Alpinia, which then focused on the maintenance of traditional garb, and the Edelweiß-Club, whose core issue became the alpine world (Edelweiss-Club Salzburg). Since then, the alpine club counts an average of fifty to sixty members.

Just one year after the inception of the club, the first Edelweißkränzchen took place. During the carnival period in 1882, the club gave a little party for its members and friends. In the years that followed, the event was hosted as a costume ball, for the party themes were "Bauernhochzeit", "Jagafest", "Holzknechtball" or "Kraxlhuberball" (Falkensteiner 2014). In the course of the years, the ball attracted more and more guests, so that nowadays up to 1,700 people attend the event.

Over time, the event took place at various locations; ironically enough, it always remained under the management of the alpine club. In the early days, small restaurants and bars served as venues.

As the amount of guests kept rising, other places had to be found. Between the First World War and the Second World War, which both caused a break in the series of events, the ballroom of the Festspielhaus was the place of event. After World War Two, a fresh start was intended. Therefore, the Zistelalm became the new venue. As soon as Haimo Falkensteiner, who succeeded his father as chairman in 1981, had gotten to know Tobi Reiser, who already previously had founded many folk music groups and incorporated the Heimatwerk in 1946, the basis for a new orientation of the Kränzchen was provided. From then on, that is, the early 1950s, folk music and folk dance reframed the event as they became the crucial element of the ball concept. Until 1963, the Zistelalm and the Festspielhaus alternated as venues. Since 1963, the place of event is the Salzburg Convention Center (Falkensteiner 2014).

A small carnival party among a few friends and members who enjoyed donning traditional costumes just for fun has turned into an occasion highly associated with tradition and traditional costumes. According to Haimo Falkensteiner, tradition nowadays looms large:

Weil wir durch die Volksmusik und die Tracht eine Tradition weiterführen ... Und weil wir mittlerweile schon selbst eine Tradition sind.

This shows that “the origin of cultural practices is largely irrelevant to the experience of tradition,” (Handler and Linnekin 1984:286) as in the beginning the attire wasn’t conceived as a traditional but as a carnival costume. Hence, romanticizing mountain cabins and idealizing the country and alpine life formed part of the concept.

At the present day, the Edelweißkränzchen constitutes an exception in Salzburg’s entertainments guide, for no other event enjoys such an unbroken popularity when it comes to traditional costumes. An important aspect of its story of success is its invitation procedure, for the Edelweißkränzchen is an event closed to the public. As status systems are protected and reproduced by restricted and controlled access (Appadurai 1986:25), their procedure is based on an elaborate system. People who want to attend the ball first need to produce an invitation letter. By means of electronic data management, information about each guest is gathered. The organizers allocate each guest a number and register their amount of tickets bought. In addition, the year of the last ball attendance is entered in a list. The idea behind is that people can’t argue that they have attended the ball recently. Enlisted people who don’t purchase any tickets for four years are crossed off the list. In 2014, the organizers renewed eighty addresses, which then were stocked up by the new members of the alpine club. In order to become a member of the alpine climbing club, candidates have to attend the club meetings, file an application and prove their achievements in terms of alpine climbing.

Thereby, the social actors monopolize their advantages and privileges by restricting opportunities to outsiders, for only a certain contingent of tickets is available to the general public. This way,

people still have to register half a year in advance in order to get the chance to purchase one of the tickets, whose prices amount just as all the others to thirty-eight euros. Reserved seats cost another eight to ten euros. Despite the fact that demand exceeds supply three times, the organizers keep their event protected, as they don't want to allocate more tickets or change the venue.

In addition, the Kränzchen is an arena of "the politics of authentication" (Appadurai 1986:57), as it is chosen to represent national culture. Politicians don't have to obey the strict invitation procedure, for they are cordially invited and also make their appearance in the opening ceremony. The mayor, the vice-mayor, the head of district authority and others parade behind the honorary couple, who then dances the first dance. According to Falkensteiner, in times of electoral campaigns more politicians attend the ball, which implies that folk culture gives them a forum for their political presentation. Likewise, Falkensteiner has received several awards for his commitments, among them the Stadtsiegel in Gold and the Silberne Verdienstzeichen of Salzburg's Land government.

9 Promoting popular tradition: Andreas Gabalier

Tracht ist Tradition, hoate Orbeit, doch der Lohn für die unzähligen Stunden.

Is a Mode, die entsteht, an der die Zeit vorübergeht, die für immer besteht.

Männer mochen mehr in da Lederhosn her

Traditional Clothing im Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karierten steck' i drin

our Fashion, unsa Gwaund, es is a Stikl Dahoam aus dem eigenen Land

traditional clothing aus'm Heimatlaund

Werte aus am Land hom fúa die Ewichkeit Bestand, der wird uns imma begleiten

wei die guade oide Trocht imma glänzt in ihra Procht jetzt und fúa olle Zeitn

(Traditional Clothing, 2013)

The Styrian Andreas Gabalier, who is the singer of the above song, plays a pivotal role in the current boom in traditional costumes, for his mode of embodying a modern and fashionable country boy not only laid the foundation of his stellar career but also enhanced and fostered the enthusiasm for traditional costumes, especially since his song *I sing a Lied für di* charted in 2011. Thereby, the outfits of the crooner, the image he created and his marketing strategies contributed greatly to the success. His stage outfit consists of a pair of lederhosen, a tight white shirt, knee socks and a red-white handkerchief. These ingredients are refined with some elements of

American pop culture, as there are the Elvis Presley's Rockabilly Hairstyle and the James Dean's sunglasses. However, the glasses are framed with a red and white checked pattern, just as the handkerchief is. On stage, his most important tools are a Styrian harmonica and a Robbie Williams inspired microphone holder, which is made of chamois antlers. All these features provide the basis for his performance as a *Volks-Rock'n'Roller*. In his onetime Saturday night show, he tells the origin story of "his movement," as he puts it.

Das meiste ist da entstanden. Am Fuße der Seetaler Alpen, am Zirbitzkogel, dem Berg meiner Inspiration. Und genau da habe ich dann gewusst, dass ich den nächsten Schritt machen muss. Den VolksRock'n'Roll in die Welt hinaustragen (Gabalier 06.09.14).



Figure 1 – Press photo of Andreas Gabalier; Photo: Michael Mey/Koch Universal Music

His song "Traditional Clothing" and his quote convey important characteristics of the canon of values which the artist represents and which he thus successfully links to traditional costumes. Gabalier's set of values in terms of traditional costumes is composed of the image of native Austria, patriotism with a tendency to nationalism, clear gender roles, whereby masculinity and femininity are enhanced by means of traditional costumes, a conservative family ideal, timelessness, sincerity, and authenticity. Correspondingly, his imagery draws on the symbols that are also associated with Austrian national identity, that is, mountain scenery and life in the countryside.

In 2014, Gabalier launched a collection of traditional fashion. The clothes are advertised as ‘Original Alpine Rock Culture Steiermark’ and combine elements of American biker apparel and Austrian traditional fashion. The products are positioned in the mid to upper-range price segment, as the cheapest product is the Andreas Gabalier handkerchief for €5.90 and the most expensive item is the Andreas Gabalier leather jacket for €1,380 (Trachtenmeister 2015). However, it is hard to discern whether the products are a clothing line or just merchandising products at a very high price. Despite the industrial production of the goods, Gabalier doesn’t grow tired of building a myth around their origin in order to suggest them to his fans.

Das Tucherl wird mühsam produziert, da sticke ich meinen Namen mit Nadel und Faden hinein. (Gabalier 06.09.14)

According to Douglas and Isherwood (1996:37), consumption “is the very arena in which culture is fought over and licked into shape.” In the course of his career, Gabalier has become a polarizing figure, as aside from love, Austria, its culture and home are one of his major themes. However, other public figures take issue with Gabalier, for he not only monopolizes these themes but also makes use of them for his commodities. Moreover, many people take exception on him turning traditional costumes into mass-products and commodifying them on a grand scale. By way of illustration, in winter 2015, the Austrian band EAV, whose lyrics and statements already had caused a stir by their socio-critical, left-wing, and radical contents, came into a public conflict with Andreas Gabalier. The offending object was their new single *Lederhosen-Zombies*, which was released in January 2015 and featured on the album *Werwolf-Attacke*. The lyrics of this song are highly critical of the commodification of traditional costumes, as they read as follows:

*In der Disco kürt man
im Folkloredampf
jeden Freitagabend
Mister Wadenkrampf.*

*Lederhosen-Zombies
zieh'n sich anders an.
Lederhosen-Zombies,
da rockt die Geisterbahn!*

(Mayer 2015)

Klaus Eberhartinger, the singer of EAV, commented on the traditional costume look and the meanings associated with it. Above all, he – who usually spoke out in favor for donning traditional costumes – found fault with the inauthenticity of the boom in traditional costumes and the fact that Gabalier attracted support from the right-wing scene.

Es is too much, es ist vor allen Dingen, es stimmt nicht mehr. Und da kommen wieder Werte zusammen die ned okay sind des ist so ein gemeinsames Umziehen um sich dann lemmingmäßig niederzusaufen, ins Koma zu saufen. Das ist das Eine. Das ist so ganz komisch geworden und ahm ... wenn ich so die Meldungen als Reaktion dann gesehen habe, denk ich mir da schon, es war schon einmal wo der Heimatbegriff und die Tracht mit einem Wertsystem verbunden waren, wo ich gesagt habe, das ist, das ist ein ganz ein böser nationaler Konservatismus, den ich ablehne. (puls 4 news)

Andreas Gabalier and Eberhartinger both cherish their lederhosen and are in complete agreement in terms of traditional costumes as part of an Austrian identity. Eberhartinger, however, quotes the title of Gabalier's first chart topper *I sing a Liad für di* in his song, because „des steht für diese Kultur oder Unkultur, man zieht sich um auf Trachtenlook – das hat nichts mit Tracht zu tun“ (puls 4 news). To Eberhartinger's mind, mass consumption and traditional costumes don't go together, for those people who caused the boom in traditional costumes belong to a social stratum he doesn't relate to traditional costumes, as they have developed a sense of nationalism. The issue at stake here is that heritage, and in this context both parties conceive traditional costumes as a form of national heritage, first has to be owned in order to be commodified (Girke and Knoll 2013:9). Conversely, claims to tradition and heritage can be dismissed as spurious and inappropriate in order to enclave the goods concerned and prevent their en masse commodification.

In the words of Handler and Linnekin (1984:279), “nationalist ideology requires the existence of a culture – ‘we are a nation because we have a culture’ – but most people are hard put to specify the traits and traditions that constitute that culture.” It hence takes specialists to discover and represent national culture. For this reason, Austria's Foreign minister Sebastian Kurz launched the social media campaign *#stolzdrauf* in November 2014. The idea was to promote integration by debating on home and the Austrians' sense of home. By means of Twitter and Facebook, that is, electronic mediation which nowadays has a huge affect on how we imagine our lives (Appadurai 2005:10), Austrians and all generations of immigrants were supposed to profess themselves to Austria and display what they were proud of in terms of the Austrian nation. In the course of the campaign, each participant had the chance to nominate three more persons to take part in it. Right from the beginning, *#stolzdrauf* polarized and prompted a heated discussion about national pride. Furthermore, the meaningfulness of the campaign was doubted and its initiator had to vindicate his person and the purpose of his enterprise. All the more, as the first three people Kurz invited on Twitter were the current President of Austria Heinz Fischer, Ex-Miss Austria Amina Dagi and the singer Andreas Gabalier (orf.at 2014).

Whereas the President Heinz Fischer proudly praised Austrians' readiness to help and their moral courage and Amina Dagi was proud of the efforts being made in terms of improving integration, Andreas Gabalier took another path. His statement on Facebook read as follows:

Ich bin stolz darauf, dass es noch sooo viele Dirndln und Buam im Land gibt, die unsere Kultur und Tradition zeitgemäß leben und weitergeben, und hoffentlich noch lange im Trachtengewand außer Haus gehen :-) #stolzdrauf www.stolzdrauf.at (Gabalier 2014)

Additionally, he posted a photo of himself wearing lederhosen and striking a triumphant pose on stage in front of a huge audience. The most interesting aspect of his statement is that he champions the idea of “our culture, and our tradition.” However, the notion of one (common) culture in fact is “an implication or result” rather than a primary and definitional characteristic of a group or nation (Barth 1998:11). Gabalier depicts culture as a historical given rather than as a constructed system, even though he nowadays is one of its key originators. Thereby, dress is one of his biggest auxiliary tools, for it plays a constitutive part in establishing the notion of one common, national culture (Breward 1998:307), which he reinforces by invoking seemingly time-honored traditions. Furthermore, this shows that the uses of traditional costumes are social, as “they can be used as fences or bridges” (Douglas and Isherwood 1996:XV). To put it another way, goods have the ability to exclude and include people, as they may be the obvious decision makers in the question of whether to belong or to be the odd one out. In this case, dirndl and lederhosen form the basis of a unitary culture, which simultaneously excludes all the others. To Gabalier’s mind, they express *the* Austrian culture and *the* tradition, whilst they are actually basal for creating a notion of “*our*” (Austrian) culture. All this happens in the light of further developments and against the backdrop of what the future should be like. Current ideas of the present lay the foundations for future courses of action and their legitimizations (Binder 2001:9). Gabalier anticipates a negative future scenario for *his* culture, as he uses the word *still* (German: *noch*) two times, as if *the* culture and *the* tradition are about to diminish. Consequently, the fences will be even more raised by all those who are within the circle, for *their* culture already appears to be in danger.

In the last few years, Gabalier not only caused a stir through his statements on Austria as a nation, but also through his traditional concepts of womanhood and gender roles. According to Mayer (2000:1) “nationalism, gender and sexuality are all socially and culturally constructed”, therefore “they frequently play an important role in constructing one another – by invoking and helping to construct the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ distinction and the exclusion of the Other.” That is to say that ideologies of gender differences and the constitution of the nation depend on each other. For this reason, Gabalier’s take on gender came into the picture ever so often in connection with

national issues. One of his biggest scandals was his performance at the *Formula 1 Großer Preis von Österreich* in Spielberg, when he was accorded the honor of singing the Austrian national anthem. Gabalier preferred to stick to the old version of the anthem, which paid tribute solely to the great sons and not – as in the current version from 2011 designated – to the great daughters and sons. Among others, the former and the current Minister for Women and The Green Party were swift to react to the singer's conservative stance. After all, the politicians caused a storm of protest for many people took up Gabalier's position and chose him as their agent in the fight against the "gender craze".

Subsequently, Andreas Gabalier tried to defend his position in the course of a speech, which he gave at the Amadeus Austrian Music Awards in spring 2015. He was unsympathetic to the criticism he attracted and couldn't understand why people associated him with right-wing politics.

Wir sind beim großen Thema Toleranz und das ist bei mir mehr als nur da, weil das ganze Thema heute schon mit der Bundeshymne begonnen hat, ah, da steht man oben, singt die Hymne, muss sofort ein Rechter sein, weil ma's so g'sungen hat, wie ma's hoit lange Zeit g'sungen hat und des find ich dann manchmal einfach a bisserl traurig (ATV - Amadeus Austrian Music Awards/29.03.2015).

However, the end of his speech aroused even more criticism, for he inverted the conventional gender relations. He – the young, rich, white, male, straight star – presented himself as a victim of society, as he said the following:

Man hat's nicht leicht auf dera Wöd, wenn ma als Manderl noch auf a Weiberl steht. (ATV - Amadeus Austrian Music Awards/29.03.2015)

Again, the right-wing audience clapped their hands the loudest. Especially the leader of the FPÖ, an Austrian party which scoops up voters on the right, supported Gabalier's statements.

Die Mehrheit steht hinter Andreas Gabalier. Für freie Meinungsäußerung und auch Normalität! (HC Strache 2015)

The reason for Strache's approval lays in the fact that nation, gender and sexuality intersect and that „the nation was produced as a heterosexual male construct”, which means that “its ‘ego’ is intimately connected to patriarchal hierarchies and norms” (Mayer 2000:6). Heterosexuality, thus, is not confined to matters of gender identity, but has to be considered in relation to the identity of the entire nation, for nation and sexuality rely in their construction on each other (Mayer 2000:5). The consequence of this is that it is usually men who are “generally expected to defend the ‘moral consciousness’ and the ‘ego’ of the nation” (Mayer 2000:6). Women, on the other side, “are often the ones who are given the social role of intergenerational transmitters of cultural traditions, customs, songs, cuisine, and, of course, the mother tongue” (Yuval-Davis 1993:627). Let me illustrate this by another statement of Strache. On 14 September 2014, Strache posted

two photos on Facebook, which on the one hand demonstrate the essentialist conception of culture on behalf of Strache and his party, and which on the other hand serve as an impressive example of the politics of dress and traditional costumes. The title of his posting was “Logik der Grünen.” The photo on the left side showed the full shot of a young woman wearing a blue and green dirndl, standing in a rural environment. The photo on the right side was a medium shot of a woman in a black burka, covering her hands with black gloves. The caption of the dirndl photo was “rückständig” (engl. backward); the caption of the second one was “bereichernd” (engl. enriching). This shows that “women play crucial roles in biological, cultural and political reproductions of national and other collectivities” (Yuval-Davis 1993:630). Even though Strache had to remove the posting after the dirndl designer Lena Hoschek had threatened legal action against him, it exemplifies the intersection of gender and nation and their reproduction by means of dress. In this case, women are appointed as the symbolic reproducers of the nation and its culture. This shows that nation, gender and sexuality coalesce in dirndl dresses, which thus also can (mis-)used for their construction, reproduction and “protection”.

10 Dressing bodies, creating women

I do not understand you Austrians. If every woman wore a dirndl, there would not be any more ugliness.

Vivienne Westwood (Bell 2012)

The statement of the great fashion icon and mother of punk Vivienne Westwood, who already acted as a dirndl ambassador in 2010, reflects the opinion of many adherents of traditional costumes. For them, the image of the perfect woman seems to be concretized in one piece of clothing, that is, a dirndl dress. According to them, women who wear a dirndl are always appropriately dressed as it fits every woman and makes the most of her, as the statement of Frenkie Schinkels, who is a famous football manager, illustrates:

Jede Frau sieht im Dirndl echt fesch aus – egal ob jung oder alt. Schlank ist hier kein Kriterium. Im Gegenteil: Je mehr Frau ,oben rum’ hat, umso besser. In einem Dirndl kann man überall hingehen, zum Heurigen oder auf einen Ball, man ist immer super angezogen. (Bilek 2014:24)

The sleeves of the blouse, the tight bodice and the voluminous skirt flatter the women’s bodies, produce an hourglass figure and thus upgrade their image. From the adherent’s point of view, a woman who dons a traditional costume thereby becomes a real woman. In fact, dress plays an important role in terms of femininity and womanhood, as it “is both an indicator and a producer of gender” (Barnes 1992:5). This holds true especially for traditional costumes, as dirndls and

lederhosen reproduce clear gender distinctions and thus help maintaining the conception of gender as something given. By the same token, “gender distinctions are a crucial part of the construction of dress” (Barnes 1992:1).

As Butler (2006:198) argues, a subject “is as such fully political; indeed, perhaps *most* political at the point in which it is claimed to be prior to politics itself.” Thereby, exclusionary operations form the basis for the constitution of subjects, just as “identity categories are never merely descriptive, but always normative, and as such, exclusionary” (Butler 2006:200). The body, then, is “a *practical*, direct locus of social control” as Bordo (2003:165) boils down the arguments of Bourdieu und Foucault. Furthermore, Bourdieu (1984:190) states that “the body is the most indisputable materialization of class taste, which it manifests in several ways.”

According to an Austrian dirndl designer, women’s figures even embody national and regional differences. She told me that the fashion of dirndls in Austria and Bavaria strongly differ from each other, for the very reason that Austrian women have smaller breasts than Bavarians. Therefore, the design and fashion of the dresses have to be adapted. Whether the bodies of Bavarian and Austrian women vary significantly or politics are inscribed on the body cannot be established at this point. Nonetheless, I consider it a striking finding, as it illustrates the relation between the constitution of subjects, dress and politics.

Concerning the dirndl dress itself, the control of the body shifts into focus, for its bodice disciplines the female body in a certain way. The dirndl thus forms a contrast to the current regime of female beauty, which is based on dieting, exercising and an inner corset of muscle (Entwistle 2000:20–21). In other words, women who don a traditional costume are freed from the pressure of self-disciplining, for the dirndl’s bodice takes control of their bodies. The descriptions of a dirndl dressmaker exemplify the disciplining of a bulky woman, as her dress put her into shape, created an hourglass figure, emphasized her breast and concealed her “problematic” areas.

Ich habe ein Dirndlkleid genäht für eine Frau, das glaubt man nicht, so stark. Wirklich. So! Da Busen so! Und die hat sich dann in einem Brautmodengeschäft ein Mieder gekauft, das ihr eben den Busen dann so gehebt hat und wo der Busen eben dann richtig gestanden ist, geh, weil des durch des Mieder des hergehalten hat und dann haben wir halt in ihre Maße dann das Dirndlgwandl habe ich dann gezeichnet und für sie gemacht. Die hat total fesch ausgeschaut.

Dirndl dresses, thus, represent an ideal of femininity, to which women are expected to aspire and which is contrasted to the male form. “In this sense, women become not only the consumers of clothes, but the consumers of the meaning and promise of idealized womanhood” (Banim, Green and Guy 2001:6). Even teenagers aspire to the idealized body and womanhood, for many dirndl producers launched dresses for young pubescent girls whose bodies are in transition. The

companies Hiebaum and Krüger, for example, stock teen-dirndls for girls aged between eight and fourteen. The style of the dirndls' tops distinguishes them from other dirndl dresses, as they are designed for a shorter upper body and a flat chest. These dirndls have a low neckline though, because „man möchte ja wie die Mama weiblich wirken,” as a wholesaler puts it. Nonetheless, the current dirndl styles still refer to a womanhood whose construction dates back to the works of the commissary Gertrud Pesendorfer, who aimed at renewing traditional costumes under the Nazi regime (Wallnöfer 2011:155).

The dirndl dress not only reproduces gender binaries and a clear image of the female gender by controlling their bodies, but it is also constructed as sexual (Entwistle 2000:187). Women's magazines encourage women to purchase special dirndl push-up bras and to care for their décolleté, as it is “*der Blickfang schlechthin*” (Kaya 2014:34). Likewise, the flirting rises with the wearing of a dirndl, as many of my fieldwork experiences show. A fifty-year-old cab driver immediately was taken by the „zwei hübschen Dirndl’n,” and started flirting with us as soon as we entered his car. A case of point is the statement of Meinrad Knapp, who is an Austrian radio host:

Für mich als Mann mit Tiroler Wurzeln ist ein Dirndl quasi das perfekte Kleidungsstück – also für Frauen. 1. Hebt es im wahrsten Sinne alle weiblichen Vorzüge hervor. 2. Verdeckt es kleine Makel und 3. (und vielleicht am wichtigsten) gibt mir das Mascherl an der Schürze all die Informationen die ich wissen muss. Nur beim Ausziehen könnt's ein bisserl einfacher gehen (Bilek 2014:26).

From Knapp's point of view, the most interesting aspect of a woman dressed in a dirndl is the bow of the apron, for it serves as a means of non-verbal communication. By looking at the bow's knot, he learns the marital status of the woman. This convention persists and is believed to be traditional, even though its historicity is unproven. Apart from this, it is standing to reason that it is a newer fashion, for married women used to dress differently from unwed girls in times past.

To summarize, traditional costumes and especially the dirndl reproduce clear gender roles and a particular image of femininity and womanhood. Furthermore, the dirndl is constructed as a sexual garment, which draws attention to women's sexual characteristics. The preservation of traditional costumes, their fashion and the associated meanings thus implies the perpetuation of certain gender roles and a particular ideal of femininity. Interestingly enough, festivities that are regarded as particularly traditional on behalf of the patrons also reproduce clear gender distinctions in terms of the role of the woman. Consider, for example, folk dance or the maypole festivities. The erection of the maypole still is a male preserve. Women, on the other hand, usually take care of the catering, arrange the decoration and entertain the guests. This shows that the conception of tradition implies certain gender distinctions. These distinctions, which are

based on traditional costumes and ingrained in the patriarchal system, also ratify and legitimate male and female spheres of action and a particular gender division of labor (Davis 1995:40).

11 Institutionalized tradition at the Heimatwerk

„Embark on an exciting journey to the multilayered phenomenon of traditional costumes,” Heimatwerk Salzburg promoted its participation in Hand.Kopf.Werk. In the hope of learning something about regional dresses, the new styles and the shortly afterwards appearing dirndl style sheet of the Heimatwerk Salzburg, I signed up for the event, which was organized by Altstadt Salzburg Marketing with the objective of advertising local businesses and the arts and crafts of Salzburg. The course of events, however, took me by surprise, for I didn’t expect the journey to start with Ötzi the Iceman. Beginning with the mummy from the Ötztal Alps, the head of the Heimatwerk Johann Köhl chronicled Europe’s history of costume and fashion down to the current style sheet of traditional costumes. More specifically, he singled out exactly all those manifestations which are relevant to contemporary styles of regional dresses. In this way, he embedded the current phenomenon of regional costumes in Europe’s history of costume and evoked connotations of their historicity. Moreover, he imparted a sense of continuity with the past and thus established a basis to draw historical authenticity from. By way of illustration, he explained that Ötzi’s cloak made of woven grass was to be found until 1920 in Austria. Looking at it the other way round, it can be argued that this instance implies that the roots of traditional costumes date back to the 33rd century BC. One way or the other, it shows that history plays an important role in the presentation of regional garb and its tradition, for it serves as a “legitimator of action and cement of group cohesion” (Hobsbawm 1996:12).

History, however, is neither a given nor disinterested, for the past “is constructed according to the conditions and desires of those who produce historical texts in the present” (Friedman 2008a:104). From this it follows that “history and discourse about the making of history is positional” and linked to the establishment of an identity in the present (Friedman 1992:194).

Concerning regional costumes in the context of the Heimatwerk, the nationalist past has been superseded by a Europeanized history. Contrary to popular belief, which considers the dirndl an Austrian or Bavarian good, the Heimatwerk constructs the dirndl as a European product nowadays, for the idea of Europe as the common ground and basis for traditional costumes is promoted. Regionality itself and its role in the establishment of a collective identity are less of an issue. In the words of Köhl:

Also ich sehe das im europäischen Kontext und damit wird das Ganze eigentlich von Haus aus schon offener und gerade jetzt auch in den Bemühungen ‚Europa der Regionen‘ ist, glaube ich, auch ganz wichtig zu zeigen: Das haben wir in unserer Geschichte alles schon gehabt. Und diese Form eines gemeinsameren Europas – halt durch Feudalherrschaften und in einer anderen Struktur – hat es schon wo gegeben.

The reason for this more open geographical frame of reference lies in the past, for one crucial chapter of the traditional costumes' history is strongly linked to National Socialism. The idea here is to overcome the ideology of the Nazi era and to furthermore counter any possibly arising right-wing tendencies. Disconnecting the phenomenon from the Nazi past and embedding it into a European one thus should take the wind out of any neo-nationalists' sails and maintain regional costumes presentable for everybody. Looking at the history of the twentieth century, Köhl discerns nationalist ideologies as the root of its disasters:

Drum zieht sich für mich dieses Nationale eigentlich immer als der Ursprung dieser Katastrophen durch. [...] Wir haben heute ganz ähnliche Geschichten, warum haben wir diese Rechtstendenzen überall? Die Menschen, die eben sagen, wir haben immer weniger im Geldbörsel, wir wissen nicht mehr, wie wir mit dem Geld zusammenkommen, die sagen, dann muss wieder einer her der Ordnung schafft – das wiederholt sich leider Gottes immer wieder. Wir Menschen sind nicht bereit aus der Geschichte zu lernen.

In the same way, Köhl aims at demystifying the allegedly ancient past of traditional costumes, as he explains:

Und diese Einflüsse sind eben sehr stark von außen und wenn man weiß, dass es von außen kommt, dann gehen die Leute auch leichter damit um. Dann heißt es plötzlich nicht mehr: ‚Das ist ja uralt!‘ Naja, unter uralt, wenn jemand fragt: ‚Was verstehst du unter uralt?‘, dann geht es meistens mit dem Wissen ein zwei Generationen zurück und dann hat's es. Und das ist dann aber nicht uralt, sondern das ist ja fünfzig oder hundert Jahre alt.

In terms of the institution's history, the idea of the Heimatwerk goes back to Sweden (1912) and Switzerland (1930), as those countries were home to its first forerunners (Köhl 1996). In 1933, a German Heimatwerk was incorporated in the form of a non-profit company (Weissengruber 2004:180–184).

A year later, Univ. Prof. Dr. Viktor von Geramb, who according to Köhl (1996) already had been in touch with the Swiss and Scandinavian Heimatwerke, founded the first Austrian Heimatwerk in Styria. According to Tostmann (1998:26), the aim here was not only to preserve and sell material goods of the folk culture like in Sweden and Switzerland, but also to research and renew costume traditions. Geramb quickly realized that the old ways of production were not sufficient for the maintenance of traditional costumes. Therefore, he started to cooperate with companies from the textile sector and together they created a token for their "real" commodities. Apart from that, Geramb published the *Steirische Trachtenbuch* in 1932. The book was based on the field notes of Konrad Mautner, son of a Jewish textile magnate who had researched the Styrian

agricultural population and had died in 1924 (Tostmann and Hausherr 1998:26–27). Concerning Geramb's political views, Kammerhofer-Aggermann (1993c:267) notes that his political attitude at first was Christian social and later on changed to austrofaschistic. In 1934, a Tyrolean Heimatwerk followed.

At the beginning of 1940, the German Heimatwerk opened a store in Salzburg. With Tobi Reiser leading the way, the provincial agricultural community planned the foundation of a second Heimatwerk based on the models of the institutions in Graz and Innsbruck shortly afterwards. In 1942, Gauleiter Adolf Scheel established the Heimatwerk Salzburg and Helmut Amanshauer, the initiator of the German Heimatwerk branch trained the employees of the new Heimatwerk (Heimatwerk Salzburg). By the end of the war, these two institutions were liquidated. However, one year later two Heimatwerke were re-established. After his denazification, Kuno Brandauer became the leader of the Heimatwerk of the Salzburg government in 1948. Only ten years before, Brandauer had argued in support of the prohibition for Jews to wear traditional costumes (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1993c:273) and was considered a reliable National Socialist. Moreover, it was under his direction that the national association of societies for traditional costumes published the first style sheet for traditional costumes in 1935 (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1996:96). In 1949, this institution became the government department of heritage (*Heimatspflege*), which he managed until 1960 and which now is the department of folk culture (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1996:100–101).

In 1946, the second Heimatwerk was founded as provisional cooperative of the Salzburg government. At the beginning, its manager and co-chairman was an old acquaintance of Brandauer, namely Tobi Reiser. In November 1948, the Heimatwerk became an independent cooperative. Yet, new elections to the board had to take place, for Reiser was considered as an offender (*politisch Belasteter*) (Kerschbaumer 1996:130). However, after two resignations another general meeting was held and Reiser unanimously became a board member and co-chairman. De facto, he was the key player all the time, for he not only encouraged the establishment of the Heimatwerk Salzburg but also was the mastermind behind the Salzburg Advent Festival (Köhl 2007). Tobi Reiser, who as a member of the NSDAP had warned against the Jews in the early 1930s (Köhl 2007), thus, continued to strongly influence Salzburg's cultural landscape. After his death, his son Tobias Reiser Junior undertook the management in 1974 and prospered in renewing the Salzburg Advent Festival. Since Tobias Reiser Junior died suddenly in 1999, Hans Köhl and Stefan Sperr, who both could look back on many years of working with Reiser, succeeded (Salzburger Heimatwerk). Only in the late 1980s, a reframing of the Heimatwerk and a reappraisal of the past took place (Kammerhofer-Aggermann 1996:97).

These days, the Salzburg Heimatwerk still is a cooperative and refers to itself as non-profit-oriented, meaning that non-material ambitions are higher than the pursuit of profit. By way of illustration, in 2012, the annual sales ran up to two and a half million euros (Köhl 2013). Besides the Heimatwerk, its Salzburg Advent Festival is also of great importance for the city of Salzburg, for the event makes for 33,000 overnight stays and impacts on the city's sales in the amount of nineteen million euros (Salzburger Landeskorespondenz 2010).

It is significant that the identification with traditional costumes is the greatest in those states which own a Heimatwerk. In 2000, the Heimatwerk of Lower Austria had to close due to its desperate financial situation. Vienna and Burgenland, on the other hand, never have been home to a Heimatwerk. All Austrian Heimatwerke are independent institutions, although they all belong to the umbrella brand Heimatwerk. Moreover, they are all members of the European Folk Art and Craft Federation, who was founded in 1972 and whose purpose is to exchange experiences, launch common European projects and foster intensive cooperation. However, at the moment no particular activities or projects are planned on behalf of the federation (Stüssi 2007).

History also looms large in the dirndl portfolio, which was published by the Heimatwerk Salzburg in 2014. The past not only plays an important role in the first chapter of the book devoted to the history of fashion starting with an image of Ötzi, but also in the illustrations depicting the various styles of regional dresses in Salzburg. The focal point of the illustrations are centrally placed fashion sketches, portraying women dressed in regional dresses. Whereas the shapes of the faceless, exaggeratedly feminine figures consist of plain pencil sketches, the cloth of their dresses is reproduced in facsimile. Behind the figures, plain-colored landscapes stretch out. The backgrounds of the illustrations show details of historical Salzburg landscape paintings dating from the nineteenth century. This shows that "the past is constantly reorganized for the present" (Löfgren 1987:88), as against the backdrop of a historical and regional located reference the present costume styles are reconnected with the past. Moreover, through evoking connotations of pastness the products are legitimated.

The emphasis on Europe's history of costumes and historical paintings is even more striking considering the fact that the amount of regional costume styles has increased fivefold in the last twenty years. Whereas former portfolios counted twenty styles, the current book comprises about one hundred models. It follows that the recent boom in traditional costumes not only captured the big market, but the domain of regional costumes, too.



Figure 2 – A model presents a regional dress at the Landestrachtenschau 2014 at the Salzburg Convention Center; Photo: Franz Neumayr



Figure 3 – Presentation of a black bridal dress created by the Heimatwerk Salzburg at the Landestrachtenschau 2014; Photo: Franz Neumayr



Figure 4 – A model walks the runway at the Landestrachtenschau 2014 at the Salzburg Convention Center; Photo: Franz Neumayr

The portfolio of regional costumes was published just at the peak of the boom in traditional costumes. According to Köhl, the reason behind the portfolio was the following:

Und jetzt ist für mich die Zeit gekommen, jetzt ist eigentlich schön wo dieser Hype der Trachtenmode am Zenit irgendwo für mich ist, dass man jetzt postuliert und mal zeigt, liebe Freunde, schaut's wir haben regional sich entwickelte Trachten.

By means of the publication, the Heimatwerk cemented its status as opinion leader in the field of traditional costumes in the realm of regional garb, as it not only collected the current variety of regional dirndls but also decided which models to include in the collection. Moreover, the Heimatwerk determined to abolish the cloths' predefined color scheme, meaning that no matter what region the dresses may have any color. By publishing a new portfolio, the Heimatwerk institutionalized the current styles of regional dirndls, maintained its prerogative of interpretation and reinforced its position as gatekeeper for defining the regional territory.

When you shift the focus to the big market and ask the producers about the traditionality of their dresses, Heimatwerk's "monopoly of cultural authority" (Featherstone 2003:102) becomes obvious. Many designers – especially those from the upper price range like Lena Hoschek – appeal to the Heimatwerk and state that they are incorporating the styles, fabrics and techniques of the Heimatwerk dirndls. At the present day, the monopoly of interpretation thus is down to the Heimatwerk, as it is an institution to which other manufacturers as well as average consumers turn for advice, opinions, and recommendations. This implies that in their position the proposed styles have a "turnstile" function, as the Heimatwerk "select[s] from exogenous possibilities and

then provide[s] models” (Appadurai 1986:31). To put it in a nutshell, the Heimatwerk is a key tastemaker (Appadurai 1986:32), as it has “been able to establish a monopoly in defining legitimate taste” (Featherstone 2003:98) within the realm of regional costumes, which hence spreads out to other parts of the sphere of traditional costumes.

Over and above that, the activities of the Heimatwerk are appreciated by the local government, for they prefaced the portfolio, attended the country-wide Landestrachtenschau and conferred the coat of arms of Salzburg on the Heimatwerk.

In the words of Appadurai (1986:57), “it is in the interests of those in power to completely freeze the flow of commodities, by creating a closed universe of commodities and a rigid set of regulations about how they are to move.” Concerning the Heimatwerk, their realm of regional costumes is protected by removing the dresses from the fashion industry by means of pace. In the words of Köhl:

Also was man im Bereich der Trachtenmode ansiedelt – wobei Tracht für mich immer Mode ist und dieses Wechselspiel immer vorhanden ist – aber der Unterschied ist zu regionalen Trachten, [dass] die doch eine langsamere Entwicklung haben zur Trachtenmode, die sich doch saisonal immer wieder ändert.

Time is essential in the fashion system, for the industry prospers from the rush for the new thriving on the craze for speed. Controlling the pace and bucking the trends of fashion thus is an effective method for regulating the flow of commodities. Moreover, it is a means to achieving decommodification, which is an important resource for maintaining and reproducing the status system (Holt 2008:738). Decommodification has become even more important with the boom in traditional costumes and the rise of their global mass-production, as these processes eradicate modes for individuation (Holt 2008:739). Correspondingly, the choices of the Heimatwerk in terms of abolishing the color scheme make room for individual dresses and by association secure distinction.

What’s more, “political elites tend to be the custodians of restricted exchange, fixed commodity systems, and established tastes and sumptuary customs” (Appadurai 1986:33). Accordingly, Köhl (2004:190) states that “nicht überall wo Tracht draufsteht, ist auch Tracht drin.” In the same way, the Heimatwerk Salzburg promoted its Landestrachtenschau, which presented the new models of the portfolio, under the slogan “100 neue ‘echte’ Trachten am Laufsteg.” This statement implies a distinction between genuine and spurious costumes, even though the head of the Heimatwerk is against distinguishing real from false.

Darum bin ich auch gegen dieses echt und unecht, weil das absolut diese Fundamente von dieser politischen Ideologisierung von Tracht sind. Und ich bin auch gegen die Uniformierung von Tracht. Darum halten wir das alles sehr offen und halten nichts von Vorschriften und

Geboten, weil wir haben Gott sei Dank Demokratie und wir haben keine Kleiderordnungen mehr. Das heißt, ich würde mir nicht anmaßen zu sagen, die Tracht muss aber so sein, nur so ist sie echt.

Nevertheless, Köhl continues to refer to the traditional costumes from the Heimatwerk as genuine, however in quotation marks. He brings forward the argument that the concept is the custom in common usage. He conceives the term *genuine* as follows:

Ich habe immer noch Probleme mit dem Begriff, weil viel Missbrauch damit betrieben wurde, aber es ist heute im Sprachgebrauch üblich unter echt und darum sag ich echt unter Anführungszeichen, wenn man es versteht als etwas, dass jetzt nicht als Gegenteil unecht und gut und schlecht differenziert, sondern das echt als etwas definiert, wo ich sag, das ist etwas Authentisches. Und etwas, was a gewisse Tradition hat und a gewisse Beständigkeit auch.

However, Upton (2001:298–299) points out that all these expressions, that is, genuine and spurious, traditional and modern, authentic and inauthentic, are dichotomous adjectives and two sides of the same coin, meaning that they are interchangeable. From Köhl's point of view, the notion of authenticity varies from person to person, as authenticity depends on the individual's position and feelings. Moreover, it is a matter of who ascribes authenticity and who fixes it (Lee 2003:xvi).

This raises the question of what characteristics classify a dirndl as “authentic” in the eyes of the Heimatwerk and moreover which arguments are brought forward in order to protect not only them from commodification but also the status system (Appadurai 1986:25).

Köhl's definition of an authentic dress is not primarily a matter of taste, but rather based on its mode of production and on ethical values. Köhl disapproves of foreign made mass-production, for it involves a risk of child labor, exploitation and offshoring the value added. Moreover, he brings forward the argument that imported commodities are untrustworthy, as they may be spuriously labeled as “Made in Austria”. Besides that, he considers cheap, mass-produced products as eco-unfriendly, for people discard them thoughtlessly. Consequently, he characterizes the authenticity of traditional costumes by means of regional production, sustainability, quality, continuity and transparency in the fashion supply chain. As a result, dresses have to be made of natural fabrics, produced in Austria and hand-crafted in order to be considered authentic by the Heimatwerk.

This classification of genuine traditional costumes trickles down to the creators of regional costumes, as the following statement of a seamstress shows:

Eine echte kann man eben nicht in der Fabrik anfertigen. Das geht halt alles noch auf Handarbeit, dass man weiß, wie noch gestickt wird oder was wo hinkommt, das muss man halt einfach wissen.

Apart from this, the decisions of the Heimatwerk are the measure of all things in terms of authentic regional costumes. In the eyes of some of the originators of regional costumes, it takes the inclusion in the book in order to be the representative of an authentic dress. Despite the paradigmatic change in terms of considering traditional costumes not any longer as purely genuine (without quotation marks) and stable, the old concept of authentic dresses persists. By way of illustration, one of the creators describes her opinion about the publication of her design:

Normal ist es jetzt eine echte Tracht. Weil das Pongauer Dirndl ist auch eine Werktagstracht und ist auch eine echte Tracht, also wäre es jetzt eine echte Tracht, weil es in den Unterlagen drinnen ist. Und des jetzt durch Unterlagen weiter getragen wird.

All this raises the question as to the implications of traditional costumes in the realm of the Heimatwerk. For the most part, Köhl's proposed return to craft production would reproduce nothing more "than a radical restriction of the availability of goods to elite sections of society" (Miller 1987:185). Even though he claims that the dresses of the Heimatwerk are for all strata of the population, the minimum price of four hundred euros automatically poses restrictions. In case you are not able to afford such a dress, you need to have a thorough knowledge of how to sew a traditional costume. Even then you need to be able to afford the price for the cloth in the amount of at least one-hundred-twenty euros. Besides that, making a case for quality reveals another distinctive feature, for it "is the key distinguisher of class: such fabrics as cashmere, linen and leather are associated with 'quality', as are good seams and proper lining. In order to decode these signs one needs to be 'in the know'" (Entwistle 2000:134). This shows that due to their mode of production, the goods of the Heimatwerk are distinctive, which is also reflected in the amount of dresses sold, for the institution manufactures between one hundred and a hundred and fifty dresses per year (Müller and Trettenbrein 2013:127).

12 Tradition's big industry

"Wir wollen a Geld machen, deswegen mach'ma alles!" a wholesale dealer explains his range of products. His assortment basically consists of two product lines, as there is one called "Wiesn Trends" and another one named "Tracht und Tradition". In line with this, the company produces two different catalogues and displays its collections separately at its exhibition stand at the Tracht & Country, which is the biggest and most important fair within the scope of traditional fashion.

With the boom in traditional costumes, many wholesalers, especially the bigger ones, started to produce dresses for all tastes and occasions. On the one hand, they offer party or Oktoberfest dirndl dresses designed for a target group who takes a liking to short skirts, gaudy colors and

conspicuous adornments. As opposed to this, there are the traditional dresses in quiet colors with long skirts made of natural cloth like cotton or linen.

Aside from the fact that tradition has become an excessively used buzzword in the advertising activities of almost every company in the realm of traditional fashion, particularly big companies stocking more than one product line label a certain style of dresses as traditional. Moreover, they seize on the increasing importance of regionality, as they draw the issue of locality into the zone of commodification. Their designs not only resemble regional dirndl styles but are also often named after random lakes, villages and other places.

Many traders and retailers want to benefit from the boom in traditional costumes and thus enter into the business of traditional fashion. As a consequence thereof, most of the wholesalers anticipate market saturation, for “inflation produced by an oversupply and rapid circulation of symbolic goods and consumer commodities have the danger of threatening the readability of goods used as signs of social status” (Featherstone 2008:672–673). As soon as one fashion has become available to the masses and thus lost its distinctiveness, the elite abandons it for a different mode (Simmel 1957:541). Furthermore, as fast as the price of the commodities declines to such a figure that their consumption serves no longer as a display of purchasing power, the customers turn to new status symbols (Veblen 1894:201). A dirndl designer puts the shifts of the market in a nutshell, as she notes, “Wenn alle etwas machen, dann läuft es sich tot.” Nonetheless, the hope and firm opinion of most of the agents is that dresses which are considered as traditional will weather the market adjustment.

For this reason, reinventing the tradition, holding the prerogative of interpretation and thus preserving its value are key success factors in asserting oneself on the market over a long period. However, this endeavor takes place in a transnational arena of diversion and decommmodification, for “today, ‘culture’ is a truly global business” (Du Gay 1997:5). Currently, the market of traditional costumes is determined by radical changes in the flows of both capital and commodities on a global scale, for the production sites move to the most profit-yielding circumstances of production. According to Friedman (1993:333–334), unstable phases in global systems are characterized by a “decentralization of capital accumulation, in which centres that have become both rich and expansive from the point of view of production export massive amounts of capital to specific areas of the system [...] leading eventually to a situation in which the centre becomes increasingly the consumer of the products of its own exported capital.”

By way of illustration, a Turkish textile producer used to employ one thousand seamstresses a few years ago. As soon as the seamstresses demanded a higher salary, in other words, a

conformation to Western standards, the manufacturing sector of traditional costumes moved to China and Pakistan. The reason behind the shifts of the market is that “there is a constant effort on the part of the consumers of these goods to obtain them at as good a bargain as may be; and hence also a constant effort on the part of the producers of these goods to lower the cost of their production, and consequently to lower the price” (Veblen 1894:201).

Companies and production centers producing elsewhere can’t compete with the prices and masses of Asian produced dresses. Consequently, commodities produced in China are a huge threat for the companies which are bound to producing in Europe due to their size and capacities. As a result, the market leaders within the scope of traditional fashion are those who produce in China and other Asian countries, for their prices can’t be obtained by smaller companies. For time is a crucial factor in the fashion industry, only those who are well positioned and have a recourse to a big infrastructure are able to manage the retail shipping dates and thus keep pace with changing trends.

One of the market leaders in Austria is the Tyrolean-based company Zillertaler Trachtenwelt, whose production sites are located in Turkey and India (Horcicka 2012). Two of the brand’s faces are Pamela Anderson and Kathrin Lampe, who used to be the host of the TV-show *Bauer sucht Frau* (Engl. version: *Farmer wants a wife*). In 2011, the company had an annual turnover of more than thirty million euros and the sales figures are showing a continuing upward trend (Wirtschaftskammer Steiermark 2015). At the moment, they run 35 chain stores in Austria and are still geared up for expansion (Horizont online 2014).

When Zillertaler Trachtenwelt set up another branch in the heart of Salzburg, the new competitor was met with refusal. Companies like Zillertaler Trachtenwelt or Krüger raid the market and thus may be detrimental for the whole business sector. For “everything becomes mediocre when spread too widely” (Gronow 1997:49), it is in the interest of the companies positioned in a medium and upper price range to drive up or at least maintain the price in order to keep up the value of their commodities and to protect their role as status symbols. For this reason, the core classification used to categorize traditional costumes in the realm of the big industry draws a line between Austrian or European produced dresses, that is, *traditional* dresses, and those made in China. This distinction is sustained by various arguments and features and can be found on the whole market, which shows that it is not an individual invention but a cultural construct. Within the big industry, the classification is collectively tested on an ongoing basis as the conversations recur to the same subject. This suggests that “it has gained an established position in its cultural domain,” however, this “does not mean it has a fixed or established

meaning but rather that this meaning is constantly being ‘updated’” (Törrönen and Maunu 2005:30).

The first point of criticism is that commodities made in China lack of quality, which is a key distinguisher of class (Entwistle 2000:134). Moreover, designers who manufacture their goods in Europe designate dresses made in China as throw-away products or disposable goods, which are worth nothing and thus should be burnt right away, as one of the dirndl retailers opined. As Veblen (1953 [1899]:119) puts it, “we feel that what is inexpensive is unworthy.” By way of illustration, Gexi Tostmann, the grande dame of traditional costumes, states the following:

Das Dirndl wird mehr oder weniger zum Wegwerfprodukt und das tut mir am meisten weh, weil optisch kann ich nichts sagen, weil über Geschmäcker lässt sich streiten (ServusTV 04.10.14).

Besides the argument of sustainability, a further distinctive feature is a small device on the garments, that is, the zipper. Dresses with zippers are often considered as non-traditional. Even though none of the designers could offer an explanation for their aversion to zippers, the mode of binding the edges of the corsets has become a tool of distinction, as the statement of a designer of a regional dirndl exemplifies:

Also wenn ich ein Dirndl mit einem Reißverschluss drauf sehe, das tut mir weh [lacht]. Bin das gerade ich? Dann siehst du ihn so schön auch, nicht einmal verschlossen, für einen jeden da ... Weiß ich eigentlich eh nicht warum. Das ist kein Dirndlgewand nicht für mich. Na. Ich weiß nicht warum. Aber da schlürfte ich nicht einmal hinein, in sowas.

It seems to me that the zipper offends the taste of the traditionalists. Moreover, it denotes modernity and efficiency, two features which also indicate mass production. As this mode of production is associated with foreign manufacturing sectors, the custodians of tradition oppose dresses with zippers. Above all, zippers stand in contrast to one of the key features of traditional costumes positioned in the upper sector of the status system, that is, handicraft. Hand-wrought goods are more expensive, as their production takes up a lot more time than mass-produced commodities. Therefore, they are also considered a lot more beautiful and suitable as means of distinction (Veblen 1953 [1899]:119–120). In addition, hand sewing buttons, hooks and eyes or inserting a zipper bear upon differences in terms of connoisseurship and craft. A dirndl designer explained that they placed the zipper in the middle of the bodice for a very good reason. This way, it is easier for women who gained weight to alter their dresses. This goes to show that even different modes of binding the edges of the fabrics may serve as a resource for forming class boundaries.



Figure 5 – Krüger Dirndl GmbH is one of the market leaders in Germany; Photo: Krüger Dirndl GmbH



Figure 6 – Promotional photograph of the “Krüger Feelings” collection, Fall/Winter 2016; Photo: Krüger Dirndl GmbH



Figure 7 – Promotional photograph of the “Krüger Madl & Buam” collection, Spring/Summer 2016; Photo: Krüger Dirndl GmbH

As a consequence, the opposite characteristics of this classification are all associated with traditional costumes made in Austria. That is to say that quality, sustainability, a design which corresponds to handicraft and a manual production are considered as features of dresses produced in Austria. The decommodification of traditional dresses thus is first and foremost achieved by a Nationalization and Europeanization of tradition in terms of production sites, yet out of economic necessity and not from a political stance. Withdrawing traditional costumes from the market in China and defining tradition by means of locating the sites of production in Europe thus is a means to reaching a high price, avoiding price fights, keeping the value up and securing the commodities' role as status symbols. Moreover, rooting the site of production in the region is a "localizing strategy" (Friedman 2000:199), which turns the commodities into unique, non-exchangeable, protected goods.

For producing in Austria and Eastern Europe appears to be ethical and justifies a higher price, companies incorporate the information about their sites of production in their marketing operations. However, according to a Salzburg dirndl designer who produces in Austria, it took a while until she could raise the customers' awareness of the place of production, especially since many clients start from the premise that Austrian costumes are produced in Austria. That is to say that it took some time to turn 'Made in Austria' into a distinctive feature.

Nonetheless, the circumstances of production in Europe might be just as bad as in Asia, as the research of the clean clothes campaign on European working conditions of seamstresses shows (Clean Clothes Kampagne Österreich 2016).

Conclusion

In today's Western societies, defining tradition by means of its manifestations and putting it in concrete terms on behalf of the academia would mean to miss the point completely; for the notion of tradition can only be conceived by considering the underlying processes that construct and deconstruct this concept. The analysis of these trajectories gives the concept of tradition a much more complex character, as it counters its common connotations, that is, timelessness, homogeneity, coherence and givenness. Tradition, thus, itself is a dynamic process determined by present social, economic and political interests. From this it follows that the reinvention of tradition is contextual, time-bound, specific and positional.

The realm of traditional costumes is a fiercely contested field, in which the construction and deconstruction of tradition takes place along various lines. Even though these lines don't have the same point of departure and follow different trajectories, they all share one characteristic: it is not about preserving the past of a tradition but rather about securing the future of one's position or identity. In this regard, tradition functions as a protectionist phenomenon which above all comes into being through declaring what it isn't. Depending on the societal sphere, distinction and the decommodification of the dirndl are attained by various means.

Nowadays, dirndl dresses form part of the world of fashion, which protects its status system by means of taste. Therefore, it is the restriction and control of taste which serves as a tool for distinction. In the realm of traditional costumes, the mechanisms of distinction and identification find expression in basically one judgment of taste, which sets the "genuine" traditional costumes apart from kitsch dresses characterized by accessories, adornments, rhinestones, concrete forms and gaudy colors. What is more, cheap, mass-produced dresses are conceived of as trashy copies of some original model. For our sense of beauty is influenced by the value and price of the commodities, we consider expensive things to be more beautiful (Veblen 1953 [1899]). Moreover, mass-produced goods are not conducive for the status system, as they don't provide the possibility of distinguishing oneself from others (Holt 2008).

This goes to show that aesthetic evaluations are one of the key determinants in terms of conceptions about tradition. In particular domains, thus, conceptions about the tradition of dirndl dresses and the style of traditional costumes primarily reflect the taste of the group in power, that is, those who have the prerogative of interpretation. That is to say that what is

believed to be traditional often represents the current dominant taste of human actors in hegemonic positions who seek to protect their status.

The renaissance of the dirndl is strongly linked to events and parties. In this regard, the dirndl and traditional costumes in general serve as a medium for sociability, as the garb often gives occasion to be at an event and meet like-minded people. A piece of clothing thus has the power to structure the formations of social life and mount social gatherings. Traditional costumes encourage sociability, for they provide a common thread and hence create a sense of cohesiveness and belonging. Within this collective framework, differences in styles of clothing approve the current fashion of traditional costumes and by association group affiliation. By the same token, fashion serves as a means to exclusion, for it demarcates one group from the others. Nevertheless, individuality and personal peculiarities are restricted within the group, too, as they interfere with the feeling of togetherness and thus spoil the pleasure of sociability (Simmel 1949). Event organizers select and address specific groups on the basis of differing advertising methods, decoration, admission, locations, dress codes and the clientele itself. As a result, each event becomes a socially differentiated venue which hence enables genuine sociability among social equals. Moreover, reinventing tradition and embedding traditional costumes in the sphere of festivities takes place by means of these features, meaning that tradition is turned into an overriding element which nonetheless is based on distinctions in terms of taste and the individual's economic and cultural capital. Accordingly, events with restricted admission and a good reputation tend to emphasize tradition and name it as one of their unique characteristics. Apart from this, events with a traditional dress code or a party theme which is related to tradition in one form or another create ideal worlds and contribute to the popular myth of traditional costumes, as they evoke connotations of the alpine world and a rural life of simplicity in unspoiled nature. Therefore, they foster a romanticizing of allegedly bygone times responding to the current need for nostalgia.

Music is another crucial factor in the organization of events. Often, it is the taste in music which gathers people and prompts them to attend an event. The impacts of music, however, are not confined to the realm of events or traditional costumes, for musicians serve as "points of identification" (Hall 1998:226) and thus have bearing on the construction of other cultural identities. The musician Andreas Gabalier fostered the boom in traditional costumes and is an important role model and representative for people who identify with traditional costumes. His example shows that it is not just about music and traditional clothing, as his presence has launched many discussions about the appropriate ways and modes of commodifying cultural goods. Moreover, the example of Gabalier illustrates the power of goods, in that they and their

cultural meanings have the capacity to create group cohesion and by association exclude all others. As a result, Gabelier has become the focal point of debates broaching national legislations and right-wing politics. This shows that goods aren't neutral – especially not traditional costumes – as they are also “engendering ideas of morality, ideal worlds and other abstractions and principles” (Miller 1987:191).

One of these core principles is the role of traditional costumes in the reproduction of gender, as they mark a difference between men and women and maintain a particular ideal of masculinity and femininity. Also, the *dirndl* is considered to enhance a woman's appearance and to express womanhood and an ideal female look. Traditional costumes thus not only express one's belonging to a wider community but also embody clear gender roles, which provide further guidance in identity formation. What is more, the concept of tradition in the realm of traditional costumes conflates nation, gender and sexuality, which points to the ideological content of tradition. From this it follows that traditional costumes and notions of their traditionality also can be misused in order to disseminate ideologies and present them as cultural essences of a nation.

Regarding traditional costumes in the realm of the Heimatwerk, nationalism has been replaced by Europeanism in order to counter any possible usurpation of right-wing populists and maintain regional costumes presentable for all strata of society. In 2014, the Heimatwerk Salzburg published a *dirndl* portfolio depicting the various styles of regional dresses in Salzburg. By means of this publication, the Heimatwerk institutionalized the current styles of regional *dirndls* and maintained its prerogative of interpretation. Also, the cooperative reasserted itself as opinion leader, for other designers appeal to its designs, cloths and techniques just as the general public still sees the Heimatwerk for advice and recommendations. Moreover, the institution reinforced its position as gatekeeper for defining the regional territory and establishing cultural identities, which are among other things constructed within their discourses of history and culture and created by means of regional costumes. The fact that the sharing of a common cultural trait is “an implication or result, rather than a primary and definitional characteristic” (Barth 1998:11) illuminates the importance of material objects in the construction of collective identities. As a result, the activities of the Heimatwerk structure the geographical space and produce regionality. Furthermore, the institutionalization of regional garb bears on the politics of identity and hence embodies the politics of positioning (Hall 1998:226).

Even though the amount of regional costume styles has increased fivefold in the last twenty years, history looms large in the portfolio and by association in the presentation of regional costumes. In the range of the Heimatwerk, the history of regional garb is aligned with Europe's history of costume and fashion, meaning that it gets interrelated with all those manifestations

relevant to contemporary styles of regional dresses. In this way, history turns regional dirndl dresses into European heritage and puts their dark chapter as propaganda tool of the Nazi regime in the rear. By the same token, the history of the Heimatwerk Salzburg, which dates back to the Nazi era, fades into the background. One of the most important figures in the establishment of the Heimatwerk Salzburg was Tobi Reiser. Down to the present day, his achievements in terms of folk music and traditional costumes have been highly praised. He was one of the key players in building the networks of practices relevant to the politics of folk culture and establishing institutions that sustain hegemonic positions in the realm of traditional costumes to this day. Besides his relations to various important stakeholders in the field of folk culture, he figured prominently in originating the Heimatwerk Salzburg and the Salzburg Advent Festival (bringing in its wake the *Verein der Freunde des Salzburger Adventsingens*) and modernizing the Edelweißkränzchen. However, current research¹ has removed any doubt about his role in the Nazi regime and his membership in the NSDAP (Huber 2016).

The production of historical texts hence is strongly linked to the present state of affairs, for the past serves as a legitimatization for the future course of action and the interpretation of history may be used as a means to positioning and protecting one's status. The Heimatwerk Salzburg protects its realm of regional costumes by removing the dresses from the fashion system by means of pace. In addition, Köhl, who is the head of the Heimatwerk, classifies dresses as authentic on the basis of their mode of production and ethical values. The Heimatwerk labels its traditional costumes as genuine – albeit in quotation marks – and promotes its “echte” dirndl dresses as green products, for their main characteristics are sustainability, quality, longevity and transparency in the fashion supply chain. As a consequence, the goods of the Heimatwerk remain distinctive, for their proposed return to regional craft production implies a restriction of the availability of dresses to elite sections of society (Miller 1987:185).

Unlike the Heimatwerk, retailers and wholesalers of traditional costumes follow the law of fast changes in fashion, for only this way fashion fulfills its purpose as a means to distinction. The change in fashion is driven by a dynamical play between two contradictory tendencies, namely imitation and differentiation. As soon as the latest fashion is adopted by everyone, it loses its distinctiveness and thus has to be supplanted by another fashion. As Simmel (1957:547) puts it, “as fashion spreads, it gradually goes to its doom.” With the boom in traditional costumes and

¹ In 2013, folklorist Elisabeth Wallnöfer produced documents indicating that Tobi Reiser had participated in the July Putsch in 1934. Consequently, the federal state government engaged the contemporary historian Oliver Rathkolb to give an opinion on the political past of Tobi Reiser. The results of his study are expected to be published in October 2016. Due to the current debates on Tobi Reiser, the Tobi-Reiser-prize has been abandoned. In 1992, the *Verein der Freunde des Salzburger Adventsingens* fathered the prize with the aid of the Stiegl brewery. The land government only adorned itself with the presentation (Kriechbaum 2016).

the full range of products in terms of price and style, traditional costumes *per se* no longer serve as a status symbol. However, the design vocabulary of traditional costumes is limited, for dirndl dresses need to have a certain style in order to be recognized as such. For this reason, exhausting all possible variants of design while overstocking the market might spell the end for today's big popularity of traditional costumes. A wide distribution destroys the distinctiveness of the fashion, and as this element wanes, customers abandon the style for another fashion.

Therefore, it is the hope of the retailers and wholesalers that dresses which are conceived of as traditional will stand the test of time. As a response to the price war caused by the advance of foreign competitors and manufacturing sectors and the increasing number of competitors edging into the market, reinventing the tradition, holding the prerogative of interpretation and thus preserving the value of the commodities are key success factors in asserting oneself on the market in the long run.

When it comes to the dirndl, the place of production has become a criterion for the conception of traditionality. That is to say that unlike in everyday clothes, "made in Austria" is considered a characteristic of "authentic" traditional costumes. In other words, a nationalization of garb in terms of its production serves as distinctive feature in economic competition. Companies which produce in Austria hence bring the place of production forward and promote Austria as their country of production. For most of the consumers tend to think that Austrian traditional costumes are made in Austria, companies which produce in Austria try to raise awareness of different manufacturing countries. Furthermore, they moralize the production and by association the consumption of foreign goods with the argument of poor quality, bad working conditions and a lack of sustainability. On the other hand, defining tradition by means of Austrianess in terms of production is a means to reaching a high price, avoiding price fights, keeping the value up and securing the commodities' role as status symbols. Moreover, rooting the site of production in the region is a "localizing strategy" (Friedman 2000:199), which turns the commodities into unique, non-exchangeable, protected goods.

Besides protecting the goods by means of their production sites, strategic changes of direction within the zone of commodification are another way of reacting to the emerging market saturation. In the hope that there is less competition and more prospects, many companies based in Salzburg set up flagship stores in Vienna. However, the market expansion to Vienna is not confined to the retail trade, but concerns all areas related to the sphere of traditional costumes. By way of illustration, the Austrian railroad company Westbahn offers a special ticket for customers who are dressed in traditional costumes at the time of the Wiener Wiesn. Under the

slogan “Trachtenträger fahren günstiger!” passengers wearing a dirndl or lederhosen buy one ticket and get one free. Likewise, the conductors have to wear traditional costumes.

Correspondingly, more and more parties with a party theme related to tradition and balls with a traditional dress code have come up in Austria’s capital. On the whole, all these venues of sociability create similar ideal worlds, meaning that the same myth of Austrianess is evoked. Therefore, alpine huts, mountain sceneries, evergreens, wooden panels and antlers serve as a decoration at the venues. Nonetheless, some attendees who are not town bred discern a lack of authenticity, for according to them, at home, that is in Styria, Salzburg or Upper Austria, “things are still a little bit more traditional.” Whether traditional costumes and the corresponding events assert themselves in Vienna on the long run, exceed their status as a mere medium for sociability and become part of the regional identity thus remains to be seen.

The expansion to Vienna is among other things associated with shifts of markets in terms of production sites and capital. Made up of textiles, materials and working hands from all over the world, traditional dresses and fashion in a country style often have widely traveled until they hit the shelves of Austrian stores and fashion chains. Yet most of the stakeholders in the realm of traditional costumes consider the impression of living in a globalized world the main reason for the current boom in traditional costumes, as according to Köhl people are looking for security, a shared identity and straightforwardness. As the head of the Styrian Heimatwerk Dr. Monika Primas puts it:

Das eine wäre zum Beispiel die stark voranschreitende Globalisierung. Das heißt, ich kann quasi zu jeder Zeit an jedem Punkt dieser Welt sein – zumindest virtuell – da sehe ich alles Mögliche was es dort an, ich weiß es nicht, Musik, an Kleidung und so weiter gibt und da kommt man dann wieder zurück zu Brauchtum, zu Traditionen, zu eben dem Dirndl, der Volksmusik und so weiter. (Ritter 2015)

Taking his lead from Robertson (1992), Friedman (2008b:243) argues that “globalization is not so much about changes in the movement of people and things as about the way such relatively constant phenomena are *identified* by participants in the world system in particular periods.” Rather, he states that periods of declining Western hegemony cause “a search for roots, for a permanence and internal peace” (Friedman 1993:355). Here, traditional costumes may create a feeling of belonging to a local community, a region or a nation state and thus contribute to people’s self-understanding as members of a wider community. In other words, they serve “as a therapy for people uncertain about who they are” (Holtorf 2010:46).

Most of the people affiliated to the sphere of traditional costumes consider the recollection of traditional values as a response to globalization. However, the reinvention of tradition is not an opposite standpoint but rather a phenomenon taking place within the global arena and capitalism.

Moreover, “the identity spaces of the global system are the source for much of the content of globalization” (Friedman 2000:201). The global arena thus is the precondition for the formation of regional identities in times of shifting hegemony. To put it in a nutshell, the local is itself a global product (Friedman 2000:198), for the idea of a globalized world enables people to define tradition by means of regional production and by association to enclave it. Also, the impression of globalization allows its opponents to attribute a regional or national meaning to traditional costumes and turn them into its opposite number. Furthermore, it is the production abroad which made the boom in traditional costumes possible and dirndl and lederhosen affordable for most people. The renaissance of traditional costumes thus is a phenomenon which emerged and at the same time only is possible through globalization.

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Abstract

Recently, a renaissance of traditional costumes is emergent in Salzburg and its surrounding areas. Young people can't wait to wear their dirndl and lederhosen at the next event, the singer Andreas Gabalier launches a collection of traditional fashion, new designers and bigger companies capture the market, and the Heimatwerk Salzburg publishes a new portfolio of regional costumes just at the peak of the boom. The central theme of all these activities and trajectories is "the" tradition – unquestioned in daily life yet barely challenged in the scholarly literature. This study addresses the concept of tradition on the basis of two questions: How is the tradition of the dirndl interpreted, constructed and deconstructed by its agents and what are the underlying dynamics in the discourse about tradition? And most of all, who claims to define "the" tradition? By drawing on participant observation and semi-structured interviews with experts, the thesis shifts the focus from reinvented traditions to the process of *reinventing* tradition. Thereby, it explores how the various conceptions of tradition and the politics of the dirndl affect the global market, structure the geographical space and shape the social life down to the individual body.

Key words: reinvention of tradition, traditional costumes, dirndl, fashion, consumption, commodification, Heimatwerk

Zusammenfassung

Tracht erlebt in den letzten Jahren eine Renaissance in der Stadt Salzburg und den umliegenden Regionen. Junge Erwachsene können es kaum erwarten, auf dem nächsten Fest ihre Dirndln und Lederhosen anzuziehen, der Sänger Andreas Gabalier präsentiert seine eigene Trachtenkollektion, junge DesignerInnen und große Modeketten drängen auf den Markt und das Heimatwerk Salzburg veröffentlicht am Höhepunkt des Booms ein neues Trachtenbuch. Das Leitmotiv dieser Aktivitäten und Entwicklungen ist allzu oft „die“ Tradition, im Alltag kaum hinterfragt und in der wissenschaftlichen Literatur wenig beachtet. Die vorliegende Arbeit setzt sich mit dem Konzept der Tradition auf Basis zweier Forschungsfragen auseinander: Wie wird die Tradition des Dirndls interpretiert, konstruiert und dekonstruiert und welche Dynamiken liegen den Diskursen über seine Tradition(en) zugrunde? Und vor allen Dingen, wer erhebt Anspruch auf „die“ Tradition? Basierend auf teilnehmender Beobachtung und ExpertInneninterviews fragt die Studie nicht nach erfundener Tradition, sondern erforscht das fortwährende Erfinden von Tradition in der Gegenwart und zeigt so auf, wie die unterschiedlichen Vorstellungen von Tradition und Tracht den Weltmarkt, den geographischen Raum, das Gesellschaftsleben und den einzelnen Körper beeinflussen können.

Schlagwörter: erfundene Tradition, Tracht, Dirndl, Mode, Konsum, Kommodifizierung, Heimatwerk