

## **The Dirndl – A dress between fashion and tradition**

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### **Abstract**

Tradition and fashion do no longer necessarily exclude each other. The Dirndl has successfully been established as a traditional dress of the Alpine Region and equally gained recognition within the global fashion industry. As Chanel's Creative Director, Karl Lagerfeld, proved in the *Métier d'Art* - Show 2014 and the September 2016 Issue of the German *Vogue* shows, tradition can enrich fashion with authenticity. However, this approval applies only in a specific context, where fashion and tradition can come together, as during traditional festivities or special occasions.

Alongside the sociohistorical development of the Dirndl, this research intends to analyse the borders of tradition and fashion, which are often considered as opposites. However, it shall be proven that both elements can coexist and should not be used as antonyms to each other. Furthermore, it is examined to what extent tradition and fashion can complement each other without losing their typical characteristics.

Both recent academic studies and visual material discuss the contemporary meaning of the Dirndl. As part of this essay, outcomes of researches from German folklorists, anthropological approaches to tradition and fashion theories shall give the reader an overall introduction to the controversial subject. Furthermore, data analysis from newspapers, magazines, and social media complement the academic findings.

As exemplified by the Dirndl, tradition does not exclude fashion. As fashion trends, traditions do change as well. Whether a dress is more fashionable than traditional or vice versa is decided by the context the dress is set in.

### **Keywords**

Dirndl, Tradition, Innovation, Fashion, Culture, Dress, Authenticity

### **Article Classification**

Conceptual paper