



VISUAL TYPOLOGIES FROM THE EARLY MODERN TO THE CONTEMPORARY

Local Contexts and Global Practices

EDITED BY
TARA ZANARDI AND LYNDA KLICH

ROUTLEDGE RESEARCH IN ART HISTORY

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15 Against “Fashion-Time”

Bernhard Willhelm, Regional Folk Dress and the Contemporary

Charlene K. Lau

The call of an alphorn introduces a promotional video for German avant-garde fashion label Bernhard Willhelm’s Spring/Summer 2007 womenswear collection.¹ A female yodeler joins in on the musical arrangement as the camera slowly focuses on the details of a garment. The camera then pulls back to reveal a model standing against a grey backdrop in a photography studio. Her hair is braided and she wears a pair of white lederhosen-like shorts with a floral print comprising edelweiss, gentians, and Alpine roses, matching crossbar suspenders, a knit blouse featuring a heart and floral design, knee-high socks, white dress shoes, and round sunglasses [Fig. 15.1].² The screen proceeds to split into three sections to offer close-ups of the ensemble, before cycling through the entire collection, repeating the same format. Immediately, films such as the American musical *The Sound of Music* (1965) and its nostalgic folk-styled song “Edelweiss” come to mind, as do stereotypes such as the yodeler and alphorn player that proliferate in television advertisements for the Swiss cough drop brand Ricola. Both of these filmic examples elucidate pastoral calm in idyllic rural life through folk music set to visual imagery of Alpine mountains and bucolic meadows.

It is filmic representations such as these that heighten the collective cultural memory of this mountainous geographic area and its surrounding regions. The Alpine has been generalized as a synthesis of agriculture, visual culture, and tourism: sheep and cattle farming, cheese-making, folk culture, traditional wooden architecture, and luxury ski resorts and spas. Despite the perceived unified regional identity of the Alps, the mountain range spans eight countries and therefore comprises multiple national identities. Likewise, the sights and sounds in the video are not entirely cohesive: while the soundtrack suggests a bucolic Alpine location frozen in time, the corresponding garments and setting do not entirely harmonize this auditory ideal. Many of the clothes and accessories appear to cite folk customs of Germanic-speaking countries, but none look wholly traditional. Seen through the lens of Willhelm and his business partner Jutta Kraus, such designs are at once zany interpretations of their cultural heritage and that of various others made into contemporary fashions. The outfits are timeless in the sense that they cannot be placed in a singular temporality and recall a bygone era with folk dress references. I state this with the understanding that folk dress does evolve, but that its temporal logic articulates a decidedly slower pace than that of fashion. For my purposes, I refer to aspects of the collection as “out-of-time”—despite an understanding of their current context and production—as this term articulates the non-linear temporality of Bernhard Willhelm’s fashion and the contemporary.

Through the sartorial quotation and integration of regional folk dress, the avant-garde creations of Willhelm and Kraus sit out of time and are purposefully out of



Fig. 15.1 Look featuring lederhosen with floral print of edelweiss, gentian and Alpine roses, and crossbar suspenders, Bernhard Willhelm Spring/Summer 2007 womenswear collection.

Source: Photo: Fahosemiel.

fashion rather than "in fashion." Their designs defy contemporary fashion's temporal structure of biannual seasons and rapid change and decontextualize historical time. I situate my evaluation of Willhelm and Kraus's practice within the temporal framework of history and contemporaneity, engaging with theories of the "now" from Giorgio Agamben, Terry Smith, Walter Benjamin, and Ulrich Lehmann in order to demonstrate the complexity of contemporary fashion's temporality. By restating anti-fashion strategies of folkloric dress and type, Willhelm and Kraus test the temporal logic of fashion; in so doing, their designs oppose the ontological status of the fashion object.

Historically, artistic avant-gardes have been viewed as cultural forces against mainstream cultural production. With this definition in mind, it is useful to consider avant-garde fashion through its position of opposition to conventional dress. Yet, the concept of fashion is difficult to fix, as its very nature implies constant flux. Philosopher Giorgio Agamben argues that fashion is disjunctive as a temporal structure: "Fashion can be defined as the introduction into time of a peculiar discontinuity that divides it according to its relevance or irrelevance, its being-in-fashion, or no longer-being-in-fashion."³ He states that an understanding of fashion must be ontologically fluid and open to modification and transformation, shaped by what is on trend. Furthermore, Agamben raises questions concerning the "when" of fashion and its preoccupation with nowness:

Is this 'now' perhaps the moment in which the fashion designer conceives of the general concept, the nuance that will define the new style of the clothes? Or is it the moment when the fashion designer conveys the concept to his assistants, and then to the tailor who will sew the prototype? Or rather, is it the moment of the fashion show, when the clothes are worn by the only people who are always and only in fashion, the *mannequins*, or models; those who nonetheless, precisely for this reason, are never truly in fashion?⁴

In this passage, Agamben demonstrates the slippery temporal nature of fashion, whereby fashion is associated with change and constant (re)generation of the new and now. Thus, the time and "now" of fashion are eternally shifting between points of disjointedness. Beyond an understanding of fashion as a temporal entity, fashion also functions as concept and object. As fashion historian Giorgio Riello contends, fashion concerns both the "(immaterial) idea and an (material) object" and that its immateriality "is part of social, cultural, economic and personal practices that are material and involve material objects."⁵ Therefore, fashion operates in an "official" system: firstly, as a social and cultural phenomenon; secondly, as a physical object; and thirdly, within the institution and business of fashion. Anti-fashion, however, repudiates the establishment of the "official" system, throwing fashion into flux. Art historian Radu Stern has described the historical artistic avant-garde's oppositional stance as a "common will to reject 'official' fashion, refusing its mercantile logic and striving to replace it by a utopian 'anti-fashion.'"⁶ In a similar way, Willhelm and Kraus's appropriation of folk dress forms and techniques is representative of an avant-garde practice that resists the increasingly rapid turnover of trends motivated by the market of fashion. When viewed within the wider context of their work—from ephemera, runway presentations, exhibitions, fashion films, and other online media—their Alpine-inspired designs oppose the institution of fashion. In this way,

Willhelm and Kraus's strategies against fashion align them with historical vanguard artists such as William Morris, and Russian Constructivists Varvara Stepanova and Liubov Popova, who aimed to reform dress through their artistic practices in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Quotations of Folk Dress as Anti-fashion

Willhelm and Kraus's recurring quotation of folk dress as anti-fashion defies the pre-established temporal modes of rapid change and the continual regeneration of newness in the fashion industry. They aim to contest the temporal logic of fashion as accelerated change—which I term “fashion-time”—from within industry parameters. Willhelm and Kraus do not deny that they operate within the broad institution of fashion, and insist that they make conscious efforts to challenge its structural framework. Just as Elizabeth Wilson and Anne Hollander have stated that anti-fashion belongs within a definition of fashion, resistance and critique can occur within the same structure that is resisted and critiqued. In this way, Willhelm and Kraus's anti-fashion is dialectical; it is simultaneously a subversion of fashion and a product of it.

Willhelm and Kraus's borrowing from folk dress is anti-fashion—that is, against fashion—in the sense that it conflates seemingly contradictory ideas of folk dress, history, tradition, and the contemporary. As Ted Polhemus and Lynn Procter claim, “anti-fashion” is exemplified in folk dress:

With the exception of the unfashionable (those who can't keep up with fashion change but would like to), anti-fashion refers to all styles of adornment which fall outside the organized system or systems of fashion change. [...] While anti-fashions most certainly do occur within the context of Western and Westernized societies, the most readily identifiable forms are the folk costumes of primitive and peasant peoples.⁷

This excerpt demonstrates that the perceived stability of folk dress opposes a particular type of continual evolution in the contemporary fashion system. As the sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies has articulated, while the measurement of time of customs is vertical and specific, the temporality of fashion is expansive and broad.⁸ In other words, the temporality of the “folk” moves in a progressive, linear direction, while fashion's time is multi-directional. That is not to say that folk culture does not progress in time, but that its temporal development differs from that of fashion.

Folk cultures have long been generalized as static in time and impenetrable to change; the interpretation of their clothing by contemporary designers thus challenges fashion-time. Contemporary fashion is largely viewed as an urban phenomenon in which the city is equated with a bustling pace and constant growth. On the other hand, folk dress is associated with rural life and sluggish progress, the latter of which is perceived as being slower than that of the metropolis's. Dress historian James Snowden has noted the opposition between city and countryside while addressing the notion of class: “When we speak of folk dress we mean the dress of the peasant communities and to a certain extent the non-fashionable dress of urban communities of Europe as it developed through the centuries.”⁹ Folk customs are not seen as wholly urban cultures; they are cultures of the peasant and rural “folk,” which have come to represent a romanticized and static notion of tradition. I contend, however, that



Fig. 15.3 Photochrom of an unmarried woman in Baden, Germany wearing a traditional red Black Forest *Bollenhut*, ca. 1890–1900.

Source: www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/pgz/item/2002713565/

relationship to the Black Forest, these alterations to the *Bollenhut* materials and color demonstrate that the designers go beyond mere quotation and instead, transform folk dress into a contemporary fashion object embedded with historical meaning and subjectivity. Willhelm and Kraus's *Bollenhut* is more than a copy of its folk dress "original" because it is a material manifestation of Willhelm's cultural identity.

In the Autumn/Winter 1999–2000 womenswear collection, notable "sartorial remembrances" of Austro-German folk dress included Willhelm and Kraus's use of *Loden*, a traditional Tyrolean fulled woolen material that is waterproof and typically produced in earthy shades of green, brown, and grey. The time intensive production of *Loden* runs in opposition to the demands of contemporary fast-fashion and its ever-evolving trends manufactured industrially on a mass scale. As a hardwearing natural fabric, *Loden* challenges the fashion system's strategy of planned obsolescence. More specifically, the *Loden* pieces are affixed with the label "Original Tiroler Loden," denoting their production in a factory in Innsbruck, Austria that has been manufacturing the cloth since 1796. With this explicit nod to old-world textile traditions, Willhelm and Kraus make an implicit critique of the fashion industry, which functions only when it maintains the cycles of technological innovation and ever-evolving trends that are produced on a mass scale. By introducing this traditional material into contemporary fashion, Willhelm and Kraus propose fashionability that is "out-of-time"

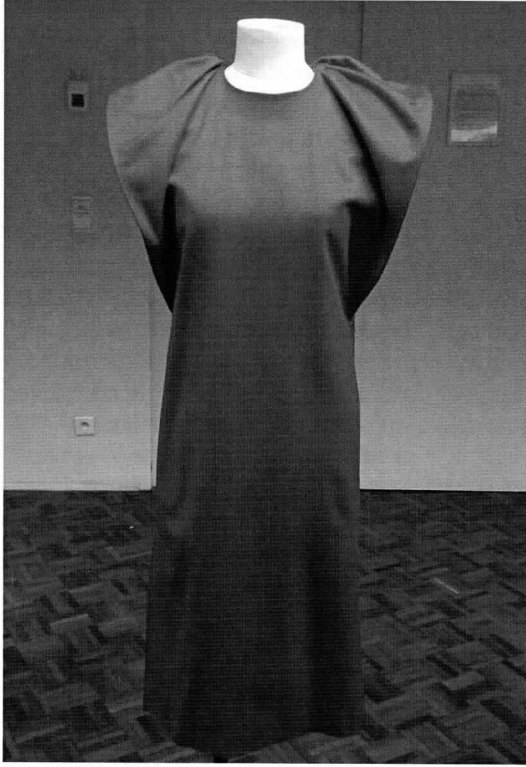


Fig. 15.4 Red Tiroler Loden "flower" dress, Bernhard Willhelm Autumn/Winter 1999–2000 womenswear collection.

Source: Photo: Charlene K. Lau.

and seemingly incompatible with the quickened pace of the fashion industry. As well, they advocate for an extension of the material life cycle of clothing as a protest against contemporary fashion's throwaway culture.

Rather than produce their garments in the anonymous factories of the globalized fashion world, Willhelm and Kraus choose, and identify, a specific location to their designs in both manufacture and design. They, however, hybridize the traditional textile with their directional flair in tops and knee-length dresses with dramatic wing-like cap sleeves or floppy harlequin collars in colors from jewel-like red to forest green [Fig. 15.4]; severe, structured blazers with angular shoulders in "bottle" and "frog" green; and wide, cropped trousers in black. The incorporation of traditional styles and handmade techniques of *Tracht* with distinctive silhouettes and non-traditional colors presents garments that intentionally avoid "fashionalization" and subvert the logic of the contemporary fashion system. These designs neither reflect the productive practices of the mass market, nor do their styles speak to a broad audience. At the same time, Willhelm and Kraus take traditional processes of textile production out of their seemingly static temporality and place them in the context of contemporary fashion.

A Question of Dialectics: the Contemporary

Willhelm and Kraus's anti-fashion quotations of Tyrolean and Black Forest folk dress render their avant-garde designs temporally disjointed, because they hover between history and contemporaneity. They sit outside of historical linear time, and are simultaneously "out of fashion" while functioning within the discourse of contemporary fashion. This notion of disjunctive temporality in relation to Willhelm and Kraus's anti-fashion can be further elucidated with reference to Terry Smith's and Agamben's theorizations on contemporaneity (the condition of being contemporary) and the contemporary, and Benjamin's concepts of history: *Tigersprung* (a tiger's leap into the past) and *Jetztzeit* (now-time). Smith proffers that contemporaneity "requires responses that are significant in ways quite different from those that inspired the many and various modernisms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."¹¹ He defines "contemporary" as "the immediate, the contemporaneous, the cotemporal" and demonstrates the difficulty in elucidating a definition when he also describes it as a term of relativity as the "aftermath of modernity."¹² Willhelm and Kraus's fashion is contemporary—aside from being in current production—because it articulates a way of being-in-the-world that is specific to the present with its non-linear temporality, multifarious identities, and heterogeneity of styles.

In regard to Willhelm and Kraus's quotation of folk dress, this interpretation demonstrates the multiple meanings of the contemporary; it speaks of the present time, denotes co-existence and simultaneity, and signifies a distinct current that follows modernism, postmodernism, or its variations. If Smith's understanding of the contemporary as immediate, contemporaneous, and cotemporal is applied generally to cultural production, all that is currently being produced falls broadly within the contemporary. This definition, however, leads to the question: what periodization encompasses the contemporary and by extension, contemporary fashion? In the ever-shifting present, the contemporary is a moving window of time. Smith also suggests that "contemporary" can be read as "being perpetually out of time, or at least not subject to historical unfolding" and "to be suspended in a state after or beyond history, a condition of being always and only in a present that is without either past or future."¹³ In other words, the contemporary is not with time (cotemporal), but rather outside of present time.

In this sense, Willhelm and Kraus's garments are situated in a paradoxical relationship; they are simultaneously anachronisms of the past and future in the present, and reflect the multiplicitous nature of temporality in the contemporary moment. Their garments are inherently contemporary because they are in current production. But there is more to their contemporariness: they also inhabit a disjunctive temporality external to a linear concept of history. It is this exteriority to present time that Agamben examines in "What is the Contemporary?" The essay takes Friedrich Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations* (1873–1876) as a point of departure, wherein the philosopher grapples with his own present. Agamben writes to Nietzsche's sense of "disconnection and out-of-jointness":

Those who are truly contemporary, who truly belong in their time, are those who neither perfectly coincide with it nor adjust themselves to its demands. They are thus in this sense irrelevant [*inattuale*]. But precisely because of this condition, precisely through this disconnection and this anachronism, they are more capable than others of perceiving and grasping their own time.¹⁴

To be contemporary is thus to be anachronistic, outside and ahead of the present time, where present time is a site of disjunction.¹⁵ In addition, Agamben asserts that as an exemplar of the contemporary, fashion "always takes the form of an ungraspable threshold between a 'not yet' and a 'no more.'"¹⁶ The question of the fashion object is such that to be "in fashion" signifies either anticipation or a sense of belatedness. In the conventional understanding of the term, fashion is never truly fashionable.

Using the neologism *Tigersprung* (a tiger's leap), Benjamin contended that "[f]ashion has a flair for the topical, no matter where it stirs in the thicket of long ago";¹⁷ fashion therefore jumps from the contemporary moment into the past, and in so doing, elucidates fashion's disjointed relationship with historical and linear time. Due to an endless "method of quotation," the logic of fashion is to evoke the past within the present as new and up-to-date.¹⁸ Willhelm and Kraus's use of folk dress is a leap into a past that itself is a construction of identity formed through history. Folk dress traditions, particularly in Western Europe serve as the signification of rural culture and peasantry because of the idealization of prior historical and cultural moments. With European nation-states forming in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the subsequent need for national identity, folk dress—among other forms of cultural production such as music and folklore—became a product of, to use Eric Hobsbawm's words, the "invention of tradition."¹⁹ Willhelm and Kraus are distinctly aware of temporal disjunction in their practice that occurs as a result of the recontextualization of folk culture in contemporaneity. When referring to Black Forest *Bollenhüte* quoted in the Spring/Summer 2007 womenswear collection, Willhelm stated that they "look like they came from outer space," rather than acknowledging their provenance from the historical category of folk customs and dress or its relation to Willhelm's personal background in that region.²⁰ His attribution of "outer space" to a traditional object effectively removes it from its apparent immovable past and places it in the context of futurity.

The result is an object that flits between past, present, and future, and, as I have stated earlier, is comprised of a variety of materials. Willhelm and Kraus's version of the *Bollenhut* is made new because of its space-age association and shifts in its colour and material composition; it is not an outright copy of its original. Rather, they take on the *Bollenhut* as a historical theme and produce a contemporary imitation that conflates both temporalities. Lehmann contends that imitation—as a form of emulation or simulation—differs from mimicry, which he defines as outright copying or exact reproduction: "However, irreverence toward the past is best achieved by quotation as imitation rather than by mimicry, since the constant change in fashion cannot be satisfied simply by a historically accurate copy. The clothes have to 'invent' the old, not mimic it."²¹ In other words, for fashion to enact change and remain contemporary, the designer must not wholly reconstruct the past. In Willhelm and Kraus's interpretation of folkloric dress, nothing is a complete copy; their fashion achieves contemporariness because it references the past but remains a product of the present.

Another example of imitation is an ensemble in the Spring/Summer 2007 menswear collection that plays with the collective memory of Alpine folk dress and includes a white t-shirt with *trompe l'oeil* print of suspenders traditionally paired with lederhosen (leather shorts). Willhelm and Kraus's techniques, as in their cheeky t-shirt drawing, demonstrate that they are not providing inauthentic copies but are conscious of the temporal shift between history and contemporaneity in their carefully chosen

references. Through the form of contemporary fashion, the re-articulation of folk dress creates synchronous temporalities split between history and contemporaneity. Nostalgia may play a part in their quotation, but they are not attempting to recreate a lost historical time tied to folk culture. Rather, Willhelm and Kraus knowingly decontextualize folkloric dress; their designs at once create a temporal fissure as they reach into the past to re-order the present and address the existential nature of being in the present moment that has collapsed under the weight of discontinuous historical time.

Willhelm and Kraus's fashion is contemporary because it is in current production, yet its contemporariness contains within it a distancing effect in its distinctive engagement with folk dress. As Smith suggests, contemporaneity sits both outside of present time and outside of history. Agamben further elaborates on the connection between contemporariness and a specific state of being:

Contemporariness is, then, a singular relationship with one's own time, which adheres to it and, at the same time, keeps a distance from it. More precisely, it is *that relationship with time that adheres to it through a disjunction and an anachronism*. Those who coincide too well with the epoch, those who are perfectly tied to it in every respect, are not contemporaries, precisely because they do not manage to see it; they are not able to firmly hold their gaze on it.²² (italics in the original)

Temporal disjunction thus makes Bernhard Willhelm fashion contemporary. I argue that this exteriority to present time assumes a position at the forefront of the contemporary, where Willhelm and Kraus's quotations of traditional Alpine folk dress and culture activate the disjunctive and heterogeneous character of contemporaneity. In the Spring/Summer 2007 menswear and womenswear collections, Willhelm and Kraus merged contemporary silhouettes with Bavarian and Tyrolean dress traditions: dirndl dresses, lederhosen, crossbar suspenders, blouses, *Loferrl/Wadlstutzen* (traditional Bavarian "legwarmer" socks), stockings with garters, and felt hats. Yet, their sartorial remembrances of Tyrolean folk dress disrupt any sense of an imagined, romantic past trapped in the vestiges of time. A number of the collection's garments feature the same floral motif as in the collection's lederhosen with floral print [see Fig. 15.1], along with classic horn and bone buttons. These elements appeared on an ensemble complete with fanny pack, while the same print was translated to a trench coat-like jacket, hats, and backpacks. Willhelm and Kraus hybridized lederhosen with a miniskirt in the womenswear collection and truncated dirndls. In the collection lookbook and runway presentation, they paired green lederhosen with a bright yellow hooded sweatshirt with an all-over pattern of cartoon characters. The model dressed in this ensemble also wore a black-brimmed hat festooned with neon shoelaces and small fluorescent colored bows that featured a Smiley face print. These amalgamations speak to the temporal heterogeneity of the contemporary; they are simultaneously historical with their quotations of folk dress, yet are contemporary in their silhouettes and incongruous iconographic details. In this sense, Willhelm and Kraus's folk-dress-inflected designs are contemporary because they are produced in the present and because they sit outside of the current moment.

Whether it is the heterogeneity of styles or the plurality of their global forms, Willhelm and Kraus's designs—with their multitude of influences from different cultures and historical periods—cannot be pinned down to any one style or period;

they are not fashionable in the sense of being on trend, but rather are at once historical and contemporary. Their sartorial remembrances of regional traditions reflect on their cultural background and personal histories in the context of contemporaneity. The Spring/Summer 2007 menswear collection melded these folk dress cultures with multiple temporal references including the psychedelic 1960s or its reinterpretation through the aesthetics of acid house, the 1980s music genre. These specific citations doubly speak to Willhelm's regional identity, his and Kraus's national identity more broadly, and Willhelm's own participation and interest in various club cultures as a youth; they reflect how the label embodies Bernhard Willhelm, the fashion designer and real-life person.

In both the runway presentation and lookbook, a long-haired male model simultaneously sported lederhosen, round sunglasses with an iconic Smiley face motif, and fluorescent yellow Smiley face paint [Fig. 15.5]. While these various temporalities of the past are individually familiar and can be located to their respective periods, their contemporary amalgamation with *Tracht* confounds any linear progression of time. In the same collection, a loose-fitting suit with trousers appears out of place among other garments that all appropriate folk dress, save for its decorative wooden buttons engraved with oak leaves and acorns. Together, the matching jacket and trousers, cut from white cotton twill cloth with wide burgundy and brown stripes, resemble a hip-hop inspired military uniform. Upon closer inspection, the "Bavarian Bondage" knee-length trousers seem to be an interpretation of lederhosen with their buttoned drop front. The similarities to *Tracht* end there however, as the trousers feature a "bum flap," a bondage or "hobble" strap that attaches the knees, and zippers that run down the backs of the thighs. Whether referring to fetish wear or punk style, the hobble strap speaks to a subversion of folk dress customs in contemporaneity. The sexual "kink" of the outfit disrupts notions of the romanticism and nostalgia that are often associated with regional identity and pride. In connecting Tyrolean custom with fetish, the suit is relative to the "leatherman" in gay culture, an archetype who favors donning—among other leather garments—lederhosen as a sign of masculinity. In this way, the jacket and "Bavarian Bondage" trousers simultaneously allude not only to Willhelm and Kraus's cultural heritage, but also to Willhelm's identity as a sex-positive, gay man. The conflation of these seemingly disparate identities is made possible in their contemporary quotation.

In recontextualizing these temporally static traditions, Willhelm and Kraus invent their own tradition that is at once old and new, and (re)write a sartorial history subjectively as German nationals and fashion designers. This notion of rewriting is taken from Lehmann, who sees fashion's recasting of its history as a way of understanding through looking back.²³ Specifically, Willhelm and Kraus write the narrative of the contemporary, which itself is constantly being revised in the continuous present. Their nostalgic garments—whether of their cultural heritage or their own lived experience—make sense of the contemporary moment fractured by heterogeneity; they are contemporary objects against time (con-temporary) or out-of-time. In this way, the historical is no longer relegated to the past, but rather, becomes anew in the perpetual present. Due to constant regeneration and renewal, history, and by extension, fashion, consist of the past, present, and future, the distinction between which Caroline Evans contends has "almost imploded."²⁴ As such, this collapse of time disrupts a sequential understanding of historical narrative where Bernhard Willhelm fashion and folk costume are spliced in the contemporary moment.



Fig. 15.5 Look featuring Tyrolean folk dress hybridized with acid house, Bernhard Willhelm Spring/Summer 2007 menswear collection.

Source: Photo: Dino Dinco.

Jetztzeit (now-time)

Lehmann's work in *Tigersprung* excavates Benjamin's theorization of the tiger's leap in conjunction with the concept of Jetztzeit or "now-time." "Now-time" is helpful in understanding non-linear historical time and the contemporary in Willhelm and Kraus's avant-garde designs. For Benjamin, "historicism," as differentiated from "history," is full of homogeneous, empty time, whereas "History is the subject of a construction whose site is not homogenous, empty time, but time filled-full by now-time [Jetztzeit]." ²⁵ Lehmann explains that in a Benjaminian understanding of history, the past is acted upon by the present: "Periods can be extracted from the false and positivist historical continuum and charged with 'now-time,' filled with meaning and revolutionary potential for contemporary (cultural) expression." ²⁶ From Benjamin's assessment that history is discontinuous, it follows that current cultural production takes on this mindset. Yet, cross-cultural exchange is one such indication of now-time that disrupts the continuum of history. For centuries, cross-cultural borrowing has facilitated taste for the new and up-to-date, the novel and the exotic; in the contemporary moment, this appropriation is further accelerated through globalization. A dissection of the musical accompaniment in the promotional video for Willhelm and Kraus's Spring/Summer 2007 womenswear collection illustrates how several fragments of history combine to comprise its now-time. The soundtrack originates from the opening theme song to the 1970's Japanese anime series *Arupusu no shōjo Haiji* (*Heidi: A Girl of the Alps*), which derived from the Swiss novel *Heidi* (1880) by Johanna Spyri, a text that itself may have been borrowed or plagiarized from a German book written by Hermann Adam Von Kamp in 1830, as German scholar Peter Büttner has suggested. ²⁷ The anime version has been translated into numerous languages including Spanish, German, Dutch, Italian, and Arabic, due to its continued worldwide popularity for more than thirty years after its initial airing. Willhelm's video features a few of these translations and manages to amalgamate widespread points of cultural reference—from Western Europe to East Asia to the Middle East—rather seamlessly, where one interpretation of the *Heidi* theme song melds into another. The viewers fill in the incongruences, just as they do in Willhelm's designs, which are not exact copies of traditional folk dress but contemporary hybrids. Similarly, the anime soundtrack merges Alpine yodeling and singing by a Japanese female vocalist. This exercise of tracing the point of origin for Willhelm and Kraus's quotation of the Alpine through folk dress and music demonstrates the steady pace at which globalism in cultural production has been developing. In the case of the promotional collection video, the original anime film has been dubbed over several times and exists in a discourse of continual re-telling. Thus, the story of Heidi, or Adelaide, as it is known in its German incarnation, comes full circle through the filter of the global turn: from Von Kamp's German novel, to Swiss literary heroine Heidi, to Japanese anime series, and in its incorporation into the Spring/Summer 2007 womenswear collection promotional video, to Willhelm and Kraus's Tyrolean folk- dress-inflected fashion.

Conclusion

Willhelm and Kraus's practice aligns with various postulations of the contemporary, including those of Agamben and Smith, and Lehmann's concept that "quotation is sartorial remembrance," ²⁸ and his theorization of Benjamin's concepts of history,

Tigersprung, and *Jetztzeit*. These interconnected ideas especially manifest in Willhelm and Kraus's quotations of folk dress traditions in fashion that comprises multiple temporalities, suspended between history and contemporaneity. In their resistance to the institution of fashion's temporal norms, the anti-fashion strategies employed in Willhelm and Kraus's folk art quotations articulate a position for avant-garde fashion against "fashion-time." Thus, a concept of history can be derived, whereby numerous narratives exist simultaneously, uniting past, present, and future.

Notes

I am grateful to Bernhard Willhelm and Jutta Kraus.

- 1 To clarify, use of the name Bernhard Willhelm will refer to the fashion label hereafter. Willhelm himself collaborates with partner Jutta Kraus. While Kraus largely handles business operations and Willhelm the creative side, together, they form Bernhard Willhelm, the label.
- 2 "bernhard willhelm show woman spring summer 07," YouTube video, 7:10, posted by "dirk bonn," March 25, 2007, www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sUBo8mHf2w.
- 3 Agamben 2009, 47.
- 4 Agamben 2009, 48.
- 5 Riello 2011. Accessed July 18, 2014. doi: 10.3402/jac.v3i0.8865.
- 6 Stern 2005, 3.
- 7 Polhemus and Procter 1978, 16.
- 8 Tönnies, 2004, 336.
- 9 Snowden 1979, 7.
- 10 Polhemus and Procter 1978, 17.
- 11 Smith 2009, 1.
- 12 Smith 2009, 4, 1.
- 13 Smith 2009, 245.
- 14 Agamben 2009, 40.
- 15 Agamben 2009, 41.
- 16 Agamben 2009, 48.
- 17 Benjamin 1969, 261.
- 18 Lehmann 1999, 301.
- 19 Hobsbawm and Ranger, eds. 1992.
- 20 Willhelm quoted in Loschek 2006/2008, accessed October 21, 2012.
- 21 Lehmann 2000, 165.
- 22 Agamben 2009, 41.
- 23 Lehmann 2000, 232.
- 24 Evans 2003), 13.
- 25 Benjamin quoted in Lehmann 2000, 37.
- 26 Lehmann 1999, 298.
- 27 AFP 2010, accessed January 20, 2013.
- 28 Lehmann 2000, 64.

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