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PARIS–NEW YORK 1925

JEAN PATOU’S “ADVERTISING”

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Introduction

Through the lens of a single dress, this chapter looks at fashion and modernism in the mid-1920s. A close reading of its design motif, an embroidered Eiffel Tower, leads to a consideration of its wider cultural, commercial and ideological meanings, in both America and France. In looking at what Paris signified to Americans, and America to the French, the chapter identifies some of the contradictions and complexities of modernist identities across the fields of fashion, commerce and visual culture in the period. The modernism it identifies, however, is not that of the artistic avant-garde but of work, business and popular culture, in particular new forms of advertising and promotion. It links fashion to the streamlined, organizational structures of modern commerce rather than to the seamless, mechanical forms of modernist visual culture.

In this, it follows a number of other writers who have elaborated on the relationship of fashion to modernism beyond the realms of art and art history. The architect and art historian Mario Lupano and Alessandra Vaccari have argued that early twentieth-century fashion was an engine of modernism, not merely a reflex of modernity; furthermore, they assert, the success of fashion in this respect eclipses other attempts to emancipate the relationship of fashion and modernism from narrow histories of art.¹ Similarly, the literary scholar Michael Levenson has argued that modernism is not just what he terms “soft culture” but also consists of “hard, causal powers of modern action” that include habits and routines: “the pace of walking, a style of gazing, a tensing of the muscles. Our bodies become modernized, and there we dwell, in those modernized bodies, in technologies, and also in concepts and images as products of modernization.”² He describes “men in capes, women on bicycles, modern bodies as opposed



to modern artefacts, in eruptive and ephemeral events staged by artists and writers.”³ And the cultural theorist Peter Wollen has described “the modernist body” as rational, hygienic and streamlined in his writing about Coco Chanel and Jean Patou’s designs of the 1920s.⁴ Modernist fashion is linked, too, to the rationalization of the body in spheres such as work and leisure, from the Taylorism of the workplace to the “mass ornament” of the chorus line described by Siegfried Kracauer.⁵ This chapter extends those arguments into the realm of advertising in the 1920s in its analysis of a single dress designed by the French couturier Jean Patou in 1925.

The story of a dress

The garment in question is a navy silk faille two-piece consisting of a long-sleeved blouson top and knee-length pleated skirt. The blouse has two patch pockets, and an Eiffel Tower embroidered in red on the front, with a waterfall of white chiffon falling from its base. At the top of the Eiffel Tower was a tiny light bulb that actually lit up, by means of a battery kept in one patch pocket, operated by a Bakelite switch kept in the other, so the wearer could turn the light on and off at will with one hand in her pocket (Figures 6.1 and 6.2). There are small holes stitched into the pockets from the inside to accommodate the wires that run inside the blouse up to a little scarlet eyelet at the top of the embroidered tower on the blouse from which the tiny light bulb can protrude. The dress survives today in the collection of the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and photographs of it, including details of the battery and switch mechanism, can be seen on the Costume Institute website.⁶ The label, which can also be seen on the website, reads “Cannes/Biarritz/Monte Carlo. Jean Patou, 7 rue St. Florentin, Paris.” This tells us that the dress was a couture model from the Paris firm of Jean Patou which at this period had three other branches at fashionable Southern resorts. The records of the Costume Institute confirm that its owner was a Mrs Mary (“Molly”) Van Rensselaer Thayer, née Cogswell. Mrs Thayer died in 1983 and the ensemble was donated to the Costume Institute in her memory by Eugenie Thayer Rahim in 1995.⁷

The blouson top of the ensemble bears the four-letter monogram of the owner’s maiden name embroidered in red vertically down the side of the Eiffel Tower: MVRG. Mary Van Rensselaer Cogswell, known as Molly, was born in the United States on June 16, 1902, the younger of two daughters whose mother was a Rensselaer, an old New York family of Dutch origin. In Molly’s childhood the Cogswells lived at 12 East 11th Street, and Molly was educated at an elite society school, Miss Chapin’s School on West 47th Street.⁸ In 1918 she was Maid of Honour at her sister’s wedding which was reported in the *New York Times*⁹ and when, in 1920, she came out at the age of eighteen, her mother



Figure 6.1 Jean Patou, *Advertising*, 1925. The top half of the ensemble.

gave a dance for her at the Ritz-Carlton.¹⁰ She continued to live with her parents on Fifth Avenue, pursuing a society life, and acquired this two-piece Patou in 1930, the year before her marriage.¹¹ She was, perhaps, a fairly typical couture client. When she married Sigourney Thayer in 1931, she was described in *Time* magazine as a "Manhattan socialite."¹² Her husband had been described by the same magazine two years earlier, on the occasion of his first wedding to Miss Emily Davies Vanderbilt, as a "spasmodic theatrical producer, wartime aviator, Atlantic Monthly poet and socially prominent jokesmith."¹³ The paper also relates that as an impoverished young man before the war he had travelled steerage to Paris without a ticket but with a silk hat. On his death, it described him, more economically, in two words: "comical, acidulous."¹⁴ That a joke also appealed to his fiancée could be inferred from her choice of an haute couture dress that came complete with a highly unusual gimmick, a light-up feature that could be operated at will by the wearer.

Thayer was six years Molly's senior. At their wedding he was thirty-four, she was twenty-eight. He died in an automobile crash thirteen years later, in 1944 aged forty-seven. Molly, who was again described as a socialite by the *New York*



Figure 6.2 The battery and light switch.

Credits: Author's photographs, taken in the archive of the Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Accession number 1995.212a–d. Five good-quality images of the ensemble and its electrical accoutrements can be viewed online at www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/79883?rpp=60&pg=1&rndkey=20140126&ao=on&ft=*&deptids=8&who=House+of+Patou&pos=48 (accessed January 26, 2014).

Times in Thayer's obituary, survived him by a great many years.¹⁵ She was an author who in the 1930s had been the society columnist for the *New York Journal*, writing under the house pseudonym "Madame Flutterby." But she was also a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserves, and one of the few western correspondents reporting from Eastern Europe immediately after the Second World War, before returning to the United States to work for the *Washington Post* and the Magnum Picture Agency. In 1961 she wrote the first biography of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, published by Doubleday. She died on December 10, 1983, and is buried with her husband in Southborough Rural Cemetery, Massachusetts.

We know nothing, however, about how she acquired this dress, or the circumstances in which she wore it.¹⁶ We can infer (from both the label and the personalized monogram bearing her initials on the front of the ensemble) that

the outfit was a couture model made specifically for her, and not a legitimized copy from one of New York's more upmarket stores, such as the Bonwitt Teller authorized replicas shown in Figure 6.3. But whether, or when, she travelled to Europe, or visited the Paris branch of Patou, is not known. Had she done so, at collection time she would have mounted the staircase of the couture house in the rue Saint Florentin to sit, alongside other private clients, and watch the dresses being modelled in the airy first floor salons lined with giant mirrors. She might have been offered lavish refreshments of the kind described by a man who went to Paris to buy a dress for his wife in 1926:

At Jean Patou's evening show the champagne was of an excellent brand; so were the cigars, and the sandwiches were most delectable. The ladies, I noticed, made great inroads upon the rose-tipped Abdullahs . . . and while champagne cup was a very welcome drink, the lemonade, orangeade and iced coffee with whipped cream came in for a good deal of attention too. As for the petits fours, well, how do women keep as thin as they are nowadays when they can eat so much?¹⁷

All this is speculation, however. But even without knowing how Molly acquired her dress, we can reconstruct with some certainty how and where it began its life in the couture ateliers of the house of Patou.

All couture gowns were first made up as a "model" or prototype in the workshops above the first floor salons. In 1920s France, the dress was known as the model and the woman who we today call the model was known as the mannequin, or living mannequin. After some fevered weeks in which the models were designed and made in the upstairs ateliers, the finished collection was brought down to be modelled by the mannequins, with some considerable sense of ceremony, in the high-ceilinged first floor salons at the "openings" as the seasonal fashion shows were called. The main biannual collections for summer and winter were shown in February and August respectively; in addition there were mid-season collections between these two dates, totaling four annual collections of which the winter ones were the largest and the most important.

A few weeks after these buyers' shows, a separate set of shows were staged exclusively for the private clients. The model dress was not the one the clients bought, however; for a private client, a copy would be made to her exact specification, requiring several fittings. For a trade buyer, a far poorer quality dress or canvas toile would be supplied with fabric samples and sold with the right to reproduce the dress commercially in the buyer's country. The model never left the premises. It was a design prototype and the couture house gave each model a number and guarded it closely against copyright infringement. As was common, Patou registered the design of this particular dress, probably just before it was shown to buyers, by means of three photographs that still survive

HARPER'S BAZAR

BONWIT TELLER & CO.
The Specialty Shop of Originations
 FIFTH AVENUE AT 38TH STREET, NEW YORK

REPLICAS of WOMEN'S PATOU GOWNS
Emphasizing The French Flared Silhouette

135—Patou's bow-front gown in replica—of moleskin satin combined with the lustrous side. In Gothic blue, wine red, epinard green, pecan brown or black. 59.00

136—Replica of a Patou gown in Renée crepe, featuring the flaring jabot and flounce. Gothic blue, wine red, epinard green, pecan brown or black. 65.00

137—Patou's flare-front coat-gown in replica, of tan or gray mannish suitings with crepe Roma vest. 125.00
 Also in Patou rep, black or navy blue. 79.00

WOMEN'S GOWNS—Second Floor

Figure 6.3 Authorized Patou replicas from Bonwitt Teller, *Harper's Bazar* (October 1925): 4. From the house of Patou's press cutting album for 1925. Author's photograph.

today in the Archives de Paris. They prove that the design was registered on August 21, 1925.¹⁸

We also know from press coverage in the Patou press cuttings album for 1925 that the embroidered Eiffel Tower of the model dress bore not Molly's initials but the name of the designer embroidered in capitals: PATOU. In every other respect, it is identical to Molly's dress. The model dress was described in at least three press articles, and illustrated in two, in which the embroidered PATOU is clearly visible: *The Graphic* for November 14, 1925, and the *Sunday Pictorial* for November 29, 1925 (Figure 6.4). These are the same photographs as those used to register the copyright that survive today in the Archives de Paris. Another cutting, from the *American Advertising World* in September 1925, has no photograph but it clearly describes the outfit. It is from the registration photographs and from these press articles that Molly's dress design can be confidently ascribed to the winter 1925 collection.

The first appearance of the dress would have been to the press on the evening of July 31, 1925. Patou had initiated special press shows from 1923, called *répétitions générales* and staged the evening before the first trade shows. Patou's innovation was to flatter the fashion journalists—previously at the bottom of the food chain in terms of their status at fashion shows—and to make the press shows resemble an elite private party. There is an evocative description of the previous season's press show left by one of Patou's mannequins. In late 1924, Patou had recruited six American mannequins in New York; they debuted in Paris on the evening of February 5, 1925, modeling his spring 1925 collection alongside his French mannequins.¹⁹ The American mannequin Dinarzade (Lillian Farley) recalled her first public appearance for Patou at the press night:

As I went through the door to show my first dress, I had the impression of stepping into a perfumed, silk-lined jewel casket, the atmosphere was so strongly charged. The men in their correct black tailcoats with the sleek, pomaded hair; the women in gorgeous evening dresses, plastered with jewels. It was hot, so hot, and the air was stifling with the mixed odours of perfumes and cigarettes. It was nearly one o'clock when the collection was over . . . twenty of us had shown five hundred models.²⁰

The next day she and the other mannequins modelled to the trade buyers, in a very different atmosphere:

The next afternoon was the opening for the American buyers. They came in droves. There was a totally different feeling from the party-like atmosphere which had prevailed the previous evening. These men and women were there on business. The European buyers came the next day and the salons sounded like the Tower of Babel.²¹



Figure 6.4 *Sunday Pictorial* (November 29, 1925): n.p. The caption reads “‘ADVERTISING’ is the name given to the model on the left, representing a simple dress with its sole trimming an embroidered Eiffel Tower bearing the word ‘PATOU.’ He designed it. The Tower is topped by a tiny electric bulb lighted from a switch in pocket.” Cutting from Patou press album for 1925. Author’s photograph.

Journalists were well fed and entertained at these press shows. Six months later Molly's dress would have been shown in identical circumstances. The London society and fashion magazine *Tatler* described the press show at the end of July 1925: "At Jean Patou's there were very delectable raspberry ices and his American models—mannequins I mean—were utterly delightful to gaze upon. Raspberry ice upon one's plate, Devonshire cream, and Sussex roses upon the cheeks of the mannequins . . . it was really a lovely picnic!"²² And a year later the *Tatler* was still extolling the hospitality of the Patou press shows, when it recounted that "Jean Patou gave us *fois gras* sandwiches and *petits fours* and 'bubbly,' and iced kafay and rose-tipped cigarettes and ginger-haired mannequins, who were too attractive for words."²³

The *Tatler's* prattling account tells us that the collection featuring the dress was modelled by Patou's American mannequins, who at that time were appearing in Paris for their second season. It is not clear, however, whether Molly's dress was modelled by one of the American mannequins or by a French one in the August 1925 show. Patou's cabine was international and the dress could have been worn by any of the mannequins. The press pictures of the dress, however, suggest that the mannequin, who has a straight bob with a fringe, was not one of the Americans, as they all have wavy hair with side or centre partings and no fringe in the press photographs from 1925.

The buyers' shows began on August 1, 1925, and were staged twice daily, at 10.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m.²⁴ In a large house like Patou's, there were different shows for the American and European buyers, the Americans coming first to represent their greater spending power; the European buyers came next day. Over the course of the fortnight, gowns that were not selling would be replaced with others.²⁵ It was a highly speculative business; only approximately ten percent of the models shown were sold, and so the unit cost of each model had to include the cost of the nine that had not sold.²⁶ Once the buyers had placed their orders and left Paris, the private clients' shows took place, and some of the unsold models might then reappear in the individual clients' shows. These began in September as a rule; they were linked to the society calendar to accommodate the customers returning to Paris in mid-September after the holiday season to buy their winter wardrobe.²⁷ The private clients' shows were far more informal and adapted for the convenience of the clients, to whom dresses might be modelled individually.

Thus if Molly Cogswell had travelled to Paris she might have attended a show any time from late August or September onwards. The fact that her dress appeared in two press articles from November 1925 suggests, however, that it had not sold in the buyers' collections. Had a buyer bought it, the photograph would not have continued to be released to the press after that date. Its reappearance in two papers in November after its first mention in September suggests that it might have been shown initially to buyers in August, then to

private clients in September and again, possibly, in November to the press as part of the mid-season collections.

It is hardly surprising that this ensemble was not bought by the trade buyers, however, because it is not a design that could easily translate to the mass market. The ensemble was a far cry from what in the industry was called a “Ford”: a dress that sold in huge numbers because it was amenable to simplification and adaptation for mass production in the American market. Rather, it was a novelty piece, with its battery and light bulb, as the *Advertising World* cutting from September makes clear, by describing it as characterizing the French love of novelty. Nowadays it would be described as a showpiece, a garment not intended to go into production but to get press attention on the runway.

Yet although it is an elite, couture ensemble made for a Manhattan socialite of means, Molly’s dress is not conservative in the traditional sense of a couture dress. Its cut and style invoke the modernity of the flapper fashions generally promoted by Patou, with their emphasis on youth and movement, and this effect is augmented by Patou’s widely publicized use of American mannequins to model his designs. Arguably this two-piece interpolated the subject as an independent, cosmopolitan modern woman. Furthermore, the dress itself was a nexus of both French and American signifiers of some complexity. In one garment, a set of social, commercial and even ideological relations converge: while the Eiffel Tower, with its iconic status as a symbol of Paris, symbolized “Frenchness” to Americans, the idea of Advertising (the name of the dress) encapsulated a certain ideal of American modernity for the French. That both countries somewhat misrecognized each other in these representations is hardly surprising: for the images they projected, and the stories they told themselves and each other, were saturated with contradictory aspirations and ideologies that were both economic and cultural. Some of these complexities can be untangled by analyzing the significance of these two representations—the Eiffel Tower and advertising—in Molly Cogswell’s dress of 1925.

The Eiffel Tower: France through American eyes

In September 1925 the *Sunday Pictorial* captioned its image of the dress thus: “‘Advertising’ is the name given to the model on the left, representing a simple dress with its sole trimmings an embroidered Eiffel Tower bearing the name ‘PATOUE.’ He designed it. The Tower is topped by a tiny electric light bulb lighted from a switch in the pocket.”²⁸ In 1925 the Eiffel Tower was the tallest building in the world; it was overtaken in 1930 first by the Chrysler Building in New York at 319 meters high and then, also in 1930, by the 449 meters tall Empire State Building. But in 1925, the date of Molly’s dress, it was a potent

image of Parisian modernity. As Agnès Rocamora points out in her chapter "The Eiffel Tower in Fashion," the tower has long been used as a symbol of Paris and, like the idea of the city itself, is a key sign of fashion discourse: both the tower and the city "contribute to the construction of Paris as a fashion centre and capital of fashion."²⁹ Rocamora invokes Roland Barthes's essay of 1964, "*La Tour Eiffel*," in which Barthes argued that the tower is pure signifier, one that "attracts meaning" so that the Parisian imaginary can be grafted onto it: "Its very emptiness designated it to the symbolic, and the first symbol it was to create, through logical assertion, could only be that which was 'visited' at the same time as the tower, that is, Paris: The tower became Paris by metonymy."³⁰ Rocamora goes on to review some of the many ways it "becomes" Paris, particularly with regard to how it has been anthropomorphized as a woman by virtue of the feminine gender of the French word for tower (*la tour*) and therefore, also, associated with fashion and dress. Analyzing Robert Delaunay's enormous painting of 1910, *La Ville de Paris*, in which the gigantic faceted forms of the Three Graces are fused with the Parisian cityscape, Rocamora argues that "the tower is in effect the fourth grace—or maybe three graces fused into one—in this vision of Paris where womanhood, tower and city meld."³¹ Surveying a range of examples, including Sonia Delaunay's advertisements for her fashion and textiles of 1925, she concludes: "A sign of Paris, a symbol of elegance and femininity, but also modernity, the tower might well be the ultimate *Parisienne*, one more monument to a feminine Paris."³²

Rocamora looks largely at what this symbol has meant to the French, particularly through the work of French authors, artists and image-makers. Such imagery was also projected *by* the French *for* foreigners, however. The Paris fashion trade was an export one of an unusual kind: it exported not goods but ideas, in the form of model dresses which it sold to overseas buyers with the rights to reproduce them on a mass scale. Hence the bombastic tone of so much of its fashion rhetoric. The idea of Paris as a uniquely cultural and artistic city was an important part of the city's symbolic capital that it deployed to sell its goods; time after time, couturiers claimed that Paris fashion could not survive long away from its native soil. It withered, they asserted, if taken out of its native city, for its essence depended on its proximity to French culture and *ambiance*. Thus the idea of French cultural superiority was written into the commercial codes of the industry. It was these ideals of Frenchness on which Patou drew to make his most important sales, not to his domestic market but overseas, and in particular to North America.

And it worked. The same rhetoric was parroted by American journalists and industry insiders the other side of the Atlantic.³³ The American fashion industry bought this myth wholesale, just as it bought the designs. Paris was pictured as a vital fashion centre for the cosmopolitan American typified by Figure 6.5, an illustration in *Harper's Bazar* showing a fashionable woman leaping across



Figure 6.5 Fashion drawing from *Harper's Bazar*, c. 1925. Undated cutting in Fashion Institute of Technology/SUNY, FIT Library Department of Special Collections and FIT Archives, New York. Author's photograph.

the Atlantic from New York to Paris.³⁴ In 1928, Carl Naether's advertising guide *Advertising to Women* devoted an entire page to the meaning of the by-line "Paris" and described how the word itself sufficed to sell luxury goods to women in particular.³⁵ In 1925, Robert Forrest Wilson wrote:

Paris, to the average woman, means, primarily clothes. All her life she has read about Parisian clothes and Parisian styles. The names of the creators of Parisian clothes are familiar to her also. She knows about Worth and Lavin and Paquin. In the fashion pages of the magazines she has seen the names of Jenny and Vionnet and Patou. These are the names that thunder an imperious authority in America, and throughout the rest of the world, too.³⁶

But if Patou's name did "thunder an imperious authority in America," Patou himself was not complacent about his success there. On the contrary, in 1925, recently returned from a high-profile American publicity trip to recruit his American mannequins, Patou continued to work hard for his American success, wooing his transatlantic customers in all sorts of ways, flattering their sense of Americanness and promoting his own particular brand of Frenchness through ideals of chic, Parisian modernity.

Molly Cogswell's outfit is designed in the French colors of red, white and blue, and made even more specifically Parisian by representing the Eiffel Tower topped with an electric light. Its waterfall of finely pleated white chiffon bordered in a red and blue stripe resembles a revolutionary cockade. Its unstructured and casual cut were typical of the athletic, rangy elegance of mid-1920s' sportswear so suited to what one American newspaper journalist in 1926 described as the "greyhound silhouette" so dear to American customers.³⁷ The cultural myths of Paris, allied with the modernity of the dress's design, gives Patou's dress "Advertising" a certain contemporaneity. The tower both connotes the city's history and transmits that history into the future. As Rocamora writes, "it is because the tower has survived time, its modernity still celebrated, that it represents a useful, iconic metaphor for fashion: tradition, the past, the present and the future are all inscribed in it."³⁸ The Eiffel Tower had been erected for the 1889 Paris Universal Exhibition (*Exposition Universelle*) and it featured prominently in the 1925 Paris International Exhibition too (*Exposition Internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes*). Early that year, in preparation for the exhibition opening in April, the tower had been fitted with 200,000 electric lights, requiring ninety kilometers (fifty-five to sixty miles) of electric cables, so it could glow in the night (Figure 6.6).³⁹ The embroidery of the tower on Patou's dress, augmented by its tiny light-up battery with its on-off switch concealed in the wearer's pocket, is a clear reference to this phenomenon. The little electric light bulb atop the embroidered Eiffel Tower in 1925 brings the old association of Paris as city of lights bang up to date by picturing the electrification of the Eiffel Tower in 1925.



Figure 6.6 The Eiffel Tower in 1925, illuminated with the name CITROEN. Anonymous photographer.

As the frontispiece to her book on the 1925 Paris exhibition, Tag Gronberg reproduces a detail of a photograph from the twelve-volume exhibition guide, the *Eyclopédie des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes au XXème siècle*.⁴⁰ It shows the Eiffel Tower from the Pont Alexandre III which had been especially remodeled for the Exposition as the *rue des Boutiques*, a modern-day Rialto with a row of Parisian luxury goods shops spanning the Seine. Gronberg describes how the light that streamed from these shop windows at night evoked a “city of light” in which the main function of light was to produce “the phantasmagoria of the commodity.”⁴¹ She cites the description from the 1924 American edition of Baedeker’s guide to Paris as *la ville lumière*, “especially

known for its 'articles de luxe' of all kinds." And she goes on to argue that "Paris, as *ville lumière*, world centre of luxury shopping, was heavily predicated on notions of femininity."⁴²

"Paris is a women's city," wrote Wilson in 1925.⁴³ His book, *Paris on Parade*, reveals the inner working of the Paris couture business to American readers. He describes the American buyers who live in Paris and work for large American clothing retailers, and the 1,200 buyers who biannually cross from the United States to France on buying trips "bringing with them into the leisurely city [of Paris] a breeze of American zip and bustl."⁴⁴ Twice a week, transatlantic liners disgorged the excited buyers at Le Havre where they clambered on board the trains for Paris.⁴⁵ There, in the big couturiers' salons, they would place numerous orders for different samples in varying sizes. These samples were destined for the large American stores who then made their own design alterations for the American market. The system did not encourage originality or distinction. Didier Grumbach argues that "For America, haute couture represented no more than a luxury prêt à porter requiring the commissioners to choose according to the tastes of a traditional clientele little inclined to excess."⁴⁶

Yet for all the popularity of the Paris couture shows, from 1925 onwards the French couture houses "haemorrhaged sales" in Grumbach's phrase, and in an attempt to curb their losses they intensified the sale of reproduction rights of couture models to sole buyers from overseas.⁴⁷ They wooed the overseas buyers in every possible way, the American commissioners most of all.⁴⁸ Even Madeleine Vionnet, a virulent anti-copyist and defender of exclusive design, entered into a contract with an American importer, Eva Boex, to produce a range of garments for the United States.⁴⁹ This context adds weight to Gronberg's assertion that "The discourse of Paris as a 'woman's city' was thus a powerful means of promoting French economic interests during the post-war years of reconstruction."⁵⁰

And in their promotion of French economic interests, the French often resorted to the very American methods which they affected to despise. The illumination of the Eiffel Tower was sponsored by the French automobile magnate André Citroën. In 1925, Francophile German writer Joseph Roth wrote from Paris: "all the way up the Eiffel Tower, you see the name of a famous manufacturer, rich enough to afford one of the symbols of the world—and America is over Paris again."⁵¹ The name was French, but the spirit of advertising, which Roth deplored, was American. In the *Frankfurter Zeitung* for August 26, 1925, he declared: "This summer Paris is neither hot nor cold nor rainy: it is American." He excoriated the way Americans dressed, with their lanky figures in flat shoes, "extrawide suits" and their general vulgarity: "Only in summer do you see so much gold and silver on clothes. The elegant and subtle line of French designers and couturiers in summer becomes lavish and ostentatious: American, in a word."⁵²

Advertising: America through French eyes

It was an American advertising journal that first reported Patou's dress in September 1925, rather than a fashion one. *Advertising World* wrote:

The French are undoubtedly advancing more in advertising. Mons. Jean Patou, the famous French dressmaker, has uniquely named one of his models for the season "Advertising," and one can conjecture all manner of things from this. The unique part of the gown is that a small bead ornament on it flashes at intervals as the mannequin (or perhaps we should say, the wearer) walks along. This again exemplifies the "unique" which appeals to the French mind. Novelty seems to come first in all things.⁵³

This account tells us that the dress was called "Advertising," in English, and that its appeal to an American audience might be that of a typical French novelty, characterized by its uniqueness. The ideas that uniformity and standardization were "American" while individuality was "French," and that these values could be grafted onto images of women, were important national stereotypes that lay behind Patou's marketing and promotional stratagems.⁵⁴ Advertising itself, too, was thought to typify a certain stand of American business acumen and entrepreneurial modernity.

In 1925, however, advertising (in French, *la publicité*) was also included for the first time in a French international exhibition. Gronberg argues that advertising appeared in the 1925 exposition as a "crucial index of modernity," and she cites the exhibition guide's claim: "the art of advertising must be modern or cease to exist." This, she argues, "was vividly underscored by Citroën's appropriation (timed to coincide with the exhibition) of the Eiffel Tower as giant billboard. By night the Tower—wired up with electric light bulbs—was transformed into a kind of giant firework. Citroën's logo appeared along with a stream of shooting stars against the city's skyline—yet another manifestation of Paris *ville lumière*."⁵⁵ In the illuminated tower, itself feminized as Rocamora discusses (*la tour*), the ideas of Paris as both city of lights *and* city of women came together. The tower advertised the idea of Paris itself, a feminine city, as much as it advertised cars: the Citroën name emblazoned down its side thus incorporated the automobile manufacturer and his brand into the metonymic representation of the city. And, as Gronberg argues in a separate article, while the Citroën illuminations drew on a specifically American model of advertising, the Seigel-manufactured dressmakers' mannequins of the Exposition embodied the principles of French advertising with its tendency to use the figure of a woman to sell anything at all.⁵⁶

Mimicking the way that Citroën emblazoned his name down the side of the real tower in a sign big enough to be seen at a distance of forty kilometers, Patou

emblazoned his own name down the side of the embroidered tower. Never before had a designer put her or his name on a garment quite so blatantly. A few years earlier, Poiret had embroidered his wife's name in the form of a rebus on a nightdress he made for her, and Patou had included handkerchiefs embroidered with his initials on the wardrobe he designed for the Dolly Sisters' tour of America in 1924, but for a designer to splash his name across the front of a dress was a new departure. In this instance, Patou used his name as a form of branding, long before it became acceptable for designers to scatter logos over the surface of their products as they do today.

The letters PATOU embroidered on the Eiffel Tower of the dress impose one signifier of chic and exclusivity (*haute couture*) on another (the tower and, by extension, Paris) so that the two become fused. Furthermore, the entire conceit of the dress, with its illuminated tower and tongue-in-cheek name, Advertising, suggest that it is an entirely knowing reference to Citroën's illuminations. As in metal, so in cloth: from cars to *couture*. Produced just a few months after Citroën's innovation, in a Paris whose night-time skyline was dominated by the image, Patou's embroidered tower is an amusing, perhaps an amused, riposte to Citroën's megalomaniac erection. But it also suggests an ambition and ego to match those of Citroën: an equivalence between the automobile magnate and the fashion czar. Patou, too, was an industrialist of sorts. Far from presenting himself as an artist, according to the traditional rhetoric of *haute couture* that sought to dissociate itself from industry, Patou's branding of the tower with his own name suggests a commercial zeal commensurate with his export ambitions and, particularly, his American sales.

"Patou's spectacular expenditure of money in adroit advertising" was notorious, according to Wilson.⁵⁷ In February 1925 the appearance of Patou's American mannequins on his Paris catwalk had generated enormous publicity; in April, Citroën's self-advertisement appeared on the tower, and the theme of Paris/New York was much in the air. Patou seized the moment. Both the motif of the Eiffel Tower with its electric light, and the name, Advertising, suggest that this dress may have been designed for dissemination as an image and an idea first and foremost: a witty joke for both the French, and for the American visitors to Paris in 1925, who could hardly have missed the city's night-time illuminations. Just as Roland Barthes claimed that the tower became Paris through metonymy, so Patou's naming of his dress Advertising became a metonym of his advertising practices and processes. It was normal *couture* practice for a designer to give each model in a collection a name. Unlike Chanel, who only numbered her dresses, Patou habitually gave his dresses French names, another way of imbuing them with the aura of Parisian *chic*. After his American mannequins debuted in Paris however, a *New York Times* journalist suggested that Patou might one day switch to American names:

M Patou has the custom of giving distinctive names to his more important creations. When his four great showings of the year take place an imposing butler stands in one corner of the salons and calls out the name of each costume as the mannequin wearing it enters. If M Patou succeeds in living down the strong opposition to his American mannequins, very probably he will give distinctly American names to the creations he will make for them to display. At the next Patou showing perhaps the butler will be heard making announcements like these:

The frock "Votes for Women" is presented.

The "Golf Girl" sports suit appears as number two.

A particularly youthful creation, "Let flappers flap" is our third offering.

For the fourth offering, we take pleasure in presenting "Dry America," a chic street costume christened specially for the weather here.⁵⁸

In this humorous account the journalist derives his suggestions from stereotypes of the American woman: the suffragist, the sportswoman, the young flapper. The latter was a type that had already featured among Patou's American mannequins in Paris, two of them being no older than sixteen and seventeen, and Patou had declared himself captivated by their "flapper walk."⁵⁹

And indeed, at his next collection Patou did use an American name for a dress: Advertising. Advertising itself was widely believed in both Europe and America to be something at which Americans had excelled since the beginning of the century.⁶⁰ But in the 1920s, argues Alan Weill, advertising changed more than in any previous decade because it began to be affected by economics.⁶¹ Victoria De Grazia describes how, after the First World War, "American businesses invaded Europe" and, building on nearly five decades of merchandizing expertise, began to sell new goods using "novel techniques and methods."⁶² She shows how American advertising agencies with offices in Europe were relentless critical of the artisanal way of working in Europe, and were convinced that consumption could be "Taylorized" just like production.⁶³

French advertising changed considerably in the 1920s, but it remained very different in conception and in fact from American advertising. Marjorie Beale aligns French post-war advertising with modernism in a provocatively titled chapter, "Advertising as Modernism," that opens her book on inter-war France. She writes that "advertising had already permeated the realm of quotidian urban life," instancing the appeal of its visual clarity to the group of writers, artists, filmmakers and designers who collaborated on the purist journal *L'Esprit nouveau*, and its influence in Louis Aragon's *Le Paysan de Paris* of 1926.⁶⁴ She argues that surrealists André Breton and Aragon saw modern commercial life as potentially poetic, and in Aragon's *Le Paysan de Paris* "commerce was surreal because it filled the world with fragments of language" that could be detached from their context and reframed or reused at will.⁶⁵

Beale focuses on the structural similarities between surrealism and advertising in a way that the American advertisers of the 1920s would have had very little time for. Indeed, she argues that it was characteristic of more enlightened French social commentators that they understood the interrelation of business and culture, and the impossibility of separating them. But she takes issue with the claims of "several generations of economic historians" that the French are a people "whose culture made them resolutely opposed to modernization."⁶⁶ She argues that in reality the French were not so conservative, and the battles between modernizers and traditionalists over Taylorism and Americanization simply served to cloak modernist designs that were taken on board by both camps: the modernizers directly, the traditionalists only once they had been recast in a form more compatible with French culture.⁶⁷ And she points out that the postwar "desire to regroup and embrace modernity" was not limited to art and culture but extended to business practices too, as French advertising of the 1920s developed in tandem with contemporary advances in psychology and psychiatry.⁶⁸

Patou was of this modernizing tendency and ran his house according to the most up to date American business methods that amounted to a form of Taylorism.⁶⁹ Unlike the more conservative French couturiers, he enthusiastically endorsed both American business methods and leisure pursuits. His advertising budget was large, his salaries high, and his prices relatively low.⁷⁰ He installed an American bar in his couture salon, and played American music at his fashion shows.⁷¹

In early April 1926, New York fashion writer Miss Helen Landon Cass gave a talk to the Indianapolis Advertising Club at the Chamber of Commerce: "Buying is the touchstone, the magic hope we all have that existence will be wonderful when we have a Patou dress, a geranium lipstick or a whiskery Airdale puppy." She added, in prescient coda on the relationship between consumer culture, desire and identity, "The store is one of the few places in the world where we can exchange what we have for what we wish."⁷² If Miss Cass understood the totemic power of Patou's name, Patou understood consumer desire equally well. Not himself a designer, like Jacques Doucet before him, and many other couturiers, he employed others to design the clothes to which he added the finishing touch and final seal of approval, providing the allure and glamour to sell them internationally, to the point where a Patou dress could become "the touchstone for desire," as Miss Cass put it. Advertising, publicity and marketing were crucial in the promotion of his couture business in the United States. Ninety percent of the cuttings in the Patou press books for 1925 are from English language newspapers. Figure 6.7 shows a page from Patou's press album from March 1925 featuring a single article on the Paris debut of the American mannequins and all the newspapers across the United States in which that article was syndicated. To measure this success he used an American press agency to track

France and America: Reciprocal visions

After the First World War, the relationship between France and America was complicated, and often contradictory. As Cindi de Marzo writes:

The complex relationship between Paris and New York City, which served as the crucible for integrating and adapting designs before trends and styles filtered to the rest of the country, involved admiration, sometimes grudging; jealousy, occasionally fierce; and opportunism, frequently economically rewarding. The cross-currents touched nearly every aspect of life: fashion, architecture, home and work spaces, cuisine, performing arts, advertising and even town planning.⁷³

America had led the July 1919 victory march through Paris to celebrate the end of the First World War. Despite the original plan for the Allies to be represented in alphabetical order, which would have put American at the end, the United States was given first place by France and her European Allies to recognize both its contribution to the war effort and "its new role as the world's leading industrialized nation, as well as the power and prosperity that accompanied that position."⁷⁴

Donald Albrecht relates how, in the interwar years, New York and Paris went on to develop "an increasingly competitive and reciprocal relationship in many arenas that had historically been considered Paris's domain."⁷⁵ Notable among these was fashion. New Yorkers began to shed their sense of inferiority vis-à-vis French culture, while the French looked to America for "vibrant" modern culture.⁷⁶ France recognized the economic superiority of America, but French attitudes to America in the 1920s were mixed. Despite the conservatism of some French critics, the late 1920s saw a French vogue for all things American. Elliot Paul, the Paris correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* who lived in Paris from 1923, recalled that "The younger French, some intellectual and others not, made a fetish of everything American and 'modern,'"⁷⁷ and French writer Paul Morand described the vogue for jazz, the Charleston, dominoes, Mah-jongg and cocktails as "Americanophili."⁷⁸ Other French writers of the 1920s, however, such as André Siegfried and Georges Duhamel, were ambivalent about America, and contrasted French individualism with American conformity. Siegfried was the author of a best-selling book on America that he had researched in New York in 1925. It was published in 1927 in France as *Les Etats-unis d'aujourd'hui* and in the United States as *America Comes of Age: A French Analysis*.⁷⁹ Georges Duhamel's less reasoned and rather more hysterical account of American society and culture was published in Paris in 1930 as *Scènes de la vie future* (scenes of the life of the future) and in the United States as *America the Menace*.⁸⁰

Siegfried mistrusted the affluence of American society: “so much luxury within the reach of all can only be obtained at a tragic price, no less than the transformation of millions of workmen into automatons. ‘Fordism,’ which is the essence of American industry, results in the standardization of the workman himself.” He argued that this standardization affected not only the individual’s manner of working but also his subjectivity and style of consumption: “can it be possible that the personality of the individual can recover itself in consumption after being so crippled and weakened in production? Have not the very products, in the form in which they are turned out by the modern factory, lost their individuality as well?”⁸¹ And he went on to assert that “in the maximum efficiency of each worker . . . lies grave risk for the individual. His integrity is seriously threatened not only as a producer but as a consumer as well.”⁸²

Both Siegfried and Duhamel linked American conformity to mass production and the production line, and argued that American productivity had an effect not only in the economic realm but also on culture and subjectivity.⁸³ Duhamel felt that advertising had destroyed the capacity for independent thought, and saw it as “the ultimate insult of American culture to the French sensibility.”⁸⁴ But at the same time, these writers admired American productivity. The rabidly anti-American Duhamel remained impressed with the long legs of American women, just as the pro-American Patou had been in his selection of the American mannequins, even if Duhamel did describe the American woman at the wheel of her car as if she had come fresh off the production line: she is, he wrote, “the modern goddess, published in an edition of two or three million copies.”⁸⁵

David Kuisel describes this tendency to polarize the two countries’ characteristics (American conformism and uniformity, as opposed to Gallic individualism) as a postwar phenomenon. He argues that, prior to the First World War, the two nations had little to do with each other, either culturally or economically, and that it was America’s military intervention in the war, and briefly in post-war reconstruction, that led America to become a major actor in European affairs.⁸⁶ This was not so, however, in fashion. From the nineteenth century, America had been a customer for French fashion and luxury goods. American retailers made regular buying trips to Paris, and there was a routine and frequent commercial exchange between both countries from at least the second half of the nineteenth century, if not earlier.⁸⁷ The exchange generated an atmosphere of mutual ambivalence, envy, admiration and fear between the fashion professions of each country and, as Albricht asserts, in fact “the interchange between Paris and New York was never simple, comprising in equal measure admiration and envy, respect and rivalry.”⁸⁸

The fashion and labour historian Nancy Green cogently describes the, sometimes mismatched and contradictory, ways in which each country saw

the other from the nineteenth century onwards under the rubric of "reciprocal visions."

French garment manufacturers have been wary of growing American industrial strength since the nineteenth century, while American designers have been anxious about creating a distinctive American style since the early twentieth. Such comparisons, by manufacturers and industrial reporters, reveal transatlantic understandings of the garment "other" which fall into the realm of what I call reciprocal visions.⁸⁹

She notes that in fashion writing "French observers often had a double discourse" arguing internally for greater industrialization and competitiveness, but, to the outside world, asserting French elegance, taste, and artistry.⁹⁰ This "fight between two nations" was both ideological and commercial—and always riven by contradiction. It was conducted in a "turmoil of charge and counter charge."⁹¹ Each country's spokesmen might declare the fashionable taste of the other country "freakish" in one breath; yet in another they sang each other's respective merits, if through gritted teeth.

Both Americans and French colluded in the construction of the stereotype of the superiority of French taste, and the American garment trade promoted the idea as actively as the French press did. The American designer Elizabeth Hawes who worked in Paris in the mid-1920s describes how the American department stores "spent hundreds and thousands of dollars building the French legend . . . the department stores of the United States made an enormous capital investment in the names of the French couturiers."⁹² Green argues that while the French were convinced of their own good taste, they reluctantly conceded the superior economic power of the United States, and had to "reconceptualize their art in the face of growing industrialization and increased competition . . . French garment manufacturers worried about their place in the world market and about how to increase productivity."⁹³

After the war, American business practices permeated the French fashion trade in the form of increasing homogenization. "Just as Ford has been imitated by Citroën, the tendency to merge smaller units into large ones, which is associated with American business methods, has left its mark upon the hitherto highly individualistic trade of the Parisian dress designer," wrote the *New York Times* in 1928.⁹⁴ In the 1920s many independent Paris couture houses were subject to mergers (Doeuillet and Doucet) and takeovers (Poiret, Drecoll, Beer, and Agnès) as one-man or one-woman businesses sold majority shareholdings and became joint stock companies. Yet the American influence did not extend beyond business practices to creative design identities and talents. Despite some vigorous American initiatives to promote American fashion that had begun

before the First World War, France retained its hegemony in the United States.⁹⁵ Phyllis Magison describes how New York retained:

total reliance on Paris for creative leadership in fashion trends well into the early twentieth century. Until the early 1930s, there was no question that Paris was *the* sole arbiter of style: infallible, eternal, sacrosanct. American fashion was the impatient kid brother: cunning, adaptable, frequently smart . . . but never *chic*.⁹⁶

New York had the manufacturing capacity, she notes, but not creativity; its dressmakers “who mostly interpreted Paris fashions” were largely anonymous until the early 1930s. Things were already beginning to change however, and, as the 1930s progressed, New York would come to find its own identity as a world fashion city, as Rebecca Arnold charts in her book *The American Look*.⁹⁷ But in 1932 the American business magazine *Fortune* could still look back on the new century and assert:

Before 1914, only the extremely wealthy among American women looked to Paris for their fashions . . . After the war, the couturiers of Paris began to dress the whole Western world. Their ideas, much diluted, but still theirs, filtered down to the cheapest grades of dresses and flowed out over all Europe and both the Americas. Paris became, and has remained, the keystone of the whole arch of international fashion. Of late, this supremacy has been challenged by New York, where the American school of *couture*, long held in anonymous subjection by Paris, is fast becoming articulate. But Paris, for a while at least, is still Paris.⁹⁸

It was, but in Patou’s couture dress with its Eiffel Tower embroidered with Molly Cogswell’s monogram, it was a Paris made over by—and for—Americans.

Notes

- 1 Mario Lupano and Alessandra Vaccari, seminar at Centre for Fashion Studies, Stockholm University, April 15, 2011. In the English language edition of their book, this is translated as “reflection” rather than “reflex.” They write that, “as an autonomous cultural expression, fashion—on a par with the visual arts and other spheres such as design and architecture—was one of the driving forces behind modernism and not a reflection of modernity.” See their *Fashion at the Time of Fascism: Italian Modernist Lifestyle 1922–1943* (Bologna: Damiani Editore, 2009), 8.
- 2 Michael Levenson, “1913 and 1914: Two Years in the History of Modernism,” presentation at the London Modernism Seminar, Senate House, University of London, June 2, 2007.

- 3 Levenson argues that "What once seemed the exclusive affairs of 'modern masters,' the 'men of 1914' (as Wyndham Lewis called them), now stands revealed as a complex of inventive gestures, daring performances." See Michael Levenson, *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 2.
- 4 Peter Wollen, *Raiding the Icebox: Reflections on Twentieth-Century Culture* (London and New York: Verso, 1993), 20–21 and 44.
- 5 Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1955), 75–86. On fashion in relation to Taylorism and the mass ornament, see Caroline Evans, "Jean Patou's American Mannequins: Early Fashion Shows and Modernism," *Modernism/Modernity* 15, no. 2 (April 2008): 243–63.
- 6 Accession number 1995.212a–d. See www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/79883?sortBy=Relevance&who=Patou+Jean%24Jean+Patou&ft=*&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1 (accessed June 22, 2017).
- 7 The dress is dated 1925 but, according to the museum website, was only acquired by the client in 1930. The museum's object files contain a copy of a typed note that the curators presume was provided by the original owner. It says "piece Patou with my monogram on tour Eiffel—electric light bulb—this was the year of Exposition Colonial (spelling?) in Paris—1930–1931. It was called 'Advertising.'" This note is a puzzle, since the dress design is unarguably from 1925, and it is most unlikely that Patou would have remade such a typically mid-1920s' design for a couture client in 1930–31 when it would have seemed very out-of-date compared to the fashionable line of the early 1930s. Perhaps Molly Cogswell misremembered the year of her visit and confused the 1925 Paris expo with the 1930 Colonial expo. The typed note would appear to be dated anywhere from June 20, 1977, to sometime in 1978, the time when the ensemble went into the museum's collection as a long-term loan. The ensemble was formally accessioned 1995.
- 8 *Time* (March 19, 1934).
- 9 *New York Times* (March 17, 1918).
- 10 *New York Times* (December 25, 1920).
- 11 The *New York Social Blue Book* for 1930 records that she was unmarried in 1930 and resided with her parents, Mr and Mrs Cullen Van Rensselaer Cogswell, at 1020, 5th Avenue.
- 12 *Time* (April 6, 1931).
- 13 *Time* (December 17, 1928).
- 14 "Milestones," *Time* (November 13, 1944).
- 15 *New York Times* (November 13, 1944).
- 16 See n. 7.
- 17 *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* (August 14, 1926).
- 18 *Archives de Paris*, accession number D12U10 281. Registration number (*depot*) 8645, registration date August 21, 1925, photograph no. 1. I am indebted to Johanna Zanon for discovering these photographs and generously sharing her research with me.

- 19 For a full account of the event and its significance, see Caroline Evans, "Jean Patou's American Mannequins: Early Fashion Shows and Modernism," *Modernism/Modernity* 15, no. 2 (April 2008): 243–63.
- 20 Edna Woolman Chase and Ilka Chase, *Always in Vogue* (London: Viktor Gollancz, 1954), 166.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 *Tatler* (September 2, 1925).
- 23 *Tatler* (August 25, 1926).
- 24 Press announcements were placed on the advertising pages of *Moniteur de l'exportation* (July 29, 1925); *Vogue* (France) (July 29, 1925); *Depêche Commerciale* (August 6, 11, 18, 1925); *Paris Telegramme* (August 2, 9, 16, 20, 30, 1925).
- 25 "King of Gowns Due Tomorrow," *Chicago Daily Tribune* (October 5, 1913). "Paris Fall Openings," *Chicago Daily Tribune* (October 12, 1913).
- 26 Georges Le Fèvre, *Au secours de la couture (industrie française)* (Paris: Editions Baudinière, 1929), 59. In fact the percentage varies according to the account. In *Le Moniteur de l'Exportation* (October 1920: n.p.), Patou is reported as saying he makes about 1,000 models per annum of which only about 10 percent are successful, so he makes his profits out of 100 models per annum. He sells the 900 off at relatively low prices, at a loss of 720F each (he gives figure for manufacture 1,200F per model sold at 400), and he calculates that to make his profit he has to sell the remaining dresses at 2,000F. He says that were it not for copyists he could sell cheaper. Both Roubaud and Poiret also put the proportion of successful dresses in a collection at 10 percent; see Louis Roubaud, *Au Pays des Mannequins: Le Roman de la Robe* (Paris: Les Editions de France, 1928), 12; and Paul Poiret, *My First Fifty Years*, trans. Stephen Haden Guest (London: Victor Gollancz, 1931), 43. However, one American journalist suggests not 10 percent but 7 percent: "Paris Yields to None in Fashion World," *New York Times* (December 2, 1928).
- 27 Philippe Simon, *Monographie d'une industrie de luxe: La haute couture, thèse pour le doctorat* (Paris: Université de Paris, Faculté de droit, 1931), 85.
- 28 *Sunday Pictorial* (November 29, 1925).
- 29 Agnès Rocamora, *Fashioning the City: Paris, Fashion and the Media* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 156.
- 30 Roland Barthes, *La Tour Eiffel*. Photographies d'André Martin (Paris: CNP/Seuil, [1964] 1989), 19. Cited in Rocamora, *Fashioning the City*, 162.
- 31 Rocamora, *Fashioning the City*, 167–8.
- 32 Ibid., 169.
- 33 Robert Forrest Wilson, *Paris on Parade* (Indianapolis: Bobs-Merrill, 1925), 58.
- 34 Undated cutting in FIT Special Collections, New York.
- 35 Carl A. Naether, *Advertising to Women* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1928).
- 36 Wilson, *Paris on Parade*, 34.
- 37 *Saturday Evening Post* (October 16, 1926).
- 38 Rocamora, *Fashioning the City*, 179.

- 39 Ibid., 164.
- 40 Vol. 11, plate XIX, *Encyclopédie des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes au XXème siècle* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, Office Centrale d'Éditions et de la Librairie, c. 1925). Also available as a reprint by Garland (New York and London, 1977).
- 41 Tag Gronberg, *Designs on Modernity: Exhibiting the City in 1920s Paris* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), 6.
- 42 Ibid., 23.
- 43 Wilson, *Paris on Parade*, 113.
- 44 Ibid., 294, cited in Gronberg, *Designs on Modernity*, 26.
- 45 Poiret, *My First Fifty Years*, 43.
- 46 "Pour l'Amérique, l'haute couture ne représente alors qu'un prêt-à-porter de luxe qui exige des commissionnaires un choix susceptible de satisfaire une clientèle traditionnelle peu inclinée à l'excès." Didier Grumbach, *Histoires de la mode* (Seuil 1993), 2nd edn (Paris: Editions du Regard, 2008), 90.
- 47 The phrase in context is "Pour endiguer, par exemple, l'hémorragie des ventes don't elle souffre à partir de 1925, elle intensifie la commercialisation des droits de reproduction de ses modèles aux seuls acheteurs étrangers." Grumbach, *Histoires de la mode*, 7. In 1922, Poiret, who acknowledged that since the beginning of the war many women could no longer afford haute couture ("les moments sont difficiles pour quantités de femmes cocottes dont la situation a du changer depuis la guerre"), designed some dresses *en série*, that is, ready-to-wear, costing between 1,200 and 1,600 francs. *Vogue* (France) (October 1, 1922): 11.
- 48 On the role of the "commissioner-exporter" (*le commissionnaire-exportateur*) in the Paris dressmaking trade, see "Le rôle du commissionnaire," 440–41, in Albert Tronc, "Paris, capitale du commerce," *L'Exportateur Française* (May 22, 1923): 437–41.
- 49 Eva Boex and Madeleine Vionnet are listed separately in the same schedule of fashion shows for buyers for Spring 1922 in the trade paper *L'Exportateur Française* (January 30, 1922). Boex, at 14 rue Castiglione, is listed as having "exclusive rights to sell Madeleine Vionnet models which appear gradually as they are designed" (qui paraissent au fur et à la mesure de leur création). In fact since the early 1920s Vionnet had licensed Boex to sell no more than three copies of each design (à moins de trois exemplaires): Grumbach, *Histoires de la mode*, 225. Vionnet's listing on the same page of *L'Exportateur Française* gives her address as 222 rue de Rivoli and does not give a show date, stating this "will be fixed later"; the paper announces that Vionnet sells "neither to commissioners nor to dressmakers, all her designs are registered according to law." This was an abbreviated version of the statement Vionnet attached to much of her publicity after her first announcement in an advertisement she took out in *L'illustration* in October 1920: see Christine Senailles, "Lutter Contre la Copie," in *Madeleine Vionnet: Les Années d'innovation* (Lyons: Musées des Tissus, 1995), 18–21. Vionnet signed deals for exclusive rights to reproduce her models wholesale; one deal involved production of one-size-fits-all ready-made dresses that were briefly produced and marketed as "Repeated originals"; see Mary Lynn Stewart, *Dressing Modern Frenchwomen: Marketing*

- Haute Couture, 1919–1939* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 130.
- 50 Gronberg, *Designs on Modernity*, 26.
- 51 Joseph Roth, “America over Paris,” in *Report from a Parisian Paradise*, trans. Michael Hoffmann (New York and London: W. W. Norton, [1925] 2004), 30.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 30–31.
- 53 *Advertising World* (September 1925).
- 54 Evans, “Jean Patou’s American Mannequins,” 250–53.
- 55 Gronberg, *Designs on Modernity*, 114.
- 56 Gronberg, “Beware Beautiful Women: The 1920s Shopwindow Mannequin and a Physiognomy of Effacement,” *Art History* 20, no. 3 (September 1997): 375–96, especially 379.
- 57 Wilson, *Paris on Parade*, 71.
- 58 *New York Times* (April 30, 1925).
- 59 *New York Herald Tribune* (February 6, 1925); *New York Telegram* (February 6, 1925).
- 60 For a pre-war example, see “The United States Is the Home of Ingenious Advertising,” *Illustrated London News* (August 12, 1911): 269. For histories of advertising in France and America in the post-war period, see Marjorie A. Beale, *The Modernist Enterprise: French Elites and the Threat of Modernity, 1900–1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 11–47; Siân Reynolds, *France between the Wars: Gender and Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996); Victoria de Grazia, “The American Challenge to the European Arts of Advertising,” in *The 1920s: Age of the Metropolis*, ed. Jean Claire (Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1991), 236–48.
- 61 Alan Weill, “Advertising Art,” in Claire, *The 1920s*, 226.
- 62 Grazia, “The American Challenge to the European Arts of Advertising,” 236.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 237–8.
- 64 Beale, *The Modernist Enterprise*, 11–47. The quotation is from p. 27.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 44.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 73.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 76.
- 68 *Ibid.*, 13. But see also De Grazia in Claire, *The 1920s*, 236–48. Beale and de Grazia differ drastically in their characterization of American and French advertising styles and approaches. Beale writes that American advertisers appealed to the emotions by contrast with the rational French who based their advertising precepts on neurological data (19–20), whereas de Grazia’s article characterized the Americans as more scientific in their approach, and the French as more influenced by ideas and visual tropes from the fine and applied arts.
- 69 Photographer and columnist Adolph de Meyer describes Patou as a “bright young man . . . with a rare sense of business that is almost American.” Baron de Meyer, “Paris Collections Seen by a Connoisseur,” *Harper’s Bazar* (November 1922): 39–43 and, for this quotation, 132.
- 70 Wilson, *Paris on Parade*, 71–2.

- 71 *New York Times* (July 31, 1926).
- 72 "Buying Is Existence's Hope," *Indianapolis News* (April 8, 1926).
- 73 Cindi de Marzo, exhibition review, *A Creative Transatlantic Tango Shapes the Modern World: Paris/New York, 1925–1940* (Museum of the City of New York, October 3, 2008–February 22, 2009). *Studio International*, December 29, 2008. www.studio-international.co.uk/reports/paris_new-york.asp (accessed February 28, 2011).
- 74 Donald Albrecht, "Introduction," in *Paris New York: Design, Fashion, Culture 1925–1940* (New York: Museum of the City of New York and the Monacelli Press, 2008), 10.
- 75 *Ibid.*, 11.
- 76 *Ibid.*, 10.
- 77 Paul Elliot, *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1942; repr., London: Sickle Moon Books, 2001), 97.
- 78 Paul Morand, *New York* (1929; repr., London: William Heinemann, 1931). On the vogue for *Amé ricanisme*, see *Comoedia* (September 14, 1928). On the Americanization of Europe, see *Evening World*, New York (November 28, 1925).
- 79 André Siegfried, *Les Etats-unis d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Colin, 1927); published in English as *America Comes of Age: A French Analysis*, trans. H. H. Hemming and Doris Hemmings (London: Jonathan Cape, 1927).
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