

# A FASHION MAGAZINE ON THE EVE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The Evolution of the *Cabinet des Modes* (1785-1786) into the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* (1786-1789) into the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* (1790-1793)

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## PREAMBULE

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic changes had to be made to the initial methodology of this research. Unable to visit archives in person from the beginning of March 2020 until the end of this project, some archival pieces were not viewed in person. The largest part of the original *Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles*, *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* and the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* had to be consulted through the online platform Gallica of the Bibliothèque nationale de France where these periodicals were almost in their entirety digitally uploaded. Archives that were closed to access – both in person and digitally – and that had extensive collections of the periodical and important imitations were the Lipperheidesche Kostümbibliothek in Berlin, the Palais Galliera and the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra – who is attached to the Bibliothèque nationale de France – both situated in Paris. However, before the outbreak I was able to visit the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam where I had the opportunity to inspect the small collection of the periodical they have in their possession as well as other important eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fashion periodicals. Historian M.A. Ghering- Van Ierlant kindly invited me to her house in Den Haag and was able to show me her extensive collection of fashion periodicals acquired through decades of research before the pandemic as well. Lastly, the Modemuseum Hasselt allowed me to access in person their collection of around thirty-five issues of the counterfeit Liège fashion periodical the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises*.

Most of the literary research could be continued through online consultation of sources, the loan service of the Ghent University library later on in the year and with the aid of the University in giving students access to the Bloomsbury Fashion Library online. I would like to thank all the concerning employees of the Ghent University who enabled this research for me.

This preamble was drawn up in consultation between the student and the supervisor and approved by both parties.

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Furthermore, I would like to thank my parents, brother and extended family for giving me the opportunity to follow my passions as well as for their continuous love and support throughout my education. Finally, this project would not have existed without the unconditional encouragement, patience and optimism of my closest friends. To all those people who broadened my views and made me believe in my own abilities, I am indebted to you.

## INTRODUCTION

Mode, (*Arts.*) costume, usage, manière de s'habiller, de s'ajuster, en un mot, tout ce qui sert à la parure & au luxe; ainsi la *mode* peut être considérée politiquement & philosophiquement.

Quoique l'envie de plaire plus que les autres ait établi les parures, & que l'envie de plaire plus que soi-même ait établi les *modes*, quoiqu'elles naissent encore de la frivolité de l'esprit, elles sont un objet important, don't un état de luxe peut augmenter sans cesse les branches de son commerce. Les Francois ont cet avantage sur plusieurs autres peuples.<sup>1</sup>

By the time Denis Diderot published his *Encyclopédie; ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences* in 1767 the meaning of fashion had changed from a functional one to an economic, philosophical, political, social, and even national definition. This was a transformation that stood at the centre of a large re-evaluation of the meaning of fashion in eighteenth-century French culture and participated at the same time in the construction of what historian Daniel Roche labelled a new "culture of appearances".<sup>2</sup> He remarked that by the eighteenth-century fashion had become increasingly symbolic and the entirety of the French economical, political and cultural societal construction had revolved around this new meaning. As Roche explained "clothes became weapons in the battle of appearances".<sup>3</sup> The clothing individuals were wearing, was no longer merely distinguished by a simple distinction of status, where fashion was the sole playground of the aristocracy, but had now also become affected by societies views on taste, frivolity and sex. The origins of these newly created axioms that stood at the centre of the new fashion system could be discovered through a historical social analysis of French eighteenth-century culture. Crucial was the changed nature of commercial culture, the elevation of Paris as the capital of fashion, the altered relation towards masculinity and femininity and the power of material objects to express subjectivities and taste and mark social standing.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Denis Diderot, *Encyclopédie; ou, Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Vol. XX-MAM=MYV (Paris: André le Breton, 1767), 479.

<sup>2</sup> Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing La Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 4.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 4.

The altered cultural and social stance on fashion meant a radical change in its presentation in print as well. Before the eighteenth-century engravings and prints were a popular pictorial source to display dress, however, these depictions were born out of humanist curiosities and part of the effort to classify material objects and people from other spheres and were almost never representations of local contemporary fashion.<sup>5</sup> When the eighteenth-century came around these fashion images were no longer focused on the desire to show the varieties of human design, but had been preoccupied by the increasingly dynamic changes of the fashion culture. The fashion plate – the visualisation of fashionable contemporary dress in the form of engraving or print – now acted as the conveyer of everything *à la mode*. France took the forefront in this narrative, the cultural, political and economic reality of its society acting as a fertile playground.<sup>6</sup> The art historian James Laver pointed out that the difference between the costume plate of the previous centuries and the fashion plate of the eighteenth-century lay in the novelty of fashion itself. Therefore the contemporaneity of fashion could be ideally rooted in the ephemerality of the periodical.<sup>7</sup> Together with the comeuppance and popularity of preceding print genres and periodicals, the fashion plate thus eventually found its ideal destination in the fashion magazine.<sup>8</sup>

Focussing on what art- and social historians consider to be the first French fashion periodical, this research aims at providing a contextual and formal analysis on the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises*.<sup>9</sup> Published from 1785 until 1793 the periodical's continuation covers not only the birth of the French cultural and economic fashion system and complimentary fashion press but its eventual demise against the backdrop of a nation's rampant radicalization as well.

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<sup>5</sup> Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, 13-14.

<sup>6</sup> Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, 13-15.

<sup>7</sup> Sanda Miller, "Taste, Fashion and the French Fashion Magazine," in *Fashion Media: Past and Present*, ed. Djurdja Bartlett, Shaun Cole and Agnès Rocamora. (London: Bloomsbury Education, 2013), 18.

<sup>8</sup> Jennifer M. Jones, "Repackaging Rousseau: Femininity and Fashion in Old Regime France," *French Historical Studies* vol. 18, no. 4 (1994): 948.

<sup>9</sup> Multiple historians – from Annemarie Kleinert, to Aileen Ribeiro and Jennifer M. Jones – consider the *Magsin des Modes Nouvelles* to be the first fashion periodical. The publication spans from 1785 to 1793 and goes through three phases of formal and editorial changes. In the first phase the periodical is published under the name of *Cabinet de Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles* (1785-1786) to eventually continue into the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* (1786-1789) as well as surviving the French Revolution through its third phase: the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* (1790-1793). Notwithstanding these formal transformations it can be conceded that all of these separate phases in their entirety can be adapted as one periodical. For the continuation of this research the title of *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* – considered to be the pivotal phase of the periodical – will be used as the overarching method of referral as preceded in art historical published writing on the periodical.

Through close analysis of the late eighteenth-century periodical and the broader social and cultural discourse this research tries to determine in what ways the first French fashion periodical was able to shape its time and how in return this change was fostered. Spanning from the frivolous and fashionable heights of the Ancien Régime to the radical raging days of the Terror, the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* can be seen as a mirror of its time as well as a tool – as they went on to influence the cultural and social spheres surrounding their inception.

In order to be able to examine a formal and contextual overview of the periodical it is important to lay out the basic borders of this research. Notwithstanding the important developments taking place in the realm of European periodical press during the second half of the eighteenth-century, this project focuses mainly on the French periodical product, unless through the means of comparison. A basic overview of the French eighteenth-century periodical press is laid out as well, however the core part of this research is centred around the years of publication, expanding from 1785 to 1793, thus situated in mainly the latter part of the century. A broader social, political and cultural look into the effects of the French Revolution on the French fashion press in general is therefore adopted as well. As a case study on the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* a large part of this research is directed towards a formal analysis of the periodical. Relying primarily on archival sources of the original, as well as numerous imitations and counterfeit publications, an attempt has been made to receive a clear first-hand understanding of the periodical. With the need to contextualize it in the broader field of French eighteenth-century publications a comparison has been made with earlier French periodicals visualizing fashion through means of print as well as post-revolutionary French fashion magazines. Looking at the discrepancies between the French fashion press and neighbouring European products, this research also tries to identify the correlations between these national fashion periodicals.

In order to determine the role of the first fashion periodical in France's cultural, political and social eighteenth-century structure as well as, in return, the formal and contextual effects on the periodical itself, attempts have been made to consult a broad and extensive swap of literature ranging from art-, social- and economic history to a more recent field in gender studies. As art historian James Laver had pointed out by the 1940s that "already a considerable body of literature devoted to the history of costume" and that "the bibliography of the subject is enormous".<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> James Laver, *Taste and Fashion. From the French Revolution to the present day* (London: George G. Harrap and Company Ltd, 1945), 5.



By that time the image of the eighteenth-century's frivolity, fashion, femininity and Frenchness had become a cliché – cemented by 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup> century scholars – and its stark contrast with the final decade of Revolution and rampant Terror featured in a substantial amount of scholarly literature. Fashion – and the fashion press – often became a central part in these bodies of literature, with the sensational comparison of the hoop skirts of Marie-Antoinette and the sans-culottes of her people at its core.<sup>11</sup> Therefore not only fashion historians but also cultural and social historians have found interest in the remarkable effects of the eighteenth-century, how fashion was representative of these changes and even to what regard fashion magazines aided their course.<sup>12</sup> The nature of the fashion periodical itself – as both a product of print culture, art- and fashion history – makes it stand at a unique crossroads of historical research. This project does not aim to repeat any of the initial social and cultural or even art-historical research conducted or question its findings. This project will also not venture to rewrite any of the literature on eighteenth-century fashion or social history. Using these bodies of literature to contextualize the French fashion periodical, an attempt will be made, however, to look closely at the effects on the *Magasin de Modes Nouvelles* specifically.

Art historians such as James Laver, Aileen Ribeiro, Anne Hollander, Alice Mackrell and Sanda Miller as well as historians focused on eighteenth-century print culture and the female (fashion) press – Caroline Rimbault, Annemarie Kleinert, Vyvyan Holland, Nina Rattner – have been fundamental in laying down the important knowledge on the first fashion periodicals.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> An extensive amount of literature has been published around revolutionary French dress as well as its comparison with the extravagance of the earlier eighteenth-century fashions. Influential have been the publications of Aileen Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1988) and Gwyn A. Williams, *Artisans and Sans-Culottes: Popular Movements in France and Britain during the French Revolution* (London: Edward Arnold, 1968) as well as more recent generation of scholar's approach, publishing studies such as Julie Catherine Bulman's "L'Habit en Révolution: Mode et Vêtements dans la France, d'Ancien Régime," (Master dissertation, Boston College, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 3.

<sup>13</sup> In Jennifer M. Jones's 2004 publication *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* the author gives an extensive list of publications that examine the relation between the French (fashion press) the Revolution and the Female eighteenth-century experience as readers or editors of those publications. The scholarly works she lists – and uses partially in her own research – are for example: "Jack Censer, *The French Press in the Age of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Jack Censer and Jeremy Popkin (eds.), *Press and Politics in Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), Harvey Chisick (ed.), *The Press in the French Revolution* (Oxford: The Voltaire Foundation, 1991)." as well as for introductions to the eighteenth-century press directed towards women: "Evelyne Sullerot, *Histoire de la presse féminine des origines à 1848* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1966); "Politique et toilette: Voilà les principales sources de la femme tels qu'ils se dégagent de l'histoire de la presse féminine," *Presse publicité: Hebdomadaire technique de toute la presse 19* (September 12, 1937): 16–18; Suzanne Van Dijk "Femmes et journaux au xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Australian Journal of French Studies* 18, no. 2 (1981): 164–78;"

Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 204-205.

Notwithstanding their fruitful attempts at mentioning the importance of the periodical in the broader eighteenth-century French Fashion and print history, no publication has focused, yet, on a complete formal and contextual case study of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*.

This project will attempt to alleviate this hiatus by combining extensive literary research with archival analysis of the complete lifespan of the periodical. Important to note is that this project's view on the periodical and its societal implementations would not be possible without the new field of Genderstudies that has taken the subject of women's periodicals into their field of research. Besides being concerned with the language, content and theory of history itself, it aims at questioning the position of women through history and in historical writing as well as the validity of institutionalized themes.<sup>14</sup> This adaptation of a gendered point of view onto the female fashion press has undoubtedly strengthened its field of research and throughout this project the writings of historians such as Jennifer M. Jones with her seminal publications *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* and *Repackaging Rousseau: Femininity and Fashion in Old Regime France* have aided to a substantial extent.

An additional element to this project is the archival research done on the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* (1786-1787). This periodical was a Liège imitation of the original French *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* under the editorship of Antoine Le Brun Tossa – a key figure in the Liège Revolution at the end of the eighteenth-century and famous for his revolutionary publications. A few historians – Anne Marie Kleinert mentions the importance of Le Brun Tossa's editorial work and M.A. Ghering- Van Ierlant has devoted her career to relocating and examining fashion plates with a particular interest in those of counterfeit European eighteenth-century periodicals – have written about the existence of this imitation, however not much is known except for its relation to the original French publication. Through an attempt at extensive archival analysis on the imitation this research was able to compare the findings and reflect on the social and cultural historic importance of the two.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Cliona Murphy, "Women's History, Feminist History or Gender History?," *The Irish Review*, no. 12 (1992): 22.

<sup>15</sup> The Modemuseum Hasselt has a collection of around thirty-five *cahiers* in its archives spanning both publication years of the imitation as well as four examples of pocket books – sequentially from June to September 1788 – published under the same name. The pocketbooks, however, do not seem to follow the original French set-up of content and corresponding fashion plates and its poor quality and detailing question the authorship of those examples. All magazines in the archive of the Modemuseum Hasselt can be traced back to an eighteenth-century local countess (possibly a certain "Mademoiselle B." or "Mademoiselle Beatrix/Beatrice") whose descendants have kept her belongings. Besides the archives in Hasselt the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam also has some examples of loose fashion plates that can be traced back to the *Magasin des Modes Françaises et Angloises*. The literature on pocket fashion magazines – and eighteenth-century pocket books in general –, however, is slim. In recent years, with the increased popularity in women's daily fashion and

This project examines the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* formally and contextually and attempts at answering its own hypothesis through a structure of three parts: the first chapter (1. *France and the first fashion magazines*) aims to frame the concept of the first French fashion periodical by viewing it through both an art-historical lens and a social-cultural one. By dissecting the fashion periodical – in general – as an art-historical source as well as examining the cultural, economic and social realities that created the possibility for the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* to come to existence, the first chapter aims at framing the periodical in both fields.

The second chapter (2. *The magazine à la mode: Magasin des Modes Nouvelles contents and lifespan*) contains a formal analysis of the three phases of the periodical: from the *Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles* (1785-1786) into the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* (1786-1789) and into the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* (1790-1793). This analysis ranges from a description of format, pricing, styles of the fashion plates, featured artists, editors and publishers as well as the argumentation behind some of the periodical's discourse and content. The second chapter – in the way that it is relevant to the representation of these concepts in the periodical – aims at explaining the cultural differences that are noticeable throughout the three phases of its publication. This contains the initial development towards taste rather than status in the *Cabinet des Modes*, as well as the growing Anglomania leading to the publication's name change and ultimately the impact of the French Revolution and Terror on the representation of fashion and the discourse in the periodical. Finally, this chapter also contains a short summary of the periodicals most influential imitations as well as a more extensive analysis on the Liège counterfeit periodical the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* (1786-1787) as it refers to the editor's revolutionary endeavours.

Chapter 3 (3. *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles and the fashionable Reign of Terror: the fashion magazine and the French Revolution*), eventually, intends to come to a conclusion on the influence of France's turbulent state of affairs by the end of the eighteenth-century on the periodical as well as, in return, the periodical's influence on the cultural, social, economic and political changes of the time.

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practicality in fashion historical literature the materiality of small items such as make-up containers, toys and other trinkets as well as pocket books and magazines more research has been conducted on these subjects. In 2019 Ariane Fennetaux published her work *The Pocket: A Hidden History of Women's Lives, 1660-1900*, detailing the hidden objects found in women's clothing and their importance to women's day to day life.

By considering the ways in which philosophical ideas, social institutions and cultural products France had produced by the end of the century, this project aims at framing the formal analysis of the periodical in this discourse and creating a necessary contextual framework.

Finally, in order to create a transparent research, it is important to lay down the used terminology and its origins. A distinction must be made between the terms “fashion” and “la mode” or “dress”. By 1767 Denis Diderot had declared in his *Encyclopédie* that *mode* had become more than just a costume, more than the act of dressing oneself. It had become more than *des habillemens*, the clothing itself or dress, it was *now* political, cultural, economic and even national.<sup>16</sup> Scholars today have attributed this altered view to an essential cultural and social shift in Western-Europe at the beginning of the eighteenth-century. Important to the term fashion, or *la mode*, was – and is – its definition of novelty and temporality. Unlike dress, fashion is ever-changing and tied to specific cultural, social, political and national systems.<sup>17</sup> Its ephemerality adapts well – unlike the costume plates published separately or in books preceding the eighteenth-century – to the contingency of the fashion periodical and the emergence of both the French fashion system – unlike any other European country at the time – as well as the unseen popularity of the national fashion press and therefore needs to be analysed simultaneously.<sup>18</sup> In this research the term “visualisation of dress” is used alongside the phrase “description of dress” as well to refer to, respectively, the imagery of dress – and in larger extent fashion – in costume- and fashion plates and the literary description of this imagery in the fashion periodical. Both, however, can be seen as representational of dress and fashion portrayed in these periodicals.

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<sup>16</sup> Diderot, *Encyclopédie; ou, Dictionnaire Raisonné*, 479.

<sup>17</sup> Historian Daniel Roche explains further in his research, influenced by Roland Barthes’ Saussurian linguistic system, that the historical study of dress has two levels of reality. Those being that of dressing itself (*habillement*) which is an act of an individual where they can be seen to adapt to their surrounding group, as well as that of clothing or costume itself (*vêtement*), an element of a formal, normative and sanctioned societal system. This last level of reality can be viewed from a historical or sociological standpoint. Fashion, Roche remarks, exists at the intersection of *habillement* and *vêtement*. Both as an act of individuality and the expression of a common gesture, fashion can thus also be measured against the large changes influencing the clothing system at a particular time and place in history.

Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, 45- 46.

<sup>18</sup> R. S. Koppen, “Fashion and Literary Modernity,” in *Virginia Woolf, Fashion and Literary Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 66-68.

Throughout this research both the terms “periodical” and “magazine” will be used to describe the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*. It is therefore important to acknowledge the difference between them. A periodical can be described as any publication that appears on a regular or occasional basis. Existing before the eighteenth-century, the periodical became an increasingly popular literary product focussing on a close relationship between the authors – editors, journalists, etc. – and their audiences. The boom of a periodical culture by the middle of the eighteenth-century can therefore be described to their inherent democratic nature. Their ephemerality as well as their place in the increased commodity culture – periodicals were cheaper to buy and therefore treated with a different material care as books – made them the ideal genre for the existence of the magazine.<sup>19</sup>

The magazine, on the other hand, is a periodical – thus appears on a regular or occasional pattern – that is aimed at the general public, has a popular focus, and features professional authors usually with expertise on a certain subject detailing opinion pieces, anecdotes and – specifically for the fashion magazine – the latest styles and fashion. There is ambiguity between scholars what constitutes the first magazine – some have appointed the *Mercure Galant*, published in 1672 by French writer Jean Donneau Visé as well as the English *The Tatler* (1709-1711) or *The Spectator* (1711-1714) by Sir Richard Steele and Joseph Addison – however, by the end of the eighteenth-century due to their popularity magazines were being published at an increasing rate and by 1786 the editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* chose the term to define their publication.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Manushag N. Powell, *Performing Authorship in Eighteenth-Century English Periodicals* (Lanham: Bucknell University Press, 2012), 4-5.

<sup>20</sup> George Unwin, “Magazine publishing”, last consulted on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/publishing/Magazine-publishing>.

# 1. FRANCE AND THE FIRST FASHION MAGAZINES

## 1.1. The fashion periodical as an art historical source

The visualisation of dress – and in larger extent fashion – in the form of the fashion periodical can be analysed through two different lenses.<sup>21</sup> *What* the fashion of the moment tells us is in many ways traceable to the cultural, societal and political influences in which it was produced. As a product of human interactions at a particular time and place any visualisation of that particular fashion can thus be seen as participating in the industry surrounding it. *How* the fashion of the moment is represented, however, is a visual rather than a cultural or economical consequence. Fashion periodicals were – and still are today – a space for designers, artists, writers and creatives to showcase their artistic views. In this regard, these periodicals are to be studied as an art historical source in which its format is of significant importance.<sup>22</sup>

The format of the periodic genre, pioneered and popularized in the eighteenth-century, can be inherently described as democratic. The authors offered advice to a large extent of the public on increasingly private matters. Often they would write from a fictional standpoint in order to offer a neutral point of view that could be seen as unbothered by their own private influences. The contents offered to the larger public were of vast themes and reached a broad audience.<sup>23</sup> The author's – or its persona in which names the periodicals were often written – claim towards this broad knowledge meant that it became an object which was much desired and sought after. This fact, however, together with the technological changes of the century that made it possible for the price of paper and printing in general to be dramatically decreased, meant that their material existence was different to other printings at the time. These periodicals could be shelved, bound and used carefully but they might also be used carelessly, distributed and torn apart to the point of disintegration.

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<sup>21</sup> Throughout the eighteenth-century – and well after – the term “periodical” will be used by contemporaries and writers alternately with the term “magazine”. They are mostly used in a similar ways and have synonymous meanings.

<sup>22</sup> Adolph S. Cavallo and Katharine Stoddert, “Fashion Plate: An Opening Exhibition for the New Costume Institute,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, nr. 1 (1971): 44.

<sup>23</sup> Notwithstanding the genre of the periodical's democratic nature it must be remarked that this did not consequentially mean that all classes of society were able to read the same – or any at all – periodicals. Chapter 2 goes more in depth on the readership of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* and what accessibility was possible to the working class as well as the middle-and upper class.

Fashion periodicals were even more at risk of this last scenario because the fashion plates they contained were catered specifically – with the use of thicker printing paper for example – towards removing them and taking them in the public sphere. Their ephemerality in this regard is a crucial part of their material existence as an art object.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Powell, *Performing Authorship*, 4-5.

## 1.2. French fashion journalism at the end of the eighteenth-century

### 1.2.1. Predecessors of fashion journalism

The visualisation of dress in print can be traced back to the beginning of printing history itself in the fifteenth-century. During the following centuries depictions of national dress – mostly containing the imagery of both women and men in the form of copperplating or etching – were often published in costume books throughout Europe. The intention of the authors, however, was mostly to give an informative historical representation of dress of times gone by. This meant that these cultural studies were not made with the intention to influence contemporaries in their fashion and were thus not used as a relevant guide to fashion at the time.<sup>25</sup>

At the beginning of the eighteenth-century, descriptions of fashion of the moment could be found throughout multiple publications and periodicals. Printed essays, from *the Tatler* in England to the French *Gazette de France*, cultural magazines but also newspapers, would on occasionally describe what the upper class was wearing.<sup>26</sup> Dress could also be mentioned in lists of stolen goods, in the descriptions of the clothing of ‘wanted’ persons, in domestic bills and accounts and through advertisements. In England, and similarly in France, from around 1760 and onwards ready-made advertised clothing could be seen in printings. This however were very early and uncommon examples and most people at the time obtained their clothing through means of a tailor. The conventional fashion periodical as a specific genre, nonetheless, only scarcely existed in Europe until the last quarter of the eighteenth-century.<sup>27</sup>

The term ‘periodical’ is severely difficult to define in an eighteenth-century context in that it encompasses a large variety of publications from the advice-column to the newsheet to the basic essay and to the magazine. The fashion magazine – or periodical – nonetheless can be seen as largely divergent from these other forms.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> M.A. Ghering-Van Ierlant, *Mode in prent (1550-1914)* (The Hague: Nederlands Kostuummuseum, 1988), 20.

<sup>26</sup> Stephen Botein, Jack R. Censer and Harriet Ritvo, “The Periodical Press in Eighteenth-Century English and French Society: A Cross-Cultural Approach,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* vol. 23, no. 3 (1981): 472.

<sup>27</sup> C. Willet Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1972), 34-35.

<sup>28</sup> Jennie Batchelor and Manushag N. Powell, ed. *Women’s Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1690-1820s: The Long Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 8.



A first attempt at combining imagery of dress with referred texts on said portrayed fashion came in the seventeenth-century with the publication of the *Mercure Galant* by Jean Donneau de Visé in Paris. These first publications were proto-fashion periodical in that they offered a tailored advice on good taste in general and with the visualisation of dress in particular.<sup>29</sup>

Most periodicals throughout Europe at the time were popular in that they offered similar lifestyle content like the *Mercure Galant* and catered towards the stylish living of their readers. Two famously known early-eighteenth-century English periodicals *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* serve as examples of the growing popularity of the full documentation of public – almost exclusively bourgeois – life.<sup>30</sup> Covering not only conventional news, they also provided their readers with a general view on public morality and manners. *The Tatler*, for example, stated plainly their aspirations for the periodical: “The general Purpose of this Paper, is to expose the false Arts of Life, to pull of the disguises of Cunning, Vanity, and Affection, and to recommend a general Simplicity in our Dress, our Discourse, and our Behaviour”. Fashion – and how the bourgeoisie ought to dress in public and private life – was thus an essential part of this objective, however, it was not solely its direction. As a focus not only fashion, but also manners, taste and consumption were seen as building blocks of cultural improvement and therefore up for public debate. In these periodicals – similar to other European early-eighteenth-century publications – fashion is more than just the material expression of dress. As an outward evocation of class, religion, status, and sociability fashion is regarded as the presentation of the relation between the individual – the body – and the surrounding society – the sphere. In this way these early-eighteenth-century periodicals can be seen as lifestyle magazines rather than fashion magazines.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ghering-Van Ierlant, *Mode in prent*, 24.

<sup>30</sup> From 1709 on Richard Steele and Joseph Addison published a sequence of prominent papers in the fictional character of Mr. Spectator and Isaac Bickerstaff for respectively *The Spectator* and *The Tatler*. These periodicals were published multiple days a week and focused on public morality, general fashion and style and conventional news. They took on a broad range of subjects covering everyday life of eighteenth-century contemporaries. Their audiences were mainly, although not exclusively, urban and the contents of the periodical were subsequently catered for a fitting bourgeois lifestyle. Erin Mackie, *Market à la Mode: Fashion, Commodity, and Gender in the Tatler and the Spectator* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1997), 1-2.

<sup>31</sup> Mackie, *Market à la Mode*, 1-3.

The gradual development of the eighteenth-century's periodicals into the specific fashion magazine was also linked to the gendering taking place in some of these new publications. Periodicals such as *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* in their attempts to garner to society at large – and the individual specifically – were interested in women as both readers and subjects. They advocated for the cultural importance and the rational minds of women to be catered towards and promised to provide contents for the female as well as the male-appropriate audience. More recent studies on the influence of women on eighteenth-century periodicals however have posed the question on how and in what circumstances this appeal towards a female audience was actually made. In many regards women's readership was seen as categorically different as that of their male counterparts and had to be thus tailored in different ways. This increased visibility of women through periodical culture meant paradoxically that their "otherness" was put on the forefront and prescribed a restricted image.

The rise of publications catered specifically to women during the eighteenth-century fed of this rigid binary. These now called women's magazines used this discourse openly from around the middle of the century to garner to their specific female audience.<sup>32</sup> The *Lady's Magazine; or Polite Companion for the Fair Sex* (1759-63) and later on the *Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex* (1770-1832) – that sporadically added a fashion plate in its publications being contested as one of the first fashion periodicals – made use of their conspicuous title to tailor towards their preferred audience. By catering towards women with content considered solely female driven – consisting of a large variety of domestic activities and preoccupations – this also meant a conscious effort to advance the knowledge of this female audience and created a space for female authors and readers.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Batchelor and Powell, ed. *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain*, 3-5.

<sup>33</sup> Vyvyan Holland, *Hand Coloured Fashion Plates: 1770 to 1899* (London: B.T. Batsford Limited, 1988), 48.

## 1.2.2. Commerce and the Parisian centre stage

At the beginning of the eighteenth-century the French fashion industry, known today to be all-powerful and domineering for centuries to come, began to take shape. Contemporary artists who influenced the visual arts and broader cultural production began to take notice of the increasing role French fashion inhabited in the public domain. The famous French painter Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) for example – who cemented the style known as Rocaille in the collective minds of its viewers – was one of the artists who focused on the increasing popularisation of fashion visualisation in print. In 1720 he made a series of engravings called *Figures de mode, dessinées et gravées a l'eau forte par Watteau [sic] et terminées au burin par Thomassin fils* in which he depicted a wide array of women in elaborate dresses.<sup>34</sup> With the representation of contemporary women dressed in the latest fashion, Watteau did not only portray the growing importance of fashion and fashionability visualised in print but also advertised France – and especially Paris – as the new capital of style and fashion in the world.<sup>35</sup>

*Gallerie des Modes et Costumes Français* on the other hand – seen as the largest and finest series of fashion prints from the eighteenth-century – cemented France's importance and reputation as the birthplace of everything considered *la mode*. The prints – published from 1778- 1787 by the young printers Michel Rapilly and Jacques Esnauts – were issued in sets of six *cahiers*. They depicted full-length costumes as well as detailed hairstyles and jewellery (fig. 1). The dress that was displayed ranged the styles of women from different classes with the depiction of men and children as a vast minority. By adding small descriptions, the publishers aimed at informing the public of the current French fashion. Their popularity was due not least to the quality of the images printed, achieved in part by taking on skilled engravers such as Nicolas Dupin and Etienne Claude Voysard and draughtsmen such as Pierre-Thomas Le Clerc, Claude-Louis Desrais and François-Louis-Joseph Watteau-Antoine, Watteau's grandnephew.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ghering-Van Ierlant, *Mode in prent*, 26-30.

<sup>35</sup> Joan E. Dejean, "Man of Mode: Watteau and the Gendering of Genre Painting," *Studies in the History of Art*, vol. 72, Symposium Papers XLIX: French Genre Painting in the Eighteenth Century. (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2007): 39.

<sup>36</sup> Els Verhaak, "The Print Room: The Marie-Jes Ghering-van Ierlant and Raymond Gaudriault Collections of Costume and Fashion Prints," *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* vol. 60, no. 4 (2012): 374.



Fig. 1: Pierre-Thomas Le Clerc and Nicolas Dupin, *Petite Maîtresse en Robe à la Polonoise de toile peinte garnie de mousseline, lisant une lettre*, from the series *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1778, engraving on paper, 19,4 x 28,2 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

The rise of the fashion magazine – the genre that became substantial and omnipresent in the nineteenth-century – was only possible on the playground created by the cultural, social and economic changes taking place in eighteenth-century France. In this regard Watteau’s earliest work, and likewise that of his peers, were strikingly similar with imagery created to promote the upcoming French fashion industry. By reproducing serially printed images of dress and cultural clothing in the form of high quality engravings or onto a canvas, he was able to lift the modest early fashion plates towards a higher level of importance (fig. 2). He – and others like him – made it possible for the rise of the French look in fashion and the comeuppance of the French fashion magazine to coincide together.<sup>37</sup> The images of the voluminous silk dresses represented by Watteau and others became thus synonym with the aristocratic, highly stylized and luxurious reputation of the eighteenth-century fashion magazines.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Dejean, “Man of Mode,” 40-45.

<sup>38</sup> Jennifer M. Jones, “Gender and Eighteenth-Century Fashion,” in *The Handbook of Fashion Studies*, eds. Sandy Black et al. (London: A&C Black, 2014), 121.



Fig. 2: Watteau fils and Le Beau, *Robe à l'anglaise* from the series *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, ca. 1784-1785 reprinted in 1911-1912, print on paper, Metropolitan Museum Library, New York.

By the seventeenth-century French Fashion and its consumers market had reached an international status. This was in part due to the promotion of the French state itself. So published the periodical *Mercure Galant* in 1673 for example that “Nothing pleases more than the fashions born in France, and... everything made there has a certain air that foreigners cannot give to their works”. Paris in this regard was the capital from which the fashion and luxuries were created from.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Valerie Steele, *Paris, Capital of Fashion* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019), 12.

During the long eighteenth-century, Paris' commercial culture witnessed a remarkable transformation in both the consumption and production of clothing, styles of dress and the meaning of fashion or *la mode* itself. Whereas at the end of the seventeenth-century dressing fashionably was reserved almost exclusively to the elite who could afford the heavy, luxurious and ornate garments of the time, this changed drastically by the next century. Fashionable dressing was now something a broader range of the population could access. Not only did the quantity and value of the wardrobes of virtually all Parisians – from workers to couturiers – increase remarkably but the general interest in wearing what was in fashion increased as well. The commercial culture that accompanied this social shift was visualised intensely in the periodicals of the day. Now fashion magazines seemed as the ideal space to talk about the new cuffs, blouses and stockings that people were wearing. At the same time these magazines were a place for the author to interact and reflect with their readers on these fashionable items and styles. As much as the fashion magazines were a part of the upcoming French commercial culture, inherently they questioned its products and wanted to guide its audience in participating with care.<sup>40</sup>

Throughout the eighteenth-century Paris grew as an important urban cultural hub which resulted in urban celebrities – actresses for example – and insiders of the fashion industry to increasingly dictate the fashion of the time. Where traditionally royal mistresses and courtiers had set the trends, a new array of fashion influencers came onto the stage. These professional fashion insiders grew to prominence at the start of the century with the comeuppance of the first couturiers and the *marchandes de modes*.<sup>41</sup> These were mostly women designers and merchants – a large amount of French *marchandes des modes* owned shops in Paris – who gained importance as influencers of the general style of the time. The shops that were opened by the *marchandes de modes* were an essential part of the growing Parisian luxury trade and had a large clientele from the French provinces as well as abroad (fig. 3-4).<sup>42</sup> They played an crucial part in the culture's idea of what was considered fashionable and *à la mode* and were often nicknamed *modistes*.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Jones, "Repackaging Rousseau," 943.

<sup>41</sup> Steele, *Paris, Capital of Fashion*, 15.

<sup>42</sup> Natacha Coquery, "The Language of Success: Marketing and Distributing Semi-luxury Goods in Eighteenth-century Paris," *Journal of Design History* Vol. 17, no. 1 (2004): 71.

<sup>43</sup> Although the *marchandes de modes*' focus lay mainly on women's fashions, they did not exclusively design for them. A large part of their male clientele would enlist the services of the *modistes* in order to buy fashionable items for their daughters, wives or mistresses. Portrayed in contemporary engravings, fashion plates and periodicals the world of the *modistes* and their clients appears to be an all-female one, however, men often took part as payers, consumers and intermediaries.

Clare Haru Crowston, "The Queen and Her 'Minister of Fashion': Gender, Credit, and Politics in Pre-revolutionary France," *Travail, genre et sociétés* vol. 13, no. 1 (2005): 19.

In contrast to the *coupeurs* and *couturiers* that traditionally created clothing and – much the same as other trades – had congregated themselves in guilds, the *marchandes de modes* had a much wider hand in the production of fashion. In 1785 the *Encyclopédie Méthodique* described the role of these *marchandes* as such:

Celle qui dispose & vend tous les petits objets qui servant à la parure... Le taffetas, la gaze, la blonde, les dentelles, les agrémens, les rubans de toutes espèces, les fleurs, les plumes & ce sont les matières qu'elle emploie [...] Son art n'est pas de fabriquer aucune chose; il consiste à former ingénieusement des résultats nouveaux, des ornemens varies & gracieux de toutes les productions légères des autres arts [...]

The *marchandes de modes*, however, would not have been able to influence their contemporaries to such extent without the aid of the fashion magazines. These magazines documented the production as well as the style influence of the *marchandes* making it possible for a larger public to act on these style suggestions.<sup>44</sup> By the final decades of the century the new ways in which fashion was consumed, interpreted and influenced became normalized and in 1776 – almost one hundred years after women could officially receive the title of *couturières* – the profession of the *marchandes de modes* was recognized by the French state, from which point the *modistes* could legally form a guild of their own.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Aileen Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France, 1750 to 1820* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 76.

<sup>45</sup> Norah Waugh, *The Cut of Women's Clothes: 1600-1930* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1968), 102-103.





Fig. 3: J.B. Mallet, *Une Marchande de Rubans au Palais Royal*, ca. late 1780s, oil on canvas, private collection.

Perhaps one of the most famous *marchande des modes* was Rose Bertin (1747-1813), Queen Marie-Antoinette's personal *modiste*. She was sometimes referred to as the "Minister of Fashion" at the French court. She- as well as many of her colleagues- had set up shop in Paris, called *Le Grand Mogol* on the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré.<sup>46</sup> Paris and Versailles at the time were tightly intertwined as they appeared as complimentary fashion capitals.<sup>47</sup> Bertin's fame rose to unseen heights by the end of the eighteenth-century because of her close relationship to the queen as her personal *modiste* as well as an intimate friend. Her wealthy and influential patrons accelerated her position in society and made her a trusted fashionable source in the fashion press at the time.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Steele, *Paris, Capital of Fashion*, 15.

<sup>47</sup> Steele, *Paris, Capital of Fashion*, 14.

<sup>48</sup> Crowston, "The Queen and Her 'Minister of Fashion,'" 15.



Fig. 4: G. Morland, *The Coquette at her Toilet*, ca. 1780s, engraving, Museum of London.

The close relations between the cultural and political dimensions – that existed on top of the basic tendencies to visualise dress and fashion in the fashion magazine – can be explained by a similar synthesis of French culture by the end of the eighteenth-century. The fashion magazine – itself a mirror of cultural production – mirrored the existing underlying social structures that made its rise possible.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Miller, "Taste, Fashion and the French Fashion Magazine," 13.

### 1.2.3. *La Mode* and modernity: The first fashion magazine

Whereas the term ‘periodical’ and ‘magazine’ are often used simultaneously, a formal distinction, nonetheless, can be made between both concepts. Periodicals are published temporally and at a changing regularity, magazines on the other hand can be defined formally in their frequency of publication. By this definition almost all magazines tend to be periodicals but all periodicals are not magazines. By the 1770s these differences can be remarked more clearly with the *Lady’s Magazine* as one of the first examples.<sup>50</sup>

The English *Lady’s Magazine* was one of the first periodicals to in 1770 introduce the innovation of adding a descriptive text to their monthly fashion plate. They aspired to provide their readers “with every innovation that is made in the female dress” but to avoid the “fleeting whimsies of depraved Elegance”. Like their counterpart the *Gentleman’s Magazine* – first published in 1731 – the *Lady’s Magazine* gave their readers an informative overview of intellectual topics of the day that became exceedingly based around morality towards the end of the century.<sup>51</sup> Although the magazine struggled to provide fashion coverage in the early decades of publication – apart from the sporadic use of patterns – they soon realised that this type of content was a selling point for readers. The adaptation of this content ranging from everything fashion to style, suggested the magazine’s contemporaneity. The reader of the day, very much influenced by the growing fashion consumer culture, recognized this type of content as an essential part of keeping up with *la mode* and being fashionable themselves. Fundamental to the increased popularity of the magazine was the use of fashion plates. These prints went on to be of such importance that most of the fashion periodicals that came to existence in the following decades completely left out the use of patterns in favour of the fashion plate.<sup>52</sup>

Fashion plates – mostly hand-coloured printed images of people dressed in the latest fashions – came to their significance by the latter part of the eighteenth-century and went on to be integral to the nineteenth- and twentieth century fashion journalism. The figures displayed on the plates would mostly be singular and were depicted in a minimally narrative social context.

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<sup>50</sup> Batchelor and Powell, ed. *Women’s Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain*, 379.

<sup>51</sup> Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress in eighteenth-century Europe: 1715-1789* (London: B.T. Batsford LTD, 1984), 52.

<sup>52</sup> Batchelor and Powell, ed. *Women’s Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain*, 446.

This meant that the fashion itself was the main focus of the plate, unlike most of the contemporary printed images that occasionally featured fashion. These printed fashion images were mostly made out of a thick paper and designed to be removed from magazine itself in order to carry it around and bring to one's tailor. Their charm and quality made them a well-kept popular item that made readers take them out of the pages of the magazine and into a bundle. From early on in the century their status would already be one of desirability and they would be bought and sold as collector's pieces.<sup>53</sup>

Whereas the *Lady's Magazine* from very early on adapted the use of the fashion plate as an integral part of their publications, by the last decades of the eighteenth-century as well as the addition of descriptive texts they did not, however, focus solely on the depiction and description of what was fashionable at the time.<sup>54</sup> The periodical's aim – as the female counterpart of the *Gentleman's Magazine* – was to offer everything believed to be the concern of its contemporary women readers. Fashion – and what could be seen as fashionable – was an element of this broad range of topics. Traditionally, however, this meant that the *Lady's Magazine* was not seen to adopt the same tone and character of the real first fashion magazines. Importantly, the periodical was also not a precedent of these first fashion magazines, as it coexisted with them by the end of the eighteenth-century.<sup>55</sup>

In February 1789, the *Lady's Magazine* published a coloured plate titled "The Fashionable Full Dress of Paris" which they had copied from the August 20<sup>th</sup> 1788 issue of the French fashion magazine *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises*. Many European periodicals who featured fashion at the end of the eighteenth-century looked at France as the epitome of *la mode*.<sup>56</sup> Regarding France – and especially Paris' – prosperous cultural playing field during the eighteenth-century, it is not surprising that the first real fashion magazine was fittingly a product of French fabrication.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Sadly, the material nature of fashion plates means that they were often removed from their original magazines. Made as a collectable and fashionable item, they were kept by original readers or sold as an art historical piece throughout the centuries. The publishers and authors of the fashion magazines that featured these desirable fashion plates aimed at preserving their fashionable material status by not adding unnecessary text or information to them (except from the addition of the names of the engravers and designer of the plates). As a consequence this meant that – divorced from their original context – the fashion plates easily lost their historic value and are now for scholars harder to research separately.

Madeleine Ginsberg, "Fashion Plates," last consulted on July 25<sup>th</sup> 2020, <https://fashion-history.lovetoknow.com/fashion-clothing-industry/fashion-plates>.

<sup>54</sup> Batchelor and Powell, ed. *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain*, 446.

<sup>55</sup> Margaret Beetham and Robin Agnew, "Fashion Journals," in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-century Journalism in Great-Britain and Ireland*, eds. Laurel Brake et al. (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), 215.

<sup>56</sup> Batchelor and Powell, ed. *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain*, 446.

<sup>57</sup> Fien Kestelyn, "De rol van de modejournalistiek in de constructie van de mode," (Master dissertation, University Ghent, 2007), 14.

## 2. THE MAGAZINE À LA MODE: MAGASIN DES MODES NOUVELLES CONTENTS AND LIFESPAN

### 2.1. Towards a culture of fashion: *Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles* (1785-1786)

Ouvrage qui donne une connoissance exacte & prompte, tant des Habilemens & Parures Nouvelles des personnes de l'un & de l'autre Sexe, que des nouveaux Meubles de toute espèce, des Nouvelles Décorations, Embellissemens d'Appartemens, nouvelles forms de Voitures, Bijoux, Ouvrages d'Orfèvrerie, & généralement de tout ce que la Mode offre de Singulier, d'agréable ou d'intéressant dans tous les genres.

- *Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles*, 1<sup>er</sup> Cahier, 15 novembre 1785.<sup>58</sup>

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 1785 what is now considered as the first fashion magazine had its first publication in Paris.<sup>59</sup> The *Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles* – as it was formally called – was dedicated to the Countess de Mark and founded and edited by Jean Antoine Brun; who was also known as Le Brun-Tossa (1760-1837) (fig. 5). Starting off as a relatively inexperienced publisher – not only in fashion but in general publishing – he quickly realised that he needed the help of a well established distributor and printer for his endeavour to be successful. With the aid of the well-known journalist and *imprimeur libraire* François Buisson Le Brun-Tossa was able to create a popular new type of fashion periodical that took over the French market and would soon gain imitators and admirers all over Europe.<sup>60</sup>

A subscription to the *Cabinet des Modes* had to be made in Paris, at Buisson's enterprise which was located at the Hôtel de Mesgrigny, Rue des Poitevins no. 13.

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<sup>58</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 1, nr. 1 (1785), A1.

<sup>59</sup> Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress*, 76;

The most extensive compilation of the magazine can be found at the Lipperheidesche Bibliothek in Berlin, short of three cahiers all of the published examples are bundled there. An almost equally comprehensive collection is at the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Other libraries containing examples of the early published magazine are the Palais Galliera in Paris, the Kostum Museum at the Haye and the Saatsbibliothek in Bamberg, Germany. Some libraries, such as Musée Carnavalet, the Musée de l'Art du Costume or the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam have separate fashion plates in their collections.

Annemarie Kleinert, *La Mode- Miroir de la révolution française* (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1990), 75.

<sup>60</sup> Jones, "Repackaging Rousseau," 949-950.

CABINET  
DES MODES,  
OU  
LES MODES NOUVELLES.

Décrites d'une manière claire & précise,  
& représentées par des Planches en Taille-  
douce, enluminées.

*Ouvrage qui donne une connoissance exacte & prompte,  
tant des Habillemens & Parures nouvelles des personnes  
de l'un & de l'autre Sexe, que des nouveaux Meubles  
de toute espèce, des nouvelles Décorations, Embellisse-  
mens d'Appartemens, nouvelles formes de Voitures,  
Bijoux, Ouvrages d'Orfèvrerie, & généralement de  
tout ce que la Mode offre de singulier, d'agréable ou  
d'intéressant dans tous les genres.*

*L'ennui naquit un jour de l'uniformité. La Mode.*

Cet Ouvrage forme vingt-quatre Cahiers par Année. Il en paroît un tous  
les quinze jours. Chaque Cahier est composé de huit pages in-8°. de  
Discours, & de trois Planches en Taille-douce, enluminées.

Le prix de l'Abonnement de l'Année est de *vingt-une livres* pour Paris &  
pour la Province, franc de Port, par la Poste, dans tout le Royaume.  
*L'argent & la Lettre d'avis doivent être affranchis.*

On s'abonne A P A R I S,  
Chez BUISSON, Libraire, Hôtel de Mesgrigny,  
rue des Poitevins, n°. 13.

M. D C C. L X X X V.

*Avec Approbation, & Privilège du Roi.*

Reserve  
3355

Fig. 5: Jean Antoine Brun and Buisson, *Titlepage of the Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles*  
*Cahier 1, 1785, print on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.*

Readers who subscribed to the periodical received twenty-four *Cahiers* a year – the magazine was published every fifteen days – that consisted of eight pages containing “de discours, & de trois Planches en Taille-douce, enluminées”.<sup>61</sup>

Unlike other women’s journals previously published that had contained imagery of fashion as well, the *Cabinet des Modes* was different in that its sole purpose was to advert to its readers the latest *mode*. The publication only sporadically advertised the latest news and in its first year of publication in general stayed away from publishing political content. Contrary to the women’s periodicals that preceded the *Cabinet des Modes*, the bulk of the magazine was centred around the fashion plates and to their corresponding descriptive texts detailing – with the use of specific terminology – the specific fashionable styles displayed. These Fashion plates – three were inserted in every *Cahier* – were engraved by the use of the *taille-douce* technique by the French artist A.B. Duhamel, who etched the original design on to a copper plate and later refined them with a burin, a technique popular for its detailed and fine results.<sup>62</sup>

Essential to the magazine’s widespread acclaim was their highly qualitative fashion plates. At the time of the *Cabinet des Modes*’ rise the professional fashion illustrator still had to emerge, as a consequence most fashion plates were produced by fine artists such as Claude-Louis Derais and Pierre-Thomas LeClerc. They offered fashion or ‘costumes’ drawn *d’après nature* in a manner analogous to that of the academies of fine art at the time. Their aim was consequently not only to represent the latest fashions worn by French aristocratic women but also to give representations of ‘real life’.<sup>63</sup> These fashion plates were also hand-coloured, which as a result meant that some copies had minor differences in their appearance (fig.6-7).<sup>64</sup> However they could be at all times identified as original copies by the names of both the designer and engraver featured on the bottom half of the plates.

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<sup>61</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 1, nr. 2 (1785), 16.

<sup>62</sup> M.A. Ghering-van Ierlant, *Vrouwenmode in prent: modeprenten 1780-1930* (Utrecht: Ghering Books, 2007), 26.

<sup>63</sup> Miller, “Taste, Fashion and the French Fashion Magazine,” 17.

<sup>64</sup> In the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam – where a large collection of fashion plates can be found – there are two exact copies of fashion plates from the *Cabinet les modes* to be found – both are *Planche Premier* from the eight *cahier* of the 1786 publication year – however one of them appears to have remarkably increased amount of pink tones through the dress featured as well as the shoes are in a different colour compared to the other fashion plate.  
*Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 8 (1786), Planche premier.





Fig. 6 & 7: A.B. Duhamel and Derais, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1* from the *Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles Cahier 8*, 1786, engraving on paper, 12,5 x 20,5cm, Bibliothèque nationale de France; A.B. Duhamel and Derais, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1* from the *Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles Cahier 8*, 1786, engraving on paper, 12,5 x 20,5cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

With the use of qualitative fashion plates, the editors of the *Cabinet des Modes* were able to provide a detailed view of the desired fashion, jewellery, hairstyles and accessories of their time. The magazine in its general tone, however, also aimed at providing a detailed overview on the inner workings of the fashion system itself. This meant taking a closer look at how the fashions were created, how they spread from class to class and how new fashionable styles came about. Making notes on the nature of *la mode* itself, the magazines were surprisingly introspective as well. By regularly examining their own role in the fashion culture they appeared self-reflective in their endeavours.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 181.



The *Cabinet des Modes* mostly featured the styles of the rich aristocratic Parisian women – and sporadically men and children – nonetheless, they appeared not to be their main demographic. Little precise information can be found on who exactly prescribed to the magazine, however, it is known that at the time French noblewomen were more likely to subscribe together with their husbands to more expensive journals such as the *Mercure Galant*, whereas bourgeois and provincial women were more likely to subscribe to journals such as the *Cabinet des Modes*. Provincials as well as foreign women aiming for the French style influence bought the magazine rigorously in order to obtain the desired standard. The changing fashion culture influenced by the consumer market and bourgeois societal tendencies affected the previous clear distinction between the fashions of aristocratic women and women of a lower social status. The fashion portrayed in the *Cabinet des modes* was therefore rarely distinguished between the class and position of middle class in comparison to upper class women. The readership of the magazine may have suggested differently, in the world of the editors there was little difference to be made.<sup>66</sup> In the fourth year of the publication the magazine reminded its readers that its contents were made “pour toutes les classes”.<sup>67</sup>

Regardless of the magazine’s aim at reaching women from different societal backgrounds – as well as their relatively low price in comparison to other periodicals at the time – it was undoubtedly the case that not all women could afford to take a glimpse at the periodical’s fashionable contents.

A subscription with the *Cabinet des Modes* – which meant receiving twenty-four *cahiers* a year – was priced at 21 livres.<sup>68</sup> At the end of the reign of French king Louis XIV (1638-1715) the median hourly salary for a worker was 1 sol and 6 deniers, which can be translated to around 19 livres a month.<sup>69</sup> By 1782 the price of 1kg of bread in Paris, however, was put at 0,2586 livre. Despite the lowered price and the magazine’s claims towards inclusivity this certainly meant that for a very large part of the French population buying the *Cabinet des Modes* was unthinkable.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Jones, “Repackaging Rousseau,” 951.

<sup>67</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 3, nr. 34: 124.

<sup>68</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 1, nr. 1 (1785), A1..

<sup>69</sup> The worth of 1 livre was equal to that of 20 sous and 240 deniers.

Jan Moens, “De franc [de] germinal: de euro van de 19<sup>e</sup> eeuw?,” Article submitted for the bianual “Numismatische Prijs van Numismatica Brugge en het Vrije” by the Royal Belgian Society of Numismatics, 2007, p. 115, last consulted on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020, [https://www.egmp-vzw.be/Pdf/jaarboeken/2000%20-%202010/JEGMP\\_2007\\_4.pdf](https://www.egmp-vzw.be/Pdf/jaarboeken/2000%20-%202010/JEGMP_2007_4.pdf).

<sup>70</sup> J. Fourastié, “Quelques réflexions sur l’évolution du niveau de vie des classes ouvrières,” *Revue Économique* 1, no. 4 (1950): 467- 478.

More than just the idealist claim that the magazine was aimed at changing their female readers taste for the better, the *Cabinet des Modes* was as much an economical endeavour as well. Fashion magazines such as the *Cabinet des Modes*, were aware of their important role as intermediary between consumers, designers and manufacturers of fashion. Taking in consideration their essential link between production and consumption they had a habit of speaking directly to creative merchants in their magazines. On February 1<sup>st</sup> 1786 in the sixth *cahier* of the *Cabinet des Modes* the editors added:

Le Cabinet des Modes étant répandu dans toutes les Provinces, ainsi que dans le Pays étranger, nous invitons les Amateurs, les Artistes, les Artisans, Fabricans & Manufacturiers, à donner avis à M. ALLEMAND, maison du Sieur Piot, Marchand de Vin, rue Sainte Marguerite, faubourg Saint Germain, à Paris, de tout ce qu'ils inventeront ou perfectionneront, tant dans les Habillemens & Parures des Personnes de l'un & de l'autre sexe, que dans les Meubles de toute espèce, Décorations Embellissemns d'appartemens, forme de voiture, Bijoux, Ouvrages d'Orfèvrerie, & Généralement dans tous les objets d'utilité, de commodité, de Mode, ou d'agrément. [...]

Les Marchands qui nous ont fait passer quelques details, s'en sont déjà bien trouvés, par la vente plusieurs articles, qui peut-être n'auroit pas eu lieu sans notre annonce.<sup>71</sup>

Production and marketing were an important combination needed to further the growth of not only the fashion magazines at the time but also the fashion industry in general. Manufacturers and merchants had quickly come to understand the importance of these new types of publications to spread the word of their merchandise and services. It was thus not surprisingly that the *Cabinet the Modes* from very early on stuffed its pages with advertisements. The importance of the French state's approval and investment in the fashion industry as a national export product meant that magazine editors and advertisers would often get the – usually royal-approval directly from the capital to endorse a certain manufacturer.<sup>72</sup> In the fourteenth *cahier* of the magazine published in January of 1786 a fashion plate was added depicting a well-dressed man wearing a hat from the manufacturer Troussier.

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<sup>71</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 6 (1786), 47.

<sup>72</sup> Clemens Wischermann and Elliott Shore, *Advertising and the European City: Historical Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2019), n.p.

The merchant must have spared no expense because the editors consequently chose to run a three-page long advertisement on the quality of his products in their magazine as well:

Nouvelle Fabrique de Chapeaux du Sieur Troussier, rue Planche-Mibray, au coin de la rue S. Jacques de la Boucherie, au bout de celle des Arcis, à Paris [...] La manière de fabriquer ces chapeaux se trouve dans le premier volume de la Bibliothèque-Physico-Economique, Année 1786, Tom. I, p. 375. Cet Ouvrage se vend chez Buisson, Libraire, à Paris.

Tous ces différents Chapeaux sont à prix fixe. Nous joignons ici, pour l'instruction de MM. nos Souscripteurs, le Rapport des Commissaires chargés, par le Conseil du Roi, de l'examen des Chapeaux de cette nouvelle Fabrique: "Les Commissaires chargés de suivre les opérations du Sieur Troussier dans les différentes manipulations qu'il a inventées, rapportent qu'il est parvenu à former une étoffe précieuse, d'une matière beaucoup plus fine que le Castor, dont le travail est plus difficile; que cela annonce que le Sieur Troussier a une grande intelligence dans l'Art de la Chappellerie [...] L'Académie Royale des Sciences a pu juger, par elle-même, de la beauté de ces Chapeaux [...]."<sup>73</sup>

With the use of fashion plates and lengthy descriptive texts featured in the main part of the magazine, these advertisements gathered a lot of attention and influence. Soon, an abundance of fashion merchants as well as other key players in the fashion industry wanted to be part of or linked to the magazine in one way or another.<sup>74</sup>

Fittingly the fashion culture in Paris at the time had equally become invested in the industries growing influencers. On February first 1786 the *Cabinet des Modes* was seen to endorse the pursuits of the *marchandes de modes* as well. Seen as an integral part of the new centre of *le goût national* they were seen by the magazine's editors as key figures of the system.<sup>75</sup> Besides the editors' display of the magazine in the growing economical fashion culture, they themselves had economical aspirations as well. They discussed the role they were hoping to play in setting up a new commercial economy based on economic growth and prosperity and – most of all – free trade. Le Brun-Tossa, himself an aspiring writer but not yet established literary figure when he arrived in Paris at the middle of the century, aimed at a self-regulating economy untethered from the reigns of guilds and state-based sanctions.

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<sup>73</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 14 (1786), 31-32.

<sup>74</sup> Clemens Wischermann and Elliott Shore, *Advertising and the European City: Historical Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2019), n.p.

<sup>75</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 182.

Louis Edmé Billardon de Sauvigny – who went on to replace Le Brun-Tossa as editor later on in the history of the periodical – sketched a plan in which he aimed at founding his own academy of fashion where production, marketing and the publicizing of fashion under a single agency was united.<sup>76</sup>

Whereas previous French periodicals such as the *Mercure Galant* found royal authority, etiquette, class and rank to be essential ways in which the fashion of the day was shaped, the *Cabinet des Modes* – as both an influencer of and influenced by the rise of the eighteenth-century French fashion culture – no longer saw that to be the case. The importance had now mainly shifted to the seasonal circles that fashion was a victim of and the gender of those trying to dress fashionably. By the late 1770s - beginning of the 1780s the royal influence that *la mode* had previously been subject under – and this almost exclusively in the previous decades – now became increasingly less apparent. Aside from the handful inspirations queen Marie-Antoinette had brought forth during her reign as sovereign – for example the *chemise à la Reine*, a style of dress characterized by a single simple muslin chemise gown pioneered by the queen in close cooperation with her *marchande de modes* Rose Bertin – she had virtually disappeared from the story of fashion being narrated by the *Cabinet des Modes* at the time. Arguably, half a decade before the French Revolution the French fashion press had almost effectively dethroned their sovereigns, at least from fashion's point of view.<sup>77</sup>

The desacralization of the fashion press meant that all eyes were now on how men and women represented fashion – the gender had become of outmost importance – and how individuals clothed themselves throughout the year. No longer rank, class and court etiquette ran supreme; the public world of the court ritual had to make place for the more private world of especially women, the family and the home. This increasingly individualistic – and arguably democratic – approach to fashion was clearly visible in the newest announcer of *la mode*: the fashion magazine.<sup>78</sup> Gender now supplanted all those previous distinctions, which even meant qualities such as age.

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<sup>76</sup> Jones, "Repackaging Rousseau," 951.

<sup>77</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 183.

<sup>78</sup> Jones, "Repackaging Rousseau," 952.

In the sixteenth cahier published on the first of July 1786, the *Cabinet des Modes* reported an answer to a woman from the French provinces who had written to the magazine. The editors point of view was clear:

On nous a écrit le 8 du mois dernier, de la Province de Bourbonnois, pour nous demander si la Mode est Générale, & si elle est la même pour les Femmes de trente & de quarante ans, que pour les Femmes de dix-huit & de vingt; & que dans le cas où il y en auroit une différente pour le moyen âge, nous la faisons connoître, pour qu'on pût s'y régler dans la Province. Nous répondons à la Personne qui nous a fait l'honneur de nous consulter, que la Mode est *une*, & qu'elle est la même pour tous les âges; que la plupart de nos Dames, bien plus âgées que de quarante ans, ne sont pas ici de difficulté de la suivre, & qu'elles ne paroissent nullement condamnables.<sup>79</sup>

Advertising on its title page “une connoissance exacte & prompte [...] de l'un & de l'autre Sexe” the *Cabinet des Modes* made it common knowledge that the fashions displayed were to be enjoyed by both women and men alike. The periodical described fashion as an interest to both the sexes, writing: “Dans tous les tems, dans tous les lieux, les deux sexes, dans la vue de se plaire mutuellement, ont cherché à se parer”.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, considerably less fashion plates were catered towards the dress of men – this statistic even worsened in the following years of publication – and in descriptive texts or anecdotes that made up most parts of the magazines mostly womens affairs were discussed. The magazine, in general, portrayed the fashion culture at the end of the eighteenth-century as an almost distinctive feminine affair at one point simply admitting that there was nothing much more to say about men’s fashion because it was no longer worth bothering with. The magazine was clear in its intentions, reflecting on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 1787 – by then it had already gone through their name change – on the inequality of male and female representation of fashion, admitting that from now on the magazine would particularly be destined for women because they needed to be satisfied first of all.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 16 (1786), 128.

<sup>80</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 1, nr. 1 (1785), 128.

<sup>81</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 3, nr. 28 (1787): 145.

On most occasions the pages were filled with direct conversations and advice towards the periodical's female audience. In the eight *cahier* of 1786 the editors of the periodical wrote:

L'Élégance & le gout qui brillent dans chacune des Parures de nos Dames, justifieroient notre attention à les faire toutes connoître, quand elles ne seroient pas d'une mode actuelle & journalière. Les deux Gravures qui suivent en présentent d'un genre nouveau, dont nous n'avons point encore parlé. On pourroit les regarder comme du gout dominant aujourd'hui: le maintien facile, l'aisance & la liberté qu'elles donnent à celles qui les portent, les sont généralement préférer. Les couleurs délicatement nuances de ces ajustemens, & la manière de les porter, réhaussent l'éclat du teint, & répandent dans tout l'air du corps & du visage une agréable vivacité. Nous nous flattons qu'on nous saura bon gré d'avoir publié ces deux Modes qui règnent chez un très-grand nombre de nos Dames.<sup>82</sup>

When the *Cabinet des Modes* did portray men's fashion it often did so under the suggestion that it was only for "young men". Proposing that except for these men, an interest in fashion was deemed inappropriate for the male sex. Whereas women followed the fashions because they were inherently attracted to the novel side of *la mode*, men saw fashion plainly as a way to dress appropriately for their status or circumstance. Thus, explained the editors of the *Cabinet des Modes*, men's fashions did not change as rapidly as the fashions of their female counterparts. There was simply no need in their eyes for the fashion press of the day to represent men's fashion in an equal abundance.<sup>83</sup>

This change in the role of fashion and its relation to gender and sex would have seemed strange to French seventeenth-century writers such as Donneau de Visé and the readers of his *Mercure Galant*. The incentive for fashion at that time was to display one's wealth and status by symbolic luxurious dress. By the time of the *Cabinet des Modes*, however, fashion and the decoration and embellishment of one's self were seen as products of women's desire to be pleasing to the eyes of men. In this new light, women were always presented as having the need to please.

Whereas the *Mercure Galant* – and other journals of its time – saw fashion as a cultural product, a consequence of court regality and etiquette, by the end of the eighteenth-century the French fashion press had made it clear that fashion was an exterior motivation of the natural desire of the sexes.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 8 (1786), H-59.

<sup>83</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 185.

<sup>84</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 185.

Inevitably this one-sided view on women's consumption of fashion and their place as consumers in social society makes twenty-first-century readers apprehensive on the real implications of the rise of the French fashion press at the end of the eighteenth-century. The *Cabinet des Modes* aimed at curating a varied female readership – in the process advertising and advancing women fashion producers such as the *marchandes de modes* – however, at the same time displayed a rigid and passive view of women, which can be undoubtedly attributed to the periodical's all male creators and contributors which by the end of the eighteenth-century was practice as usual. The periodical was not as much *by* women as it was *for* them, meaning that their femininity was often materialized and deemed performative.<sup>85</sup>

Scholars today have deemed the term 'women's magazine' situated in the eighteenth-century itself as oxymoronic. Recognized as such even at the time of the original publication these 'women's magazine' made by women were determined to be a myth. In part because the male editors and artists creating these publications were often seen to use similar rhetoric's as in the male centred French journals at the time.<sup>86</sup> The editors of the *Cabinet des Modes*, nonetheless, saw women's apparent disposition for fashion and novelty by the end of the eighteenth-century as a virtue rather than a vice. When the vast effects of the French Revolution had stripped many aristocratic women of their titles and honours they had shared with their husbands, the magazine was clear on one thing: women still had fashion to fall back on:

Parmi les gens de qualité, ce sont les femmes qui perdent le plus à la revolution [...] Il ne reste donc plus à celles qui veulent jouir promptement, et frapper les yeux d'un vis-éclat, que la singularité, la richesse et l'élégance du costume.<sup>87</sup>

The French Revolution may have snatched away pomp, pageantry and the corruption of the Ancien Régime, the *Cabinet des Modes* insisted that fashion – as a natural feminine prerogative under the new regime was save.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Siobhan McIlvanney, "What Early French Female Press can Tell us About a Key Period for Women in Public Life," last consulted on 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 2020, <https://thewire.in/culture/what-early-french-female-press-can-tell-us-about-a-key-period-for-women-in-public-life>.

<sup>86</sup> Batchelor and Powell, ed. *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain*, 17.

<sup>87</sup> *Journal de la mode et du goût* 2, no. 6 (1791): 1-2.

<sup>88</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 186.

## 2.2. Imagery and imagination: *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* (1786-1789)

L'accueil que le Public a fait au *Cabinet des Modes*, & le desir que nous avons de le perfectionner, nous engageant, en changeant son titre, à lui donner une forme plus étendue, & à l'enrichir de nouvelles matières. Le titre de ce journal sera désormais celui-ci:

*Magasin Des Modes Nouvelles, Françaises et Anglaises.*

Une Nation avec laquelle nous avons fait plus d'une fois échange d'opinions, d'usages & de modes, s'est empressée de profiter de notre Entreprise, en publiant en anglois un Journal, intitulé: *The fashionable Magasine. Ou Magasin des Modes Anglaises.* Flatté de cette emulation, nous la tournerons au profit de MM. les Souscripteurs & du Public, en les faisant jouir de tous les objets que contiendra le Journal Anglois. Mais voici une autre ressource précieuse pour notre Journal: un Dessinateur habile, entretenu à grands frais à Londres, est chargé de ne nous laisser ignorer aucune des Modes Nouvelles échappées au Journaliste Anglois. Par ce moyen, le *Magasin des Modes Françaises & Anglaises* contiendra tout ce que les Modes Anglaises auront de plus agréable & de plus utile; & les joignant à notre propre fonds, ce Journal acquerra un degré de perfection qui ne peut qu'ajouter à son intérêt & à son succès.

- *Cabinet des Modes*, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1786.<sup>89</sup>

On the first November of the *Cabinet des Modes*' second year of publication the editors announced that the magazine from now on was going to be called the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises*. The first few pages of the *cahier* were centred around this important announcement. Readers were made aware of what to expect when they subscribed to the altered magazine. In the second half of the issue the final fashion contents under the name of *Cabinet des Modes* were published, in order for a continuation to take place under another name only a few weeks later. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of November of that same year the first issue – the *premier cahier* – of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* was a fact.<sup>90</sup> Remarkably the notation of the title is different in the first issue unlike in its announcement, however, remained the same throughout the following years of publication (fig. 8).

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<sup>89</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 24 (1786), 1-2.

<sup>90</sup> The most extensive compilation of the magazine can be found at the Lipperheidesche Bibliothek in Berlin, short of three cahiers all of the published examples are bundled there. An almost equally comprehensive collection is at the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Other libraries containing examples of the early published magazine are the Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archéologie de Paris at the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra de Paris and at the Staatsbibliothek Munich. The annual publications from 1787 to 1788 can only be found in the Kostum Museum at the Heye. Some libraries, such as Musée Carnavalet, the Palais Galliera or the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam have separate fashion plates in their collections.

Kleinert, *La Mode*, 75.





(Seconde Année, N°. 1.)

**MAGASIN DES MODES NOUVELLES,  
FRANÇAISES ET ANGLAISES,**

Décrites d'une manière claire & précise, & représentées par des Planches en Taille-douce, enluminées.

*Ouvrage qui donne une connoissance exacte & prompte, tant des Habillemens & Parures nouvelles des Personnes de l'un & de l'autre Sexe, que des nouveaux Meubles de toute espèce, des nouvelles Décorations, Embellissemens d'Appartemens, nouvelles formes de Voitures, Bijoux, Ouvrages d'Orfèvrerie, & généralement de tout ce que la Mode offre de singulier, d'agréable ou d'intéressant dans tous les genres.*

Premier Cahier. 20 Novembre 1786.

EN récapitulant tous les Cahiers où nous avons représenté des femmes vêtues de redingotes d'hommes, il fera aisé de voir quelles ont été en peu de tems les variations de la Mode. Voici encore une redingote qui prouve que sa marche ne s'est point ralentie. C'étoit le pas le plus difficile à franchir que celui-ci, & elle l'a franchi; c'étoit la forme la plus brillante & la plus agréable à prendre, & elle s'en est emparée.

La Femme représentée dans la **PLANCHE I<sup>re</sup>**, porte une redingote de drap vert foncé, brodée en or sur les devants, aux poches de côté, coupées en long, & aux paremens;

Sous cette redingote, un jupon de fatin rose glacé;

Sur le col, un ample fichu de gaze, en chemise, à deux colets;

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Fig. 8: De Sauvigny and Buisson, *Titlepage of the Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises*, 1786, print on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Formally the title page of the newly published magazine – aside from the altered title and the added numeration and date at the top of the page – remained the same. Like with the *Cabinet des Modes* the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* showed its clear intentions in its title page with the promise of an exact and prompt knowledge of clothing, decorations, embellishments and all types of adornment.<sup>91</sup> The quote that proudly graced the early title pages of the *Cabinet des Modes* reading “L’ennui naquit un jour de l’uniformité”, however, did not appear again in its continuation until the magazine’s third year of publication – the second under the new name – when it was proudly mentioned again.<sup>92</sup> On this new publication the original author of the quote – the French writer Antoine Houdar de La Motte (1672-1731) who in his 1719 poetry piece *Les Fables* expressed that boredom one day arose out of uniformity – was not mentioned.<sup>93</sup>

The magazine appears formally similar to its predecessor, however, a change had been made by the editors regarding the amount of *cahiers* published a year. So they explained: “L’abondance des matières nous oblige à augmenter d’un tiers le nombre des Cahiers. Au lieu de *vingt-quatre* par année, il en paroîtra dorénavant *trente-six*. Chaque Cahier sera toujours composé de *huit pages in-8°. de Discours, & de trois Planches en taille-douce, enluminées*. Il en paroîtra un Cahier tous les dix jours, à commencer du 20 Novembre courant”.

The editors mentioned as well that the magazine was due a monetary increase from 21 to 30 livres for an annual subscription. They clarified this augmentation, however, stating that it was not due to the increase in *cahiers* but because of the increased amount of fashion plates published in an outstanding quality, as they remarked, unlike those of other periodicals, stating: “[...] & si l’on veut bien comparer ce prix avec celui des autres Journaux, & considerer combien le frais de l’Enluminure & Gravure sont dispendieux, on sera étonné de sa modicité”.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 1 (1786): 1.

<sup>92</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 3, no. 2 (1787): n.p.

<sup>93</sup> The full quote can be found in his *Fable* number XV titled “Les Amis trop d’accord” and reads: “C’est un grand agrément que la diversité: nous sommes bien comme nous sommes. Donnez le même esprit aux hommes, Vous ôtez tout le sel de la société. L’ennui naquit un jour de l’uniformité.”

“Citations”, last consulted on 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2020,

[https://dicocitations.lemonde.fr/citation\\_auteur\\_ajout/103510.php](https://dicocitations.lemonde.fr/citation_auteur_ajout/103510.php).

<sup>94</sup> Notwithstanding an editorial changing of the guard, the magazine’s printer remained the same. A yearly subscription could again be made at the printing shop of Buisson at the Hôtel de Mesgrigny, rue de Poitevins no. 13, Paris. In a catalogue from 12 December 1786 published by the L’imprimerie de Laporte on rue des Noyers Paris containing all the new published literature and periodicals by Buisson the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* is mentioned. A small introduction to the magazine is made and readers are reminded of the fact that the periodical used to be published under the name *Cabinet des Modes*.

Antoine-Louis-Guillaume-Catherine Laporte and François Buisson, *Livres nouveaux dans tous les genres, qui sont actuellement en vente chez Buisson, libraire, hôtel de Mesgrigny, rue des Poitevins, no. 13* (Paris: L’imprimerie de Laporte, 1786), 4. ;

*Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 24 (1786), 186-187.

These fashion plates were similarly made by highly skilled artists as those recruited for the *Cabinet des Modes* and their popularity attracted a wide audience. Initially, similarly to the *Cabinet des Modes* three engravings were separately published in the magazine, however, after the second year of publication the separate fashion plates were replaced by a fold-out print that showed all three of the models side by side. As a consequence these depictions could connect and narrative driven scenes were created.<sup>95</sup>

That only the last adaptation of the magazine – published from 1790-93 under the name *the Journal de la Mode et du Goût* – has a clear indication of its real editor, makes it hard to find decisive evidence on the editorial records of the periodical's predecessors. Scholars however have – after years of literary debate – been able to find consensus in the theory that the editor Jean-Antoine Brun, nicknamed Le Brun-Tossa, edited the *Cabinet des Modes* as well as the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût*, however the literary writer Louis Edmé Billardon de Sauvigny (1736-1812) took his place for the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*.<sup>96</sup> Not unexperienced in women's periodicals, at twenty-eight de Sauvigny began writing and editing for the French periodical *Journal des dames* (1759-1778). In 1777 he was able to obtain a position as a royal censor, however lost that opportunity a year later when he was caught approving a "subversive" book. Eventually in November of 1786 he became the editor of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* and under his editorship the magazine appeared to be pulling away from its previous aristocratic associations towards more revolutionary sympathies. The *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* not being his sole endeavour, de Sauvigny went on to write literature heavily influenced by enlightened writers and philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, increasingly writing in tune with their call for a "return to the virtues of simpler life".<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Verhaak, "The Print Room," 376.

<sup>96</sup> Both the *Cabinet des Modes* and the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* failed to positively identify their editors except from the *Journal du Mode et du Goût* where the reader is informed on the first page of each issue by the editor's name "M. Le Brun". Historian Annemarie Kleinert argues in her publication *Die frühen Modejournale in Frankreich: Studien zur Literatur der Mode von den Anfängen bis 1848* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1980) that the editor of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* must have been de Sauvigny – possibly in minor collaboration with others – because of a note identified in the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* stating that M. de Sauvigny had "read and approved" the title page and introduction of the fourth year of publication. Kleinert, nonetheless, sees Lebrun-Tossa as the definite editor of the last years of the magazines publication and as a crucial influencer for the preceding and following publications.

Miranda Kam, "Masters of La Mode: Representations of Women in the French Fashion Press, 1785-99," (Master dissertation, University of Hawai'i Mānoa, 2017), 5.

<sup>97</sup> In an issue of *The Romantic Review* from February 1938 the literary historian C.D. Brenner gives a more in dept look in the literary prowess of de Sauvigny in "A neglected Pre-Romantic: Billardon de Sauvigny".

Jones, "Repackaging Rousseau," 950.

### 2.2.1. A sartorial simplicity: Anglomania and the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*

De Sauvigny's increasingly democratic political and social views had a significant influence on the kind of publication he went on to create. His dreams for the return towards a simplified, virtuous life were projected in the fashion magazine's pull towards those aspects in late eighteenth-century English fashion. The 1780s – in many ways – can be characterized by a wave of Anglomania. Earlier in the century, however, a seed had already been planted by an interest in the informal wear coming over from France's English neighbours. The French periodical *La Galerie des Modes* had from its early beginnings in 1770 shown an interest in both their native formal French court styles as well as the foreign simpler English fashions. Inspired by the English' love for the outdoors, their impressive country estates and high society life surrounding it, the French very early on in the eighteenth-century were fascinated by and subsequently adapted some of their fashions. The interest in these informal, simpler styles however was not solely practical. When the Enlightened French writer and philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778) visited London in 1727 he expressed his admiration for the English political and social values. Unlike what he perceived as the French' aristocratic traditions of indifference and hypocrisy, Voltaire saw the manifestation of the English in themselves through independence and self-reliance. Voltaire and other influential philosophers like him who believed in similar values – like Rousseau who had expressed his enthusiasm for the cultural and social theories of seventeenth-century English writers such as John Locke – expressed their views on dress and appearance in similar ways.<sup>98</sup>

Aileen Ribeiro – In her seminal work *The Art of Dress*- notes that even though it often appears as cliché it is true that the difference between the classes was less noticeable in the dress of the English in comparison to that of the French. In many ways society in England by the eighteenth-century could be characterized as the home of great sartorial freedom, diminished class inequity and an exhilarating individualism. Like in the rest of Europe these political, cultural and social circumstances influenced the dress and fashion of their time greatly. Remarkably so that when foreign visitors came to England they often found themselves perplexed by the conflicting messages sent out by the English fashions.

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<sup>98</sup> Alice Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion: 500 years of Fashion Illustration* (New York: Costume & Fashion Press, 1997), 80.



This view was corroborated by contemporary accounts, as the editor of the English women's periodical *The Ladies Library* commented on the cultural impetus of the day: "What Difference is there now between the Dress of a *Citizen* and a *Courtier*, of a *Taylor* and a *Gentleman*, or a *Servant* and a *Master*? The *Maid* is very often mistaken for the *Mistress*, and the *Valet* for my *lord*."

The popular periodical *The Female Spectator* declared to its readers by the end of the eighteenth-century: "There is no difference made between the young nobleman and the city-apprentice, except that the latter is sometimes the greater beau".<sup>99</sup> Consequently the dress of the English was associated with the state of their society and deemed to be progressive, democratic and individualistic.<sup>100</sup> French fashion on the other hand was seen by the English – and increasingly by the French people as well – as inherently complicated and formal. When The Earl of Orrery, a young English eighteen-year old, visited Paris in 1722 he remarked on this noticeable difference, saying: "The French ladies most of them from what I can perceive may be very beautiful but they dress themselves in a new face every day... Their shapes also may possibly be fine but of this no certainty for they wear Sacs or Robes de Chambres that will hide the roundest Shoulders".<sup>101</sup>

During the eighteenth-century this phenomena was created by French people – those who were in the privileged position to do so – dressing increasingly not only for different seasons or occasions but also for different activities as a consequence sometimes even multiple times a day. The French *naissance* of the concept of *la mode*, the acceleration of the fashion cycle as a result of the increased consumer culture with the aid of the visual culture of the fashion press, cemented the idea in the heads of French men and especially women that fashion itself was constantly rapidly changing and had to be subsequently chased.<sup>102</sup> This idea was greatly supported and cemented in the heads of the readers of the fashion periodicals. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 1787 the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* noted:

Ce seroit peu pour la Mode, que l'on connoît si légère, si inconstante, de ne changer qu'après un certain tems, qu'à tells époques, lorsque le dégoût peut naître, & qu'il est même déjà né; elle veut encore changer tant de fois par jour. C'est pourquoi elle a pris l'habit du matin, l'habit du diner, l'habit du soir.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Kathleen M. Oliver, "Dress in 18<sup>th</sup>-century English Life and Literature," in *Samual Richardson, Dress, and Discourse* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 40.

<sup>100</sup> Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress*, 83.

<sup>101</sup> Anne Buck, *Dress in eighteenth-century England* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979), 33.

<sup>102</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 184.

<sup>103</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 10 (1787): 73.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1788 the magazine published similarly a fashion plate in three parts showing one woman depicted during three different activities: on the left she can be seen in a *habit du matin*, in the middle the woman is portrayed in a *mantelet* – the magazine adds carefully that both the *habit du matin* and *d'après-midi* can be worn underneath as long as the overcoat is appropriate and sufficiently fashionable- and lastly on the right she is seen wearing a horse-riding outfit (fig. 9).<sup>104</sup>

All women portrayed in the fashion plate can be seen to wear *caracos* inspired by English contemporary fashions. Admitting that these fashions had started to reign supreme in fashionable French society, the editors started their publications noting: “Les caracos devant être aujourd’hui Presque les seuls habits de nos Dames, avons-nous déjà dit, il étoit nécessaire qu’elles les variassent à l’infini”.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> The editors remark on the third depiction as well: “Les Angloises, grandes cavalières, & montant plus souvent à cheval que nos Dames ne se prominent, doivent imaginer des modes, surtout pour monter à cheval; elles ne doivent guère en imaginer que pour cela; aussi varient-elles de tems à autre leur habillement pour monter à cheval. [...] On reconnoitra aisément que ne ce ne sont que les habits de nos Dames, avec quelques modifications.”

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 3, no. 9 (1788): 65-68.

<sup>105</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 3, no. 9 (1788): 65.



Fig. 9: A.B. Duhamel and Defraine, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1, 2 & 3* from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 9, 1788*, engraving on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The English style and fashion could by the end of the eighteenth-century be described as a softer, more practical, less adorned and in general more natural look. Whereas the *robe à la française* was a structured and pleated gown the *robe à l'anglaise* – named after the initial styles worn by English women – was more tight-fitting with the use of a narrow bodice and open front. Often these bodices could also be separate from the skirt – termed as *caraco* by contemporaries – except at the very back where at the centre a pleated fabric was stitched down from the neckline to the waist (fig. 10). The bodice at the front was v-shaped and mostly filled in by a stomacher while the open skirt at the front often displayed a decorative petticoat.

Another highly popular English style adopted by the French throughout the final decades of the century was the *redingote*.<sup>106</sup> A term derived directly from the English word “riding coat” the style of dress was worn from the 1720s on to the end of the century. Initially a practical term to describe a man’s overcoat it soon became a popular long-sleeved gown worn by fashionable women. Many variations on the style consequently meant that it could not easily be characterized as one type of dress particularly, however, the main features in common stood out as: masculine details – such as button closures on the bodice-, fitted waist and arms and a sleek look in mostly darker colours. These *redingotes* were often paired with *fichus* – a muslin or fine gauze white fabric puffing out at the bodice – and large hats adorned with feathers, bows and trimmings.<sup>107</sup>

An example of this intensely popular style was depicted in the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1787, where the woman represented was dressed in a brightly coloured satin *redingote* with a wide collar, trimmed with red fox skin and gold edging. Underneath she wore a satin *gilet* or under waistcoat made out of a pink and white large striped fabric. Around her collar the woman can be seen to wear a masculine tie made out of white gauze tied together loosely by a gold pin decorated by a hieroglyphic sign. Her shoes were decorated with a white satin ribbon to match her tie and gloves.

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<sup>106</sup> Kendra Van Cleave, “The Lévitte Dress: Untangling the Cultural Influences of Eighteenth-Century French Fashion,” (Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings, University of Nebraska, 2018), 7-11.

<sup>107</sup> Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 80-81.



An important element of the female attire was the hat, this one was depicted featuring wide brims to resemble the large women's hats popular at the time, however, finished in a masculine architectural style decorated by a large silver buckle as well as bows and feathers on top.

Lastly, the woman depicted can also be seen wearing a small elegant cane in her left-hand, a typical masculine accessory popular at the end of the eighteenth-century as well as a male inspired *coiffure* complete with three rows of curls and a low hanging long knot at the back.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> The description of the style of dress depicted reads in its entirety: "Telle que la jolie Femme, que nous avons figure, la porte, c'est une redingote de satin couleur queue de serin, don't le collet renversé, très-large, est de peau de renard roux, don't les paremens des manches sont de peaux pareilles, & don't les bords des devants sont garnis de bandes de peaux pareilles. Les coutures de derrière de cette redingote sont ornées de cordonnets d'or, & les poches des côtés sont ornés de larges broderies en or. La Femme est vêtue, sous cette redingote, d'un gilet de satin, à larges raies roses & blanches, & d'un japon de satin violet, à raies fondues. A ses pieds, des souliers de satin couleur queue de serin, falbalassés d'un ruban-satin blanc.

Autour de son col, une ample cravatte de gaze, don't les bouts, noués lâche, retombent très bas sur un fichu-jabot, attaché par devant avec une épingle d'or, à large tête hiéroglyphique. A ses mains, des gants de peau jaune-serin. De la main droite, elle tient une légère badine, garnie d'une longue pomme d'ivoire blanc, tournée en champignon. Sur sa tête, un chapeau-feutre, à forme très-profonde. Les bords du chapeau & le sommet de la forme, sont garnis d'une peau de renard roux. La forme est ceinte d'un très-large ruban violet, qui vient se passer dans une très-large boucle d'acier poli, appliqué sur le devant, & qui vient former par derrière un très-gros noeud, dont les bouts pendent très-bas. A ses oreilles, de chaque côté, trois petites poires d'or attachées à la file.

Cette femme est frisée comme les hommes, à trois boucles de front de chaque côté, à large grecque quarrée, & à gros catogan par derrière. On voit que le chapeau est enfoncé jusques sur les yeux, comme nous le portons."

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 11 (1787): 82-83.



Fig. 10: A.B. Duhamel and Desrais, publisher Buisson, *Planche Premier* from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 12*, 1787, engraving on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The relationship of French and English fashion influence and the adaptation of their representative styles, however, was not always distinctively one-sided. When the editors of the *Magsin des Modes Nouvelles* made clear their reasons for the altered title of the periodical in their opening statement as well as their subsequent partnership with the *Fashionable Magazine* for seven months in 1786, the substantial English influences on French fashion had become evidently clear. The French artists and contributors of the magazine were sent to London to report on the newest English fashions. *The Fashionable Magazine* on their part declared their admiration for the French fashion and the popularity of the *Cabinet des Modes* that by that time had been bought and read extensively by English fashionable society, stating:

The French Cabinet des Modes has made its way into all parts of Europe and the English Fashionable Magazine bids fair to become still more popular.

It was thought proper to premise thus much for the satisfaction for such readers as are acquainted with the french language; we shall now proceed to describe in English the several figures as taken from that work.

The English editors – entering the partnership whole-heartedly - nonetheless, were certain of their own influence as well:

But we beg to hint, that London now, generally speaking, gives Fashions to Paris and of course to all Europe and not Paris to London.<sup>109</sup>

Although the *Fashionable Magazine's* eagerly covered French fashions and garnered acclaim from its enthusiastic readers, they considered the rapid changes in French fashion and their tendencies towards frivolity and excess as products of their “fashionable absurdities” with which the editors greatly amused themselves. They wrote:

[...] our restless neighbours will abundantly supply us with new modes for our amusement or observation, though they have happily ceased, in a great measure, to be objects of our imitation.

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<sup>109</sup> Ghering-Van Ierlant, *Mode in prent*, 39.

The French editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* were similarly aware of the ambiguous cultural relationship between these two nations. They defended themselves against the English claims concerning the fast French fashion cycle by what they perceived to be a British disdain for variety. The editors argued that the English did not need the continual diversity that the French *marchandes de modes* gave to their goods. To the editors the English demanded perfection from all their manufacturers and had a longing for selling said perfect goods that were already known to them and familiar. The French however – the editors remarked – had a lust for variation only made possible by a process of trial and error. They were content with this reality, noting: “La perfection nous ennuiroit sans doute”.<sup>110</sup>

Consequently a clear distinction between French and English fashions remained present within the formal construction of the magazines, with the editors mostly using separate chapters or subcategories to describe either or of those two fashions.<sup>111</sup> On the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1787 *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* published a plate of a woman dressed in fashionable English equestrian-inspired attire. The editors – aware of the cultural implications this representations held – openly asked the question exactly how French this way of dressing was and what – if any – adaptations had to be made in order for it to please its French wearers. They went on to remark:

L'émulation que nous avons dit devoir nécessairement exister entre deux Nations aussi voisines & aussi rivaux que la Nation Française & la Nation Angloise, a fait naître la Mode représentée dans la Planche Ire. Après que la Nation Angloise eut créé les redingotes Franco-Anglomanes, ou les redingotes d'hommes end raps, & qu'elle les eut vues adoptées par notre Nation, il fallout, pour le distinguer, qu'elle changeât l'extrême simplicité de ces redingotes, qu'elle la chargeât, qu'elle la décorât, qu'elle la rendît nouvelle par l'ornement qu'elle y ajoutoit. Que disowns-nous? Il fallout qu'elle imaginât des redingotes jusqu'alors inconnus, qu'elle montrât un esprit d'invention, que les François, toujours justement orgueilleux de leur conception, sembloient être en droit de lui contester. C'est pourquoi elle a inventé les redingotes de satin, garnies de peaux de martre, de peaux de renard, d'hermines, &c...<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Kam, “Masters of La Mode,” 14.

<sup>111</sup> In the majority of the issues published by the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* certain parts of the magazine are categorized under either “Modes Angloises” or “Modes Françaises”.

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 9 (1787): 81.

<sup>112</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 11 (1787): 81-82.

Whereas in this example the editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* were clear on the solution at hand for the Anglo-French fashion question, at other times they did not appear to have the same ardent answer. Only two issues before the fashion plate previously discussed was published the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* opened debate to all its readers, keeping the cultural conversation at the time alive:

Qui l'emporte pour le goût, des Dames Angloises ou des Dames Françaises ? qui fait mieux choisir ses couleurs, la forme de ses habits, la maniere de sa coëffure, l'uniformité ou l'ensemble de ses habillemens ? qui fait mieux parer tout son air, toute sa personne ? Nous laissons cette question à décider à tout le monde, & nous présentons pour objet de comparaison les deux Bustes de Femmes, représentés dans cette Planche [...].

This debate was published on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1787 alongside a fashion plate depicting two women in fashionable dress, however, the woman on the left – dressed in a pink and green striped satin dress – supposedly had to represent the French fashions of the day and the women on the right – depicted in a cappuccino coloured dress without a *fichu* attached at the front of the silhouette – was the example of English fashion (fig. 11). The editors of *the Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* were clear, however, in their analysis of both fashions on one thing : either sides went and copied the other on numerous occasions.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> The magazine details the dress of both women on the fashion plate, with the first woman on the left representing the French fashions and respectively the one on the right as the English example: “La Femme vêtue d’une robe de satin rose, à larges raies vertes, ne porte sur la tête que des *gazes* roses & noires *posées* en forme de pouf, & qu’une aigrette de plumes de diverses couleurs, qui lui retombent presque sur le front. [...] Cette Femme est frisée tout en grosses boucles détachées, faites à l’envers, ou tournées en dessous, au lieu des boucles tournées en dessus, comme les Dames de Paris les portent. Avouez que si c’est pour changer la Mode Française que les Dames de Londres ont adopté cette forme, elles n’ont point été heureuses dans leurs changemens. Cela peut les distinguer de nos Dames; mais cela les fera-t-il preferer? [...] La Seconde Femme, vêtue d’une robe en chemise de couleur capucine, ne porte, comme le première, que des *gazes posées* en pouf, & formant une *cocque* très-large pardevant. [...] Qui douteroit maintenant, en voyant ce dernier Buste, que les Angloises, & que les Anglois, si fiers de leur d’esprit inventation, & qui veulent se donner pour originaux, & jamais pour copies, qui craindroient sur-tout de nous suivre en rien; qui douteroit maintenant qu’ils nous ont imités? Robe en chemise, boucles à *la Plaquette*, plumes sur la tête, bouquet dans le corset: tout ne prouve-t-il pas que, lorsqu’ils inventent, ils nous copient? Mais, que leur orgueil n’en murmure pas, nous nous appliquons assez à les imiter; & pour une fois qu’ils prennent nos goûts, nous prenons cent fois les leurs, dans les objets où ils excellent.” *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 9 (1787): 65-71.





Fig. 11: A.B. Duhamel and Mitant, publisher Buisson, *Planche 2* depicting respectively the *modes Françaises* on the left and the *modes Anglaises* on the right, from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 9*, 1787, engraving on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

## 2.2.2. Imagery and imitation: Foreign imitators of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*

The *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*' popularity reached far and wide, with even the American Ambassador to France, Thomas Jefferson, being one of the magazine's illustrious subscribers. He was heard saying he "sent the fashion plates to feminine friends in America, and relayed goings on about Mademoiselle Rose Bertin, the dressmaker to Queen Marie-Antoinette".<sup>114</sup> This popularity however put the magazine on the international radar, consequently creating copycats far and wide.<sup>115</sup> In the course of the 1780s, European people – and especially women – in general could start to benefit from the availability of fashion magazines in their own native language. The initial spread and imitation – both somewhat legal and illegal – of French fashion periodicals was fundamental for this new age of fashion. Not only in the German states, the Netherlands or Belgium<sup>116</sup> but also in Russia, America and the Italian city states and provinces these developments paved the way for the boom of the fashion press during the nineteenth-century.<sup>117</sup> Whereas some fashion magazines – such as *The Fashionable Magazine* – agreed with the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* on the right to imitate or even completely take over fashion plates and content, not all imitators felt the need to stick to the rules. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1787 the editor of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* noted:

Nous déclarons expressément que nous n'avons aucun Associé à Liège, ni à Weimar en Saxe: cette declaration vaudra ce que de raison, & elle pourra être comprise par quelques-uns.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 79-80.

<sup>115</sup> Ghering- Van Ierlant, *Vrouwenmode in prent*, 26-27.

<sup>116</sup> Strictly speaking the modern concept of Belgium as a country only existed from its creation in 1830. At the time of the French Revolution the most part of what is now Belgian territory was then part of the Southern Netherlands.

<sup>117</sup> For a full estimate of the late eighteenth-century fashion magazines adapting or at least taking direct influence from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* these publications can be listed: in the German states *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* (published in Weimar, 1786 to approximately 1827), in the Netherlands *Kabinet van mode en smaak* (published in Haarlem, 1791-1794), in England *The Fashionable Magazine; or Lady's and Gentleman's Monthly Recorder of New Fashions* (published in London, 1786), in Russia *Lekarstvo ot skuki i zabor* (translated to *A Cure for Boredom and Anxiety*, published in Moskou, 1786-1787) and in Italy with the *Giornale delle nuove mode di Francia e d'Inghilterra* (published in Milan, 1786-1794) and the *Donna galante ed Erudita, giornale dedicato al bel sesso* (published in Venice, 1786-1788).

Xénia Borderioux, "Instruction in Eighteenth-Century Coquetry: Learning about Fashion and Speaking its Language," in *French and Russian in Imperial Russia: Language Use amongst the Russian Elite*, eds. Derek Offord et al. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 195.

<sup>118</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 31 (1787): 243.

The editors quickly started to feel the need to express their concern after imitators of the periodical had become increasingly popular abroad. From 1786 to 1827 in Weimar – modern day Germany – the fashion magazine *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* was published by an editor named Friedrich Justin Bertuch. On regular occasions the periodical would use fashion plates directly copied from those of the *Cabinet des Modes* (fig. 12). The editors of the magazine however did not appear to be ashamed by this stating “Ohne blosze Copisten von jenen zu sein”. They believed the fashion plates they created – made by the German in-house engraver Georg M. Kraus after the French drawings sent from France – to be an essential element in the spread of the newest French fashions towards their readers. Not only did the fashion itself and particular styles of dress interest the Weimar fashion press, the cultural influences in France was of their interest as well. The *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* wrote remarkably in one of their early publications: “Es ist ein Anzug der bey mademoiselle Bertin für die Groszfürstin von Rusland gemacht worden war, und den ich bey ihr an der Gliederpuppe zeichnete”.<sup>119</sup>

The cultural influences that were being eagerly adapted and appropriated by the magazine’s editors however, were not to everyone’s taste. Increasingly philosophers and writers – including some of Weimar’s most famous residents Johann Gottfried Herder and Johann Wolfgang Goethe – saw the cultural and social influences these French magazines could have as worrisome. They argued early on that the French magazine itself was not devoid of underlying political discourse and should therefore not be so casually adopted by the German people. Their apprehension nonetheless wasn’t well received as the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* in its early heyday alone sold 2250 monthly copies with a predicted readership of twenty-five thousand by the end of the century.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Ghering-Van Ierlant, *Mode in prent*, 41.

<sup>120</sup> Friedrich Justin Bertuch, Georg Melchior Kraus and Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, “Introduction to the Journal of Luxury and Fashion (1786),” *Cultural Politics* 12, no. 1 (2016): 23.





Fig. 12: Friedrich Justin Bertuch and Georg Melchior Kraus, *Band 1 & 2* from the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, 1786, etching on paper, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

In the Netherlands a similar popular endeavour was undertaken with the *Kabinet van Mode en Smaak* – roughly translated to the ‘Cabinet of Fashion and Taste’ – published from 1791-1794 in Haarlem.<sup>121</sup> The editor A. Loosjes derived its magazine’s name from the *Cabinet des Modes* and regularly used fashion plates directly adapted from those of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* (fig. 13-15). Whereas some magazines, such as the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, took the initial boost received from its alignment with French popular imagery to create a broad readership able to take them into the next century of fashion periodicals, some of these imitations were not as successful as others. The dependency of these magazines on their original adaptations became clear when around 1795 most French fashion periodicals had to close publication due to political circumstances, thus taking some of their foreign imitators with them. By the end of 1794 the *Kabinet van Mode en Smaak* had to announce that they too had to stop publication indefinitely. They expressed their sentiments to their readers in the form of a poem:

[...] Noch modepraal, noch klederpracht kan u bekoren.  
Op uwen ondergang houdt gij het oog gericht.  
En sluit thands voor vermaak uw oog en beurzen digt.  
Thands zou het dwaasheid zijn geliefde Landgenooten  
Indien wij in dezen staat ons Kabinet niet slooten.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Holland, *Hand Coloured Fashion Plates*, 57.;

Translates to: “Neither the pomp of fashion, nor the pageantry of dress is able to charm you. You keep an eye on your doom and shut then your eye and purse for entertainment. It would be folly, dearest countrymen, if we did not close our Kabinet in this state.” Unless otherwise noted, all translations from Dutch are my own.

<sup>122</sup> Ghering-van Ierlant, *Vrouwenmode in prent*, 29.

MODE-NIEUWS.

Het Vrouwenbeeld op de IXe Plaat, vertoont een Duitsch meisjen, gereed om uit wandelen te gaan, die zich een zeer eenvoudig toilet gemaakt heeft. Een fijn rood gevoerd stroochoedjen bedekt haar hoofd. De Linten die op het choedjen zijn, loopen op eene zeer losse wijze onder de Kin te famen. Voor het overige kan deze kleeding uitwijzen, tot welk een eenvoudigheid thands de kleeding der vrouwen is afgedaald. Een bewijs, zoo wij ons niet bedriegen, van den naderenden val van het rijk der Mode, dat door den val van de Monarchie in Frankrijk schijnt vooraf gegaan te zijn.



Fig. 13: A. Loosjes, publisher Adriaan Haarlem, *Mode Nieuws and fashion plate IX* from the *Kabinet van Mode en Smaak*, 1794, engraving and print on paper, Nationale Bibliotheek, Den Haag.





Fig. 14 & 15: A. Loosjes, publisher Adriaan Haarlem, *Fashion plate IV* from the *Kabinet van Mode en Smaak*, 1792, engraving and print on paper, Nationale Bibliotheek, Den Haag; A.B. Duhamel, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1* from the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût*, *Cahier 15*, 1792, engraving on paper, 12,9 x 19,3 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

A similar fate befell the southern neighbours of the Dutch imitation magazine. From 1786 to the end of 1787 in Liège, modern day Belgium, a fashion periodical was published under the name *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises*.<sup>123</sup> The magazine's approach, however, was less complicated than that of the other imitations. From the first days of its publication the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* did not only copy the fashion plates of the original French magazine but also completely took over its contents (fig. 16). Besides a slightly different cover and minor detailing – such as the convenient absence of the date of the publication – the magazine appeared to be completely similar in its production.<sup>124</sup> Each year 36 *cahiers* were published at a price of 27 livres for an annual subscription – and 30 livres for subscribers abroad – and were sold separately at a cost of 24 sols. The editor of the magazine revealed himself as “J.J. Tutot” and encouraged his readers to either subscribe to his publication in a number of *libraires* in Paris, or in the town of Liège.<sup>125</sup>

Although most of the editors of French imitation fashion periodicals were driven by the hopes of profitable returns and the promise of quick money and relatively little investment, some of them, arguably, were also instigated by political reasons.

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<sup>123</sup> Because of its relatively short lifespan and under-the-radar origins few examples of *the Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* have been recovered. Due to a donation the Modemuseum Hasselt, Belgium, has around thirty-five *cahiers* in its archives spanning both publication years as well as four examples of pocket books – sequentially from June to September 1788 – published under the same name. The pocketbooks, however, do not seem to follow the original French set-up of content and corresponding fashion plates and its poor quality and details question their authorship. All magazines in the archive of the Modemuseum Hasselt can be traced back to an eighteenth-century local countess (possibly a certain “Mademoiselle B.” or “Mademoiselle Beatrix/Beatrice”) whose descendants have kept her belongings. A note can be found on the titlepage of the 6<sup>th</sup> *cahier* published in 1787 by the imitation possibly mentioning or remarking on a link with the French king (see Appendix I). Besides the archives in Hasselt the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has some examples of loose fashion plates that can be traced back to the *Magasin des Modes Françaises et Angloises* as well.

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* 2, no. 6 (1787), 7.

<sup>124</sup> Not displaying dates on the published imitation was a way for the editors of these illegal magazines to avoid getting black-listed by the industry in lists of notorious *contrefaçons*. By doing this they remained under the radar for longer amounts of time and were able to continue their profitable publications.

François Moureau, *Les presses grises. La contrefaçon du livre (XVI<sup>e</sup> – XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Paris: Aux Amateurs de livres, 1988), 94.

<sup>125</sup> Ghering-van Ierlant, *Vrouwenmode in prent*, 227.;

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* 2, no. 6 (1787), 7.;

On page no. 7 of *cahier* 6, 1787, the information from the editor reads: “On souscrit à Paris. A Liege, chez J.J. Tutot, & comme principal Bureau, au Bureau des Postes Impériales de Liege où l'on souscrit pour L'Esprit des Journeaux, dédié à S.A.S. le Prince régnant de la Tour & Tassis, 12 vol. de près de 500 pag. Chacun ; & Journal Politique, 52 Cahiers par an.”

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* 2, no. 6 (1787), 7.

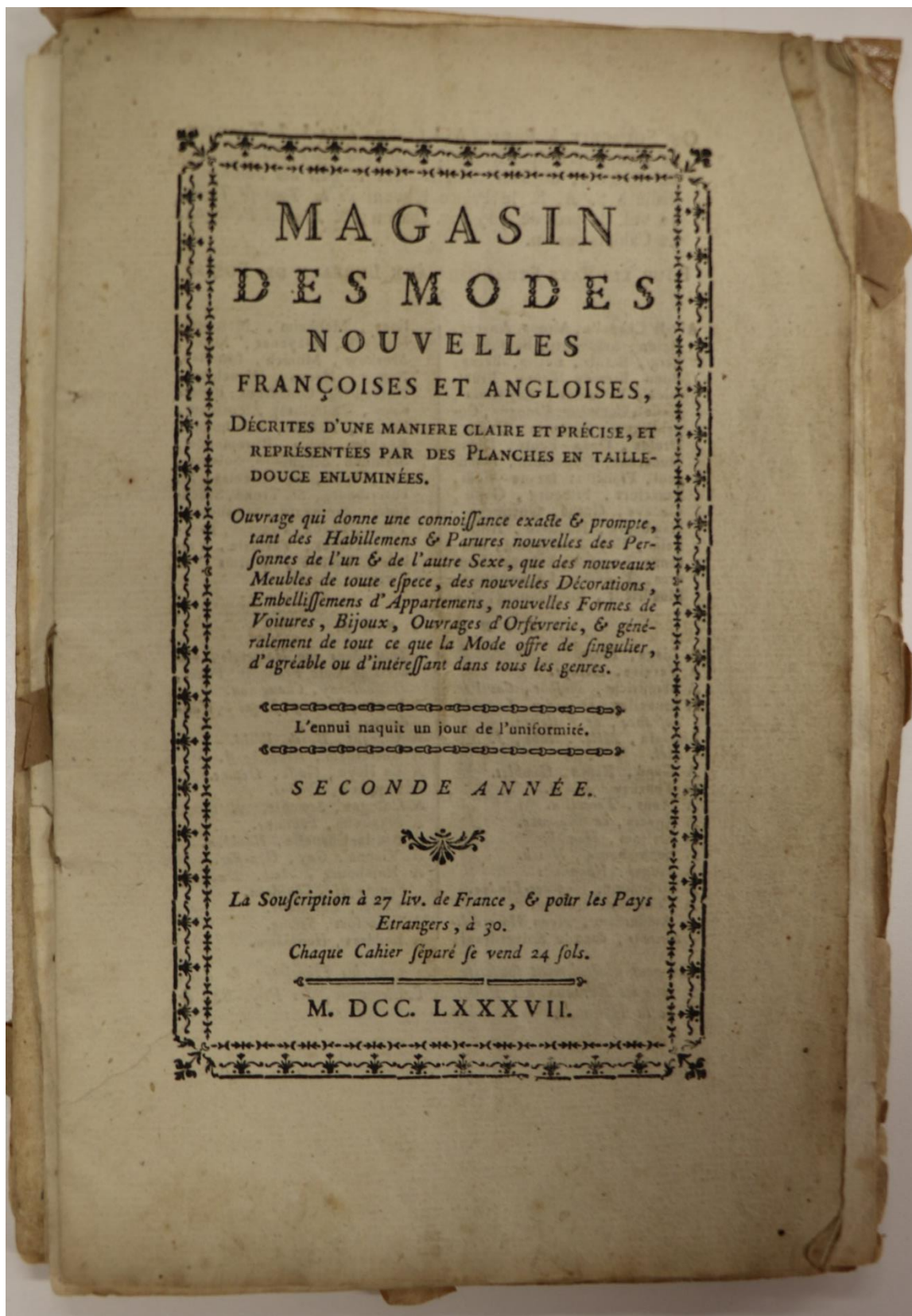


Fig. 16: Jean-Jacques Tutot, *Titlepage of the Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises Cahier 8*, 1787, print on paper, 13 x 20cm, Modemuseum Hasselt.



Jean-Jacques Tutot, born in 1741 and raised in Liège by parents of French descent, became famous throughout his lifetime as a political printer.<sup>126</sup> In his career he owned no less than thirty-three printing presses and had a large amount of workers employed. Mostly known for bundled collections of famous – often French – illegally copied articles and publications he was able to expand his wealth as well as to make current affairs available to a broader part of the public. His democratic aspirations would soon drive him towards printing political and even revolutionary contents.<sup>127</sup> These endeavours were only possible by the political and social climate present in Liège at the end of the eighteenth-century. When in 1772 a new leader was democratically elected of the Prince-Bishopric of Liège – named François-Charles de Velbrück (1719-1784) – a period of wealth and prosperity began.<sup>128</sup> Led by an enlightened and tolerant leader the people of Liège were allowed freedom of press and publication resulting in a boom of literary publications and periodicals.<sup>129</sup>

Tutot took great use of this period of prosperity and went on to publish his most famous work *L'Esprit des Journaux français et étrangers* in 1772 that existed – long after his death – until 1818.<sup>130</sup> The periodical – published in volumes each 168 pages long – was spread throughout Europe and garnered Tutot and his enterprise worldwide fame.<sup>131</sup> His political affinities and professional endeavours, nonetheless, were not without its dangers. In 1784 the enlightened ruler was replaced by another Prince-Bishop – Constantin de Hoensbroeck (1724-1792) – who immediately went on to nullify his predecessor's democratic changes.

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<sup>126</sup> Lily Portugaels, "Tutot, imprimeur, éditeur, capitaliste et révolutionnaire," last consulted on August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020, <https://www.lalibre.be/regions/liege/tutot-imprimeur-editeur-capitaliste-et-revolutionnaire-51b892ede4b0de6db9afa145>.

<sup>127</sup> Paul Delforge, "Jean-Jacques Tutot," last consulted on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2020, <http://connaitrelawallonie.wallonie.be/fr/wallons-marquants/dictionnaire/tutot-jean-jacques#.XyqbNp4zaUk>.

<sup>128</sup> At the end of the eighteenth-century the Prince-Bishopric of Liège was one of the most enlightened societies of Europe. Operating completely separate from the other parts that constitute modern day Belgium, they were able to establish democratic policies and protections. At the head of the nation was a Prince-Bishop elected by the Church and approved by the Pope and the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. The vast majority of social, cultural and political decisions however were made by the States-General – the governing body of the nation – which consisted of one third clergy, one third nobility and one third democratically elected representatives of the people. This system kept possible absolutist and tyrannical leaders from taking power and created liberties, for many unseen at that time in Europe.

Patricia Chastain Howe, *Foreign Policy and the French Revolution. Charles-François Dumouriez, Pierre Le Brun and the Belgian plan, 1789-1793* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 8.

<sup>129</sup> Daniel Droixhe, "La plume et le plomb. Journaux et journalistes au pays de Liège au temps de l'heureuse révolution de 1789," *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 70, no. 3 (1992): 785.

<sup>130</sup> Paul Delforge, "Jean-Jacques Tutot," last consulted on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2020, <http://connaitrelawallonie.wallonie.be/fr/wallons-marquants/dictionnaire/tutot-jean-jacques#.XyqbNp4zaUk>.

<sup>131</sup> Daniel Droixhe, *Une histoire des lumières au pays de Liège. Livre, idée, société, Liège* (Liège: Éditions de l'Université Liège, 2007), 192.

The press, after decades of freedom and possibility, took up its arms to defend – together with the people of Liège – their rights but was scrutinized and under imminent threat. By the summer of 1789 after years of unrest a Liège revolution had begun.<sup>132</sup> Tutot – as well as many other printers and publishers of the city – took a major role in the events by defending the written word: on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August 1789 the first issue of *his Le Journal Patriotique* came of his press.<sup>133</sup> In the years that followed – and the subsequent unrest in Liège as well as Brussels – Tutot kept on publishing revolutionary literature. In 1793, however, again under the rule of a new Prince-Bishop – François-Antoine de Méan (1756-1831) a sympathizer of the last ruler – Tutot found himself put on a dangerous black list for his revolutionary sympathies.<sup>134</sup> After a short stay in Paris, Tutot died on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1794 under suspicious circumstances. By then, however, his fame and name had proceeded him and his enterprise went on to publish more enlightened material in the following decades.<sup>135</sup>

Jean-Jacques Tutot and other publishers like him saw a French popular fashion magazine such as the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* as a vital part of spreading enlightened cultural, social and political ideas. By the end of the eighteenth-century the fashion press was a player and at the same time a co-creator of an increasingly rapid influx of communication between people and nations.<sup>136</sup> The format of the fashion periodical was unique in that it was relatively cheap to print – and especially to copy – , it consisted of multiple publications a year and was significantly cheaper than other genre of periodicals at the time – only increasing the fast spread of these magazines – and last but not least, its contents were often, certainly in its early days, seen as relatively harmless. Towards the end of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles'* lifetime, however, political thought had unavoidably crept into its pages.

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<sup>132</sup> Patricia Chastain Howe, *Foreign Policy and the French Revolution. Charles-François Dumouriez, Pierre Le Brun and the Belgian plan, 1789-1793* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 9-11.

<sup>133</sup> Paul Delforge, “Jean-Jacques Tutot,” last consulted on July 29<sup>th</sup> 2020, <http://connaitrelawallonie.wallonie.be/fr/wallons-marquants/dictionnaire/tutot-jean-jacques#.XyqbNp4zaUk>.

<sup>134</sup> Lily Portugaels, “Tutot, imprimeur, éditeur, capitaliste et révolutionnaire,” last consulted on August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020, <https://www.lalibre.be/regions/liege/tutot-imprimeur-editeur-capitaliste-et-revolutionnaire-51b892ede4b0de6db9afa145>.

<sup>135</sup> Paul Delforge, “Jean-Jacques Tutot,” last consulted on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2020, <http://connaitrelawallonie.wallonie.be/fr/wallons-marquants/dictionnaire/tutot-jean-jacques#.XyqbNp4zaUk>.

<sup>136</sup> Daniel Droixhe, ed. *L'Esprit des journaux: un périodique européen au xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Wavre: Le Cri, 2009), 8-9.



Despite the success of these foreign copies the editors of the French *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* did not regard imitation as the sincerest form of flattery. Early on they were vicious in their vocality towards these *contrefacteurs*.<sup>137</sup> The readers of the French magazine would be informed on multiple occasions on the stupidity of these imitators because by copying the contents of the magazines without much thought and mixing up fashions and certain periods of time or seasons they would inevitably deceive their public with false fashions. The editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* were therefor concerned that the dress being displayed in these *contrefaçons* were out of style – and thus inappropriate – by the time they reached their intended audience. Their plea read:

Que les Libraires de Weimar & de Liège, qui contrefont nos Cahiers, & qui ont juré de mentir à leurs Souscripteurs, en se montrant comme nos Correspondans, ne donnent que trois semaines après nous à leurs Abonnés cette représentation d'une homme à la chaffe, ainsi que nous sommes parfaitement instruits qu'ils la donneront, & encore mutilée, ce ne sera point pour les Abonnés un très-grand mal, à cause de la saison où cette représentation paroît, & parce que cette Mode n'est pas sujette à des variations successives & précipitées; mais le mal pour eux sera de ne recevoir les autres figures que trois semaines après nous, parce que la Mode que ces figures annonceront pourra être changée.<sup>138</sup>

Afterwards the editors remarked that the *contrefaçons* they had the chance to see in person, did not appear to have reached the same qualitative standards as the original and were being sold at the exact same price. Conclusively they noted: “Quel peut être l'avantage pour les Souscripteurs de ces Libraires, d'acheter les contrefaçons, qui, nous le dirons toujours, ne paroissent que trois semaines après nos Cahiers, & ne sont pas fidelles?”<sup>139</sup>

In the 12<sup>th</sup> cahier of the same year of publication the editors went in the defence again, admitting that for the sake of revenge they should just copy one of the Weimar fashion magazines, but that they were not even worth the attention they would receive.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> In the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* there is talk of *contrefacteurs* and *contrefaçon*. These terms, however, can be explained by a positive or equally a pejorative translation. The word *contrefaçon* is mentioned in in 1754 in the L'Encyclopédie D'Alembert as follows: “terme de librairie, qui signifie edition ou partie d'édition d'un livre contrefait, c'est-à-dire imprime par quelqu'un qui n'en a pas le droit, au prejudice de celui qui l'a par la propriété que lui en a cédée l'auteur; propriété rendue publique et authentique par le privilege du Roi, au autres lettres du Sceau équivalentes”.  
Moureau, *Les presses grises*, 7.

<sup>138</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 6 (1787), 45-46.

<sup>139</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 6 (1787), 46.

<sup>140</sup> The entire remark is put separately underneath a fashion plate description and reads: “Si nos dignes Contrefacteurs de l'Allemagne, qu'un de leurs tendres & féaux amis nous a conseillés obligeamment de prendre pour modèles (nous ignorons pourquoi), avoient trouvé quelque chose de nouveau & de digne d'être représenté, nous leur demanderions la permission de les contrefaire, pour nous revancher au moins une fois; mais las! leur conception, qui s'éloigne autant de la Mode

Much of the editors outcries, however, went without much notice. Earlier that year the magazine published another two-page long complaint towards their many imitators, specifically directing their attention towards those of Weimar and Liège and even calling out Tutot by name as the guilty *contrefacteur*.<sup>141</sup> Like all the objections made before by the editors in their French magazine, Tutot in his imitation copied the entirety of the contents – as well as his own conviction, by name – unbothered by its consequences.<sup>142</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth-century copyright laws had been put in place to protect authors as well as publishers and their content, however, these laws were often incomplete and due to both regional and federal jurisdictions tended to be complicated resulting in few real convictions. The case was even more hopeless when the illegal activity took place abroad and international policies were not put in place yet to combat these circumstances.<sup>143</sup>

Towards the end of 1787, in the first *cahier* of the new publication year, the editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* had found a way to combat the imitations. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of November they declared:

Vers la fin de l'Avis pour le renouvellement des Abonnemens, inféré dans le dernier Cahier, nous avons prévenu MM. Les Souscripteurs que désormais nos trois Planches seroient mises sur une même feuille, parce que cette invention nous paroissoit un bon moyen d'emêcher les contrefaçons, qui ne pourroient paroître que plus de six semaines après nous, si les contrefacteurs s'asservissoient à nous imiter, ainsi qu'ils le doivent; nous renouvelons ici cet Avertissemnt, que désormais nos trois Planches seront mises sur une même feuille, & pour les raisons énoncées, afin que ce nouveau proceed n'étonne point nos Souscripteurs; nous ne dison pas, asin qu'il ne les fâche point, parce qu'il doit leur être très-indifférent d'avoir les trois Planches sur trois feuilles, ou de les avoir sur une même. Ils sentient parfaitement qu'il ne doit pas nous l'être autant qu'à eux.<sup>144</sup>

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existante, n'a, dans ses hardis écarts, rien imaginé que nous puissions rapporter. Qui s'étonneroit de ce que ces Messieurs donnent leurs Cahiers à leurs Libraires à un prix moindre que le nôtre, lorsqu'il prennent, pour ainsi dire, les images de dessus les quais, pour les publier comme la Mode? On en sera encore bien moins surpris, lorsque l'on saura que leurs Planches ne sont gravées qu'à l'eau-forte, ce qui diminue leur prix de deux tiers de nôtres, qui sont gravées au burin & à la point sèche, & que leurs Enluminures sont à teinte plate, & tant soit peu retouchée."

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 12 (1787), 90-91.

<sup>141</sup> A small note is made on the bottom of the page that says: "C'est le sieur *Tuttot*, Libraire, qui contrefait nos Cahiers à Liège".

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 2, no. 4 (1787), 28.

<sup>142</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* 2, no. 4 (1787), 6.

<sup>143</sup> Chris Schriks, *Het kopijrecht : 16de tot 19de eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2004), 42-49/183.

<sup>144</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 3, no. 1 (1787), 1-2..

By presenting three plates on one foldable sheet of paper they realised that it would now be nearly impossible for these *contrefacteurs* to imitate the magazine as quickly as before (fig. 17).<sup>145</sup> For the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* – who had always copied the fashion plate directly by mirroring the original, leaving out the signatures below the figures and colouring by hand afterwards – these changes were too complicated and expensive for them to continue their enterprise (fig. 18-19).<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Kam, “Masters of La Mode: Representations of Women in the French Fashion Press, 1785-99,” (Master dissertation, University of Hawai’i Mānoa, 2017), 10.

<sup>146</sup> The *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* was trying to adapt to the new changes the editors of the original *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* had made to the fashion plates. By recycling old original fashion plates and reusing them as one part of a double spread the editors of the imitation attempted to keep up with the quick formal changes (Appendix II).



Fig. 17: A.B. Duhamel and Desrais, publisher Buisson, Early example of three plates presented on one foldable sheet, Planche 1, 2 & 3 from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 1*, 1787, engraving on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.



Fig. 18 & 19: Jean-Jacques Tutot, *Planche Premier* from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises Cahier 2*, 1787, engraving on paper, 13 x 20cm, Modemuseum Hasselt ; A.B. Duhamel and Desrais, publisher Buisson, *Planche Premier* from the original *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises Cahier 2*, 1787, engraving on paper, 11,9 x 19,8cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

The magazine ended its full-size publications and appeared to have continued with pocket magazines, possibly to save money or to avoid further legal repercussions. The pocket magazine – of which only four examples seem to have been published in the summer months of 1788 – can be traced back, however, quality seemed to have declined, with the negligent colouring of the foldable or split-up plates as an example, and their content was derived from the original French magazine dating weeks or even months back (fig. 20-21).<sup>147</sup> These poignant changes – as well as no doubt the increasingly arduous life events of its editor – seemed to be the end of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises*.

The French editors, on the other hand, seemed to appreciate these changes. Now, for the first time, it was possible to display figures in relation to each other. This narrative element created a possibility to create stories, lifting these initial fashionable images with little subtext to tools of communication. The editors now found themselves in the unique position to visualize political, cultural and social commentary by the trusted and popular medium of the fashion plate. Increasingly the magazine became a tool to voice the underlying currents of the day, in a seemingly innocent manner.<sup>148</sup> It's neighbouring country – as well as business partner – the *Fashionable Magazine*, however, looked suspiciously to the magazine's rapid changes.

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<sup>147</sup> There are many examples of the editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* adapting a wide two-part fashion plate featuring an interior scape into their pocket magazine, copying the original plate – mirroring it in the process – and making it into a three-part foldable for their imitation published three weeks after the original. The Pocket magazine was published in June of 1788 and featured a total of seven plates all imitations from the original magazines published a month earlier, May 1788 (Appendix III).

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* 3, no. 18 (1788), Planche premier.

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises* 3, no. 6 (1788), Planche 5.

<sup>148</sup> Ghering-Van Ierlant, *Mode in prent*, 41.





Fig. 20 & 21: Jean-Jacques Tutot, cut up fashion plate in one part, *Planche 4* from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises Cahier 6*, 1788, engraving on paper, 7 x 10cm , Modemuseum Hasselt;

A.B. Duhamel and Defraine, publisher Buisson, three-part plate, *Planche 1,2 & 3* from the original *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises Cahier 17*, 1788, engraving on paper, 31,5 x 17,3 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

Fashion plates were an essential element of the fast spread of new Anglo-French styles adopted by the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* by the end of the eighteenth-century. With its wide array of publications and broad adaptation throughout Europe the French fashion press was seen to be culturally dominant. Due to France's governing system – where subsequently the publishing system was influenced greatly by elites and not so much made *by and for* the broader public audience – towards the end of the century Britain had start to looking increasingly suspicious towards France's periodical products.<sup>149</sup> The French (fashion) press was seen vulnerable to the comprehensive government regulations – including the certain use of advertising – and was thus linked to France's political system. Consequently, the press' lower individualistic and democratic tendencies created mistrust amongst it's European neighbours. By the end of the 1780s a culture of fear had been spread throughout Britain concerning the cultural and social influence France's periodical press could create at home. The escalation of violence during the French Revolution and the subsequent philosophical and literary spread of French ideas intensified this mutual anxiety and antagonism that was already present.<sup>150</sup> The British were right in assessing that even the French fashion magazines were not exempt from the political circumstances taking place, noting that their content became increasingly politicized. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 1789 the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* declared that the English-style redingote was still very popular however a minor addition ought to be made:

La femme représentée dans cette planche est vêtue d'une redingote de draps écarlate, garnie de très-larges boutons d'acier polis, unis ou travaillés, à la volonté, &, par-dessous cette redingote, d'un jupon de *drap blanc*. Cet accoutrement rentre autant qu'il est possible dans l'uniforme national.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> The English-language publishing system (encompassing Britain and America) can be seen by the end of the eighteenth-century as less dominated by the elite parts of society than that in France. Not only did the journalists and editors appear to have been more representative of the public at the time, so was its audience as well. It has been estimated that by the end of the eighteenth-century 55 to 60 percent of the male population was literate (with the figure for America to reach close to 80 percent) unlike in France where the figure barely reached 40 percent. The French press, undoubtedly as a product of its political and societal influences at the time, appears to have been supported with a larger margin by aristocrats and the high-ranking figures of the middle classes who's tastes followed suit with that of the upper classes.

Stephen Botein, Jack R. Censer and Harriet Ritvo, "The Periodical Press in Eighteenth-century English and French Society: A Cross-Cultural Approach," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* vol. 23, no. 3 (1981): 472-476.

<sup>150</sup> Angela Wright, *Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764-1820: The Import of Terror* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 63-65.

<sup>151</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 36 (1789): 282.



Where *The Fashionable Magazine* was initially able to look at its French partner with a certain level of wariness but nonetheless reverence and appreciation, less than a decade later the French periodical product had become downright dangerous. By 1790 an end had come to the fairly amical relationship between the two magazines and the two went their separate ways. For the English however too much had changed across the pond to even consider a similar endeavour in the future. In 1793 the *Gentleman's magazine* – one of Britain's leading popular periodicals – had expressed their concern for its readers, asserting that they believed the British people to be “too intellectually generous to be alert to the venom of poison mysteriously prepared by the malignant silence of assassins”. By 1793 the public protest against the French Revolution had increasingly moved away from a political and constitutional argument towards a predominantly cultural and social complaint. In that short amount of time, the shared venture of the fashion magazines, looking back, now seemed outlandish.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Wright, *Britain, France and the Gothic*, 67.

### 2.3. Fashioning the Revolution: *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* (1790-1793)

Lorsque quatre-vingt Députés à l'Assemblée Nationale, qui tenoient ses Séances à Versailles, vinrent à Paris, après la prise de la Bastille, annoncer que le Roi se rendroit le lendemain à l'Hôtel-de-Ville, qu'il renvoyait les Troupes qui investissoient la Capitale & l'Assemblée Nationale, que la paix étoit faite entre lui & ses Sujets, & qu'il vouloit l'annoncer lui-même à ses braves Parisiens, le Peuple changea ses cris ordinaires de Vive le Roi, en ceux de Vive la Nation: il confound aujourd'hui ces deux fortes de cris, & les profere ou ensemble, ou successivement; cette Nation, qui avoit montré tant de courage, qui venoit de conquérir sa liberté, méritoit ces explosions du coeur, ces souhaits qui ne sont que des felicitations mutuelles, qu'elle exprimoit avec tant d'enthousiasme [...]

- *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises*, 1789.

On December 1<sup>st</sup> 1789 the editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* left nothing to the imagination when they published these first-page words directed to their readers. Only a few months after the fall of the Bastille France had drastically changed and what earlier on might not have been the explicit political rhetoric the magazine was known for, now had become part of France's – and the press' – new reality.<sup>153</sup> Impossible to ignore the unfolding events, national interest had now become centre-stage and the French (fashion) press followed suit. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of December – barely two issues after that publication – the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* suddenly without a real announcement or notice ceased to exist.<sup>154</sup>

The thirty-sixth and last issue of the periodical was filled with the political content it had built up throughout the months preceding its final publication. The visualisation of fashion through fashion plates had been used by the editors in previous issues to steadily inject patriotic sentiments, and now – with the use of three-part fashion plates – the narrative could be told even more clearly. In the final publication of the magazine under its name the editors gave information and advice on how to incorporate national symbols into one's wardrobe while still being *à la mode*. They instructed, for example, on the use of wearing the *tricolore* in their everyday styles, remarking: “L'on ne peint pas toujours les trois couleurs nationales sur les rubans & sur les étoffes dont se parent nos Dames: communément on ne met que deux couleurs, que l'on amalgame de la manière la plus convenable. C'est le bleu & le blanc; c'est le rouge & le blanc; c'est le bleu & le rouge que l'on joint ensemble”.

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<sup>153</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 34 (1789): 265-266.

<sup>154</sup> Madeleine Delpierre, *Se vêtir au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Société Nouvelle Adam Biro, 1996), 180.

The woman represented on the first plate on the left depicted the editors favourite combination: blue and white, because it was clear in its patriotic intentions while still being fashionable and in season (fig. 22).<sup>155</sup>

The narrative power of the three-part fashion plate, however, meant that visually these two colours corresponded with the woman on the right, dressed in a bright red *redingote*. Where the fashionable styles of those women might have been seen as relatively subtle in their intent, the dress of the women centre-stage, however, left nothing to the imagination. From top to bottom she was adorned in bows, trimmings and *cocardes* in the three national colours. The silhouettes itself, nonetheless, appeared to be more subdued than the fashions of months earlier and the use of solid colours – remarkably the use of a black hat, a colour considered masculine and not usually depicted in women’s fashion plates at the end of the eighteenth-century – as well as the absence of extensive trimmings and accessories which had historically made French fashion instantly noticeable by the *marchandes de modes*’ love and use of it.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 36 (1789): 279-280.

<sup>156</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 36 (1789): 281-282.



Fig. 22: A.B. Duhamel and Defraîne, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1, 2 & 3* from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 36*, 1789, engraving on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

For a period of approximately two months no real fashion content came from French soil and against the harrowing backdrop of the French Revolution it could be understood that none would appear for a while as well. Notwithstanding the all-encompassing events of the revolution on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1790 a new fashion magazine arose. The *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* on closer inspection seemed to be the continuation of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* – both closely related in format, content and featured artists and writers (fig. 23).<sup>157</sup> The periodical appeared every ten days and was published thirty-six times a year.<sup>158</sup> The contents were similar to that of its predecessor, however, more attention was made towards literary texts and cultural exploits such as book- and theatre reviews. The price of an annual subscription held up at 30 livres and the magazine could also be bought for half a year at a price of 15 livres. The subscription, similarly to that of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*, could be made in Paris at the *imprimeur-libraire* François Buisson who had seemingly changed address and was now located at rue Hautefeuille, Hôtel de Coëtlosquet, no. 20. To obtain the magazine readers could also go to London, and subscribe with Joseph de Boffe, a French *libraire*, located on Gerard-Street no. 7 in Soho, who published three or four days after the original French periodical.<sup>159</sup>

Unlike the many similarities, the *Journal de la Mode & du Goût* was clearly distinctive from its predecessor as well. The title page read the same statement towards “une connoissance exacte & prompte” of fashion but the editors felt the need to add a new important remark:

On y joint les Costumes des principaux Personnages des Pieces nouvelles jouées sur les grands Théâtre de la Capitale, & les Airs nouveaux, Romances & Ariettes, des Compositeurs Français & Italiens les plus distingués.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Ghering-van Ierlant, *Vrouwenmode in prent*, 28.

<sup>158</sup> The most extensive compilation of the magazine can be found at the Lipperheidesche Bibliothek in Berlin, short of three cahiers all of the published examples are bundled there. An almost equally comprehensive collection is at the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Other libraries containing examples of the early published magazine are the bibliothèque de l'Opéra de Paris, the Staatsbibliothek in Munich and the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal possesses all of the February cahiers of 1790. Some libraries, such as Musée Carnavalet, the Palais Galliera or the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam have separate fashion plates in their collections. Kleinert, *La Mode*, 75.

<sup>159</sup> “Le *Journal de la Mode & du Goût*, forme trente-six Cahiers par année. Il en paroît un tous les dix jours, avec deux Planches en taille-douce eluminées, deux pages *in-4°*. de Musique, & huit pages *in-8°*. de Discours. Le prix est de 30 liv. pour l'abonnement d'une année, *franc de port par la Poste*, & de 15 l. pour 6 mois”.

*Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 1 (1790): 7-8.

<sup>160</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 1 (1790): 1.

N<sup>o</sup>. ( 1 )



**L**E Printems n'est pas loin de nous; encore un mois, & les Modes vont renaître en abondance avec la saison nouvelle; en attendant, nous consacrons les Planches de nos deux premiers Cahiers à la représentation des dernières de cet hiver.

N<sup>o</sup>. I. Une femme vêtue d'un *Caraco* rayé de bleu foncé & de bleu clair; un petit bord rouge regne tout - au - tour, en forme de galon; jupon de fatin blanc avec un bord très-large, couleur *bleu de ciel*.

Sur ses épaules, au lieu de Mantelet, un

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Fig. 23: Jean Antoine Brun, publisher Buisson, *Titlepage of the Journal de la Mode et du Gout ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette Cahier 1, 1790*, print on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.



Whereas the *Magasin de Modes Nouvelles* previously had also shown a great interest in the broader cultural products of the day – such as theatre plays and literary essays – the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* seemed to have shifted its attention towards half fashion and half other cultural content, with the two nonetheless occasionally overlapping. Only two fashion plates were published – with a shift from depicting mainly women’s dress and sporadically men’s and children’s fashions to now around half men and women and almost no representation of children’s dress – the third plate was reserved for a musical piece. The increased attention in men’s fashion was directed mostly, however, to the uniforms of the day, with an entire spread in one of the issues about the military dress of the National Guard or by showing citizen men in the simple dress *à la Révolution*.<sup>161</sup> The fashion plates were not signed by their artist of the drawing or the engraving and were to a certain extent of lesser quality as those previously published by the *Cabinet des Modes* or the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*. Original designs could be seen to be recycled and adapted slightly to the new fashions of the time, resulting in fashion plates that appeared to be almost entirely similar.<sup>162</sup> On the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 1790 the magazine published a fashion plate almost entirely a direct copy of the plate published in the premier cahier on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February. Now, however, the simple black *habit à la Révolution* of the man was substituted for a bright yellow and red satin ensemble as well as a black hat with *cocarde*. The woman depicted on the right seemed to have adorned her hat with a *cocarde* as well (fig. 24-25).<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> On the first *cahier* of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût*, published on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 1790, the editors depict a woman and man dressed in the latest the *modes nouvelles*. The woman, featured under N° 1, wears a *Caraco rayé* made out of dark- and light blue satin trimmed with a small red braided border as well as a white satin petticoat with a light blue border. The man is dressed in a black *habit à la Révolution*, his coat adorned with silver buttons shaped after the look of a diamond as well as a bright red cashmere *gilet*, yellow cashmere culottes, white silk stockings and a large white pleated *cravatte*. A single diamond pin is passed through the man’s *cravatte* to “fait porter la tête haute, & donne à cet homme un air de resolution”. The editor goes on to remark in a note at the bottom of the page: “On est également à la mode avec cet accoutrement, en portant des Culottes de Casimir noir & des Bas de soie noirs” to remind their audience again that the colour black – unlike in the previous decades – had now very much become fashionable.

*Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 1 (1790): 1-2.

<sup>162</sup> Ghering-Van Ierlant, *Mode in prent*, 44.

<sup>163</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 12 (1790): 1-2.





Fig. 24-25: A.B. Duhamel, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1&2* from the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette Cahier 1*, 1790, engraving on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France;

A.B. Duhamel, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1 & 2* from the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette Cahier 12*, 1790, engraving on paper, 18,7 x 24,3 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

The fashion displayed in the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* by that time had become completely ingrained by political thought and in every issue published in the first year of the magazine (1790-1791) the dress, the hat or accessories would be a display of national pride and French citizenship. The question of how fashion could benefit the revolution and what the consequences likewise of those events meant for *la mode* was asked by the editors. The second *cahier* of the magazine dared to pose the question:

Le commencement de la révolution n'a pas donné naissance à beaucoup de modes nouvelles, et sur ce chapitre les Dames ont paru assez indifférentes. Aujourd'hui leur goût commence à se réveiller, et un grand nombre d'elles se montrent patriotes, en adoptant les couleurs de la Nation.

[...] On voit, par le mélange du rose, du blanc et du bleu, que l'habillement et la coëffure des deux femmes de ce cahier, peuvent, à juste titre, être appelés *patriotiques*.<sup>164</sup>

Still feeding of the early enthusiasm of the Fall of the Bastille on July 14<sup>th</sup> 1789 as well as the 'abolition of feudalism' on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August, the fashion being proposed in these plates was outgoing and creative. The terms used to discuss the styles – which had always been important verbal tools of communication for the fashion press – left nothing to the imagination.<sup>165</sup> From *Chapeau à la Triomphe* and *Lit à la Révolution* to *Pierrot à l'égalité*; fashion terms and their corresponding styles were means to express the revolutionary thought French society had become rampant with.<sup>166</sup>

The ephemeral nature of the fashion press – by the beginning of the 1790s the production of content and the spread of information had certainly accelerated – made it the perfect mode of communication for the heightened rapid political climate. When religious houses were being disbanded throughout 1790 the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* was quick on their feet. Depicting a *robe à la Vestale*, the editors visualized the new dress for a nun who had been 'freed by the Revolution'. The women depicted wore white resembling the Vestal Virgin of old Roman times, while at the same time adorned with fine golden buckles and 'passion'-hairstyle with numerous rows of curls forming a headdress similar to that of the ancient goddess Diana. When the initial euphoric effects of the early days of Revolution had worn off and a large part of the public started to oppose it, the fashion magazines adapted these rapid societal changes.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 2 (1790): 18-19.

<sup>165</sup> Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 81.

<sup>166</sup> Ghering-Van Ierlant, *Mode in prent*, 44.

<sup>167</sup> Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 81.

The magazine's predecessors had visualized and verbalized that taste no longer needed to be dictated by men and women of the elites. Towards the final decades of the eighteenth-century it was made clear that the French fashion economy was organized around gender and nationality. Therefore taste – associated more broadly with manners and morality – played an essential part during the fashionable displays of the Revolution. By propagating that fashion was the materialization of taste it therefore not only had historical precedent – thus not being a vice of the modern world – but could also be seen as natural human product. Fashion became an essential part of the national, political and cultural experience and served as a strong tool for the new France the public had in mind.<sup>168</sup> However much puzzling to understand the sartorial extravagance displayed by the fashion magazines at a time of great political ambiguity and uncertainty – as well as the rejection of the former opulence of the elites – the *Journal de la mode et du Goût* voiced the public's demand in fashion.<sup>169</sup>

Not only was the fashion revolutionary, so was the rest of the magazine's content as well. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1790, in the *Premier Cahier*, the editor added an anecdotal humorous story – not unlike the editors before him – however, here the message couldn't be more clear:

M. le Dauphin apprend à lire dans la *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme*, Le Roi lui demandoit, il n'y a pas long-tems, s'il avoit déjà retenu quelque chose.

- Qui, mon Papa. Je sais que les hommes sont *égaux*, & qu'ainsi tous les Français sont des hommes comme moi.

- Cela est vrai.

- Oh, j'en suis bien persuadé, quoique tous les jours, *là-haut*, j'entende dire le contraire par l'Archevêque de..., l'Evêque de..., le Duc de..., le Comte de..., & presque toutes les Dames de la Cour.

- Ces gens-là se trompent, mon fils

- En ce cas, mon cher Papa, vous devriez bien leur ordonner d'apprendre à lire dans la *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme*.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 194-196.

<sup>169</sup> Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 82.

<sup>170</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 1 (1790): 7.

From early on the editor of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* made it clear what type of fashion magazine he wanted – and felt the needed – to publish at the time. Jean Antoine Brun (1760-1837) – also known as Le Brun-Tossa – who had been the editor of the *Cabinet des Modes* and an important contributor to the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*, had a different vision in mind for what he wanted the magazine to become.<sup>171</sup> On first glance, the transformation of the title had made his intentions immediately visible. Most likely adapted from the 1768 cultural journal *Courrier de la mode ou Journal du goût* – which at times published imagery of fashion as well but however did not have the characteristics of the later fashion magazines – Le Brun-Tossa thought the title to be an appropriate one amidst one minor alteration; he replaced ‘ou’ (or) with ‘et’ (and). By the end of the eighteenth-century it had become evident for the editor that a magazine of fashion had now become a magazine of taste and that where previously the frivolity of fashion had been seen as its main wrongdoing, now fashion became elevated to the realm of cultural, social and even political style. As an exceptional example of his time’s changed attitude towards the fashion press, Le Brun-Tossa wanted to enlarge the function of the fashion periodical from merely reporting on the latest fashionable styles to a real form of art.<sup>172</sup>

Unlike its predecessors the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* advertised on its title page who had the editorial lead of the magazine. Le Brun-Tossa’s own image as a forefront revolutionary was essential to the magazines view on fashion and taste throughout the French Revolution. As much as the periodical aimed at fashionable readers interested in the latest *mode*, by 1790 political and societal changes had become unremovable from the cultural sphere and the audience’s change of view needed to be reflected in the periodicals they read as well.<sup>173</sup> Buisson had taken Le Brun-Tossa on to boost subscription and trusted in the editor’s quick wit and fast pen to engage new readers to buy the magazine. Le citoyen Le Brun – as he was liked to be called – was a supporter of the Girondin revolutionary faction and by then had already garnered great fellowship with his pro-revolutionary writings. Following his earlier endeavours Le Brun-Tossa injected the fashion magazine with a dose of enlightened literature, revolutionary thought and witty descriptions on the new matching fashions of the day.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Marie Galvez, “Bibliographie de la littérature française (XVIe – XXIe siècles),” *Revue d’Histoire littéraire de la France*, 2013: 662.

<sup>172</sup> Miller, “Taste, Fashion and the French Fashion Magazine,” 18.

<sup>173</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 1 (1790): 1.

<sup>174</sup> Kleinert, *La Mode*, 84-85.

He was able, however, to ridicule the fashion's rapidly changing styles at the time of publication and saw them as a worthy source for a little light-hearted amusement. Using the satirical rhetorical literary methods popular in the eighteenth-century – which Le Brun-Tossa was familiar with throughout his substantial revolutionary writings – *la mode* became an ideal target. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 1789 the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* published a text written by Le Brun-Tossa on a new style of hat that represented the three estates (fig. 26). The journal satirically commented:

Cette origine nous promet une longue suite de modes nouvelles, sur-tout si, à augurer par cette nouveauté, on retrace chaque point essentiel de la Constitution établie & décrétée.<sup>175</sup>

Le Brun-Tossa pointed out the ridiculousness of fashion that celebrated and commemorated current political events and took the practice to an extreme by remarking that the *marchandes de modes* of Paris would “soon be making hats to comment on each article of the new constitution”.<sup>176</sup> The women's hat depicted on the fashion plate was adorned with an embroidered traversed sword, spade and crosier to symbolize the unity of the Three Estates. Not uncommonly hats – as was the case already decades before – had been the echoes of current societal events in the French fashion magazine of which the *marchandes de modes* had free range of adding *cocardes*, *tricolore* feathers and other national symbols.<sup>177</sup> So it became common for satirical commentary on hats as well as the latest essays on the constitution to be published simultaneously on consecutive pages in the fashion magazine. This was an entirely deliberately choice by the editor. Fashion, taste and the latest styles were as culturally important as the newest revolutionary review, even if they fell victim to ridicule once in a while.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 29 (1789): 228.

<sup>176</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 188-189.

<sup>177</sup> There are many examples of revolutionary dress represented just after the main events of the French Revolution unfolded in the magazine. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1789 the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* publishes a fashion plate depicting two silver buckles and the dress of a man and woman. The man is depicted as a member of the National Guard and wears the appropriate uniform, as well as a *tricolore cocarde* on his hat (Appendix IV).

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 30 (1789): 233-236.

<sup>178</sup> Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 81.





Fig. 26: A.B. Duhamel and Defraigne, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1, 2 & 3* from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 29*, 1789, engraving on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

As Annemarie Kleinert described in her publication *La Révolution et le premier journal illustré en France*, the period from 1790 until 1793 – when the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* eventually ceased to exist – could be categorized as a time of devout enthusiasm and patriotism when the editors of these magazines saw the opportunity for an unprecedented freedom of publication. Notwithstanding the all-encompassing effects of the revolution, the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* had garnered a wide loyal following and for a period of over three years was able to publish the latest fashion news. By the second half of the first year of publication, however, cracks had already started to appear in the perfect façade and Le Brun-Tossa – in many ways disappointed by the many unfulfilled promises of the Revolution, started to slowly diminish his political content.<sup>179</sup>

By the autumn of 1790 public unrest had become rampant again in France and many pro-revolutionaries had slightly started to change their demeanour towards the imminent societal collapse. Le Brun-Tossa – disappointed by the course of events – chose to no longer denounce the representatives of the nobility or clergy in his publication and even stopped devoting a line to the 14<sup>th</sup> of July festivities that took place in 1791 and 1792. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of April the editor cited a poem by Horace in the pages of his magazine, in hope of evoking feelings of moderation and peace among his audience. Fearing further turbulence of events he no longer wished to add to the fuel by showing extreme revolutionary fashions and adapted his fashion plates to depict more subdued styles.<sup>180</sup> On the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, in the thirty-third issue of the magazine, Le Brun-Tossa described the changing fashion he wished to display:

Les couleurs fortes et tranchantes plaisent plus que jamais aux femmes de qualité; elles associent le blanc ou noir, au rouge au jaune, au jaune, au brun foncé, au bleu ciel, etc. ces couleurs s'appellent symboliques. Il est cependant quelques costumes adoucis, qu'on appelle modérés [...]<sup>181</sup>

The subdued colours of pink, white and green contrasted enormously with the palette that had been displayed in previous issues of the magazine. In the months and years of publication that followed fewer and fewer descriptions of fashion were being published by the editor in general, however, those that were being published, caught attention as they appeared completely opposite to extreme revolutionary rhetoric previously portrayed.

Le Brun-Tossa was subtle in his convictions but made it nonetheless clear that he stood in solidarity with those who had a desire for a halt to the endless period of turmoil.<sup>182</sup> On May 25<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Kam, "Masters of La Mode," 126.

<sup>180</sup> Kleinert, *La Mode*, 88.

<sup>181</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 33 (1792): 1-2.

<sup>182</sup> Kleinert, *La Mode*, 88.



1791 the editor depicted “un jeune homme costume à la contre-révolution”. The figure was dressed in a black simple coat, a yellow waistcoat, green *culottes*, white silk stockings and a muslin tie.<sup>183</sup> The styles depicted in the magazine had increasingly become a reflection of the societal terror taking place in France around 1791. That same year on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October a fashion plate was published depicting a man dressed in moderate clothing and accessories. One of these happened to be a club he was holding in his right hand, intended to defend himself. The editor remarked on the matter:

Depuis quelque temps nos jeunes gens se sont transformés en Hercules, et c’est une chose plaisante de voir leur foible bras trainer une lourde massue, qui jusqu’à présent de leur a servi qu’à tuer des mouches et à faire peur aux enfans. Les circonstances où nous sommes ont donné lieu à cette fanfaronade [...]<sup>184</sup>

Later that year, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December, the magazine depicted *une robe à la Coblantz* made out of black silk (fig. 27).<sup>185</sup> Like in the previous years of publication the verbalization of these styles as well as their visualisation were extremely important and names such as *à la Triomphe* and *à la Coblantz* were being used as instant catchphrases. In this fashion plate the title of the style of dress referred to certain towns – such as Coblantz – on the German border with France that served as refugee centres for those escaping the Revolution. The woman depicted on the fashion plate wears a red overdress and shoes trimmed with black satin reminiscent, adds the editor, of the blood and grief that the revolutionary persecution had caused. The white gloves alluded to the innocence of these victims.<sup>186</sup> The editor lastly added as well: “collier forme d’un simple ruban nakara”, which appeared as a red line to symbolize where the guillotine was supposed to fall.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 10 (1791): 1.

<sup>184</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 23 (1791): 1.

<sup>185</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 31 (1791): 2.

<sup>186</sup> Kleinert, *La Mode*, 88.

<sup>187</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 31 (1791): 2.



Fig. 27: A.B. Duhamel and Jean Antoine Brun, publisher Buisson, *Robe à la Coblentz*, *Planche 2* from the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette Cahier 31*, 1791, engraving on paper, 11,2 x 19,6 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

A similar rhetoric – in a subdued but often sarcastic manner – can be found in the magazine during the third year of publication. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1792 the editor depicted a Catholic bishop's costume that had become increasingly fashionable and that could be reminded of the dress of a prelate. With his statement it became clear that the earlier sentiments of hatred towards the clergy had now slowly started to subside. With the publication of these types of dress, the magazine deliberately made a statement, echoing the feelings of many readers at the time.<sup>188</sup>

On June 20<sup>th</sup> 1791 – in a series of escalations that would set off the reign of Terror- king Louis XVI fled to Varennes in order to escape prosecution.<sup>189</sup> The editor of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* did not comment on those events, however, did publish a fashion plate on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July depicting a *coiffure à la Louis XIV*.<sup>190</sup> A similar moment occurred when on the first August of 1792 – just before the looting of the Tuileries Palace – the periodical commented on the new fashionable hairstyle and style of dress worn by the queen, whose fashionable outfit – noted Le Brun-Tossa – deserved proper attention by depicting it in a fashion plate.<sup>191</sup> The editor's unwavering attachment to the king and his political beliefs might have been subtle through the means of his silence, however, the styles of dress being were surprisingly symbolic in their statement. Unlike the early months when Le Brun-Tossa had written and edited for the magazine, now, his affinities had become much more subtle and the content – besides the small remarks and description of styles – reflected his subdued emotions.

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<sup>188</sup> Kleinert, *La Mode*, 88.

<sup>189</sup> Peter McPhee, *The French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2001), n.p.

<sup>190</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 16 (1791): 1.

<sup>191</sup> If the editors of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* thought it to be worthwhile to show the fashions adopted by Queen Marie-Antoinette by 1792 this was partly because of the Queen's ardent continuation in wearing those styles. Even after the royal family was forced to flee to Varennes in 1791 the sovereign was still ordering new sophisticated dresses from her *marchande de modes* Rose Bertin. Although it appeared to be only half of her normal yearly expenditures, Marie-Antoinette's clothing bill for 1791 was still nearly 44 000 livres. Even after her imprisonment in 1792 dresses would be ordered on a regular basis, after which she send the government of the French Republic her bills. By that time, however, Rose Bertin was no longer taking in these orders herself. In July of 1792 the most famous *marchande de modes* decided to flee to Coblenz, were a few of her clients had taken refuge. When voices were becoming growing louder that the previous "best friend to the queen" ought to be subjected to a similar fate as her, Bertin did not hesitate and after fleeing set up shop abroad. Her popularity amongst foreign clients only grew stronger and in 1800 – when things appeared to have settled down – she returned to France an ever richer woman. Olivier Bernier, *The Eighteenth-century Woman* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1981), 126-127.

During the following events and the subsequent end of the French Ancien Régime – the imprisonment of the royal family, the abolition of the monarchy and the decapitation of the king and queen being the most important ones – Le Brun-Tossa kept his silence once more. The eloquence of his stillness spoke as loudly as his initial revolutionary outcries.<sup>192</sup>

In the months that followed subscribers became harder and harder to find and keep as well as the level of luxury depicted unattainable for most readers. At the same time the freedom of press that had made the birth of the French fashion magazine possible in the first place, had now become challenged by the newly appointed Directory government as they upheld a culture of censorship, police control and revealed an utter lack of trust in the French editorial freedoms.<sup>193</sup> In the spring of 1793 the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* eventually had to cease publication indefinitely. The story of the first fashion magazine had finally come to an end, and had changed drastically through the course of its lifetime. The radical events of the Directoire-period that took over French society during the last decade of the century had created an environment unfit for publication. It would take until the summer of 1797 until a French fashion magazine published a fashion plate again.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Kleinert, *La Mode*, 88-89.

<sup>193</sup> Margaret Waller, "Disembodiment as a Masquerade: Fashion Journalists and Other "Realist" Observers in Directory Paris," *L'Esprit Créateur* 37, no. 1 (1997): 46.

<sup>194</sup> Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 84.

### 3. *MAGASIN DES MODES NOUVELLES* AND THE FASHIONABLE REIGN OF TERROR: THE FASHION MAGAZINE AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

#### 3.1. Politicizing the periodical: A fashion magazine subject to its time

Fashion: custom, usage, manner of dressing, of adjusting oneself, in a word, everything that serves the “parure” and of luxury; therefore fashion can be considered politically and philosophically.

- D. de Jaucourt, *Encyclopédie*, 1765.

Fashion may be considered in general as the custom of the great. It is the dress, the furniture, the language, the manners of the great world.

Which constitute what is called the Fashion in each of this articles,  
And which the rest of mankind are in such haste to adopt,  
After their example.

- A. Alison, *Of the Nature of the Emotions of Sublimity and Beauty*, 1790.

Aileen Ribeiro, in her masterful 1995 publication *The Art of Dress*, included the citations of both an eighteenth-century French and British author to indicate that at the time the fashions were being produced and consumed they were also being perceived by contemporaries as the bearers of cultural and philosophical change. These ideas – that fashion is widespread through society and likewise copied, that it is much more of a societal and cultural manifestation rather than the fleeting folly of style and that it serves as a mode of individual representation – would not only influence the theory of Ribeiro but also that of writers centuries before her. Looking at the fashion of the eighteenth-century it is therefore assumed that it can be closely unpacked by mirroring its products with the cultural, societal and political changes of that era.<sup>195</sup>

Fashion in many regards serves as a way to talk about historical change. It can present a utopian view of the world; a means to visualise the desire for a better future. In this regard it stands at a unique intersection between the present and the future. As a discourse to think and talk about social reform, fashion – and the visualisation of fashion through print – is the mirror of desired progress. Even though they are products of conformity, capitalism and the need for demand, they serve at the same time as means for change. The content of fashion periodicals at the eve of the French Revolution therefore can be read as more than their form itself, more than the sartorial image it presents.

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<sup>195</sup> Peter McNeil, ed. *A Cultural History of Dress and Fashion in the Age of Enlightenment* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018), 14-15.

The periodical in which fashion was being carefully depicted therefore also is a product of its turbulent time, influenced by cultural, political and economic events. Fashion periodicals at the end of the eighteenth-century did not only depict the cultural and societal influence the Revolution had brought about, they were revolutionary tools themselves, influencing their power, in that their material attributes allowed them to be spread far and wide and the ideas it represented with it.<sup>196</sup>

The *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* – by the time the cultural repercussions of the French Revolution had influenced fashion and fashionable style in all walks of society – was seen eager to adopt the new revolutionary imagery. Quickly the magazine started to see itself as the favourite candidate to represent these styles, however odd or even ridiculous they might have seemed to the editors. As the magazine's writers were unanimous on the morality of the revolution– a necessary event aimed at liberating the French people and building them an equitable and fair society – so was their stance towards the new revolutionary fashion. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 1789 the editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* made these sentiments clear on the very first pages of their publication:

Il n'y avoit pas de doute qu'une revolution comme celle qui s'opere en France, ne dût fournir à la Capitale l'idée de quelques modes. C'est un assez grand événement pour cela.<sup>197</sup>

The dress depicted in fashion plates at the time of the French Revolution was often subtle, with men and women dressed in national colours – red, white and blue could be used interchangeably as well as black appeared to be a popular colour amongst men wanting to dress seriously – as well as accessories such as the cocarde, were omnipresent. On occasions however, the symbolic nature of these accessories appeared to be more on the nose. On the first December of 1789 the editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* commented:

[...] le Peuple changea ses cris ordinaires de *Vive le Roi*, en ceux de *Vive la Nation*: [...] cette Nation, qui avoit montré tant de courage, qui venoit de conquérir sa liberté, méritoit ces explosions du coeur, ces souhaits qui ne sont que des felicitations mutuelles, qu'elle exprimoit avec tant d'enthousiasme; ces cris de joie ont certainement donné l'idée aux Ouvriers de faire les Boucles à la Nation [...].<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Mackie, *Market à la Mode*, xiv.

<sup>197</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 29 (1789): 227.

<sup>198</sup> *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 34 (1789): 266.



Buckles had been a fashionable item worn by both men and women throughout the eighteenth-century and had been used extensively through the last decades by the *marchandes de modes* to accessorize the big *chapeaux* of their female clients.<sup>199</sup> Towards the end of the century, however, buckles had become the accessory of choice to express symbolic revolutionary sympathies. The *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* published a series of *boucles à la Bastille*, where in a small metal circle the famed fortress was represented featuring towers as well as canons to symbolize military strength and national sentiment.<sup>200</sup> On the first of December however, after the fortress had been stormed, the editors decided to go even further and instructed the artists designing the fashion plates to add the overt words “Vive la Nation” (fig. 28).<sup>201</sup> Fashion had become the home for cultural and symbolic expressions of the Revolution, and the French fashion press – through their intentional overt aestheticizing of these events – had put themselves in the front of the barricades.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> On the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 1786 the *Cabinet des Modes* remarked on the new fashionable uses of buckles: “Il est une Mode qui prend fortement aujourd’hui: c’est celle de porter dans les Chapeaux, sur le côté gauche, une Boucle d’acier de toute la longueur de la forme de Chapeau, & qui tient attachée une grande rosette de ruban noir de la même longueur.” These buckles had become increasingly larger throughout the 1780s and 1790s and served as an important part of the fashionable ensemble. Going into the French Revolution, buckles – who were unlike the extravagant expensive accessories of previous years usually made out of cheaper metals, usually silver or brass – had become a popular choice for both men and women to still be able to adorn themselves while at the same time subtly express their patriotic feelings.

*Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 15 (1786), 118.

<sup>200</sup> Henry René d’Allemagne, *Les accessoires du costume et du mobilier depuis le treizième jusqu’au milieu du dixneuvième siècle... Ouvrage contenant 393 phototypies, reproduisant plus de 3.000 documents* (Paris: Schemit, 1928), 48- 49.

<sup>201</sup> On the same fashion plate the *Boucle à la Nation* is represented, also two women both seen adorned in a *Bonnet à la Bastille* and a man depicted on the right side of the plate in a *Habit d’uniforme*.

*Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* 4, no. 34 (1789): Planche 1, 2 & 3.

<sup>202</sup> Ghering-van Ierlant, *Vrouwenmode in prent*, 27.



Fig. 28: A.B. Duhamel and Defraire, publisher Buisson, *Planche 1,2 & 3* from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 34*, engraving on paper, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Eighteenth century cultural and social discourse was in many ways engrained by the logic of “antifashion”. This meant that what was perceived as fashion could be described as everything that is considered merely fashionable, in means of stylistic change. This pull towards everything taste, morality and style – and thus anti-fashion – proved to be one of the most sustainable models of modernity. It drove the wheels of style, of contemporary taste and social products of what was considered fashionable. In this way stylistic change was a mode to escape the conventional, well adopted contemporary fashion in pursuit of a more “natural” way of living and dressing. Fashion – in this instance what could be considered as “bad fashion”; for the sake of novelty itself, to express one’s wealth – in this discourse took on the role of a tyrant that reigned with an iron fist crushing the “true” self of its subjects with frivolity and emptiness. This view was widely adopted by the fashion periodicals at the time – the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* being the most historically important example – was not far removed from similar anti-absolutist political and cultural theory formed in the upcoming bourgeois European spheres. This discourse can also be understood as a critique on capitalism itself – the system that fashion inherently is forced to adhere to – and through that a symbol of the time’s larger societal capitalist rejection. The picture, however, becomes increasingly complex when realised that these periodicals were themselves a part of the capitalist cycle they critiqued. However, for the editors and the contributors of these fashion magazines their mission was one of continual striving towards taste, style and morality, even if that meant adding a few advertisements once in a while.<sup>203</sup>

By now, it seems clear that fashion periodicals did not only follow the revolutionary fashions popular by the end of the eighteenth-century but they themselves influenced societal change. Seen as a vital tool of the process of socialization, fashion had become an important part of the cultural upheaval that had taken place. Fashion periodicals therefore played a crucial part in this chain of events – in that they served as a much more than their form alone.<sup>204</sup>

When reading the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* contextually with its political, cultural and social influences it is nonetheless important to add the element of nationality as well. The existence of the first fashion magazine would not have been possible without the distinctive characteristics of the French eighteenth-century society. In the French fashion press by the end of the century style had become synonymous with national style.

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<sup>203</sup> Mackie, *Market à la Mode*, 5-10.

<sup>204</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 195-197.

Whatever that national style had become – whatever *la mode* had dictated – needed to be seen as the important national representation of style. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 1791 the editors of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* felt the need to share this sentiment:

Les hommes, soit en grande toilette, soit en négligé, ont adopté un genre de coëffure assez bizarre: les cheveux, lisses, ou crépés, sont partagés sur la tête, et rabattus sur le front, ce qui s'appelle toupet fendu: tout cela est d'assez mauvais goût; mais enfin, c'est la mode, et la très-grande mode; nous sommes obliges de la suivre [...] <sup>205</sup>

That these changes did not always seem sensible or felt right to the editors representing them in their own magazines, was ascribed to the nature of style and taste itself. What had once been considered a negative and dangerous consequence of the paradox of *la mode* had now been transformed into a treasured national product. By insisting that fashion was a historical and natural product of human society its need for change and revolution could be explained by mankind's desire for the same. This confirmation and valorisation of *la mode* could be clearly identified in the issues of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* during the early years of the Revolution. The editors of the magazine suggested that fashion and the Revolution was profoundly linked. More than the surface-level appearances – such as the *Chapeau à la Triomphe* and the *bonnets à la Bastille* – would suggest, did the editors of the French fashion magazine see the transition and turmoil of the Revolution itself as inherently similar to nature of fashion.

By their view, women especially and *la mode* – who were both in a constant state of fluctuation – had found their heimat in the instability of the Revolution. Therefore fashion and the increasingly rapid fashion cycle was not harmful but simply a necessary state of being. One that ought not to be feared but rather applauded for making the women whom adopted its novelties “plus jolie” as well as possibly even more modern.<sup>206</sup> On the 5<sup>th</sup> of September 1790 the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* declared:

Les couleurs, la forme des habillemens, des bonnets, des chapeaux, varient avec une rapidité inconcevable; tout suit la révolution, et ses ressent de l'inquiétude générale; cependant le bouleversement dans lequel nous vivons, bien loin de nuire au beau sexe, le rend encore plus aimable [...] <sup>207</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusement du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 31 (1791): 2.

<sup>206</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 195-197.

<sup>207</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusement du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 20 (1790): 1.

### 3.2. The courtier and the civilian: The individual in the revolutionary French fashion press

When the *Cabinet des Modes* published on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1786 that they were adapting the title of their publication to *the Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises* and would subsequently go to great lengths to depict the newer and simpler English styles, they expressed sentiments already resonating with the larger public.<sup>208</sup> Despite the two nations frequent political and cultural friction, they both could be seen hankering towards a more natural style of dress. By the 1780s this impulse had been surfacing for quite some time, with famous artists and cultural and political reformers denouncing the fashion of their time. Not only, they remarked, could it be characterized by its frivolity and temporality – arguably forgivable crimes – these philosophers and writers by the end of the eighteenth-century had declared worse: fashion could also be described through its profligacy, deceptiveness and even immorality.<sup>209</sup>

These views discussing the morality of fashion were not solely a discourse raging through the world of *la mode*. By the second half of the eighteenth-century the Enlightenment had been influential on all aspects of French culture. Philosophers who had previously been seen to debate the basic structures of society went on to apply their methods on everything concerning taste and fashion as well. They pressed that debates around morality concerning the political and social structures of nations were needed in the discourse on appearances as well. On the forefront of these debates was Jean-Jacques Rousseau who had by that time been voicing his concerns on the negative consequences of luxury and artifice on the morality of societies for decades. The outcome of these enlightened debates on fashion and morality was unanimously agreed on: dress had to become the material expression of comfort, health, simplicity, naturalism and good morality.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> *Cabinet des Modes, ou les Modes Nouvelles* 2, nr. 24 (1786), 1-2.

<sup>209</sup> Amelia Rauser, *The Age of Undress: Art, Fashion, and the Classical Ideal in the 1790s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 12.

<sup>210</sup> Numerous enlightened philosophers and writers explored the intersectionality of fields such as commerce, fashion and all other aspects of urban public life. The most famous of them arguing for the triumph of morality in all those fields mentioned was undoubtedly Rousseau, however, many others appeared influential in their theories as well. François Fénelon, Louis-Joseph Plumard de Dangeul and Etienne de la Font de Saint-Yenne are but to name a few.

Kendra Van Cleave, "The Desire to Banish Any Constraint in Clothing: Turquerie and *Enlightenment Thought in the French Fashion Press, 1768-1790*," *French Historical Studies* 2, no. 43 (2020): 198, 203-204.

French writers and philosophers pointed towards the fashions of their English neighbours as one of the possible sources for this new natural way of dressing. Already in the earliest decades of the eighteenth-century a change in fashion had taken place in Anglophone spheres. At first appearing mainly in men's dress but later on adapted in women's dress as well, a general pull towards a simplified fashionable style was visible. For the first time in history people from higher societal classes began adopting styles of dress and actual garments of those lower in rank. Initially through the adaptation of informal wear only, however, as the eighteenth-century progressed these styles were deemed appropriate for general everyday wear. In the course of the following decades dress became so informalized that sometimes the dress of a man or woman could not be differentiated to that of a particular individual of a lower class. In 1739 an English observer wrote:

There is at present a reigning ambition among our young gentlemen of degrading themselves in their apparel to the class of the servants they keep... my Lord Jehu wears a plush Frock.<sup>211</sup>

Historically it had always been so that the fashions of the upper classes had trickled down to the lower classes – subsequently adopting essential parts of these styles as they saw fit to do so considering their means – however, never before had the process been reversed. In 1772 the *London Magazine or Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer* – aware of this popular new phenomena – remarked that now “the lower orders of the people (if there are any, for distinctions are now confounded) are equally immersed in their fashionable vices”.<sup>212</sup>

The process of democratization of style and fashion – that had notwithstanding taken place early on in the eighteenth century – left the French witnessing the phenomena astoundingly. By 1785 the informal English fashions had all but taken over. France had seen the removal of the *habit habillé* – or formal dress – in English fashions quickly influence their national styles as well, and by 1791 the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* – who had been a first-hand responder to these changes for years, finally remarked: “Depuis quelque temps, les déshabillés des femmes sont du meilleur goût possible”.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> The English used the term “frock” throughout the eighteenth-century to describe a loose-fitting coat with a distinctive turned-down collar. Formerly the style of dress had been used exclusively as the garment of choice for the countryman, however, by the beginning of the eighteenth-century it had become the staple of the urban working man. Towards the end of the century, slowly, the term was being used to describe women's overcoats and dresses as well.

C. Willet and Phillis Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1972), 17.

<sup>212</sup> Willet and Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume*, 16-17.

<sup>213</sup> Charles Henry Lockett, *The relations of French and English society (1763-1793)* (London: Longmans, Green and co., 1920), 42.;  
*Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 5 (1791): 1.



France's adaptation of the informal styles of their English neighbours was undoubtedly connected to the underlying desires towards their egalitarian democratic society. The fashion being adapted by the French were symbolic for the political and cultural challenges taking place at the centre stage of French society. By the end of the 1780s the courtier had appeared similarly *deshabillé* to the citizen, fashion thus had visualised the revolutionary voices crying out for a French society similarly stripped from pomp, pageantry and immorality.<sup>214</sup>

The fashion periodical served as a powerful tool in this process. Often the editors found themselves taken aback by new fashions that had appeared from Paris – but nonetheless had to feature in their publication because that was simply the nature of *la mode* – however, on numerous occasions they were seen to carry out significant influence by depicting revolutionary fashionable styles, approved by the editors. Le Brun-Tossa – himself a fervent admirer and participator of the Revolution – advised his audience to adopt these informal and democratic styles. The terminology being used to describe the new fashions was of the utmost importance, as their symbolic nature resonated with the magazine's audience. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 1791 the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* depicted a woman adorned in a *Bonnet à la Paysanne* made out of white gauze, trimmed with a deep red ribbon and finished with a black cockade. The editors expressed their adoration towards this new style of hat and remarked in the following publication on the enthusiasm received from their subscribers as well.<sup>215</sup> For the urban upper- and middle class, wearing peasant- or provincial inspired clothing was a way to take on the virtues described to the rural lifestyle without the negative side effects they inhabited.<sup>216</sup> It is therefore important to mention as well that even though the views of the eighteenth-century elites on the informal, peasant-like, natural way of dressing were clear, the opinions of the ordinary people on the subject were far more ambiguous. Nevertheless, it is possible, in hindsight, to detect a range of overlapping views that found expression under the different circumstances of society.

A crucial element needed for these societal changes to take place was the representation of these styles – referring not only to dress, but to a symbol of a larger society, to taste as well as morality – in the different media of the day. The fashion periodical appeared to be one of the most democratic and successful in this endeavour.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Van Cleave, "The Desire to Banish Any Constraint in Clothing, 198, 203-204.

<sup>215</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 3 (1791): 1.

<sup>216</sup> Van Cleave, "The Desire to Banish Any Constraint in Clothing, 198, 203-209.

<sup>217</sup> John Styles, *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 195.

This revolution of simplicity, however, had a deeper foundation in the writings of enlightened philosophers of the eighteenth-century and was based on one clear concept: individuality. In order for the courtier and the *citoyen* to depart to the revolution dressed in similar fashionable styles a shift had to have taken place in the collective minds of the French by the end of the century. Increasingly fashion had become the expression not of one's class or title but of one's individual self. Therefore, Rousseau and his peers agreed, fashion had become the visual representation of the individual's own taste and morality. Fashion itself had become a way in which to assert individuality, it had become a crossroad for the individual and the surrounding society to meet. Therefore it was both mobile and fixed, particular and general.<sup>218</sup>

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1790 the editors of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* published a *cahier* entirely catered towards these sentiments. The women nowadays, Le Brun-Tossa remarked, now all wear the same style of dress, in some way or another they have found a way to "montrent patriote, en adoptant les couleurs de la Nation". When it came to their adopted fashionable styles a difference between the *courtier* and the *citoyen* was now almost entirely impossible to detect. The editor approached this matter, however, with great satirical humour and was sure to add anecdotes on these drastic societal changes. The anecdote he published at the end of the *cahier* was telling:

Le bas-peuple a déjà adopté les idées qu'a fait naître la révolution. On sait que les mendiants et même les *décroteurs*, pour flatter l'amour-propre des passans, les appelloient *mon prince, Monseigneur, monsieur le comte, monsieur le marquis, mon général, mon capitaine*, en leur demandant l'aumône, ou en leur offrant leurs services. Aujourd'hui les gens de cette espece, pour vous faire leur cour, vous disent: *une petite part de vos charités, MON BON CITOYEN! un coup de vergette en passant, MON BON CITOYEN? décrotez-la!*

Les demoiselles du Palais-royal ont aussi change d'allure, et prennent différentes qualités, selon le rang des personnes à qui elles s'adressent. Une d'elles, jeudi dernier, a acosté un évêque qui, pour se distraire faisoit un tour de galerie, après avoir sa croix pectoral dans sa poche. A la suite de quelques propos, la commere à invite le prélat à la reconduire chez elle, et s'approchant de son oreille, lui a dit, d'une voix basse et sucrée: *venez, venez, monsieur l'abbé; vous aurez lieu d'être très-satisfait; je suis un peu ARISTOCRATE.*<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, 48.

<sup>219</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 1, no. 2 (1790): 23-24.

As the collective mindset changed in favour of the individual rather than the society, Rousseau's plea for morality and taste became even more necessary. Now, it had become clear that the artifice of social hierarchies and their appointed roles was intended to mask the true self of the individual. Therefore the most genuine, authentic version of the individual appeared in private, in a natural state devoid from the mask of pomp and pageantry.<sup>220</sup> This change towards naturalism in fashion was perhaps most visible early on in the fashion magazines. By comparing the earliest published fashion plates of the *Cabinet des Modes* with those of the final *cahiers* of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* the change taken place in the silhouette of women's dresses in nearly a decade proved the fascination with the natural individual form. Dress size had dramatically increased and the outlines of the skirts and *caraco's* – now omnipresent in French fashionable society – had started to follow the natural female figure.<sup>221</sup> Men's silhouettes on the other hand, had remained relatively the same, however, the heavily embroidered waist- and overcoats made out of brightly coloured silks and satins were now replaced by dark coloured suits. Unlike that of women, men's fashion was believed to no longer have need for the abundant expressions of fashion. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1792 the editors of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* echoed this sentiment:

Depuis quelque temps, le costume des hommes ne vaut pas la peine qu'on s'en occupe: ce sont toujours des culottes sans fond [...] Les habits, pour la plupart, sont bruns ou noirs; les redingotes, du plus mauvais goût [...] Mais les femmes ne peuvent pendre le goût d'une mise élégante; on s'en convaincra, en examinant, dans nos cahiers, combien est grande la diversité des chapeaux et des jolies bonnets.<sup>222</sup>

The magazine was not alone in expressing their feelings in a satirical way. By the last third of the eighteenth-century the periodical press had increasingly become the revolutionary tribune to announce and denounce fashion and newly fashionable styles. The fashion plate – and in general the medium of engraving – was deemed ideal because of its relatively low cost and the possibility of rapid spread with its intended audience. These plates did not only feature the fashion that political, cultural and societal changes had created, through satirical evocations of how dress ought to be – often inspired through the enlightened literary essays or writings published in their pages – but they had the power to change fashion itself.

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<sup>220</sup> Rauser, *The Age of Undress*, 12.

<sup>221</sup> Bithy R. Goodman, "The Modernity of la Mode: a History of the French Revolution Through the Lens of Fashion, Culture and Identity," dissertation (Bucknell University, 2012): 90.

<sup>222</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 35 (1792): 2-3.

By making the written word, the ideas and the thoughts visible, the fashion periodical was able to create a cultural conscience. In 1777 the German engraver and painter Daniel Chodowiecki (1726-1801) published a series of engravings titled “Natur und Affectation”, published in the philosophical journal *Göttinger Taschenkalender* that through a series of sets of two illustrations attempted at visualising the contrast between natural and affected manners.<sup>223</sup> In the very first panel a distinction was being made between a man and woman in harmony with their natural setting – barefoot, draped just to the extent of decency, in a classical contrapposto-position – and a couple depicted in contemporary dress, however it is clear to the viewer that they were overloaded with hairpieces, silk trimmings and fringes and the landscape behind them had almost completely been obscured by their extravagant dress (fig. 29). The series of engravings – that quickly received wide acclaim and garnered immense popularity, subsequently being published abroad under the title “Natural and Affected behavior” – were aimed at influencing the audience’s view on fashion and morality – what dressing *d’après nature* really meant – but would through its popularity and cultural influence foreshadow the neoclassical dress of the beginning of the nineteenth-century.

Three decades later, fashionable women were seen all around Europe having discarded the extravagant paniers and ostentatious wigs in favour of the long white classically inspired muslin dresses and hairdos inspired by Greek and Roman mythology.<sup>224</sup> At the crossroads of cultural philosophy and literary writings on morality, taste and fashion, the medium of the engraving had become especially important. The nature of its materiality – as well as its long cultural history by the end of the eighteenth-century cemented in European society – made it the democratic and artistic format of choice to depict the changing of fashions.

*The Journal des Dames et des Modes* (1797-1839) – who was the first French fashion magazine to come after the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*’ unfortunate demise – would be on the forefront of depicting and popularizing the neoclassical fashion in France, however, without the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*’ implemented cultural changes this would not have been possible (fig. 30).<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Ernst Hinrichs and Klaus Zernack, *Daniel Chodowiecki (1726-1801): Kupferstecher, Illustrator, Kaufmann* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), VII-VIII.

<sup>224</sup> Rauser, *The Age of Undress*, 12.

<sup>225</sup> Perhaps one of the most defining characteristics of the Neoclassical style of dress is its high-waisted silhouette – creating that sought after architectural, tall, column-like figure – which had been eagerly adopted by the beginning of the nineteenth-century in fashion magazines such as the *Journal des Dames et des Modes*. Nonetheless, by 1793 this sartorial element had already started to gain traction. Throughout the continuation of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* it can therefore be noticed that the silhouette in women’s dress by the last cahier of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* had appeared remarkably different of that of the premier cahier of the *Cabinet des Modes*. Wide panniers had been cast away as well as the general emphasis on the cinched in waist and wide hips-contrast. By the 1790s the taller, simplified silhouette popularized in the following years had started to appear. Rauser, *The Age of Undress*, 93. ;



Fig. 29: Daniel Chodowiecki, Natur and Affectation from the Göttinger Taschenkalender, 1777, etching on paper, 4,4 x 8 cm, Heidelberg University Library.



An 8. *Costume Parisien.*

(228)



*Fichu-Turban. Chapeau de Paille, à bord retroussé.*

DZU

Fig. 30: Unknown, *Fichu-Turban. Chapeau de Paille, à bord retroussé* from the *Journal des Dames et des Modes, Costume Parisien An 8*, 1799-1800, engraving on paper, 11,5 x 17,8 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.



Perhaps the most remarkable example of the courtier and the civilian dressing in the same fashions *d'après nature* must have been the queen of France. In 1783 Queen Marie-Antoinette ignited a scandal as her portrait by Mme Vigée-Le Brun for the Paris Salon showed her dressed in the *robe en chemise*.<sup>226</sup> Revolutionary in itself, this style of dress was made out of one piece, construed in a lightweight thin cotton muslin. Unlike the previous *robe de françaises* the design of the *robe en chemise* was remarkably simplified and appeared almost as an underdress. French society was so shocked by this that the portrait subsequently had to be removed from the salon and that Marie-Antoinette had publicly declared to Rose Bertin – her *marchande de modes* and mastermind behind this new stylish design – that she would no longer be wearing this kind of informal attire and she would revert to her “imposing gown with pleats”. From fashion’s stand, nonetheless, it was too late. The revolutionary shapes of the *robe en chemise* had spread far and wide and the bourgeoisie of Paris grew fond of the new comfortable and relaxed shape. Marie-Antoinette was criticized that her dress was too sensual and sexualized, unfitting for a queen of France, however much more than sensuality and sexuality the new fashion expressed a sense of individuality. Fittingly the bourgeois spheres of Paris loved the new style and adopted it fairly quickly, turning away from the influences of Versailles.<sup>227</sup>

Marie-Antoinette discovered at first hand what the new late eighteenth-century obsession with natural styles as expressions of one’s own morality and individuality meant. Earlier on in the century she had been criticized and ridiculed for her extravagance in clothing. Her fashion – and the way in which she chose to cloth herself – was no longer solely a mere representation of her status. By the end of the eighteenth-century dress of the individual had become equated to a symbolic representation of that individual’s identity. Other queens before her might have also been ridiculed and criticized by the lavish and exorbitant spending on fashion, however, by the time Marie-Antoinette did the shopping it resulted in a capital offense.

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<sup>226</sup> The *robe en chemise* was also called the *chemise à la reine* after its famous wearer. The dress itself was a simple tube-like shape – unlike the multi-layered difficult construction of *the robe à la française* for example – made out of cotton muslin often imported from luxury destinations abroad as well as gathered at the body by drawstrings in order to keep the natural figure of the wearer visible. Even though the dress itself was a complete departure from Marie-Antoinette’s earlier extravagant styles and its informality unlike anything seen before, its simplicity however did not necessarily imply its low expense. Having to import the very fine muslins from places such as India and the Caribbean made the style itself extremely expensive. Therefore the Queen’s new adopted dress was much more a consequence of her fashionable aesthetics rather than her search for practicality.

Sarah Goodman, “Devil in a white dress: Marie-Antoinette and the Fashioning of a Scandal,” (master dissertation, San José State University, 2017), 16.

<sup>227</sup> Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 78-79.

Therefore individuality and the expression of that subjectivity in dress was more than just a naturalist and pastoral pastiche – a craving towards a more carefree natural world – it was inherently the expression of cultural, political and societal changes. By the late eighteenth-century fashion was no longer masking the underlying public identity of an individual, it no longer featured as a border between the body and the sphere, the inner and the outer, the individual and the society. By the time Marie-Antoinette had found herself standing at the guillotine, clothing had become one's identity. The dress she wore revealed her true self, it was a window onto her most inner truth, a mirror of her morality.<sup>228</sup>

The symbolic imagery of Marie-Antoinette – and the women like her, who had to face their end on the guillotine – dressed in white, long, classical inspired muslin dresses became the final expression of their identity. The new style emerging around the period of the Terror in France associated with naturalism, freshness and innocence had become the way in which to describe the women led to their deaths. Their styles of dress – mostly white loose gowns accompanied by a short hairstyle – equated to their individuality and their morality.<sup>229</sup> After witnessing the execution of female prisoners a priest remarked:

I looked for the ladies; I could only see the mother. Her attitude was that of devotion, – simple, noble and resigned. [...] The mother's life was ended. How I grieved to see that young lady, looking in her white dress even younger than she really was, sweet and gentle as a little lamb, led to the slaughter. I felt as though I were present at the martyrdom of one of those holy young virgins represented in the pictures of great masters. [...] The same thing which occurred in her mother's case happened in hers, [the daughter], [...] the same pain, the same calm, the same death! How the red blood flowed down from her head and her throat!<sup>230</sup>

A similar fate had befallen the queen of France. By depicting Marie-Antoinette in a neoclassical white dress English painter William Hamilton (1750- 1801) tried to ascribe to her character the aspects attributed to the natural fashions. Painted in 1794 – only a few months after her death – *Marie-Antoinette Led to her Execution* represented the queen in one of her most virtuous portrayals (fig. 31). The dress itself stood as a symbol of lightness, heavenliness and purity and stood out against the darkly coloured clothing of the bystanders. Her stillness – her eyes cast towards heaven, her hands behind her back – was a continuation of her fashion.

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<sup>228</sup> Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 212-213.

<sup>229</sup> Rauser, *The Age of Undress*, 173.

<sup>230</sup> Louise Henriette Charlotte Philippine de Durfort, "Prison Journals During the French Revolution," last consulted on August 5<sup>th</sup> 2020, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/46750/46750-h/46750-h.htm>.

Her individuality had thus again been portrayed through her exterior way of dressing. Once more the individual and their clothing were equated.<sup>231</sup>



Fig. 31: William Hamilton, Marie Antoinette Led to her Execution, 1793-1794, oil on canvas, 197 x 152 cm, Musée de la Révolution française, Vizille, France.

The changed attitudes in fashion through the rapidly adapting cultural and societal events were being put on the forefront by the fashion periodicals. The *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* set the tone when they depicted on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 1791 a woman dressed in a dress à la Coblentz (fig. 27). She herself – through her clothing – was a symbolic representation of the horrors suffered through the Reign of Terror. Her bright red coloured dress was obvious in its connotation, however, the editors made sure that the details were similarly powerful: a small red ribbon around the neck to represent the decapitation of prisoners under the guillotine, as well as snow white gloves to symbolize her own virtue and innocence.<sup>232</sup>

<sup>231</sup> Rauser, *The Age of Undress*, 173.

<sup>232</sup> *Journal de la Mode et du Goût ou Amusemens du Salon et de la Toilette* 2, no. 31 (1791): 2.

The *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* was revolutionary in their approach in that for the first time satirical political commentary was being portrayed through the means of the subtlety of the fashion plate. In this regard their influence on the cultural, social and political changes taking place around the last decade of the eighteenth-century was of great consequence. The magazine that would come after them – the *Journal des Dames et des Modes* – followed in their footsteps.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 1798 the editors of the magazine published a fashion plate depicting the view of a women's back, dressed in a white muslin long dress trimmed with crossing dark red ribbons trickling down her arms and bodice, combined with a matching hat with red stripes (fig. 32).<sup>233</sup> Such dresses evoked memories of scenes as those the priest had described earlier in the Revolution, with the blood of the victims streaming down their white prison dresses. Fashion periodicals could often be seen aestheticizing the political through fashion. In many ways the all-encompassing events of the Revolution and of the subsequent Terror had appeared to be greatly influential to the formal and contextual integrity of the first fashion magazine. Nonetheless, the French fashion magazines had altered with their fame and popularity fashion and dress in their own right.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> *Journal des Dames et des Modes* 7, no. 11 (1798): 173-174, 179-180.

<sup>234</sup> Rauser, *The Age of Undress*, 173-174.





Fig. 32: Unknown, Turban au Ballon. Ceinture croisée. Ridicule à Chiffre./ Théâtre Feydeau from the Journal des Dames et des Modes, Costume Parisien, An 7, 1798, engraving on paper, 11,6 x 17,7 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

Fashion, however, was not without its dangers and the individual was all too likely to fall victim to fashion's alluring but destructive qualities. The general belief that fashion can be construed as a fleeting cultural product characteristic for its frivolous nature is one clearly noticeable in publications throughout the eighteenth-century. In 1712 *The Spectator* tells its readers "The most improper things we commit in the Conduct of our Lives, we are led into by the Force of Fashion." The periodical will try throughout their publications to regulate this force in order to steer the taste of the masses -as they see it- in the right cultural and societal direction.<sup>235</sup>

Periodicals throughout the eighteenth-century, therefore, were filled with accounts of individuals who fell victim to fashion. In that process, they lost themselves and became susceptible to the tainted identity of consumerism and capitalism. Most of those victims, however, were women, because they were seen to be more vulnerable to the damaging effects of the commodity-based market. The French fashion press played an essential part in the subjugation of women as easy prey for societal vices. They saw women as particularly enamoured with the modes of the day and therefore more likely to sway for these empty materialisations, however certain types of men preoccupied with the same fancies were at risk as well.<sup>236</sup>

Analysing the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* through the cultural and social events of the French Revolution, it becomes clear that those events did not really alter women's position and portrayal in society, by the means of the periodical press in general. If women had been the number one victims to fall for frivolity, immorality and bad taste before the Revolution, their representation did not become more nuanced after. Eager to use women as symbols, the male editors of the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* depicted women – the image of the good patriotess was very important in this – as ideological beings, their existence very much used in performative ways. Despite the magazine's broad social, cultural and philosophical changes throughout its publications, the women they portrayed did not come out as liberated as the magazine's ideas.<sup>237</sup> The French fashion press had to be halted for a few years against the backdrop of turbulent times, for it to appear altered and changed into the *Journal des Dames et des Modes* in 1797. As its name declared this publication – unlike the previous *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* – was increasingly made *for* women and *by* women, undoubtedly influenced by the first feminists – such as Mary Wollstonecraft and her 1792 publication *A vindication for the Rights of Woman* – taking up their much deserved space for the first time in the fashion press.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Mackie, *Market à la Mode*, 2.

<sup>236</sup> Mackie, *Market à la Mode*, 48.

<sup>237</sup> Alison S. Fell, "Femmes Face à la Guerre," in *Modern French Identities* vol. 67 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), 32.

<sup>238</sup> Suellen Diaconoff, *Through the Reading Glass: Women, Books, and Sex in the French Enlightenment* (New York: State University New York, 2005), 171-172.



## CONCLUSION

By the time the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* had its first publication in 1785 the cultural, social and political corner stones of the eighteenth-century in France had already been established. The existence of the first French fashion magazine was only possible due to an conglomerate of factors creating a fertile playground. Leaning on the long history of periodical culture in Europe – and in France particularly – the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* was able to feed of the increasing popularity the genre had already established. Secondly, the magazine benefited from the strong consumer-culture that had emerged in France that made fashion but also the fashion periodical a commodity to be consumed, to be enjoyed by society and individuals. Important to the magazine's comeuppance was also the underlying socio-political currents that had by the end of the eighteenth-century changed France drastically. This meant that fashion was no longer simply a way of clothing oneself and to express one's social class or rank, it had increasingly become a means to display individuality and morality. Therefore fashion, and the fashion press, became the subject of enlightened writers who wanted to reform all aspects of the society. This society had to be seen striving towards virtue, morality, freedom and liberty and the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* played an important catalyst role in depicting how that could be visualized.

Fashion, or *la mode*, was no longer solely practical, it was cultural, economic, social and political. And the first French magazine was a crucial catalyst for this changing world. Therefore the form of the fashion magazine itself, was closely influenced by its purpose. Not only did the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* depict the these subsequent societal changes by mirroring them in their revolutionary fashion plates, they had as much of a role to play – both formally and contextually – in changing the course of the revolution.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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**Fig. 2** Cavallo Adolph S. and Katharine Stoddert. "Fashion Plate: An Opening Exhibition for the New Costume Institute." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, nr. 1 (1971): 45.

**Fig. 3** Ribeiro, Aileen. *Dress in eighteenth-century Europe: 1715-1789*. London: B.T. Batsford LTD, 1984, 55.

**Fig. 4** Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress in eighteenth-century Europe: 1715-1789*. London: B.T. Batsford LTD, 1984, 54.

**Fig. 5**

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**Fig. 7**

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**Fig. 9**

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**Fig. 12**

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**Fig. 14** Ghering-van Ierlant, M.A.. *Vrouwenmode in prent: modeprenten 1780-1930*. Utrecht: Ghering Books, 2007, 29.

**Fig. 15**

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**Fig. 16** Picture by the author, 2019.

**Fig. 17**

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**Fig. 18** Picture by the author, 2019.

**Fig. 19**

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**Fig. 20** Picture by the author, 2019.

**Fig. 21** <https://rijks-web.azurewebsites.net/en/collection/RP-P-2009-1666A>. Last consulted on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.

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**Fig. 29** Rauser, Amelia. *The Age of Undress: Art, Fashion, and the Classical Ideal in the 1790s*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020, 12.

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**Fig. 31** Rauser Amelia. *The Age of Undress: Art, Fashion, and the Classical Ideal in the 1790s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020, 172).

**Fig. 32**

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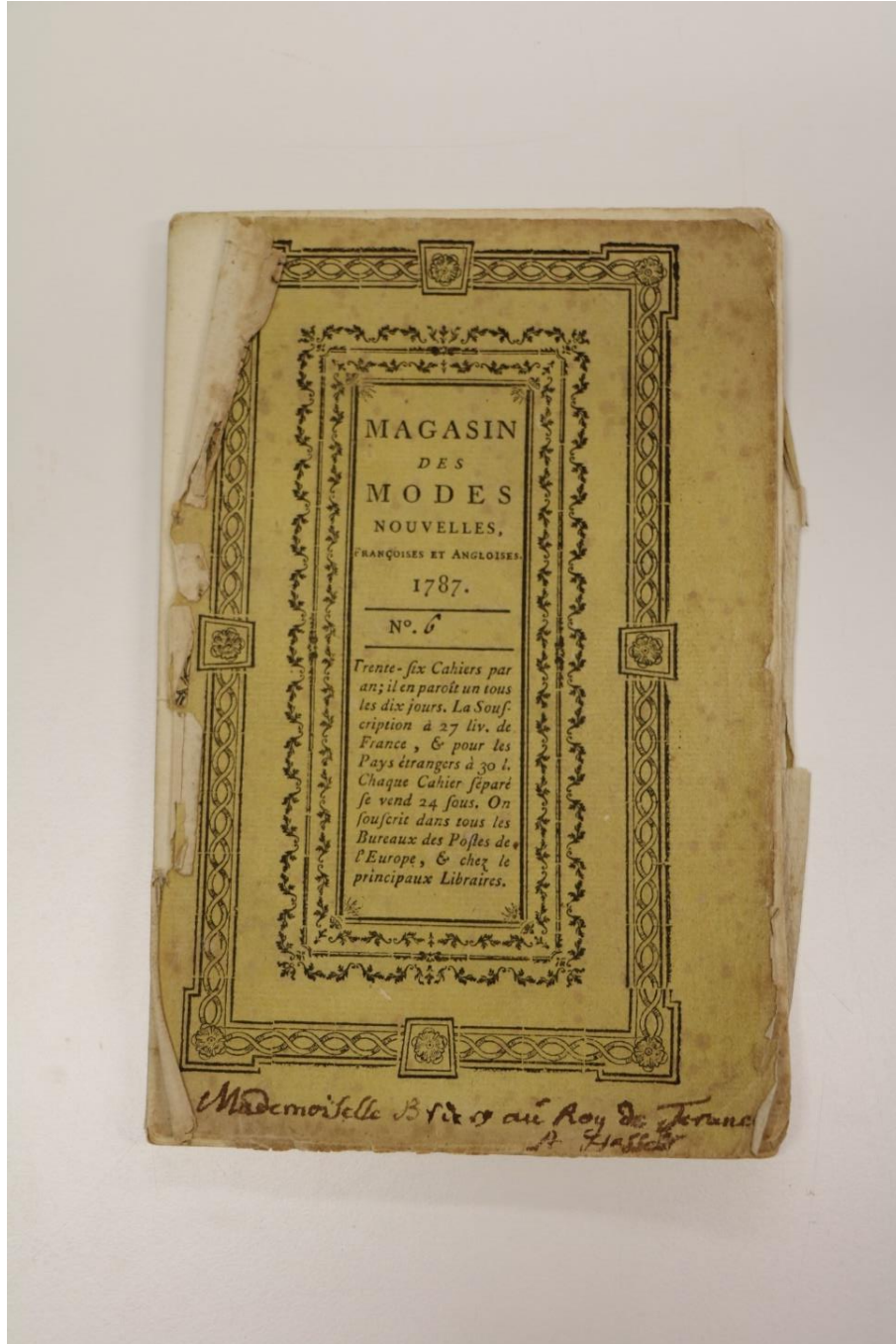
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## APPENDICES

### I. APPENDIX I



Appendix I: Jean-Jacques Tutot, *Titlepage of the Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises with note on the bottom of the page that reads “Mademoiselle B[...] au Roy De France A Hasselt”, Cahier 6, 1787,* print on paper, 13 x 20 cm, Modemuseum Hasselt.

Picture by the author, 2019.

## II. APPENDIX II

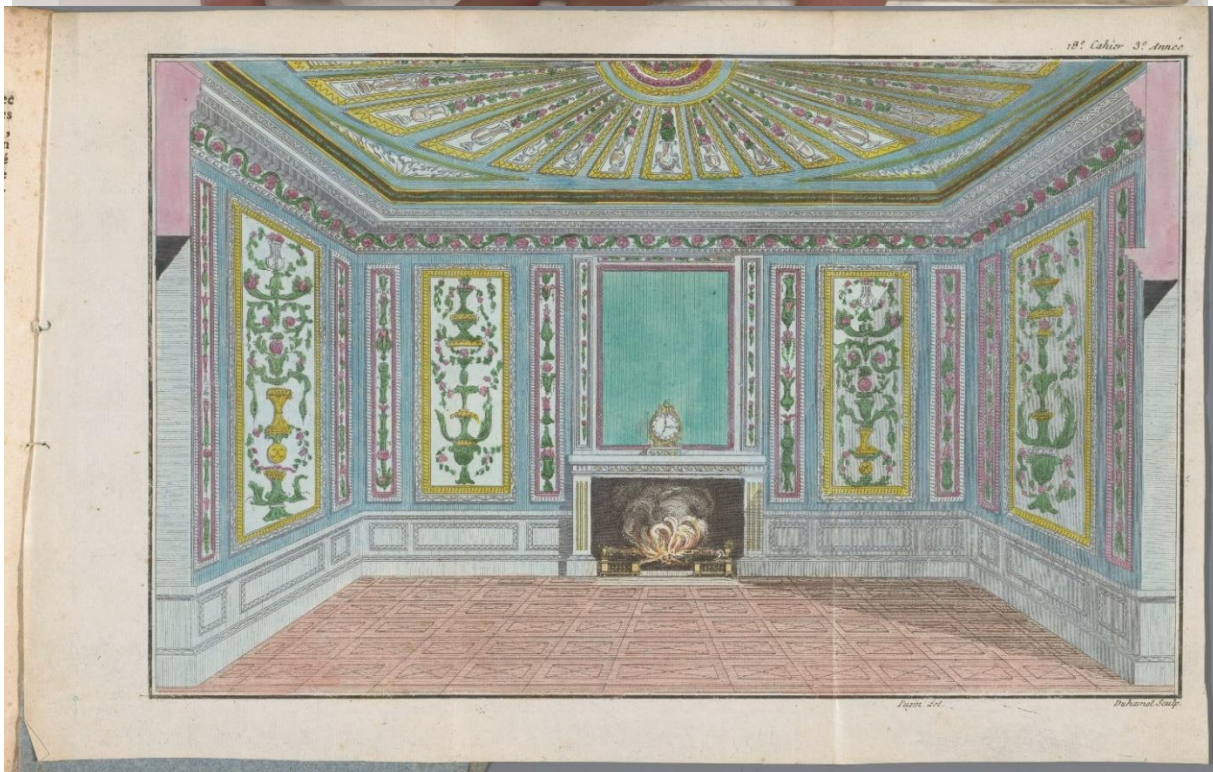


Appendix II: Jean-Jacques Tutot, *Planche 2 & 3 of the Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises Cahier 12*, 1787, engraving on paper, 13 x 20 cm, Modemuseum Hasselt.

Picture by the author, 2019.



### III. APPENDIX III



Appendix III Top: Jean-Jacques Tutot, *Planche 5* showing an interior scape from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Angloises Cahier 6*, 1788, engraving on paper, 14 x 10 cm, Modemuseum Hasselt.  
 Picture by the author, 2019.

Appendix III Bottom: A.B. Duhamel after Pugin, François Buisson publisher, *Planche* showing an interior landscape *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 18*, 1788, engraving on paper, 28,6 x 17,8 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

<https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=magasin+des+modes+nouvelles+1788&p=1&ps=12&st=Objects&ij=4#/RP-P-2009-1667A,4>, last consulted on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020.



IV. APPENDIX IV:



Appendix IV: A.B. Duhamel after Defraigne, François Buisson publisher, *Planche 1, 2 & 3 from the Magasin des Modes Nouvelles Françaises et Anglaises Cahier 30*, 1789, engraving on paper, 33 x 18,9 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

[https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=magasin+des+modes+nouvelles+1789&p=1&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=5#/RP-P-2009-1306\\_5](https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/zoeken/objecten?q=magasin+des+modes+nouvelles+1789&p=1&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=5#/RP-P-2009-1306_5), last consulted on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

