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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

Department of History

**The *Métier* of the Fashion Merchant (*Marchande de Modes*):  
Luxury and the Changing Parisian Clothing System, 1795 to 1855.**

Volume 1 of 2

by

**Fiona Lesley Ffoulkes**

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2017



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

**ABSTRACT**

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

History

Doctor of Philosophy

**THE MÉTIER OF THE FASHION MERCHANT (*MARCHANDE DE MODES*):  
LUXURY AND THE CHANGING PARISIAN CLOTHING SYSTEM, 1795 to 1855.**

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Fiona Lesley Ffoulkes

Fashion merchants were acknowledged as the highest status trade and dynamic agents for change within the production and consumption of women's clothing in the eighteenth century but their position in the nineteenth century has not previously been considered. This thesis examines how the trade evolved in Paris between 1795 and 1855 considering factors such as gender, finance and location in the context of political, economic and social change. The findings challenge the idea that significant change only occurred before 1789 or after 1860. Fashion merchants used novelty, luxury and taste to produce fashionable merchandise, particularly headgear, from a range of authentic and substitute materials that stimulated consumer demand across different social levels.

Engaging with debates about gender and the public sphere, the investigation demonstrates that, although there were successful male merchants, women continued to dominate the sector. Married women did not retreat from business, instead their husbands could be helpmeets and the *métier* was often the focus of the family economy.

Continuity was found in the use of credit in trade, the high status of the fashion merchant, the importance of reputation and the value of location and premises. Change was shown in production, sales and promotional strategies including advertising and the increasing importance of headwear to French industry was acknowledged by its inclusion in the industry exhibitions of 1851 and 1855.



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## **Academic Thesis: Declaration Of Authorship**

**I, Fiona Lesley Ffoulkes**

declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

**The *Métier* of the Fashion Merchant (*Marchande de Modes*): Luxury and the Changing Parisian Clothing System, 1795 to 1855.**

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. The thesis is based on work done by myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission;

Signed:

Date:



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## **List of Abbreviations and Notes**

The first reference is written fully and then the abbreviation is used.

AN Archives Nationales, Paris.

AP Archives de Paris.

BHVP Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris.

BN Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

INPI Institut National de la Propriété Industrielle, Paris.

V & A V & A Museum, London

All translations from French to English are the author's own unless otherwise stated.



## Introduction

The main argument of this thesis is, that by examining how the trade of the fashion merchant developed between the late eighteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth century, an understanding of their dynamic role in an active fashion system will be demonstrated. I will posit that the Parisian fashion industry was continuing to develop before the second half of the nineteenth century, contrary to the general position taken by historians. In expanding on this position, I will show that the *marchande de modes* was a significant agent in the commercial world that was able to build on the trade's Old Regime successes and create new businesses in a different context offered by the complex political and social changes of their times. In order to accomplish these aims this thesis examines a range of questions relating to the issue of continuity and change in the *métier* of a range of fashion merchants who operated in Paris between 1795 and 1855.

I have uncovered the working patterns and practices of small to medium sized businesses that were mainly owned by female entrepreneurs with a smaller number of male proprietors. New insights are offered into the areas of gender, consumption and credit and the shifting dynamics of urban space that were part of how a business identity was constructed in order to target clients of different social levels. This investigation takes a fresh approach to examine the minutiae of business operation plus social and cultural practices that reveal, for the first time, how the women and men of this trade dealt with the challenges and opportunities of the period to become a dynamic force that contributed to significant changes that occurred within the French fashion industry.

The fashion merchant's business was part of the needle trades that were culturally seen as predominantly feminine. Their demand from

suppliers stimulated the production of materials such as fabrics, lace and trimmings which were needed in their own manufacture of goods that were then sold through retail outlets. Merchandise known as *modes* in the 1770s was defined as fine clothing and objects, mainly for women, that changed according to caprice or taste. Parisian products were also acknowledged as the leading arbiters in this area.<sup>1</sup> With a reputation for creativity, innovation and novelty, *marchandes de modes* stimulated the faster production and consumption of fashionable goods.<sup>2</sup> Within the hierarchy of clothing *métiers* because of these associations they achieved a higher status than the other principal producers of female clothing.

This was the position of the *métier* up to the time of the French Revolution however until now there has been no detailed study of their significance to the nineteenth century fashion industry when there were different challenges and opportunities that affected the luxury clothing sector. I will argue that, as part of the growing luxury artisanal industries they were significant to economic development in Paris and so to France. Studying the nineteenth century context for commerce shows that individuals in business had to adapt to an unstable political situation with periods of war and times of economic crises as well as alterations to the regulations around work. There were also periods without a court which before the Revolution had provided important elite clients for luxury clothing suppliers.

The advantage of focusing on this particular trade is that the scale of fashion merchants' businesses was small to medium and their operations often combined skilled, non-mechanised manufacture with retail practices so that, as typical examples of Parisian firms, the investigation will contribute to knowledge of this sector. I have research questions around the impact of the abolition of the guilds,

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<sup>1</sup> *L'Almanach Général des Marchands, Négociants et Commerçants de la France et de l'Europe* (1773), cited in Michele Saporì, *Rose Bertin: Couturière de Marie-Antoinette* (Perrin, 2010), pp. 37-38.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Régime*, trans. by Jean Birrell (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 307.

changing regimes, gender and credit that could affect a business and the ability to succeed. Studying male and female proprietors will also identify the range of factors that shaped how they experienced business differently in the early nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

The position of the male fashion merchant has received little attention from historians along with questions about the impact the presence of the male merchant had on what was the accepted training to enter the *métier*, and the way the business was founded or operated. Capital investment and credit will be considered looking at how businesses were financed and whether loans were still predominantly made by family members. I will investigate the factors that built a reputation and how that linked to the choice of location and premises as well as being a promotional tool in the use of commercial literature, the press and the industry exhibitions. This will include considering the impact of court clients and whether their loss, in times of regime change, stimulated the profession to find new business strategies to diversify towards different levels of the market.

A range of factors, such as new materials, imitations and substitutes, will be examined in order to understand the increased specialism that had occurred by the end of the nineteenth century. I am focusing this investigation on the capital city and so there are research questions about how the city developed and its impact on the locations of fashion merchants, the ease of circulation and availability of transport. Finally, I reveal what avenues were available to fashion merchants to promote their enterprises and whether they actively advertised their businesses. This thesis continues an investigation into the *métier* of the fashion merchant (*marchande de modes*) that started with a master's dissertation

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<sup>3</sup> Béatrice Craig, *Women and Business since 1500: Invisible Presences in Europe and North America?* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), p. 5.

examining the career of the male fashion merchant (*marchand de modes*) Louis Hippolyte LeRoy, 1763 to 1829.<sup>4</sup>

In the context of nineteenth century Paris, I analysed LeRoy's business practice, clientele and reputation. I demonstrated that LeRoy's business practice was similar to that of Worth's and that therefore he also could be seen as the forerunner of the modern *haute couture* industry.<sup>5</sup> This was the beginning of an investigation into the history of the luxury fashion industry in Paris and the changing terminology, role and status attached to the different trades. The current thesis has been undertaken to look more widely at the *métier* between 1795 and 1855 in order to understand the condition and the significance of the fashion merchants' position in the production and consumption of clothing in Paris. The range of dates that cross different regimes will allow a consideration of change and continuity in a sixty-year period and the investigation will look outside these dates when relevant to clarify points. Historians have often focused on the last half of the eighteenth century and the late nineteenth century as being significant periods of change related to the mass production of clothing, greater consumption across class divisions, *haute couture*, technical change and social history. There have been two studies of changes to the clothing industry in Paris that are particularly significant because they point out two key periods of change. Roche has looked at the increasing consumption of luxury items across social levels in the eighteenth century and Perrot has looked at changes linked to increasing markets, mass production and department store practices after 1860. I will examine the significant events between these dates as they relate to fashion merchants.

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<sup>4</sup> Fiona Ffoulkes, 'Louis Hippolyte LeRoy, 1763-1829: Grandfather of Haute Couture', (unpublished master's dissertation, Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> Françoise Tétart-Vittu has also stated that she considers the earlier developments under the fashion merchants Bertin and LeRoy to be the beginning of the industry that became associated with the term *haute couture*, Françoise Tétart-Vittu, 'The Origins of Haute Couture', in *Paris Haute Couture*, ed. by Olivier Saillard and Anne Sazzo (Flammarion, 2013), p. 18.

Daniel Roche's approach in examining the production and consumption of clothing – the clothing system - of the eighteenth century was to link social and cultural history. First written in 1989 in French, his study concluded that a kind of 'revolution' was taking place which allowed the further developments of the nineteenth century to occur predating the retail techniques associated with department stores.<sup>6</sup> Both his work and that of Perrot partly attribute this to the importance of the second-hand clothing sector that accustomed the poorer part of the consumer market to the purchase of ready-made clothing.<sup>7</sup>

Roche considered that fashionable clothing and accessories were items that all sections of society were consuming at a faster rate than in previous times and that this was particularly shown in the inventories of the popular classes (*le people*) between 1775 and 1790.<sup>8</sup> In studying the clothing trades Roche identified the *couturières*, *lingères* and *marchandes de modes* as occupying key positions in the production of women's clothing and further stated that it was women, in their different but predominantly female guilds, that responded faster than men to the new opportunities 'in the economy of clothing'.<sup>9</sup> It was in female clothing that a desire for luxury and novelty was used by female merchants to change habits by promoting the obsolescence of things and increase the rate of consumption.<sup>10</sup> The *métier* of fashion merchant whose guild in 1776 also brought together traders in artificial flowers and feathers, dealt in unnecessary but desirable fashionable adornment. Nonetheless

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel Roche, *La Culture des Apparences: Une Histoire du Vêtement XVIIe – XVIIIe Siècle* (Fayard, 1989). Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 295 and p. 508.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 508. Philippe Perrot, *Les Dessus et les Dessous de la Bourgeoisie: Une Histoire du Vêtement au Dix-Neuvième Siècle* (Fayard, 1981). Philippe Perrot, *Fashioning the Bourgeoisie: A History of Clothing in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. by Richard Bienvenu (Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel Roche, *Le Peuple de Paris: Essai sur la Culture Populaire au XVIIIe siècle* (Fayard, 1981). Daniel Roche, *The People of Paris: An Essay in Popular Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, trans. by Marie Evans and Gwynne Lewis (Berg, 1987), pp.168-71.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 296.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 307.

Roche pointed to a lack of knowledge of the trade before this date when it was part of the mercers' guild. In the last years of the *ancien régime* Roche stated that the *marchande de modes* was central to the clothing economy as they commissioned items from other artisans from small objects like clasps and pendants to stockings, lace and braid which enabled them to offer a large range of goods to their customers.<sup>11</sup> They embellished the work of others in the needle trades and 'arranged and changed' items in line with current fashion.<sup>12</sup> Roche also identified some specialisation by different fashion merchants before 1789.<sup>13</sup> Their success showed how significant the clothing system was economically and socially and culturally their boutiques added brilliance and dynamism to the city of Paris. According to Roche, they were also educators of their customers; both by the example of their shops and by their own appearances as 'models'.<sup>14</sup> In 1981 Philippe Perrot carried out an interdisciplinary historical study of nineteenth century French production and consumption of clothing and clothing behaviours.<sup>15</sup>

Perrot is significant to my investigation as he focused mainly on the later period, after 1860.<sup>16</sup> Perrot gave the following reasons for this: developments in the textile industry and the ready-made clothing industry, the impact of department stores plus the growth in 'modern' consumption due to increasing prosperity across the levels of society.<sup>17</sup> Perrot and Roche, considered that the clothing merchants drove consumption by constantly inventing novelty but Perrot also stressed the importance of reputation to business success and he identified different kinds of fashion based on social level. The wealthy 'bourgeoisie of the Chausée d'Antin and the old aristocracy

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 308-09.

<sup>12</sup> François Alexandre Garsault, *L'Art du Tailleur, Contenant le Tailleur d'Habit d'Homme; Les Culottes de Peau; Le Tailleur de Corps de Femmes et d'Enfants, et la Marchande de Modes* (Paris, 1769), p. 54. Cited in Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 309.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 327.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 328.

<sup>15</sup> Philippe Perrot, *Les Dessus et les Dessous de la Bourgeoisie*.

<sup>16</sup> Philippe Perrot, *Fashioning the Bourgeoisie*, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

of the Faubourg Saint-Germain', dressed in different styles.<sup>18</sup> For my study this could indicate that a widening market of consumers was developing which was also linked to headwear. Perrot briefly mentioned that hats became 'an indispensable element of appearance' linked to class as to be hatless would be a sign of lower class.<sup>19</sup> Other historians of dress and textiles have also focused attention on the last half of the nineteenth century looking at the significance of ready-made clothing and of the English *couturier* in Paris, Charles F. Worth who has been credited with creating *Haute Couture* or what at the end of the nineteenth century was called *grande couture*.<sup>20</sup> Historians like Perrot and Ribeiro have focused on the garments that Worth produced in limited numbers but where 'luxury distinguished it' from ready-made clothing.<sup>21</sup>

According to Ribeiro, this renewed importance to the dress relegated accessories to a secondary position whereas in the early nineteenth century, during the dates of my investigation, this had been reversed.<sup>22</sup> All these points raise questions about the condition of the fashion industry before 1860 which by omission can either sound moribund or, in Ribeiro's account, points to something more active occurring. In France, the Musée Galliera has held exhibitions supported by detailed catalogues including text by Françoise Tétart-Vittu and Piedada da Silveira that have considered changes in the commerce of nineteenth century clothing for women including the changing terminology for trades and premises.<sup>23</sup> They have also published research on some of the *magasins de*

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>20</sup> Worth's son's account of the fashion industry also emphasised the contribution of his father in changing the industry, Gaston Worth, *La Couture et la Confection des Vêtements de Femme*, (Paris, 1895). Diana de Marly, *The History of Haute Couture: 1850 to 1950* (Batsford, 1988a) and *Worth: Father of Haute Couture* (Elm Tree Books, 1988b). Philippe Perrot, *Fashioning the Bourgeoisie*, p. 184.

<sup>21</sup> Philippe Perrot, *Fashioning the Bourgeoisie*, p. 103.

<sup>22</sup> Aileen Ribeiro, *Ingres in Fashion: Representations of Dress and Appearance in Ingres's Images of Women* (Yale University Press, 1999), p. 43.

<sup>23</sup> Musée Galliera, *Sous l'Empire des Crinolines* (Paris Musées, 2008). Musée Galliera, *Au Paradis des Dames: Nouveautés, Modes et Confections, 1810 to 1870* (Paris Musées, 1993). Musée Galliera, *Modes et Révolutions, 1780 to 1804*, (Paris-Musées, 1989).

*nouveautés* that predated the department store.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately these works are not available in English and in 2010 Riello and McNeil called for further research into this period.

Much of the [19<sup>th</sup>] century's fashion is poorly understood and remains little researched [...] Characterised as it is by change – in the production, distribution, consumption of clothing, as well as in their cultural and social attributes – the period between the French Revolution and the 'invention of couture' in the 1860s-1880s is still elusive.<sup>25</sup>

Riello and McNeil pointed to a lack of published sources available for a study of women's clothing in the nineteenth century, particularly the first half of the century. Another reason for focusing on the last half of the nineteenth century for historians of retail and urban histories, such as Miller, has been the perceived impact of the department stores from 1852 and the easier circulation provided by Hausmann's building projects.<sup>26</sup> The effect of these points all together has been to create the idea of revolution and not evolution leaving developments of the first half of the nineteenth century in obscurity. For the history of fashionable clothing and the luxury industries more work has been published for the eighteenth century, in English and French, than the nineteenth century. Delpierre and Ribeiro have made detailed studies of fashion in the eighteenth century, the former of the clothing *métiers* and locations and the latter of dress and textiles as they relate to representation and social and political history.<sup>27</sup> There have been some examinations of

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<sup>24</sup> Piedada da Silveira and Françoise Tétart-Vittu, *Des Magasins de Nouveautés aux Grands Magasins: Aux Deux Magots 1813-1881* (Paris: CCM, 1993). Piedada da Silveira, *Les Magasins de Nouveautés de la Rue Montesquieu: Au Pauvre Diable et au Coin de Rue* (Paris: CCM, 1997).

<sup>25</sup> Giorgio Riello and Peter McNeil, *The Fashion History Reader: Global Perspectives* (Routledge, 2010), p. 267 and p. 271.

<sup>26</sup> Michael B. Miller, *The Bon Marché: Bourgeois Culture and the Department Store* (Princeton University Press, 1981), p.19. Philip G. Nord, *Paris Shopkeepers and the Politics of Resentment* (Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 60-142.

<sup>27</sup> Former curator at the Musée Galliera, Madeleine Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century* (Yale University Press, 1998). Aileen Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France, 1750-1820* (Yale University Press, 1995). 'Fashion in the Eighteenth Century: Some Anglo-French Comparisons', *Textile*

particular trades linked to clothing such as mercers, *couturières* and *marchande de modes* for the eighteenth century.<sup>28</sup> The *métier* of the seamstress (*couturière*) in eighteenth century Paris was examined by Crowston and she compared their trade under the guild system to that of the acknowledged, higher status, fashion merchant.<sup>29</sup> I will be investigating the suggestion that despite the Revolution many traditional working practices remained in place throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>30</sup> Jennifer Jones, in her work on the eighteenth century *marchandes de modes*, examined the construction of gender identity as it related to fashionable clothing and those engaged in the trade.<sup>31</sup> Acknowledged as the first celebrity *marchande de modes*, Rose Bertin, has received the most attention from writers; from the late nineteenth century to the present day. She has been acknowledged as the forerunner of the contemporary fashion designer in Paris whose relationship as a supplier to Queen Marie-Antoinette brought her business success and a comfortable lifestyle.<sup>32</sup> In examining the position of the

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*History*, 22:2 (1991), 329-45. *Fashion in the French Revolution* (Batsford, 1988). *Dress and Morality* (Batsford, 1986). *Dress in Eighteenth Century Europe, 1715 to 1789* (Batsford, 1984). See also Richard Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearances: Representations of Dress in Revolutionary France* (Berg, 2002).

<sup>28</sup> Carolyn Sargentson, *Merchants and Luxury Markets: The Marchands Merciers of Eighteenth Century Paris* (The Victoria and Albert Museum, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Fabricating Women*, p. 67.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 389.

<sup>31</sup> Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Berg, 2004). ‘Coquettes and Grisettes: Women Buying and Selling in Ancien Régime Paris’, in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspectives*, ed. by Victoria De Grazia and Ellen Furlough (University of California Press, 1996), pp. 25-53. ‘Repackaging Rousseau: Femininity and Fashion in Old Regime France’, *French Historical Studies*, 18 (1994), 939-99.

<sup>32</sup> Comte de Reiset, *Modes et Usages au Temps de Marie-Antoinette: Livre-Journal de Mme Eloffe, Marchande de Modes, Couturière Lingère Ordinaire de la Reine et des Dames de sa Cour* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1885). Emile Langlade, *La Marchande de Modes de Marie-Antoinette, Rose Bertin* (Paris, 1911). Pierre de Nouvion and Émile Liez, *Un Ministre des Modes sous LXVI, Mlle Bertin Marchande de Modes de la Reine, 1747 to 1813*, (Paris, 1911). Anny Latour, *The Kings of Fashion* (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1958). Michelle Saporri, *Rose Bertin*. Caroline Weber, *Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution* (Picador, 2007). Michelle Saporri, *Rose Bertin: Ministre des Modes de Marie-Antoinette* (IFM, Regard, 2004). Colin Jones, *Paris: Biography of a City* (Penguin Books, 2004), pp. 229-32. Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex: Economies of Regard in Old Regime France* (Duke University Press, 2013), pp. 246-82. Study day, ‘Autour de Rose Bertin: Les Marchands de Modes à Paris’;

fashion merchant in the nineteenth century she provides a model although, despite publications, her business practice along with others of the late eighteenth century has not been explored fully.

In order to investigate the businesses operation of merchants I will also analyse their clients within the context of France at a particular time when there were different courts or no court. As they consisted of an elite who provided an important clientele for fashion merchants I will engage with the work of Philip Mansel who has studied the early nineteenth century courts and their expenditure. My investigation responds to Mansel's approach that the court is 'a vital element in national identity' with an influence on manners and the decorative arts including fashion and dress.<sup>33</sup> Colin Jones has made extensive studies of the history of France, particularly the eighteenth century, and his biography of Paris provides essential information about changes to the city during the dates covered in the thesis.<sup>34</sup> Hausmann is sometimes mistakenly credited with changes to the city such as the creation of boulevards but these existed along with many sites for 'public sociability' by the eighteenth century.<sup>35</sup>

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Paris, Archives Nationales, 17 December 2013. Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, 'French Connections: Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire, and the Anglo-French Fashion Exchange', *Dress*, 31 (2004), 3-14. 'Minister of Fashion: Marie-Jeanne 'Rose' Bertin', (unpublished thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2002). 'The Face of Fashion: Milliners in Eighteenth Century Visual Culture', *British Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies*, 25 (2002), 157-72. 'Rose Bertin in London?', *Costume* (1998), 45-51.

<sup>33</sup> Philip Mansel was one of the founders of The Society for Court Studies in 1995 and his publications include, Philip Mansel, *The Court of France, 1789 to 1830* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 3. 'Paris, Court City of the Nineteenth Century', *The Court Historian* (2008) <<http://cour-de-france.fr/article340.html>> [accessed 18 June 2014]. *Louis XVIII* (John Murray, 2005). *Dressed to Rule: Royal and Court Costume from Louis V to Elizabeth II* (Yale University Press, 2005). *Paris Between the Empires 1814 to 1852* (London: John Murray, 2001). *The Eagle in Splendour: Napoleon I and his Court* (George Philip, 1987).

<sup>34</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris: Biography of a City* (Penguin Books, 2004). *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon 1715 to 1799* (Allen Lane: The Penguin Press, 2002). *Madame de Pompadour: Images of a Mistress* (London: National Gallery, 2002). *Cambridge Illustrated History of France* (Cambridge University Press, 1999). David Garrioch has studied the changing landscape of Paris between the eighteenth and nineteenth century in, *The Making of Revolutionary Paris* (University of California Press, 2002) and 'House Names, Shop Signs in Western Europe Cities, 1500 to 1900', *Urban History*, 21:1 (1994), 20-48.

<sup>35</sup> Colin Jones, *The Smile Revolution in Eighteenth Century Paris* (Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 92. 'Smiling Sociability in the French Enlightenment',

The changes to the city between the *ancien régime* and before Hausmann became Prefect of the Department of the Seine in 1853, with a mandate for his urban plan, have received little attention from scholars. However, there is a rich sector of studies in the urban history of Paris linked to politics, the economy and culture.<sup>36</sup> A recent exhibition at the Musée Carnavalet examined the ‘dream’ that Napoleon I had for the city including the building of grand monuments, the Stock Exchange (*Palais de la Bourse*) and the construction of Rue de Rivoli for commercial as well as residential space.<sup>37</sup> Many of the projects were completed and are significant to my argument that the city was an attractive alternative to the court as a site for display. Historians of architecture have also examined the developments in the building of private mansions and retail complexes, particularly the galleries and passages that were a feature of retail innovation before the department store.<sup>38</sup> Historians, like Coquery for the eighteenth century and Gillet and Miller for the nineteenth century have analysed developments in commercial practice, location and premises.<sup>39</sup>

Natacha Coquery has published several texts concerning the luxury retail industry in eighteenth century Paris considering how their locations were connected to ‘historical, economic and social

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paper given at the conference *Creating the Europe 1600 to 1815 Galleries*, London, V & A Museum, 8 April 2016.

<sup>36</sup> For example, concerning Paris, the work of Anthony Sutcliffe, *The Autumn of Central Paris: The Defeat of Town Planning, 1850 to 1970* (Edward Arnold, 1970); *Paris: An Architectural History* (Yale University Press, 1993). Donald J. Olsen, *The City as a Work of Art: London, Paris, Vienna* (Yale University Press, 1986). David Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (Routledge, 2006). Allan Potofsky, ‘The Construction of Paris and the Crises of the Ancien Régime’, *French Historical Studies*, 27:1 (2004), 9-48 and *Constructing Paris in the Age of Revolution* (Palgrave McMillan, 2009).

<sup>37</sup> ‘Napoléon et Paris: Rêve d’une Capitale’, exhibition at the Musée Carnavalet, Paris, 8 April to 30 August 2015.

<sup>38</sup> Specialist texts include Alexandre Gady, *Les Hôtels Particuliers de Paris: Du Moyen Âge à la Belle Époque* (Paris: Parigramme, 2008). Bertrand Lemoine, *Les Passages Couverts en France* (Paris: Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 1997).

<sup>39</sup> Le Bon Marché was the first department store to open in Paris in 1852 and was examined by Daniel B. Miller, *The Bon Marché: Bourgeois Culture and the Department Store, 1869-1920* (Princeton University Press, 1981).

developments'.<sup>40</sup> Miller and Gillet looked at shopping practices in nineteenth century France to contextualise the rise of the department store by considering earlier shopping arcades, *magasin de nouveautés* and the English style bazaars.<sup>41</sup> The history of British retailing has been examined by historians like Walsh and Cox focusing on methods of selling by those with and without premises ranging from pedlars and travelling salesmen to merchants with stalls and boutiques.<sup>42</sup> In this thesis I am responding to the point that Cox has made that traditional accounts of retail history thought significant change only occurred after 1850 with department stores catering for mass markets and shops having more than one outlet. I agree with her stance when she called for historians to expand the range of questions they ask when examining retail history and rather than only looking for signs of modernity in shop design, display, advertising, and shopping as a leisure activity, to also consider how retailers responded to the challenges of their time.<sup>43</sup> There have been some focused studies of companies dealing with luxuries, such

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<sup>40</sup> Natacha Coquery, 'Luxury and Revolution: Selling High-Status Garments in Revolutionary France', in *Selling Textiles in the Long Eighteenth Century: Comparative Perspectives from Western Europe*, ed. by Jon Stobart and Bruno Blondé (Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), pp. 179-92. Other publications include *Tenir Boutique à Paris au Dix-huitième Siècle: Luxe et Demi-luxe* (Paris: CTHS, 2011). *Hôtel, Luxe et Société de Cour: Le Marché Aristocratique Parisien au 18 Siècle*', *Histoire et Mesure*, 10:3-4 (1995), 339-69.

<sup>41</sup> Marie Gillet, 'Innovation and Tradition in the Shopping Landscape of Paris and a Provincial City, 1800 to 1900', in *The Landscape of Consumption*, ed. by Jan Hein Furnée and Clé Lesger (Palgrave McMillan, 2014), pp. 184-203. Béatrice de Andia and Caroline François, *Les Cathédrales du Commerce Parisien: Grands Magasins et Enseignes*, (Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 2006). The many publications by Piedada da Silveira and François Tetart-Vittu on the *magasin de nouveautés* include *Des Magasins de Nouveautés aux Grands Magasins: Les Grands Magasins du Louvre au XIXe Siècle* (Paris: CCM, 1995). *Des Magasins de Nouveautés aux Grands Magasins: A la Ville de Paris, 1841 to 1882* (Paris: CCM, 1994). *Aux Deux Magots 1813 to 1881*. Piedada da Silveira, *Au Pauvre Diable et Au Coin de Rue*.

<sup>42</sup> Alison Adburgham, *Shopping Style: London from the Restoration to Edwardian Elegance* (Thames and Hudson, 1979) and *Shops and Shopping, 1800 to 1914* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1989). Claire Walsh, 'Stalls, Bulks and Shops and Long-Term Change in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century England', in *The Landscape of Consumption*, ed. by Jan Hein Furnée and Clé Lesger. Claire Walsh and Nancy Cox, 'Their Shops are Dens, the Buyer is their Prey: Shop Design and Sales Techniques', in *The Complete Tradesman: A Study of Retailing, 1550 to 1820*, ed. by Nancy Cox (Ashgate, 2000), pp. 76-115. Claire Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth Century London', *Journal of Design History*, 8:3 (1995), 157-76.

<sup>43</sup> Nancy Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*, pp. 223-24.

as jewellery, but these have concentrated on the merchandise and clients rather than the location and display as part of the brand and techniques for stimulating consumer spending.<sup>44</sup> However recent studies of the architecture of Paris have included some of the fashion merchants that were based in particular areas such as Place Vendôme.<sup>45</sup> Apart from changes in retail, how production altered after the French Revolution has been seen as significant and was examined at a recent conference.<sup>46</sup> One of the concerns was that the lack of guild control over training would affect production quality.

Since the 1980s, historians Kaplan, Farr and Sonenscher have published important studies of the guilds in France examining their social and political functions.<sup>47</sup> There have also been studies that have reappraised the operation of the guild system within French society, gender studies and the economy in the eighteenth century as well as examining the support for their reinstatement during the nineteenth century.<sup>48</sup> There have been particular studies of male guilds, women within male guilds and female dominated guilds such as those in the clothing trades, though none specifically on the guild

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<sup>44</sup> Vincent Meylan, *Mellerio dits Meller: Joaillier des Reines* (Paris: Télémaque, 2013). Diana Scarisbrick, *Chaumet, Master Jewellers since 1780* (Paris: Alain de Gourcuff, 1995).

<sup>45</sup> *La Place Vendôme: Art, Pouvoir et Fortune*, ed. by Thierry Sarmant and Luce Gaume (Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 2002).

<sup>46</sup> 'Les Progrès de l'Industrie Perfectionnée: Arts et Manufactures de la Révolution Française au Premier Empire (France, 1789 to 1815)'. International symposium 13 to 14 June 2014, Paris, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA) et Centre Allemande d'Histoire de l'Art.

<sup>47</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, *La France, Malade du Corporatisme? XVIIe-XXe Siècle*, ed. by Steven L. Kaplan and Philippe Minard (Belin, 2004) *La Fin des Corporations* (Fayard, 2001), *The Bakers of Paris and the Bread Question 1700-1775* (Duke University Press, 1996), 'L'Apprentissage au Dix-Huitième Siècle: Le Cas de Paris', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 40:3 (1993), 436-79., 'Social Classification and Representation in the Corporate World of Eighteenth Century Paris: Turgot's Carnival' in *Work in France: Representations, Meaning, Organization and Practice* (Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 176-228., 'The Character and Implications of Strife Among the Masters Inside the Guilds of Eighteenth Century Paris', *Journal of Social History*, 19:4 (1986), 631-47. James R. Farr, *Artisans in Europe, 1300 to 1914* (Cambridge University Press, 2000). Michael Sonenscher, *Work and Wages: Natural Law, Politics and the Eighteenth Century French Trades* (Cambridge University Press, 1989).

<sup>48</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Fabricating Women*, pp. 5-8. *Guilds, Innovation and the European Economy 1400 to 1800*, ed. by Stephan R. Epstein and Maarten Prak (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

of the fashion merchants.<sup>49</sup> These works allow an understanding of the regulation of work and the issues around gender and labour in the period before this thesis. The area of gender studies has produced extensive research on the relationship between women, work and the family and there have been a range of key areas where historians have taken distinct stances.<sup>50</sup> These range from issues of 'separate spheres' - gender norms divided into public or domestic lifestyles - 'segmented spheres' - economic activity being driven by business markets related to gender; and women's hidden economic agency being hidden by a range of contemporary and historical narratives.

In the last thirty years, historians have sought to understand the different experiences of women and men in nineteenth century society and the 'separate spheres' ideology of gender distinct domestic and public worlds, as articulated by Davidoff and Hall in

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<sup>49</sup> Hafter, Daryl M., *Women at Work in Pre-industrial France* (The Pennsylvania State University, 2007), 'Stratégies Pour Un Emploi: Travail Féminin et Corporations à Rouen et à Lyon, 1650-1791', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 54:1 (2007), 98-115., 'Female Masters in the Ribbonmaking Guild of Eighteenth Century Rouen', *French Historical Studies*, 20:1 (Winter, 1997), 1-14. For the *couturières*' guild see Clare Haru Crowston, 'Women, Gender and Guilds in Early Modern Europe: An Overview of Recent Research', in *The Return of the Guilds*, ed. by Jan Lucassen et al (Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 19-44; Clare Haru Crowston, 'Part Two: Making the Guilds', in *Fabricating Women*, pp. 171-293. For the mercers' guild see Carolyn Sargentson, *Merchants and Luxury Markets*; Judith Coffin, 'Women's Work? Men and Women, Guild and Clandestine Production in Eighteenth Century Paris', in *The Politics of Women's Work: The Paris Garment Trades, 1750 to 1915* (Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 19-45. Judith Coffin, 'Gender and the Guild Order: The Garment Trades in Eighteenth Century Paris', *The Journal of Economic History*, 54:4 (Dec., 1994), 768-93. Cynthia Truant, 'La Maîtrise d'une Identité? Corporations Féminines à Paris aux XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles', *CLIO.Histoire, Femmes et Sociétés* (1996), 1-12. Carol Loats, 'Gender, Guilds and Work Identity: Perspectives from Sixteenth Century Paris', *French Historical Studies*, 20:1 (winter 1997), 15-30. *Malade du Corporatisme? XVIIe- XXe Siècle*, ed. by Steven L. Kaplan and Philippe Minard (Belin, 2004). Michael D. Sibalis, 'Corporatism after the Corporations: The Debate on Restoring Guilds under Napoleon I and the Restoration', *French Historical Studies*, 15:4 (1988), 718-30.

<sup>50</sup> Originally published in 1978, the classic text by Scott and Tilly covered the 1700s to 1900s and it was the first to examine women as workers in France and England and was reissued in the late 1980s. Joan W. Scott and Louise A. Tilly, *Women, Work and Family* (Routledge, 1987); 'Women's Work and the Family in Nineteenth Century Europe', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 17:1 (Jan., 1975), 36-64.

1987, has predominated despite many challenges.<sup>51</sup> Recently there have been studies of women in business, by Craig, Kay and Phillips that have disputed the ideas put forward linked to this ideology that women either withdrew from business, in Europe and America, or were only limited to gender appropriate activities such as needle trades by 1850.<sup>52</sup> Looking at married women these historians found that despite legal constraints they operated as helpmeets and deputies in 'joint spheres' running family businesses and that single women were dynamic agents that could be called 'opportunity entrepreneurs'.

As an alternative way of approaching the idea of gendered areas, Scott has suggested 'segmented spheres' as a more useful tool for analysis when examining the business world.<sup>53</sup> Commerce works by forms of specialist markets, often gender based, and so considering women's hats and clothing being produced and sold predominantly by women and men's clothing being predominantly created and sold by men, follows. This idea resonates with the subject of this thesis because some historians have seen the work of high-end fashion merchants and dressmakers in Europe as exceptions to the perceived lack of women in business.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> For a discussion of how 'separate spheres' has remained a popular concept see the introduction in Béatrice Craig, *Female Enterprise Behind the Discursive Veil in Nineteenth Century Northern France* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), pp. 6-16. The concept of separate spheres was formalised in Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780 to 1850* (Routledge, 1987 & 2001).

<sup>52</sup> For Marseille, in the nineteenth century, Éliane Richard has found that women were heading businesses dealing with a range of manufacturing in cutlery, ceramics and alcohol as well as a large *magasin de nouveautés* that became a department store, 'Des Marseillaises en Affaires', *Annales du Midi* 118:253 (2006), 118-253, cited in Béatrice Craig, *Behind the Discursive Veil*, p. 10 and *Women in Business since 1500: Invisible Presences in Europe and North America?* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2016). Alison C. Kay, *The Foundations of Female Entrepreneurship: Enterprise, Home and Household in London, c.1800 to 1870* (Routledge, 2009). Nicola Phillips, *Women in Business, 1700 to 1850* (Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 3-5 and p. 255.

<sup>53</sup> Joan W. Scott, 'Comment: Conceptualizing Gender in American Business History', *Business History Review*, 72 (1998), 242-49.

<sup>54</sup> Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 240, 302, 312.

Another way of testing the ‘separate spheres’ notion has been to link this to class norms as Bonnie Smith’s influential work on French bourgeois women concluded that women retreated from business roles in large capitalised businesses into the domestic fields to concentrate on motherhood and religion.<sup>55</sup> Craig’s recent publication focuses on the same geographical area of Northern France and challenges the conclusions of Smith, looking at women’s economic engagement. Craig has identified ‘economic, social, legal and cultural factors that facilitated or restricted’ women’s engagement with work but also challenged the idea that women disappeared from business after 1850.<sup>56</sup>

Barker, along with other historians such as Simonton, Beachy, Craig and Owens, have also challenged the notion that women disappeared from the world of work as put forward by Davidoff, Hall.<sup>57</sup> The recent studies by Barker have focused on lower middle-class women and she comes to the conclusion, like Kay, that they were very much present in the commercial world. Craig considered that less was known about the petty middle class (*petites bourgeois*) such as craft workers and retailers, which is the group that this thesis examines.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Bonnie G. Smith, *Ladies of the Leisure Class: The Bourgeoisie of Northern France in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 1981).

<sup>56</sup> Béatrice Craig, *Female Enterprise Behind the Discursive Veil and Women and Business since 1500: Invisible Presences in Europe and North America?* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2016). Other texts on women and work in France include, ‘Women and Businesses in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Northwestern Europe. Introduction: Les Affaires sont-elles Affaires de Femmes?’, *Histoire Sociale*, 34:68 (Nov. 2001), 277-81. ‘Petites Bourgeoises and Penny Capitalists: Women in Retail in the Lille Area during the 19th Century’, *Enterprise and Society*, 2 (2001), 198-24.

<sup>57</sup> *Female Agency in the Urban Economy: Gender in European Towns, 1640-1830*, ed. by Deborah Simonton and Anne Montenach (Routledge, 2013); Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760 to 1830* (Oxford University Press, 2006). *Women, Business and Finance in Nineteenth Century Europe: Rethinking Separate Spheres*, ed. by Robert Beachy, Béatrice Craig and Alastair Owens (Berg, 2006); *Women’s History: Britain, 1700 to 1850*, ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (Routledge, 2005); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780 to 1850* (Routledge, 1987 & 2001).

<sup>58</sup> Béatrice Craig, ‘Petites Bourgeoises and Penny Capitalists’, 199 and 201.

The separate spheres discussion along with a need for more studies about women and work makes class a concern of this thesis both in terms of the level in society of the women and men working as *marchandes de modes* and when looking at the different levels of consumer markets for their merchandise. However, as Maza has shown, the language used to discuss the levels in French society between 1750 and 1850 is complex.<sup>59</sup> Maza has said that the French bourgeoisie were often defined by what they were not, such as a noble or someone who earned a living from manual labour, and that the word was often used to mean middle and upper-middle class.

The term bourgeoisie in French and English normally referred to a social elite and in France the word evolved between 1750 and 1850 from a civic elite to the ruling capitalist class as defined by Marx as those that controlled capital in the industrial revolution.<sup>60</sup>

Historically, the word itself dated from the early middle-ages and the term with the greater social range was middle class (*classe moyenne*) which was only used systematically from the 1820s and this derived from social science rather than history.<sup>61</sup> Counting the bourgeoisie by 'occupations and wealth', Garrioch has stated that between 1815 and 1830 this group grew significantly.<sup>62</sup> The relationship between different parts of society were thought to have been ordered by taste and factors that affected their consumption concerned the eighteenth century philosophers and economists Adam Smith and David Hume as well as Pierre Bourdieu in the

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<sup>59</sup> Sarah Maza, *The Myth of the French Bourgeoisie: An Essay on the Social Imaginary 1750 to 1850* (Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> In eighteenth century Bourdeaux, Adams has shown that the Lamothe Family who were mainly lawyers, with one son who was a priest and one a doctor, kept apart from the merchants of their city and considered themselves to be a professional elite. Christine Adams, *A Taste for Comfort and Status: A Bourgeois Family in Eighteenth Century France* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-6.

<sup>62</sup> David Garrioch, *The Formation of the Parisian Bourgeoisie*, (Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 245.

twentieth century.<sup>63</sup> According to Bourdieu, a class is defined partly by its consumption and ‘taste is an acquired disposition to differentiate’ where consumer products become ‘signs of distinction but also of vulgarity’.<sup>64</sup> The word ‘taste’ was defined by Larousse as ‘discernment, a sense of the beautiful, the graceful and elegance’.<sup>65</sup> In the nineteenth century there was negative discussion about bourgeois and *petit-bourgeois* taste particularly in their choice of products and the decoration of their domestic interiors.<sup>66</sup> Auslander has seen concern about taste as a response to the post-guild free market where the choice of goods expanded across a range of outlets and for which consumers had to adapt.<sup>67</sup>

The availability of novel consumer goods in eighteenth century France and Britain has been examined by historians who have sought to describe popular luxury (*luxe populaire*) aimed at the non-elite ‘middling and trading classes’ by using terms like ‘new luxury’, ‘semi-luxury’ (Berg), ‘*demi-luxe*’ (Coquery) and ‘populuxe’ (Fairchilds).<sup>68</sup> The terms describe desirable fashionable goods and ‘aristocratic luxury items’ that were made of cheaper materials aimed at a less wealthy section of society.<sup>69</sup> Contemporary and historical attitudes to luxury are current subjects for discussion and

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<sup>63</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Routledge, 1981; repr. 2010).

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 468 and p. 485.

<sup>65</sup> Pierre Larousse, *Nouveau Dictionnaire de la Langue Française* (Paris: P. Larousse, 1886) cited in, *Le Commerce du Luxe. Production, Exposition et Circulation des Objets Précieux du Moyen Age à nos Jours*, ed. by Natacha Coquery and Alain Bonnet (Mare et Martin, 2015), p. 271.

<sup>66</sup> Audrey Gleonec, ‘La Democratisation du Meuble de Style au XIXe Siècle’, in *Le Commerce du Luxe*, ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Leora Auslander, ‘The Gendering of Consumer Practices in Nineteenth Century France’, in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough (University of California Press, 1996), p. 82.

<sup>68</sup> Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth Century Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 5. Natacha Coquery, ‘The Semi-Luxury Market, Shopkeepers and Social Diffusion: Marketing Chinoiseries in Eighteenth Century Paris’ in *Fashioning Old and New: Changing Consumer Patterns in Western Europe, 1650 to 1900* ed. by Bruno Blondé, Natacha Coquery, Jon Stobart et al. (BREPOLS, 2009), p. 122. Cissie Fairchilds, ‘The Production and Marketing of Populuxe Goods in Eighteenth Century Paris’, in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, ed. by John Brewer and Roy Porter (Routledge, 1993), p. 228.

<sup>69</sup> Cissie Fairchilds, ‘The Production and Marketing of Populuxe Goods’, p. 228.

have resulted in conferences, networks, museum exhibitions, books and a new journal.<sup>70</sup> Berry considered that Plato, the Romans and the early Christians established luxury as a negative term representing it as a corrupting force.<sup>71</sup> The changing associations are illustrated by the connection between luxury and lust in sixteenth century England in contrast to ‘magnificence’ (*faste*) that was an acceptable Aristotelian term.<sup>72</sup> During the eighteenth century there were contradictory attitudes to luxury that reflected a negative moral position versus the importance of the production and consumption of luxury goods to the economy.

In theory, the general opinion is against luxury, in  
practice everybody is engaged with it.<sup>73</sup>

Recent conferences and publications have explored the term’s changing meanings.<sup>74</sup> Four different quotes about luxury from 1777, 1787, 1855 and 1865 from contemporary dictionaries were discussed.<sup>75</sup> These showed that essentially the attitude to luxury remained a negative one and that the condemnation reflected moral and political thinking. However, Coquery and Bonnet pointed out that it was difficult to find an analysis of luxury from the socio-

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<sup>70</sup> ‘Condé Nast International Luxury Conference’, Florence, Suzy Menkes, 23 April 2015. Giorgio Riello and Rosa Salzberg, *The Luxury Network*, University of Warwick, 2013. Exhibition, ‘What is Luxury? London, V & A Museum’, 2015. Winchester Luxury Research Group, *Luxury: History, Culture and Consumption* (Bloomsbury, 2014). Nancy Cox, ‘Small Luxuries for Ordinary People’, *Retailing and the Language of Goods, 1550 to 1820* (Ashgate, 2015), pp. 141-57. Chris Berry, *The Idea of Luxury* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>71</sup> Chris Berry, *The Idea of Luxury*, p. 199.

<sup>72</sup> This idea is examined by Maria Hayward in the court dress of the period. Maria Hayward, ‘Luxury or magnificence? Dress at the Court of Henry VIII’, *Costume*, 30:1 (1996), 37-46.

<sup>73</sup> ‘Dans la théorie, l’opinion commune est contraire au luxe, dans la pratique tout le monde s’y livre’, Dumont or Butel-Dumont, *Théorie du Luxe, ou traité dans lequel on entreprend d’établir que le luxe est un resort non seulement utile mais même indispensable nécessaire à la prospérité des états* (London, 1775) cited in Carolyn Sargentson, *Merchants and Luxury Markets*, p. 1 and p. 6.

<sup>74</sup> Conference, ‘The Trade in Luxury the Luxury of Trade. The Production, Display and Circulation of Precious Objects from the Middle Ages to the Present Day’, 21-23 November 2012, Musées Gadagne, Lyons, organised by Laboratoire de Recherché Historique Rhône-Alpes (LARHRA). The conference papers have been published in *Le Commerce du Luxe. Production, Exposition et Circulation des Objets Précieux du Moyen Age à nos Jours*, ed. by Natacha Coquery and Alain Bonnet (Mare et Martin, 2015).

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

economic perspective. In the long eighteenth century, it was part of the discussion about increased consumer spending and goods that could not be called necessities. This is pertinent to my thesis as these could be goods supplied by fashion merchants.<sup>76</sup> An entry in a dictionary for the 1890s continued to define luxury as excess linked to personal vanity and sensuality although the same publication, under consumption, gave a more extensive and less negative entry showing that the contradictions still remained.<sup>77</sup> Here the luxury object that was linked to fashion ‘for the satisfaction of taste and caprice’ but that was not an improvement in value to that object was seen as an example of ‘unproductive consumption’. Alternatively, ‘reproductive consumption’ was a positive development because an object was being replaced by one of ‘equal or superior value’.<sup>78</sup> The dictionary definitions were unclear because meaning depending on changing geographical and cultural factors. Jones has called this ‘a dynamic rather than a static concept’ in the eighteenth century.<sup>79</sup> Fashion, as used by fashion merchants, was seen as having the power to stimulate a poorer group in a consumer society with the desire to copy the wealthier elite in their purchases, ‘emulative acquisitiveness’, and can be used to explain popular luxury (*luxe populaire*).<sup>80</sup> Emulation theory has been disputed as too simplistic however this market has often been linked to the production of ‘imitations’ of luxury goods and was the subject of a conference in Switzerland.<sup>81</sup> The luxury market has been seen as a

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>77</sup> Entries for *Luxe* and *Consommation* in C. Flammarion, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédie Universel*, 8 vols (Paris: E. Flammarion, 1894-98). Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, p. 190.

<sup>80</sup> Styles discussed the accepted description of a consumer society, John Styles, ‘Clothing the North: The Supply of Non-Élite Clothing in the Eighteenth-Century North of England’, *Textile History*, 25:2 (1994), 140 cited in *Le Commerce du Luxe*, p. 5. Rosalind H. Williams also considers there was a different model of consumption in late nineteenth century France rather than the ‘courtly model’, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth Century France* (University of California Press, 1982), p. 11.

<sup>81</sup> There is a discussion about emulation theory in Michael Kwass, ‘Big Hair: A Wig History of Consumption in Eighteenth Century France’, *American Historical Review* (June 2006), 641-43. The conferences were organised at the L’Institut d’Histoire, Université de Neuchâtel, Switzerland with the involvement of Nadège

source of high profits but also fragile because of the link to fashion with the desire to constantly renew products. In earlier times this enabled the elite at court to acquire material prestige but today as in the nineteenth century this elite was also made up of those in finance.<sup>82</sup> Other conferences have taken place in Europe, in 2006 and 2013, that have taken a global approach to history and examined the circulation of luxury goods in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>83</sup>

Taking into account the current academic concerns, I will consider how notions of luxury impacted on the businesses of fashion merchants in the first half of the nineteenth century. Luxury can also be applied to location and premises in urban development and recent work by Simonton has included fashion merchants with other retail trades considering gender, guilds and class in the context of three towns in the eighteenth century: Aberdeen in Scotland, Colchester in England and La Rochelle in France.<sup>84</sup> In a similar discussion of urban space, Coquery has focused on eighteenth century Paris and the impact of luxury retail outlets on the development of the capital.<sup>85</sup> Riello has examined how businesses responded to changes in fashion and the impact of competition

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Sougy. 'Luxes et Imitations, XVIIIe-XXe Siècle: Entre Inspiration et Innovation', 26-27 June 2012. 'Ça n'est pas de Prix! Les Dessous de la Valeur du Luxe', 21 to 22 November 2014.

<sup>82</sup> *Le Commerce du Luxe*, p. 5.

<sup>83</sup> Conference, 'Luxes et Internationalisation: XVè-XIXè siècles', L'Institut d'Histoire et le Comité Franco-Italien d'Histoire, Université de Neuchâtel, 25 to 27 June 2009. The resulting book, Nadège Sougy, *Luxes et Internationalisation: XVIIe-XXe Siècles* (Alphil, 2013). Conference, 'Le Commerce du Luxe à Paris aux 17e siècle et 18e siècle. Echanges Nationaux et Internationaux', INHA, Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne, 17-18 November 2006. The resulting book, *Le Commerce du Luxe à Paris aux 17e siècle et 18e siècle. Echanges Nationaux et Internationaux*, ed. by Stéphane Castelluccio (Peter Lang, 2009).

<sup>84</sup> Deborah Simonton, 'Milliners and Marchandes de Modes': Gender, Creativity and Skill in the Workplace in *Luxury and Gender in European Towns, 1700 to 1914*, ed. by Deborah Simonton, Marjo Kaartinen and Anne Montenach (Routledge, 2015), pp. 19-38.

<sup>85</sup> Natacha Coquery, 'Shopping Streets in Eighteenth Century Paris: A Landscape Shaped by Historical, Economic and Social Forces', in *The Landscape of Consumption*, ed. by Jan.H. Furnée and Clé Leger. See also, Elizabeth Sanderson, 'The Edinburgh Milliners, 1720 to 1820', *Costume*, 1 (1986), 18-28.

between London and Paris.<sup>86</sup> In shoe production understanding changing consumer tastes and new fashions contributed to the success or failure of the enterprise.<sup>87</sup> A special issue of *Business History* has examined approaches by historians to business longevity; the survival or failure of businesses.<sup>88</sup> Napolitano, Marino and Ojala questioned whether business survival was a valid performance measure as management studies have separated performance from survival so that the authors have criticised a lack of a unified perspective in investigations. The point was made that currently there was

no single explanation for longevity, or even consensus on why companies should survive in the first place, as the aim for long-term survival might jeopardise (short term) profitability.<sup>89</sup>

In the fashion industry in modern times Dana Thomas has discussed the implications of these two different strategies for the development of luxury brands by contrasting the groups LVMH and Richemont and the former's short term with the latter's long-term strategies.<sup>90</sup> Survival was affected by the 'line of business, location and size' and more studies were called for.<sup>91</sup> The significance of being able to understand longevity was partly that it might also explain business failure such as bankrupt fashion merchants. Rivezzo's article on research into longevity over the last 30 years has stated that most studies had concentrated either on business failure or business

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<sup>86</sup> Giorgio Riello, *A Foot in the Past: Consumers, Producers and Footwear in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 190-220.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>88</sup> There are five articles including Maria R. Napolitano, Vittoria Marino and Jari Ojala, 'In Search of an Integrated Framework of Business Longevity', *Business History*, 57:7 (Routledge, 2015), 955-69. Angelo Rivezzo, Mika Skippari and Antonella Garofano, 'Who Wants to Live Forever: Exploring 30 years of Research on Business Longevity', *Business History*, 57:7 (2015), 970-87.

<sup>89</sup> Maria R. Napolitano, Vittoria Marino and Jari Ojala 'In Search of an Integrated Framework', p. 955.

<sup>90</sup> Dana Thomas, *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost its Lustre*, (Penguin Books, 2007), pp. 46-57.

<sup>91</sup> Maria R. Napolitano, Vittoria Marino and Jari Ojala 'In Search of an Integrated Framework', p. 957 and p. 955.

success with only a few combining the two areas.<sup>92</sup> Most companies faced times of difficulty and success so it was suggested that studies should include success and failure with both quantitative and qualitative research which is the approach taken for this thesis. An element in the success of a business could be the visibility of their merchandise and their inclusion in industry exhibitions.

Recent published works however, have concentrated on ideas around the representation of national identity at the industrial exhibitions and there have been few studies that have considered how clothing was represented.<sup>93</sup> Ideas related to retail practice, ready-made garments, gender and luxury have received some attention. Boucher, Jones and Purbrick have seen a link between the methods of display in the 1851 exhibition and the new department stores of the period.<sup>94</sup> Françoise Tétart-Vittu gave a short overview of the position relating to garments in an exhibition catalogue about clothing during Napoleon III's empire.<sup>95</sup> Piedada da Silveira has also published relevant information about the involvement of Maison Gagelin, Worth and the *magasins de nouveautés*.<sup>96</sup> The nineteenth century economist and historian Armand Audiganne stated that the products of French industry had historically been directed towards the taste of women and Whitney Walton explored this further in examining the 1851 Great Exhibition in London. Walton included some details about clothing in her works but mainly focused on the importance of bourgeois women's

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<sup>92</sup> Angelo Riviezzo, Mika Skippri and Antonella Garofano, 'Who Wants to Live Forever', p. 982.

<sup>93</sup> *Britain, the Empire and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851*, ed. by Jeoffrey Auerbach and Peter Hoffenberg (Ashgate, 2008).

<sup>94</sup> François Boucher, *The History of Costume in the West* (Thames & Hudson, 1996), p. 370. Colin Jones, *Paris: Biography of a City* (Penguin Books, 2006), p. 386. *The Great Exhibition of 1851: New Interdisciplinary Studies*, ed. by Louise Purbrick (Manchester University Press, 2001), p.14.

<sup>95</sup> Françoise Tétart-Vittu, *Sous l'Empire des Crinolines*, (Paris Musées, 2008), pp. 166-71.

<sup>96</sup> Piedada da Silveira, 'Les Expositions des Produits de l'Industrie Française', in *Au Pauvre Diable et au Coin de Rue*, pp. 14-15. *Des Magasins de Nouveautés aux Grands Magasins. A la ville de Paris* (Paris: CCM, 1994), p. 18. 'Maisons Célèbres', in Musée Galliera, *Au Paradis des Dames*, pp. 40-43.

consumption of furnishings.<sup>97</sup> The significance of feminine taste and power over the family's consumer spending has importance for this investigation of the inclusion of female clothing and accessories at the exhibitions. Apart from gender, Odile Nouvel has suggested that examining the industry exhibitions was a way of considering the changing representation of luxury.<sup>98</sup> Concerns were also expressed about the classification of objects in the exhibitions that showed different attitudes to the products that were considered fine art and others that were seen as the lesser decorative arts.<sup>99</sup> Historians, like Kaiser, have looked at the impact of the exhibitions on the population of France

In the nineteenth century, world exhibitions could potentially help to create and strengthen a feeling of national community through bringing together people from Paris and the provinces and from all walks of life and instilling in them a sense of pride in what was presented as their common technological, economic and artistic achievements.<sup>100</sup>

Kaiser has looked at the role of the international exhibitions in Paris from 1855 as an instrument to build a sense of national identity amongst French people and concluded that they probably were able to consolidate a sense that already existed about the superiority of French culture. This fostered sense of pride was then used to 'legitimise' the political system of the day', however this could also be applied to pride in Parisian luxury clothing.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Whitney Walton, *France at the Crystal Palace: Bourgeois Taste and Artisan Manufacture in the Nineteenth Century* (University of California Press, 1992). 'To Triumph Before Feminine taste': Bourgeois Women's Consumption and Hand Methods of Production in Mid-Nineteenth Century Paris', *Business History Review*, 60:4 (Winter, 1986), 541-63.

<sup>98</sup> Odile Nouvel, Conservatoire Honoraire de Département XIXe Siècle, Musée les Arts Décoratifs at the conference, 'Les Progrès de l'Industrie Perfectionnée', Paris.

<sup>99</sup> Odile Nouvel and Camilla Murgia, *ibid*.

<sup>100</sup> Wolfram Kaiser, 'Vive la France! Vive la République? The Cultural Construction of French Identity at the World Exhibitions in Paris 1855–1900', *National Identities*, 1:3 (1999), 227.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 227-28.

## **Methodology and Primary Sources**

A multi-disciplinary approach has been taken to this study using sources familiar to art historians, dress and textiles historians and gender, social, cultural and business historians which include archival sources as well as printed commercial literature and memoires plus visual images such as paintings, fashion plates and surviving objects. Quantitative and qualitative research was carried out and the methodology of the thesis includes a prosopographical approach also referred to as ‘collective biography’.<sup>102</sup>

Prosopography is the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives. The method employed is to establish a universe to be studied, and then to ask a set of uniform questions.<sup>103</sup>

One of the common uses of this method has been to investigate changes in society by looking at social groups including those linked by occupation. Recent studies in business history have used the technique to understand changes in ‘business elite formation’.<sup>104</sup> The specific group of actors in history studied for this thesis are composed of fashion merchants (*marchandes de modes*) and the goal is to understand the factors that impacted on the success or failure of the individual businesses in order to explore the factors that contributed to change or continuity in the clothing system. As in Pierre Bourdieu’s approach, what is important ‘is not the individuals per se but rather the history and structure of the field’.<sup>105</sup> Fellman has stated that usually the aim of this approach was to generalise from a large database where findings would be given through the creation of tables and appendices. Broady has said that the use of

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<sup>102</sup> Lawrence Stone, ‘Prosopography’, *Daedalus*, 1 (1971), 46. Donald Broady has examined Pierre Bourdieu’s use of prosopography since the 1970s, Donald Broady, ‘French Prosopography: Definition and Suggested Readings’, *Poetics*, 30 (2002), 381.

<sup>103</sup> Lawrence Stone, ‘Prosopography’, p. 46.

<sup>104</sup> Susan Fellman, ‘Prosopographic Studies of Business Leaders for Understanding Industrial and Corporate Change’, *Business History*, 56:1 (2014), 5-21. Juha Kansikas, ‘The Business Elite in Finland: A Prosopographical Study of Family Firm Executives 1762-2010’, *Business History*, 57:7 (2015), 1112-132.

<sup>105</sup> Donald Broady, ‘French Prosopography’, p. 382.

quantitative and qualitative techniques depended on the ‘availability and quality of data’ as not all records would necessarily contain the same information for each individual in the sample.<sup>106</sup> Fellman agrees with this analysis and stated that deeper reflection could come from including other material to augment the quantitative findings.<sup>107</sup> I agree with this as an approach and for this thesis prosopography was favoured over other methods of interrogating sources as I needed a method that would be suitable for a large study across a range of businesses rather than a focus on a single case study which I had already carried out for the shorter master’s dissertation.

The challenge of using prosopography is that it needs a reasonable number of actors linked in some way. In my study, the connection needed to be their trade as fashion merchants as this is the focus of my investigation. Primary sources relating to the trade for 1795 to 1855 are scarce as there was no longer a guild or trade association. There were some sources for those successful merchants who had a high public profile and entries in trade directories and fashion journals but often only the surname was given. Though useful this did not aid research in archival sources. However, bankruptcy cases, although reflecting a business at a particularly low point, in many examples also provided information about the business and the proprietor before and after the proceedings started. They were also inclusive of those larger concerns who had been successful with high profile clients as well as those working in a small way from their homes. Therefore, research questions could be used to interrogate the actors discovered from a range of sources with the bankruptcy cases providing the greatest number. The limitation of the bankruptcy cases was that although the bankruptcy registers survived they only contained brief information whereas the more detailed files mainly covered the 1840s and 1850s. Fortunately, the

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 382.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

successful businesses, including those owned by Mme Corot and M LeRoy, provided evidence from the earlier period.

This thesis will study a fairly large group where the variants stem from the scale of merchants' businesses and sustained success versus periods of insolvency. The sample are connected by the questions that will be posed in each chapter to understand relevant personal and business related information. The answers to these questions will assist in an understanding of how the trade as a whole operated and will have a deeper significance for an understanding of the production, consumption and distribution of women's clothing.<sup>108</sup>

The limitation of this approach is that more documents were available for fashion merchants working at the end of the period being studied than the beginning and even a fairly large data base is still only a fraction of the number of businesses operating at that period. Nonetheless some generalisations can be made and the thesis makes use of a range of methods and sources that will enable a rigorous approach suitable to the fragmentary nature, though rich range, of the available primary sources.

Documents were consulted in French and British archives and a database was created from 70 bankruptcy cases held mainly at the Archives de Paris.<sup>109</sup> The main changes to the legislation affecting bankruptcy were, in 1673, Colbert's *Ordonnance Royale*, in 1807 Napoleon I's *Code de Commerce* and under Louis-Philippe, the 1837 and 1838 *Law of Bankruptcy*. Changes related to what defined fraudulent behaviour and how punishment was assigned along with the length and cost of the bankruptcy procedure.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-7.

<sup>109</sup> The exception is the documentation concerning the sale of M. Thibault's business due to bankruptcy proceedings, 13 May 1811. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN) MC/ET/XVIII/663. Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), Bankruptcy Registers of the Tribunal de Commerce (*Registres d'Inscription des Faillites*), 1800-1935, series D10U3. There are 121 registers for 1808 to 1935 and registers 1-30 cover 1808 to 1855 with a gap for 1831. The files are under series D11U3 and there is a card catalogue also covering the dates 1792-1807 that lists bankruptcy cases in registers and files by trade.

<sup>110</sup> Coquery and Praquin have examined the changes in the law as it applied to bankruptcy. Natacha Coquery and Nicolas Praquin, 'Règlement des Faillites et

Bankruptcy proceedings were recorded in registers that linked to the detailed files but not all files survived.<sup>111</sup> The sample of surviving fashion merchants' cases date from 1789 but as can be seen in Appendix 1 more have survived from the 1840s and 1850s than the earlier years. These files normally consisted of a range of documents including a balance sheet (*bilan*), inventory and report. Sixty-one files contained the balance sheet which listed the assets and liabilities of the merchant and when detailed also gave names of clients owing money and the rental costs for premises. The inventory survived in 54 cases and listed merchandise, documents and personal clothing along with the room they were found in and the position of the rooms within the building. Designated retail space such as *boutique* or *magasin*, work space like *atelier* or *laboratoire* and domestic rooms were noted. There was also a report to creditors by the receiver (*syndic*) in 52 cases sometimes with a detailed history of the person and the business with their training and experience plus a summary of the reasons for business failure. Other documents related to meetings of creditors, the appointment of agents and receivers plus whether the bankrupt was negligent (*banqueroute simple*) or fraudulent (*frauduleuse*). Although a rich source of information, bankruptcy files have limitations because they only show those that failed, at a particular time in the life of the business as opposed to what Sonenscher has called 'ordinary prosperity and uneventful success'.<sup>112</sup> Other documents recorded different events in the life of the enterprise such as partnership agreements and sales of businesses.<sup>113</sup>

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Pratiques Judiciaires: De l'Entre-soi à l'Expertise du Syndic (1673-1889)', *Histoire et Mesure*, 23:1 (EHESS, 2008), pp. 43-83. See also *The History of Bankruptcy: Economic, Social and Cultural Implications in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Thomas M. Safely (Routledge, 2013).

<sup>111</sup> There are large gaps in the surviving files between January 1817 and January 1830 as well as May 1840 to May 1847. AP, D11U3/64 and D11U3/93.

<sup>112</sup> Michael Sonenscher, *The Hatters of Eighteenth Century France*, (University of California Press, 1987), p.178.

<sup>113</sup> Partnership agreements and dissolutions were found in the Archives de Paris and notarial documents relating to sales in the Archives Nationales. The publication Archives Nationales, *Documents du Minutier Central des Notaires de*

The invoices, account books, letters and notes that recorded daily transactions have survived in smaller numbers for the first half of the nineteenth century and generally only for the more successful *marchandes de modes* such as LeRoy, Corot and Barenne who all supplied the different courts or wealthy clients.<sup>114</sup> The invoices and correspondence for royal and aristocratic clients listed the merchandise and suppliers which allows a comparison to be made across the dates both in terms of invoice headings, type of goods supplied by the *marchandes de modes* and if they changed over time. The correspondence of Napoleon I's empire showed a conflicting relationship with suppliers that can help in an examination of the changing significance of the clothing industry to different regimes as well as how prices and the value of goods were calculated; both by the merchant and the government. These records offer evidence of the relationship between *marchandes de modes*, suppliers and clients. Royal commissions, such as a trousseau, were closely followed as shown by the surviving correspondence. The premises of fashion merchants can also be examined through the tax records for land registry and building reports plus notarial documents for leases.<sup>115</sup>

Reports were taken of buildings for tax purposes and, although they vary in how much detail they provide, they usually start with a description of the outside of the premises so this can be a rare source for understanding the precise location, the number of

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*Paris concernant l'Histoire Économique et Sociale, 1800-1830* (Paris: Centre Historique des Archives Nationales, 1999) which analysed sources for the study of trades in 4 *notaires'* studies, VII, XXVIII, XLI and XCIII, revealed relevant documents relating to civil and business life for *marchandes de modes*.

<sup>114</sup> Paris, Archives Nationales, Pierfitte, series O shows court consumption and the Archives de Paris has business archives and private archives that include invoices from fashion merchants. Two of the account books belonging to Louis H. LeRoy survive. Paris, *Grand Livre de Compte*, no. 4 and *Grand Livre de Compte*, no.5, 1811-1821, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BnF), Fr. Na. 5931 and 5932. Invoices and letters are also part of the collection of papers relating to the Empress Josephine's wardrobe, 1809. London, The National Art Library, V & A Museum (V & A), 86.UU. 1 & 2.

<sup>115</sup> Documents organised by street, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), Land Registers (*Sommier Foncier de la Ville de Paris*), DQ18 and Building Inspections for tax assessment (*Calepin des Propriétés Bâties*), 1852, AP, D1P4.

storeys, the layout of the rooms, dimensions and even what the façade of a business looked like. Some leases have also been obtained for different types of locations from the Palais Royal to the Galerie Vivienne and Rue de Richelieu. These describe the number of rooms, their location, the cost of the rent and any restrictions on usage. This can give evidence of the changes in fashionable location, the status of the business and who the target customers were plus providing examples of the set-up costs. There are a range of primary sources for the national and international exhibitions which include catalogues and jury reports as well as supporting documentary evidence on the planning and assessment of the different exhibitions along with royal visits.<sup>116</sup>

The catalogues listed the products displayed and the manufacturer with their address and sometimes a short history of the company. The jury reports listed the medal winners and included some comment and there could also be an assessment of the particular industry compared to past exhibitions. For example, in the report from the 1889 exhibition a table is included showing the level of exports for women's clothing and hats, since 1837. It was also stated that one of the most important facts of the century had been the creation of an industry for ready-made clothing.<sup>117</sup> The section on the history of the hat-making industry pointed out that the manufacture of felt hats was limited and expensive at the beginning of the nineteenth century but that around 1840 production developed, and by 1850 it was of particular importance.<sup>118</sup> Straw hats were examined too and these texts can help that part of the inquiry which is trying to understand the reasons for specialisation, changes in ready-made merchandise and how the use of imitations could provide a range of goods at different prices. Lastly, there was

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<sup>116</sup> Paris, Archives Nationales, (AN), Pierrefitte, F12 for documents about the industry exhibitions.

<sup>117</sup> Alfred Picard, *Exposition Universelle Internationale de 1889 à Paris: Rapport Général, Mobilier, Tissus, Vêtements* (Paris, 1891), p. 507.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 158.

an expanding commercial literature and media available such as trade cards, trade directories, newspapers and fashion journals.

Journals varied in their approaches making some more helpful than others in examining the research questions and sample of *marchandes de modes*. The *Almanach des Modes* for 1814, 1815 and 1821 surveyed the fashionable clothing suppliers in what seemed to be a disinterested manner rather than a form of advertising. The limitation of the fashion press was that credits to suppliers were not given under fashion plates in the early nineteenth century and in the text, across the dates, it was not always stated who the author was. As much of the editorial included paid advertising in the form of puff or *réclame* the information about fashion merchants was not detached evaluation but it demonstrated how *marchandes de modes* created a business identity and a promotional strategy. In order to investigate these issues and the factors around change or continuity in the role of the *marchande de modes*, between 1795 and 1855, the thesis is divided into four main chapters with three sections.

In Chapter 1, I will analyse the context in which fashion merchants operated in the first half of the nineteenth century. France suffered periods of economic difficulties and there were changes to society and government regimes which affected the commerce in luxury clothing. Focusing more on factors relating to commerce and fashion merchants, the next sections will examine developments to the guilds in France until they were abolished in 1791 and the eighteenth-century businesses of *marchandes de modes* including the career of Rose Bertin.

Chapter 2 will begin by examining the factors, such as gender and class, that affected the choice of pathways towards the *métier* of fashion merchant as a proprietor. I will then consider how capital was acquired in order to start a business as well as how the finances of the business operated and whether the network of credit

had changed since the eighteenth century. Lastly, I examine changes to the merchandise that was produced and stocked for a range of clients through retail sale, looking for factors linked to specialism, class and notions of luxury.

In Chapter 3, I consider the significance of changes to infrastructure and transport in Paris and how this affected the location of fashion merchants' premises and the circulation of people and goods. The relationship between class and lifestyle is examined and how Paris offered a range of sites for display and social interaction. This includes examining how distinctions were made by the fashion merchants between carriage customers and pedestrians. Then I analyse how a 'good' location was defined for fashion merchants across the dates and the factors that might motivate a change of premises. Lastly, I examine the factors that affected the external and internal character of the business with an identity linked to luxury, comfort and type of clients.

Lastly, Chapter 4 will examine the use of different kinds of promotional strategies by fashion merchants to build their reputations and increase sales. I analyse the opportunities for publicity in elite orders for imperial and royal trousseaux and marriage *corbeilles* and this display of luxury clothing then links to the next section which examines the significance of clothing in the national and international exhibitions and the presence of fashion merchants. These events were widely reported in the media and the growing opportunities to advertise in print literature, newspapers and journals is investigated in the final section. A context to the investigation of the thesis will be considered in the first chapter.

## **Chapter 1. France, 1789 to 1855: Government, Economy and Luxury Clothing Production.**

In this opening chapter, I will focus on the political, economic and social context that eighteenth century and nineteenth century fashion merchants had to operate within. From the end of Louis XVI's reign until the second empire of Napoleon III was a turbulent period of monarchies, republics, empires and revolutions with different regulations for commerce. The presence or lack of a court was significant to the development of the luxury clothing industry in Paris because historically these had depended on the monarch, his family and nobles as clients for their merchandise.<sup>119</sup> Commerce was subject to increased risk by the country's economic problems, regime changes along with the associated social unrest and war. There were also other events that caused problems for the population generally such as climatic disasters and health scares including three major outbreaks of cholera between 1832 and 1854.<sup>120</sup>

In the first of three sections, I will begin by considering changes to society, the economy and luxury commerce focusing on key events that would have increased risk for fashion merchants or provided opportunities. Secondly, I will focus on the history of guilds and how it affected the women's clothing industry, female workers and the significance of the fashion merchants' independent guild. Finally, I will investigate the merchant's rise to elite status within the hierarchy of the clothing trades for women in the eighteenth century.

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<sup>119</sup> According to Fox and Turner a sizeable bourgeois clientele developed for Parisian luxury goods in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, *Luxury Trades and Consumerism in Ancien Régime Paris*, ed. by Robert Fox and Anthony Turner (Ashgate, 1998), p. xvii.

<sup>120</sup> Climatic disasters produced periodic subsistence crises in France during the nineteenth century at roughly ten-yearly intervals. Pamela Pilbeam, *The 1830 Revolution in France*, (Macmillan, 1991), p. 39. Cholera outbreaks occurred in 1832, 1848-49 and 1853-54. Colin Jones, *Paris*, pp. 338-40 and p. 363.

## France: Society, Economy and Luxury Commerce.

In this section, as a context for the later focus on changes to the trade of fashion merchant, I will examine the key periods of positive and negative economic activity together with changes in regimes. Then, I will show how these events impacted on the growth of the luxury trades. Table 1 summarises the periods of economic difficulty and growth or prosperity in France across the dates being examined showing the regular fluctuations to the economy. During the *ancien régime* the 1750s had been boom years but by the 1770s, in the reign of Louis XVI, the country was in recession.

**Table 1. Periods of Economic Difficulty and Growth, 1770s to 1850s.**

YEAR	ECONOMIC DIFFICULTY	ECONOMIC GROWTH
1770s-1780s	Recession and near bankruptcy	
1792	Crisis	
1804-1809		Prosperity
1810-1813	Difficulty	
1815-1846		Slow growth
1827-1833	Difficulty and crisis	
1834-1846		Growth
1846-1851	Crisis	
1852-1857		Prosperity

The French finance minister Calonne faced the situation of a state on the verge of bankruptcy. In 1786, he estimated that revenue would amount to about 475 million livres and would be less than expenditure at 587 million livres.<sup>121</sup> In part the financial crisis was due to the cost of war, necessitated by frequent conflicts and the increasing size of the army. This expenditure amounted to between a third and a half of the budget during peacetime but escalated to around seventy per cent during wars.<sup>122</sup> Whilst the state had saved itself from bankruptcy in 1789 by seizing Church property the mass

<sup>121</sup> Roger Price, *A Concise History of France* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.85.

<sup>122</sup> Roger Price, p. 61 and Colin Jones, *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, pp. 176-77.

of the population appeared to be still vulnerable to dips in the economy.<sup>123</sup> The extravagance of the court, including Marie Antoinettes' expenditure on clothing, was perceived by the public as a factor in the state's economic problems although it was only a small part of state expenditure.<sup>124</sup> The Revolution of 1789 gave rise to the conversion of the Estates General to a National Assembly, King Louis XVI was overthrown on 10 August 1792 and on 21 September a constitutional Convention proclaimed a republic. Although these were dramatic changes French society still had a stable bourgeois elite.<sup>125</sup> However, in 1793, France was dealing with internal conflict as well as being at war with most of Europe.

Political centralization, Revolutionary Tribunals, mass executions that included the king, queen and many of the royal family were part of the system that became known as the Terror during the years 1793 and 1794. The extremes of this time, along with the leadership of Robespierre (executed 28 July 1794), were eventually also rebelled against by deputies in the Convention. The years 1794 to 1795 saw a severe winter and poor harvest which led to protests in Paris against the high prices of bread similar to those seen leading up to the Revolution of 1789. The new more conservative republic suppressed the risings and gave executive power to five Directors but this government was seen as weak and the legislature was pressured by military force into accepting a new Consulate with Général Napoléon Bonaparte, Sieyes and Ducos. In 1799 (Revolutionary Calendar Year VIII) Napoléon was appointed as First Consul for ten years with a legislative assembly (*corps législatif*) and a senate both with indirect means of election.

The power of Napoléon was further extended when he was made Consul for life, in 1802 and then on 18 May 1804 he was proclaimed head of a hereditary empire. The financial system was changed

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<sup>123</sup> Colin Jones, *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, p. 184.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p.178.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p.176.

through the law of 24 November 1799 which established a central bank and improved the system of collecting taxes plus in 1803 the Bank of France was founded.<sup>126</sup> At the beginning of Napoleon I's empire (1804-9) there was prosperity with support for the luxury industries but it only represented a period of regaining ground lost during the years of the Revolution.<sup>127</sup> In the government about a third of the leading bureaucrats were made up of those who had been nobles under the old regime and under Napoleon occupied the same posts. Individuals were selected by 'degree of wealth and political compliance' from the nobles and bourgeoisie and considered 'notables'.<sup>128</sup> From 1809 the population was more subject to the results of economic problems with increases in taxation and poor harvests in 1810, 1811 and 1812 so that by 1813, after years of war the economy worsened.<sup>129</sup>

After military defeat, Napoleon I was forced to abdicate on 6 April 1814 leading to a constitutional monarchy and the return of Bourbon dynasty under Louis XVI's two brothers - the comte de Provence and the comte d'Artois (Louis XVIII and later Charles X). Napoleon's first empress, Josephine died in May 1814 and his second wife Marie-Louise was granted the duchy of Parma in June 1815.<sup>130</sup> The former emperor attempted to regain the government of France when he returned from exile on Elba on 1 March 1815 for a 'Hundred Days'. However, this attempt failed and after being defeated by the allied troops at the Battle of Waterloo he abdicated again on 22 June 1815.

In 1814 on 3 May Louis XVIII had ceremonially re-entered the Tuilleries palace and was to 'govern in combination with a parliament' however, as under Napoleon I, nobility could be a

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<sup>126</sup> Roger Price, p. 130. Colin Jones, *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, p. 194.

<sup>127</sup> Roger Price, p. 133 and p. 139.

<sup>128</sup> Pamela Pilbeam, *The Constitutional Monarchy in France, 1814-48* (Longman, 2000), p. 9.

<sup>129</sup> Jean Tulard, *Nouvelle Histoire de Paris. Le Consulat et l'Empire: 1800-1815*, (Hachette, 1983), p. 357.

<sup>130</sup> Philip Mansel, *The Court of France*, p. 92.

qualification for position but wealth and political preference was also significant.<sup>131</sup> Attempting to find continued support for luxury goods the Conseil Général des Manufactures declared

French people more than all others likes to find its models at the court of its kings.<sup>132</sup>

These words were spoken to the Duchesse d'Angoulême in 1814 and showed the anxiety of manufacturers.<sup>133</sup> Louis XVIII's regime was seen as creating a court that was accessible where the popularity of the receptions at the Tuilleries Palace made it more full of people than ever before increasing the demand for the correct clothing.<sup>134</sup> A new elite made up of men who were bankers or sons of third estate deputies were not excluded from applying for court office.<sup>135</sup> During the years of the Restoration regimes between 1815 and 1846 the economy grew slowly but there were problems in 1827 and 1829 to 1830 when protests against the government of Charles X took place in a context of bad harvests, high prices and business failures. At the beginning of the reign of Louis Philippe there was also a depression between 1830 and 1832. The 1820s and 30s were a time of intensified class distinctions when the wealthy bourgeoisie were fearful of what were called the 'dangerous classes' meaning the urban labouring poor seen as living a life of vice and criminality.<sup>136</sup> Local and national government included bankers, businessmen and industrialists and Stendhal commented that the power of old money was being replaced by the power of

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<sup>131</sup> Philip Mansel, *The Court of France*, p. 94. Pamela Pilbeam, *The Constitutional Monarchy in France*, p. 2 and p. 9.

<sup>132</sup> Philip Mansel, *Paris, Court City*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>133</sup> Mansel has stated that the Duchesse d'Angoulême was not particularly interested in luxury and 'people complained, her household was less impressive than the Empress's', Philip Mansel, *The Court of France*, p. 111.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., p. 105 and p. 108.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>136</sup> Jones stated that the terminology and negative association of crime with labour was discussed in Louis Chevalier, *Classes Laborieuses et Classes Dangereuses à Paris Pendant la Première Moitié du Dix-Neuvième Siècle*, (1958) but some historians have seen this as more of a 'cultural construction' than a reality. Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 325 and p. 582. Denise Z. Davidson, *France After the Revolution: Urban Life, Gender and the New Social Order* (Harvard University Press, 2007), p.15. Susan Foley, *Women in France Since 1789: The Meanings of Difference* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 59.

new wealthy middle-class groups.<sup>137</sup> There was no social acceptance of the Napoleonic nobles at Louis XVIII's court and the Catholic church together with the ultras (ultra royalists), who were supported by comte d'Artois, saw a self-seeking bourgeois elite gaining power. The comte succeeded to the throne after the death of his brother in 1824 but this was an unpopular government because of acts such as the suppression of the freedom of the press and increasing references to the religious power of kings.<sup>138</sup>

When Charles X was forced to abdicate on 2 August 1830 (known as the July Revolution, 27-30 July) he had named his successor as his grandson, the duc de Bordeaux, however Louis Philippe duc d'Orléans was appointed and became known as the 'bourgeois or citizen king'. The king and his family attempted to present themselves as virtuously bourgeois which meant restricting their use of luxury but this led to the criticism that they were not supporting the luxury industries.<sup>139</sup> As most nobles refused to attend the court, instead this period is associated with the consolidation of political and economic power of the bourgeoisie.<sup>140</sup> It was never a popular monarchy and the situation worsened when the economy took a downturn. The period 1834 to 1846 had been a time of economic expansion with the national revenues 'increasing 4 % annually' this being twice the amount of growth for the period 1825 to 1835.<sup>141</sup> However, from 1846 to 1851 many small enterprises, including fashion merchants' businesses, failed.<sup>142</sup> In 1847 the crisis

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<sup>137</sup> Pamela Pilbeam, *The Constitutional Monarchy in France*, p. 10. François Boucher, *A History of Costume in the West* (Thames & Hudson, 1996,) p.358.

<sup>138</sup> Pamela Pilbeam, *The Constitutional Monarchy in France*, p. 10. Studies of the reign of Louis XVIII have been published by Phillip Mansel, *Louis XVIII* (John Murray, 2005) and *Paris Between the Empires, 1814-1852* (John Murray, 2001) and Munro Price, *The Perilous Crown: France Between Revolutions* (Pan Books, 2007).

<sup>139</sup> Henriette Vanier, *La Mode et ses Métiers Frivolités et Luttes des Classes 1830 to 1870* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1960), pp. 7-8.

<sup>140</sup> Philip Mansel, *The Court of France*, p. 193.

<sup>141</sup> Yvonne Crewbow, 'French Economic Situation 1847 to 1852', in *Revolutions 1845 to 1852* (1998) <<https://www.ohio.edu/chastain/dh/feco.htm>>[accessed 14 January 2013].

<sup>142</sup> François Crouzet, 'Historiography of French Economic Growth', *Economic History Review*, 56:2 (2003), 215-42.

deepened and the Bank of France's gold reserves diminished by two thirds in just a few months and had to borrow from English banks.<sup>143</sup>

Construction diminished and public works planned by Louis-Philippe's government were postponed. On 24 February 1848, an uprising began and in the next few days there was a state of panic as prices on the stock exchange collapsed and there was a run on the Bank of France whilst other banks went into bankruptcy.<sup>144</sup>

Taxes were increased to 45 % in March and the unemployment situation was unresolved. In Paris 184,000 people were out of work so on 26 February the government introduced national workshops - by mid-June 118,310 people were enrolled to work in them.<sup>145</sup>

These were criticised for their expense but when they were closed in June this provoked a violent insurrection after which there were 1,500 executions without trial and 25,000 arrests and deportations to Algeria.<sup>146</sup>

The measures taken by the government after this included exemption for tax for five years for new building and the reintroduction of prison for debt. The economy was to be encouraged to grow but at the cost of fundamental human rights.<sup>147</sup> After violent protests, the king abdicated on 24 February 1848 and a provisional government of journalists, liberal politicians and lawyers was formed in haste and declared a republic. The Second Republic lasted from 1848 to 1852 and according to the contemporaries Tocqueville and Balzac, the struggle was now between classes unlike the three orders of the 1789 Revolution.

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<sup>143</sup> Gold reserves fell from 226 million francs to 59 million francs in six weeks between February and March. Jones, Peter, *The 1848 Revolutions* (Routledge, 1991; repr. 2013), p. 57.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. On French banking see Colin Heywood, *The Development of the French Economy, 1750 to 1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 26-28.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

The three orders have been replaced by what we call classes. We have lettered classes, industrial classes, upper classes, middle classes etc.<sup>148</sup>

In December 1848 Charles Louis Napoleon, nephew of Napoleon I, was elected as president for four years.<sup>149</sup> This nostalgic connection helped Louis because of the inaccurate associations with low taxes and French military glory.<sup>150</sup> Confident of support Louis organised a *coup d'état* on 2 December 1851 and became president for life before pronouncing himself emperor in 1852 to be known as Napoleon III.<sup>151</sup> Although the regime was authoritarian it coincided with a period of 'dynamism and prosperity' due to factors aiding the economy.<sup>152</sup> World trade was thriving, boosted by a gold boom in Californian and Australian mines and the period of low prices between 1817 and 1851 stimulated enterprise.<sup>153</sup> There was a period of economic prosperity until 1857 linked to the founding of a modern banking system which encouraged savers, increased the circulation of banknotes and offered credit more widely than ever before.<sup>154</sup> The court of the second Empire made Paris the centre of elegant life in a manner that had been lacking under the Restoration courts and, as at the court of Napoleon I, there was again strong support for the traditional luxury industries.<sup>155</sup>

France had a workforce that in part were highly skilled particularly in the production of labour intensive, high quality, fashionable luxury goods such as textiles. By the seventeenth century Louis XIV's minister, Colbert, recognised the importance of such goods to the

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<sup>148</sup> Colin Jones, *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, p. 210.

<sup>149</sup> Charles Louis Napoleon, later Napoleon III, was the son of the union, in 1802, between the daughter of the Empress Joséphine, Hortense, and Napoleon's brother Louis Napoleon.

<sup>150</sup> Colin Jones, *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, p. 211.

<sup>151</sup> Napoleon I's son had died childless in 1832, *ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 212.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.* On the economic crises of 1857 and 1866-7 under Napoleon III's empire, *Historical Dictionary of the French Second Empire, 1852-1870*, ed. by William E. Echard (London: Aldwych Press, 1985), pp. 205-07.

<sup>155</sup> François Boucher, *A History of Costume in the West*, p. 362. Henriette Vanier, *La Mode et ses Métiers*, p. 8.

economy of France shown in his statement that 'fashion is to France what the gold mines of Peru are to Spain'.<sup>156</sup> The benefits of a reputation for high quality fashionable goods were acknowledged and though the monarch and his courtiers might be based at the palace of Versailles the luxury trades that they patronised were mainly based in Paris.<sup>157</sup> Coquery has called the great aristocratic residences in Paris 'poles of attraction' for the network of suppliers of luxury goods.<sup>158</sup> The reputation of Paris, for the production of clothing in particular, was so high that Roche has said it was the most famous centre in Europe as well as being an 'empire of distribution'.<sup>159</sup> By the early nineteenth century, whereas Lancashire in England concentrated on the production of cheap cotton, France concentrated on high quality silk and worsted.<sup>160</sup> The quote below from the eighteenth century *parlements* of Paris demonstrates the value attached to the luxury goods produced in France.

Our merchandise has always won out in foreign markets [...] it is sought after all over Europe for its taste, its beauty, its finesse, its solidity, the correctness of its design, the perfection of its execution, the quality of its raw materials [...] Our arts, brought to the highest degree of perfection, enrich your capital, which the entire world has become the tributary.<sup>161</sup>

In studies of the eighteenth century, Sonenscher and Sewell have confirmed the importance of the artisanal luxury trades in Paris to

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<sup>156</sup> Said by Jean-Baptiste Colbert in 1665 and quoted in Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 229.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid. Also Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 268. The fashion merchant to the queen and court, Madame Eloffe, was an exception as she was based in Versailles rather than Paris. For more information about Mme Eloffe see Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, pp. 326-27 and Comte de Reiset, *Modes et Usages au Temps de Marie-Antoinette: Livre Journal de Madame Eloffe* (Firmin Didot, 1885).

<sup>158</sup> Natacha Coquery, 'Hôtel, Luxe et Société de Cour: Le Marché Aristocratique Parisien au 18 Siècle', *Histoire et Mesure*, 10: 3-4 (1995), 339. Natacha Coquery, *L'Hôtel Aristocratique: Le Marché du Luxe à Paris au XVIIIe Siècle* (Publications de la Sorbonne, 1998).

<sup>159</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, pp. 326-27.

<sup>160</sup> François Crouzet, 'Historiography of French Economic Growth', p. 225.

<sup>161</sup> William H Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848* (Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 153.

the urban economy and in Sewell's case to the economy of France.<sup>162</sup> These trades were made up of 'clusters of separate but interdependent enterprises' with complex divisions of labour.<sup>163</sup> Fan-making was an example of the geographical division of labour where the work of making the fan-holders (*batôns*) was no longer being carried out in Paris but was being increasingly put out to villages in Picardy.<sup>164</sup> During the Revolution the luxury trades like jewellery, lace and embroidery were not suppressed but they were particularly badly hit by the lack of consumer demand and habits of consumption were affected by the new ideology of the republic.<sup>165</sup> Female and male workers found only shorter periods of work but some applied their skills to making goods for the military.<sup>166</sup> Instead of fashion and luxury, economic growth was being shaped by war and the large size of the army, which was about a million in 1793-4, stimulated demand for items such as armaments and clothing much of which was produced in Paris. However, by 1800 consumer items known as *articles de Paris* such as jewellery, ribbons, watches and porcelain were in demand and the mechanised production of textiles like cotton were growing dramatically.<sup>167</sup>

In this section, I have examined changes to government and society in France as they affected the economy and luxury commerce.

Despite the instability of the different regimes and the times of social and economic problems that affected the country, the 1850s was a time of prosperity with a regime that supported the luxury industries

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<sup>162</sup> Michael Sonenscher, *Work and Wages*, p. 212. William H. Sewell, 'The Empire of Fashion and the Rise of Capitalism in Eighteenth Century France', *Past and Present*, 206 (Feb. 2010), 81-120.

<sup>163</sup> Michael Sonenscher, Chapter 7 'The Parisian Luxury Trades and the Workshop Economy', *Work and Wages*, pp. 201-43.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., pp. 212-13.

<sup>165</sup> Natacha Coquery, 'Luxury and Revolution', pp. 180-82.

<sup>166</sup> Lace making was predominantly a female sector and was badly affected during the crisis. Dominique Godineau, *The Women of Paris and Their French Revolution* (University of California Press, 1998), pp. 60-63.

<sup>167</sup> Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon 1715-99* (Allen Lane: The Penguin Press, 2002), p. 543. William M. Reddy (1984) *The Rise of Market Culture: The Textile Trade and French society, 1750 to 1900*, Cambridge University Press, p. 74.

and a growing bourgeoisie. Traditionally the state sanctioned guilds controlled different trades and the next section will examine their function as they related to women's clothing, gender and fashion merchants.

### **Regulating Commerce: Guilds and Gender.**

In this section, I will examine how guilds affected the trade of fashion merchants and what impact they had on how women experienced the world of work. I will argue that the importance for the *métier* of being granted a separate guild was mediated by the longevity of the trade by 1776 and by this being granted at a time when drastic reforms to guilds had already taken place. Importantly, I will posit that although these reforms opened all guilds to both sexes this had little impact on the division of work that was regarded as 'culturally natural'. My findings agree to some extent with Pilbeam's point that guilds only assisted a small number of 'elite women' although I show that there were still benefits for women that need not be discounted.<sup>168</sup> I will start by a brief, general examination of guilds, their structure, functions and the benefits to members in an urban environment. Then, I will focus on how the guilds and other factors impacted on women's work and finally, I will show how reforms to guilds and the establishment of a separate corporation for fashion merchants had limited affects or benefits to those in the trade.

By the late eighteenth century, guilds in urban centres dominated trades that were perceived as requiring skills as opposed to non-guild work such as domestic servants, some manual labourers or food vendors. Within the area of skilled work there were also 'privileged' parts of Paris, like the Faubourg St Antoine, which were controlled by churches and hospitals, outside guild control. However, they were disadvantaged commercially because they

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<sup>168</sup> Pamela Pilbeam, Book Review of Clare Haru Crowston, *Fabricating Women: The Seamstresses of Old Regime France, 1675-1791*, *The American Historical Review*, 108:1 (February, 2003), 269.

could not sell outside their area.<sup>169</sup> Skilled trades were regulated by a complex system which was affected by gender issues and how trades were treated that were successful but did not have an independent guild such as the fashion merchants. An understanding of what the French guild system was and how it operated has been illuminated by key scholars such as Kaplan, Sonenscher and Farr.<sup>170</sup> Defining guilds, Sonenscher has described a corporation or guild as a reciprocal arrangement with the royal government.

a collective body that had been granted a title by the king to govern its own affairs in exchange for its recognition of his sovereign authority.<sup>171</sup>

In focusing more on the structure of the organisations and the benefits to members, Kaplan has described them as

communities or corporations of artisans and merchants associated for the purpose of commercial advantage, social prestige, mutual assistance and moral edification.<sup>172</sup>

These associations had legal statutes that were drawn up and examined before being issued as a royal letter patent and confirmed by the *parlements* of Paris. Guilds were perceived to form the vital

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<sup>169</sup> Cissie Fairchilds, 'The Production and Marketing of Populuxe Goods', p. 232.

<sup>170</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, *La France, Malade du Corporatisme? XVIIe-XXe Siècle*, ed. by Steven L. Kaplan and Philippe Minard (Belin, 2004), *La Fin des Corporations* (Fayard, 2001), 'L'Apprentissage au Dix-Huitième Siècle: Le Cas de Paris', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 40:3 (1993), 436-79; 'Social Classification and Representation in the Corporate World of Eighteenth Century Paris: Turgot's Carnival' in *Work in France: Representations, Meaning, Organization and Practice* (Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 176-228; 'The Character and Implications of Strife Among the Masters Inside the Guilds of Eighteenth Century Paris', *Journal of Social History*, 19:4 (1986), 631-47. Michael Sonenscher, *Work and Wages, The Hatters of Eighteenth Century France* (University of California Press, 1987); James R. Farr, *Artisans in Europe, 1300 to 1914* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>171</sup> Michael Sonenscher, *The Hatters of Eighteenth Century France*, p. 7. See also the ideas of the manufacturer and negociant Antoine-Augustin Renouard from July 1790 about the issues around what constituted a guild in Philippe Minard, 'Le Métier sans Institution: Les Lois d'Allarde-Le Chapelier de 1791 et Leur Impact au Début du XIX Siècle', in *Continuités Imaginaires d'un Corporatisme au Féminin*, in *La France, Malade du Corporatisme? XVIIe-XXe Siècle*, ed. by Steven L. Kaplan and Philippe Minard (Belin, 2004), p. 81.

<sup>172</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, 'The Luxury Guilds in Paris', p. 257.

function of helping to maintain public order by disciplining the labour force.<sup>173</sup> Their patriarchal structure combined control of a hierarchy of work skills with legal and moral responsibilities. In theory, the masters had the commercial advantage of a monopoly in that trade and regulated apprenticeship and journeymen (*chambrelans*) which in turn controlled production standards. This would then protect consumers from inferior products, guarding France's reputation for high quality luxury goods. Holders of royal patents and privileges were also thought to encourage innovation and improve France's position in competitive markets.<sup>174</sup> Control of working practices however was mainly confined to the urban communities in towns and cities whereas 85 per cent of the population were part of the rural community and operated outside the guild system.<sup>175</sup> For women in the eighteenth century, the patriarchal guilds and a complex system of 'customary and written law' were built on the idea of the family economy where the man was the head of the household. He managed his family members in the same way that he directed his underlings as a guild master and this model particularly affected married women's rights in business.<sup>176</sup>

Married women who were known as public traders (*marchandes publiques*) could be independent business women but those who did not have this status were required to be authorised by their husbands.<sup>177</sup> Even under Napoleon I's commercial code in 1807 a woman needed the consent of her husband to operate as a public trader. If under the marriage contract, there was a community of

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<sup>173</sup> Carolyn Sargentson, *Merchants and Luxury Markets: The Marchands Merciers of Eighteenth Century Paris*, p. 8. Cissie Fairchilds, 'The Production and Marketing of Populuxe Goods', in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, ed. by John Brewer and Roy Porter (Routledge, 1993), p. 231.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Claire Haru Crowston, *Fabricating Women*, p. 175.

<sup>176</sup> The law also differed according the area of France, Clare Haru Crowston, *Fabricating Women*, pp. 223, 451 and 'Women, Gender, and Guilds in Early Modern Europe: An Overview of Recent Research' in *The Return of the Guilds*, ed. by Jan Lucassen et al (Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 19.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 224 and Amanda D. Kessler, *A Revolution in Commerce: The Parisian Court and the Rise of Commercial Society in Eighteenth Century France* (Yale University Press, 2007), p. 143.

goods and there was no authorisation then the woman was considered as trading for her husband and he would be liable for any debts incurred.<sup>178</sup> However, in 1776 the legal barriers that had stopped women joining most guilds were removed and this period has been called a ‘new age’ because of the inroads that women made into a previously predominantly masculine controlled guild environment. The benefit to women was that it was a public acknowledgement of women’s capabilities.<sup>179</sup> Previously, male guild masters were expected to oversee the business and contribute to the management of the guild with female relatives and employees performing tasks that were considered auxiliary and unskilled.

Marriage and a woman’s dowry has been acknowledged as important for the opportunity to start a family business but as wives or daughters of masters, the precise nature of their work has been largely undocumented because of their legal status.<sup>180</sup>

However, one benefit was that they had opportunities to learn the skills necessary to operate different manufacturing or trades within the family. As a guild mistress, there were other options for some women and between the end of the seventeenth century and the Revolution of 1789 there were around 2,000 or so merchant/mistresses (*marchandes-maîtresses*). This was a small number of the 20,000 masters/mistresses engaged in the clothing trades according to Roche’s calculations for the early eighteenth century.<sup>181</sup> At the end of the seventeenth century the most important guilds for women were the linen drapers (*lingères*) and the seamstresses (*couturières*). In 1675 when women were granted the

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<sup>178</sup> *Code de Commerce*, 10 September 1807, Titre Premier – des Commerçans, Article 4. *French Civil Code*, 17 March 1803, Book 1. Of Persons, Title V. Of Marriage, Chapter VI. Of the Respective Rights and Duties of Married Persons <[http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/code/book1/c\\_title05.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/code/book1/c_title05.html)> [accessed 31 March 2016]

<sup>179</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, *La Fin des Corporations*, p. 233.

<sup>180</sup> Daryl M. Hafter has examined the importance of this ‘shadow labour’ in ‘Women Who Wove in the Eighteenth-Century Silk Industry of Lyon’, *European Women and Preindustrial Craft*, p. 42.

<sup>181</sup> From 1700-25 figures included 1,882 master tailors, 1,700 seamstresses, 1,820 shoemakers and 319 hatters, Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 279.

right to make women's clothes as *couturières* they breached the 'male monopoly' of the tailor who had previously employed them and established a model where needlework for women was linked to sexual identity. Female seamstresses had existed before, but illegally, and despite the seizure of goods by tailors they had continued to make for children and women.<sup>182</sup> By granting them their own guild the royal government acknowledged the significance of their clothing sector economically and ended dissention with the tailors.

The other main guilds for women were the *bouquetières-chapelières en fleurs* who worked with natural flowers and those who traded in hemp and flax (*filassières*) but these guilds had less resources and were declining compared to the guilds for the two needle trades.<sup>183</sup> There were also male guilds that admitted a certain number of women as masters (*maîtres*) although these were mainly widows of masters in the trade. Other *métiers* had a mixed gender guild where individuals could become mistresses or masters such as the seedswomen (*grainières*) and seedsmen (*grainiers*). Their statutes stated that two out of the four guild's officials (*jurés*) had to be women of any marital status from adult singletons (*filles majeures*) to married women (*femmes*) or widows (*veuves*). These mistresses also had the right to confer titles on their daughters and sons so that this 'mixed gender' guild showed more parity between men and women than the male trades that admitted women. Female dominated and mixed gender guilds in Paris in the eighteenth

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<sup>182</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Fabricating Women*, p. 174. Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 301.

<sup>183</sup> For more information about the guild of the *bouquetières* see Sabrina Cauchy, 'Les Bouquetières-Chapelières en Fleurs à Paris sous l'Ancien Régime' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Paris XII, 2007). 'Les Bouquetières-Chapelières en Fleurs à Paris sous l'Ancien Régime', *Genre et Histoire*, [on-line] Printemps 2008, <<http://genrehistoire.revues.org/335>> [Accessed 27 February, 2016].

century offered both opportunities and difficulties, particularly as guilds were increasingly threatened with reform or abolition.<sup>184</sup>

In principal, after the reforms of 1776 all guilds were open to women and men and by 1786 eight women had taken advantage of this to become members of the tailor's guild (*tailleuses d'habits*) whilst two had joined the guilds that dealt with fur, stockings and hats (*pelletières-bonnetières-chapelières*) and others joined non-clothing guilds including trades in food, ceramics and glass.<sup>185</sup> However, these were not large numbers of women and opening the guilds to all, regardless of gender, had little impact on the factors that divided work that was seen as 'culturally natural'. These reforms of 1776 could be interpreted as a progressive way of ending monopolies and increasing competition or as an act of royal charity.

Royal governments did not show consistency in the way they treated women, being less motivated by maintaining cultural norms than using changes to control the power of guilds. For example, supporting the merchants against the weavers to control production, in 1744 the wives of Lyon silk weavers were forbidden to work beyond the home *ateliers*, reducing the weavers' financial independence and power. To weaken the guild's monopoly, draw girls without guild family connections were to be permitted to operate as substitutes for master weavers.<sup>186</sup> Hafter has commented that part of the motivation was to help women have more access to work to enable them to support themselves and avoid turning to prostitution.<sup>187</sup> However, they could also be seen as a method of reinforcing male control in trades and a reaction by men to competition from female labour that was cheaper because of women's lower wages.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Cynthia Truant, 'La Maîtrise d'une Identité? Corporations Féminines à Paris aux XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles', *CLIO.Histoire, Femmes et Sociétés* (1996), 1-12.

<sup>185</sup> Cynthia Truant, 'La Maîtrise d'une Identité?', 4-5.

<sup>186</sup> Daryl M. Hafter, 'Women Who Wove', p. 43.

<sup>187</sup> Daryl M. Hafter, *Women at Work in Preindustrial France*, p. 227.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

The guilds' importance to women was that they showcased the talents and skills of women demonstrating how they could effectively manage and police a trade. It was also a platform for the voice of female workers which gave them an identity with a respected position in society, particularly for those who obtained the mistresship. Neither the male or female guilds discussed ideas of liberty or equality in the workplace but in defense of guilds they spoke of the nature of men and women, the guilds' usefulness and how it aided the public good. The largest female guilds also demanded more independence for their workers, justice and the right to be a part of the economic and social world.<sup>189</sup>

These last points reveal women's dynamic approach to business and a concern for their position in the workforce as well as society however, great numbers of women lacked the capital to join the guild system. Considering the seamstresses' guild, Pilbeam has stated that, although during the period up to the Revolution the needle trades were the most important source of work for women, the guilds only concerned 'a tiny elite'.<sup>190</sup> This therefore provokes the question of how important the creation of a new guild for fashion merchants was during this turbulent period of guild reform when their relevance was under attack.

Successive royal governments since the twelfth century had supported and made guilds compulsory for skilled trades though this system was criticised for focusing on the master or mistress rather than the worker, female or male, as many apprentices never succeeded to the position of master/mistress. This meant that those with power could bar others from gaining the same position, perhaps unfairly.<sup>191</sup> Guilds were constantly being adapted and reformed in line with changes in practice, as a response to disputes between

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>190</sup> Daryl M. Hafter, *Women at Work*, p. 289. Pamela Pilbeam, Book Review, *Fabricating Women*, 269.

<sup>191</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, 'L'Apprentissage au Dix-Huitième Siècle; Le Cas de Paris', 436.

guilds and to legalise certain practices.<sup>192</sup> There were so many illegalities that it was impossible for the government to eradicate them and this was a major reason for why the royal government tried to abolish the guilds.<sup>193</sup>

In 1754 there had been the first in a series of free trade edicts but abolition changed into restructuring in August 1776.<sup>194</sup> In preparation for this abolition Turgot, the Controller General of Finance, asked Albert, the Lieutenant-General of Police for Paris, to produce a statement that could be shown to the king – where Albert stated the arguments for free-trade. These included the issue that monopolies meant time and money wasted in law suits (guilds spending c 400,000 livres per year in attorney's fees), and kept prices high which limited the market for French goods.<sup>195</sup> However, he also pointed out the dangers to the state when guild regulations were routinely flouted as it showed that working class people were forced to work outside the guilds and to buy illegal goods because they were cheaper. He also considered that such widespread law-breaking could make people contemptuous of its government.<sup>196</sup> Albert linked these difficulties to the rise in consumer demand that was unconcerned with guild regulations. Most guilds however, vigorously opposed attempts to abolish them or reduce their power and Turgot's wide-ranging efforts in this area were resisted because the *parlements* were afraid of the public disorder they might spark.<sup>197</sup> In 1775 there was a poor harvest and rising prices which together with suspicions of Turgot's intentions provoked what became known as the 'flour war' and this event contributed to his dismissal and the restoration of the guilds.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Cissie Fairchilds, 'The Production and Marketing of Populuxe Goods', p. 234.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., p. 241.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., pp. 234-35.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., p. 241.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>197</sup> Roger Price, *A Concise History of France*, p. 75.

<sup>198</sup> Colin Jones, *Cambridge Illustrated History of France*, p. 177.

Between 1776 and 1789 despite attempts to make reforms, such as lowering entrance criteria and the fees, changes to guild regulations were very slow to emerge and not clearly defined. From the number of disputes being dealt with by the police rather than guild officials, and the way that masters stopped registering their apprentices, it appeared that respect for the old system was waning.<sup>199</sup> Reasons for abolishing the guilds though, both in France and in most of continental Europe, were connected to political ideals rather than economic motivation. Guilds were weakened by the reforms of August 1776 when certain trades were combined and others named as free trades thereby reducing their number. By the time of the Revolution the system was seen as out of touch with the times and a symbol of the royal government's protectionism. Still, they were not abolished immediately but rather that possibility was under consideration as a possible pathway.<sup>200</sup>

The National Assembly received about a hundred petitions between September 1789 and March 1791 and Charles-Antoine Chasset, lawyer and mayor of Villefranche-en-Beaujolais drafted a motion requesting the 'dismantlement' of the guilds.<sup>201</sup> It was not until 15 February 1791 that a decree was submitted to the National Assembly calling for this action.<sup>202</sup> From 2 to 17 March the Allarde decree abolished guilds and all kinds of apprenticeship, instead it would merely be necessary for merchants and artisans to purchase a license (*patente*).<sup>203</sup> This new kind of business tax necessitated the Assembly to define who would pay it and therefore the role and category of workers within production. It was decided that journeymen and apprentices would be exempt from the license along with others with a low income – categorising by economic

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<sup>199</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, 'L'Apprentissage au Dix-Huitième Siècle', pp. 469-73. Daryl Hafter, *Women at Work in Preindustrial France*, p. 227.

<sup>200</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, *La Fin des Corporations*, p. 500.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., pp. 500-02. Liana Vardi, 'The Abolition of the Guilds', p. 709.

<sup>202</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, *La Fin des Corporations*, pp. 500-45.

<sup>203</sup> Philippe Minard, 'Le Métier sans Institution', p. 83. Steven L. Kaplan, 'L'Apprentissage au Dix-Huitième Siècle', p. 478.

status instead of guild hierarchy.<sup>204</sup> There was no discussion by the Assembly about any potential uses of the guild system before their decisions were taken and, although the guilds protested, the opposition tended to be in the refusal by individuals to pay the new license.<sup>205</sup> Despite fears about the lack of an appropriate training in skilled trades, apprenticeship continued without guild support. The notion of skill that had to be passed on by a master as a ‘trade secret’ was a strategy by guilds to maintain control. Sonenscher and Hafter have agreed that most skills needed in the eighteenth century for a particular trade were similar across Europe and could be learned by practice rather than a prescribed training.<sup>206</sup>

The second law of 14 to 17 June 1791 forbade workers’ associations and a third law on 29 September limited the activities of clubs and societies with the aim of destroying the ‘spirit of the guilds’ emphasised by the statement that in a free government the only rights were those of the state and the individual citizen.<sup>207</sup> After the abolition of the guilds there were supporters of the system that regularly spoke for its reinstatement but a trade association for those in the needle trades did not exist until the late nineteenth century.<sup>208</sup> The main arguments put forward in favour of restoring the guilds were a repetition of those used in the Old Regime, that they would ‘maintain socio economic stability, guarantee high quality goods,

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<sup>204</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, *La Fin des Corporations*, pp. 529-36. Liana Vardi, ‘The Abolition of the Guilds’, p. 716.

<sup>205</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, *La Fin des Corporations*, pp. 527-29. Liana Vardi, ‘The Abolition of the Guilds’, p. 717.

<sup>206</sup> Michael Sonenscher, *The Hatters of Eighteenth Century France*, pp. 35-6. Daryl M. Hafter, *European Women*, p. 44.

<sup>207</sup> Philippe Minard, ‘Le Métier sans Institution’, pp. 84-85.

<sup>208</sup> Minard looked at the issues around the calls for the reinstatement of the guilds between 1791 and 1830, *ibid.*, p. 88. Crowston has examined how a Catholic social movement reconsidered the guilds from the 1870s which led to the creation, in 1892, of an association for owners, employees and workers in the needle trades called *L’Union de l’Aiguille*. By 1894 there were 900 members and in 1895 the association had an employment office and a restaurant plus they offered interest free loans. Clare Haru Crowston, Crowston, ‘Du Corps du Couturières à la Union de l’Aiguille: Les Continuités Imaginaires d’un Corporatisme au Féminin’, in *La France, Malade du Corporatisme? XVIIe – Xxe siècle*, ed. by Steven L. Kaplan and Philippe Minard, pp. 197-209 and p. 213.

and discipline labour'.<sup>209</sup> Frustration in the confusion concerning the regulation of business was shown in a statement from 1816.

No more law, no more apprenticeship, no more masters, no more inspections [...] no more good faith in sellers, no more security for buyers, no more confidence in strangers.<sup>210</sup>

However, those who argued against attempts to restore the guilds said that they were incompatible with freedom and that it was a myth to see their existence in the Ancien Régime as part of a golden age for the artisan. It was suggested that there would be problems with low quality goods because under the new system any inexperienced worker could start a business just by paying for the *patente*.<sup>211</sup>

Under this free market system women and men could purchase the licence which continued into the nineteenth century.<sup>212</sup> Fashion merchants were affected by these events because before the reforms, in the eighteenth century, they had been officially connected to the mercers' guild.

In 1776, this ancient guild was joined with the drapers and they became part of the guild elite, the *Six Corps*. This was significant for the fashion merchants as their status would have benefited from the association with an important guild before gaining their independence. There were similarities and differences in their business operations. Mercers were allowed to sell many different kinds of merchandise including silk and lace and small objects for the person or the home but they were not allowed to make objects,

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<sup>209</sup> Steven L. Kaplan, *La Fin des Corporations*, pp. 615-16. Michael D. Sibalis, 'Corporatism after the Corporations: The Debate on Restoring the Guilds under Napoleon I and The Restoration', *French Historical Studies*, 15:4, (Fall 1988), 720.

<sup>210</sup> 'Plus de lois, plus d'apprentissage, plus de maîtrises, plus d'inspection [...] plus de bonne foi dans les vendeurs, plus de sécurité pour les acheteurs, plus de confiance chez l'étranger'. Stated by Bertrand from Rouen in January 1816 and quoted in Philippe Minard, 'Le Métier sans Institution', p. 89.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., pp. 718-20.

<sup>212</sup> Changes to the licenses in 1848 showed the regulations concerning who paid showing the cost of 3.20 fr for a *marchand de modes*, 5.20 fr for a *modiste* and 8.40 fr for a *modiste à façon*, Alexandre Duverger, *Dictionnaire National de Droit Français en Matière Civile, Commerciale* (Paris, 1849), p. 510 and p. 553. The *patente* was also discussed in Béatrice Craig, *Women in Business since 1500* (Palgrave: 2016), p. 114.

only finish them.<sup>213</sup> As a *métier* the fashion merchants had existed at least since the seventeenth century without a guild but by the 1760s the mercers had attempted to draw these successful businesses under the control of their guild in two ways: renting them a license to trade and permitting masters' female relatives to operate as fashion merchants.<sup>214</sup> The male contemporary philosopher and supporter of rights for women, Concorde, expressed his outrage that female fashion merchants had to trade under their husband's name

in France a woman could be regent, and yet until 1776 she could not be a fashion merchant in Paris.<sup>215</sup>

In August 1776, as part of the reorganisation of guilds, the trade was given the accolade of public acknowledgement and granted independence from the mercers. However, they had to contend with individuals of two other related trades. The *métier* was joined with those who made flowers out of feathers and bouquets of artificial flowers for women so that the guild was of 'fashion merchants, feather dressers, and flower makers' (*faiseuses et marchandes de mode, plumassières fleuristes*).<sup>216</sup>

Crowston is one of the few historians to examine this new and short-lived guild, finding that it attracted 452 people between 1776 and 1782 and that it cost 300 livres to join which was similar to the payment previously paid to the mercers' guild.<sup>217</sup> The cost was a lot

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<sup>213</sup> Carolyn Sargentson, *Merchants and Luxury Markets*, p. 11.

<sup>214</sup> Clare H. Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 147. François A. Garsault, *Art du Tailleur; Contenant le Tailleur D'Habits D'Hommes; Les Culottes de Peau; Le Tailleur de Corps de Femmes et Enfants; la Couturière; et la Marchande de Modes* (Paris, 1769), p. 2 and p. 54. Pierre Jaubert, *Dictionnaire Raisonné Universel des Arts et Métiers*, 3 (Paris, 1773), Paris p. 93.

<sup>215</sup> 'en France une femme ait pu être régente, et que jusqu'en 1776 elle ne pût être marchande de modes à Paris', Marquis de Concorde from 1790 in 'The First Essay on the Political Rights of Women', *Oeuvres de Concorde*, vol 12 (Paris: Firmin Dodot Frères, 1847), pp. 129-30. Cited by Steven L. Kaplan, *La Fin des Corporations*, p. 233.

<sup>216</sup> Madeleine Delpierre, *Dress in France in the Eighteenth Century* (Yale University Press, 1997), p. 131.

<sup>217</sup> This information was gathered from royal commission records of an audit of the guild's finances. A.N. V7 435, in Clare H. Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 148 and p. 360.

less than the 1,000 livres due from members of the new drapers-mercers' guild but three times more than the fee of 100 livres due from the *couturières*.<sup>218</sup> Grouping together in one guild several related female dominated occupations was an acknowledgement by the state that these were economically significant sectors and one that could provide the royal government with significant revenue.

Whilst showing disapproval, the *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, acknowledged this change as linked to the fashion merchants' inventiveness in finding ways to increase consumption.

It is in itself a minor item of trade and profit [...] cause of an unfortunate revolution in domestic manners. The excessive expenditure in which women and even men are accustomed to indulge for constantly changing ornaments and finery, does by its effects and repercussions, incalculable harm.<sup>219</sup>

Fashion merchants were able to both stimulate and benefit from increasing consumption in fashionable goods and before they had a guild identity they had built a reputation for innovation and creative talent, noted in 1769.

[...] sewing and arranging according to the fashion of the day the embellishments which they and the ladies constantly concoct.<sup>220</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century they were businesses with different specialisms including different kinds of retail that stocked fashionable accessories. Production evolved from trimming to creating the whole garment and *toilette*, including headgear making them the ancestors of modern fashion designers. Some parts of the guild concentrated on retailing, adding umbrellas, snuffboxes and other fashionable accessories to their traditional stock of ribbons

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid., p.308.

<sup>220</sup> François A. Garsault, *L'Art du Tailleur*, p. 54 cited in Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 309.

and laces.<sup>221</sup> Their successful business management was acknowledged as the *marchandes de modes* were to be permitted to accumulate several mistress-ships as long as they could take on the necessary financial burden.<sup>222</sup>

The system of work that was regulated by the guild system had a long history in France but whilst there were arguments for reforming or abolishing the framework by the 1760s I have shown that for married or single women in the labour force there were not many opportunities for control unless they were part of the small number that could find the capital or have the family connections to a guild. Then, they achieved status and security and a visibility and voice in commerce and society. The fashion merchants were entrepreneurial in that they operated successfully outside the system until the 1760s and had created a successful identity for their trade which was not dependent on the existance of their own guild. I have shown how the link to the prestigious guild of mercers had the benefit of status by association but it also played a part in concealing the business role of the mercers' female relatives who traded as fashion merchants. Nonetheless, public acknowledgement of the success of a small number of female and male fashion merchants added to their commercial and social credit and served as an example to others. To understand how it became so significant as a trade, I will focus on a detailed examination of the business operation of the *marchande de modes* and their origins in the final section.

### ***Marchandes de Modes: Luxury Clothing in Eighteenth Century Paris.***

In this final section, I will focus on the *métier* of the eighteenth-century fashion merchant and reveal how their trade developed to the point where it was perceived as a female dominated trade that

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<sup>221</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 309.

<sup>222</sup> This right was also extended to *couturières*. Ibid., p. 304.

achieved an elite status in the hierarchy of clothing suppliers for women. Significantly, their businesses provided a model for later merchants working in the nineteenth century. I will begin by exploring their origins and place within the clothing trades along with the skills they demonstrated and the pathways they followed towards ownership of a business. I will show that their ascendancy as merchants was due to several factors including the opportunity to create a new celebrity role through the range of merchandise and services being offered to elite clients. This was also a way of appealing to new consumers from a range of social levels. Importantly, I investigate Roche's claim that they took a business risk by relying too heavily on court clients.<sup>223</sup> Next, I will look at the management of finance and credit and lastly, I will investigate the way merchants promoted their businesses through their reputation linked to their location in Paris and opportunities to advertise in print literature and a growing fashion press in France and abroad.

In the eighteenth century, many categories of workers, in different guilds, contributed to the items in a wealthy woman's wardrobe. These ranged from the *coiffeur* who, as well as hairstyling, created and supplied headdresses, the *lingère* (linen draper), who worked with fine, lightweight fabrics and lace for underwear, nightwear and capes; to the makers of a myriad of accessories including, stockings, fans, muffs and gloves. The 'dress' was assembled from different pieces that were controlled by three different categories of workers: the *tailleurs de corps* or *corsetiers* (boned bodices and court trains), the *couturières* (seamstresses) and the *marchandes de modes* (fashion merchants). The wide skirts and flowing pleats or trains at the back of the *robe* allowed the fabric and decoration to be highlighted and silk designs changed more frequently than garment designs.<sup>224</sup> This partly explains why the fashion merchant was able

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<sup>223</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 327.

<sup>224</sup> French silk textiles changed seasonally whilst garment styles only 'evolved slowly over years', Lesley Ellis Miller, *Selling Silks: A Merchant's Sample Book 1764* (London: V & A Publishing, 2014), p. 12.

to develop a niche for the business that was based on innovation and fashion. As the fashion merchant who had the highest status before the Revolution, and therefore has been studied more than others, it is pertinent to mention here the problem of the published sources that have been used to examine Rose Bertin's life and career (1747-1813).

Part of Bertin's continued celebrity has been connected to the great number of accounts that have appeared on life at the court of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette that are still available and have stories about Bertin's role as the queen's fashion merchant. There is no way of authenticating the words that were assigned to her and which were probably more revealing about the writer than Bertin. However, her interest to creative professionals is shown by the large amounts of authentic legal documents, bills and business letters collected by the *couturier* Jacques Doucet. Importantly there are 'no known personal letters, diaries or authentic memoirs'.<sup>225</sup> A false memoir, an unreliable account attributed to Jacques Peuchet was published after Bertin's demise and it was immediately denounced by her heirs.<sup>226</sup> The problem for modern historians is that many later accounts that were published about Bertin, from Langlade and Nouvion onwards have continued to use this supposed memoir as a source or relied heavily on texts that used it creating a repeated

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<sup>225</sup> Chrisman-Campbell's PhD thesis examined the primary sources for her study of Rose Bertin and notes Doucet's collection as being in the Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archéologie, Paris. Documents relating to Bertin's emigration during the Revolution are in the Archives Nationales, Paris. Records relating to her birth, death and property can be found in the public record offices in Paris, Epinay, Amiens and Abbeville. Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, 'Minister of Fashion: Marie-Jeanne Rose Bertin' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2002), vol. 2, pp. 465-47.

<sup>226</sup> The nineteenth century interest in Queen Marie-Antoinette led to two unreliable published works, Jacques Peuchet, *Mémoires de Mlle Bertin, sur la Reine Marie-Antoinette* (Paris: Bossange, 1824). Touchard-Lafosse, Georges, *Souvenirs de Léonard, Coiffeur de la Reine Marie-Antoinette* (Paris: A. Levavasseur, 1838).

cycle of unreliability.<sup>227</sup> Historians have also disagreed when investigating the origins of the *métier* of *marchande de modes*.

Some research has pointed to a connection with the linen drapers and in 1947 Jean Allilaire stated that the category was descended from the hatmakers (*chapeliers*) although more research has focused on the guild of mercers. Printed references can be found to the trade in the seventeenth century when a Mme Duchap was a renowned *marchande de modes*.<sup>228</sup> There was also a fashion merchant depicted in a comedy from 1692, Madame Amelin, who arrived to collect payment from her client, Madame Angélique, the wife of a notary to whom she has supplied a *coiffure extraordinaire*.<sup>229</sup> This example genders the fashion merchant as female although Crowston has found that the numbers of men and women listed in trade almanacs as working in this field were similar in the eighteenth century. Men had never been legally disbarred from it, but by perception this had become seen as a 'feminine' sector.<sup>230</sup> Their business was linked to the textiles sold by mercers, accessories and headgear. Like the mercers, fashion merchants sold ribbons, fabrics and decorations for women's clothing but they also used their needlework skills to attach these as trimmings to clothing and headdresses (*coiffures*). Learning sewing skills was

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<sup>227</sup> Émile Langlade, *La Marchande de Modes de Marie-Antoinette*, Rose Bertin, (Paris, 1911). Nouvion, Pierre de and Emile Liez, *Un Ministre des Modes sous LXVI, Mlle Bertin Marchande de Modes de la Reine, 1747-1813* (Paris, 1911).

<sup>228</sup> All cited in Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing La Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Berg, 2004), p. 109, 94 & 248. According to *L'Art de Coiffure des Dames* the fashion merchants broke away from the linen drapers in 1669. The reference to Mme Duchap came from a poem written in 1773. The hatmaker is from Jean Allilaire, *Les Industries de L'Habillement* (Paris: Société D'Éditions Française et Internationale, 1947), p. 248.

<sup>229</sup> Cited in Madeleine Delpierre, *Dress in France*, p. 25. First performed in Paris on 15 November 1692. Florent Carton Dancourt 'Les Bourgeoises à la Mode' in *Répertoire Général du Théâtre Français. Comédies en Prose*, II (Paris: H. Nicolle, 1818)

<<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5456794p/f121.tableDesMatieres>>[accessed 9/9/2015] For more information on the playwright and actor Dancourt see Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, pp. 139-42, 169-71, 352,

<sup>230</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 150. Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, p. 95.

part of a girl's education that could be taught at home or at primary schools and was suitable to help women find employment when from families who needed her income as part of the family economy.<sup>231</sup> Rose Bertin's choice of *métier*, education and training is an example of a pathway towards the ownership of a fashion merchant's business.

Marie-Jeanne Bertin was born in Abbeville, Picardy on 2 July 1747 into a family that was socially in the lower middling level. Her father, Nicholas, worked as one of the archers of the royal mounted police (*archer de la maréchausée royale*) and her mother, Marie-Marguerite, was a sick nurse. Rose Bertin received her basic schooling in reading and writing at the Grande École de Liberté and probably completed an apprenticeship in the needle trades with her aunt who was a *marchande de modes* although there are also indications that she trained as a *coiffeuse* (hairdresser).<sup>232</sup> This pathway from hairdressing which required similar skills in sewing and design talent was also taken by Comtesse du Barry (Jeanne Bécu), who later became mistress to Louis XV, as she started working for the hairdresser M Lametz before working for the fashion merchant, M and Mme Labille.<sup>233</sup> Bertin moved to Paris, probably attracted to the opportunities for work and advancement that were not available in Abbeville. By the early 1770s she had demonstrated her skills and experience in the trade by gaining employment with a well-established fashion merchant at Au Trait Galant, Rue St Honoré. She would have needed the ability to construct the items shown by Garsault in Figure 1.

<sup>231</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, 'From School to Workshop: Pre-training and Apprenticeship in Old Regime France' in Bert De Munck, Steven L. Kaplan and Hugo Soly, *Learning on the Shop Floor: Historical Perspectives on Apprenticeship* (Routledge, 2007), p. 49. Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 267. Joan W. Scott and Louise A. Tilly, *Women's Work and the Family*, p. 106.

<sup>232</sup> Bertin's aunt was Victoire Barbier who married François Lejeune, a sculptor, but by 1784 she had left him and was living with Bertin in Paris. Michelle Sapori, *Rose Bertin: Couturière de Marie-Antoinette*, p. 13. There is a quote from a document surviving in Bertin's home town, Abbeville that is by M. Amourette, *marchand fripier*, et M. Dannel, *marchand linge*, 'Mlle Bertin très experte à friser et coiffer les dames'. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>233</sup> M and Mme Labille, *A la Toilette*, Rue Neuve des Petits Champs. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

In 1769 these were garments such as *le mantelet* (short cape), *la plisse* (type of cloak) and *la mantille de cour* (a smaller *mantelet* that covered the forearms). This demonstrated the gendered division of labour involved in creating court dress (*grand habit*) as Garsault explained that the male *tailleur de corps* constructed the boned bodice and the train, the female *couturière* made the skirt and the *marchande de modes* made *la mantille* and was responsible for trimming all the different parts of the outfit.<sup>234</sup> As well as construction skills it was necessary to learn how to communicate with customers and Figure 1 shows this interaction in the boutique of a *marchande de modes*. In the business at Au Trait Galant Bertin would have seen the possible upward trajectory for a young employee as the *magasin de modes* was managed by Mme Buffault and her partner who had formerly been the senior shop assistant.<sup>235</sup> However, to move towards ownership capital was needed, unless a family business was inherited or the merchant worked from home without retail premises or a designated workroom. In Bertin's case, she attracted the interest of a patron, the duchesse de Chartres, who presented her to Marie-Anoinette. It is not clear how Bertin raised the capital but her growing reputation as a court supplier may have helped her secure a loan. Possibly, the premises from where she sold and constructed items from were small, as she was recorded as living in Rue St Denis whilst working from Rue St Honoré around 1772 and 1773.<sup>236</sup> The scale of her business is shown in the range of the merchandise that was supplied as ready-made and also from bespoke orders.

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<sup>234</sup> Garsault, François Alexandre, *L'Art du Tailleur*, p. 55.

<sup>235</sup> Michelle Saporì, *Rose Bertin*, p. 19.

<sup>236</sup> Kimberly Chrisman-Cambell listed as a source an existing bill dated 19 June 1772 for Bertin at 'Au Grand Mogol', Rue St Honoré, 'Minister of Fashion: Marie-Jeanne Rose Bertin', pp. 465-7. Clare Haru Crowston cited a police report registered Bertin's home address as Rue St Denis opposite Les Innocents, 6 March 1773, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 265.

Examining merchandise is important to understanding fashion merchants' central role in the production and consumption of fashionable clothing when compared to other clothing traders. In seeking to explain the elite position of Bertin and others Parmal has seen the *métier's* growing importance, particularly between 1740 and 1780, as due to the innovative manner of ornamenting gowns. By 1780 there were said to be 150 different ways to decorate clothing.<sup>237</sup> The gown in Figure 2 shows the kind of varied ornamentation, from fabric flowers to puffs and tassles created and applied by the fashion merchant and demonstrates that artistic judgement and skill was required in the positioning and designing of the decoration, choice of colour and materials, as well as needlework skills. However, looking at the range of merchandise is more significant as this allowed merchants to maintain their elite court clients as well as stimulating demand from a more middling level of consumer with ready-made products. This point agrees with Crowston's analysis of Bertin's bills that reveal around 210 different kinds of products ranging from textiles, ribbons, feathers and ready-made items like headwear, outergarments such as mantles and shawls, plus jewellery.<sup>238</sup> Most products were for women but there were some items for men like lace cuffs, handkerchiefs and tassles for swords. Bertin rarely supplied full court dress but there were examples of this for a clients' presentation at court.

For example, the Comtesse d'Argenteuil purchased elaborate decorations in black silk and lace for different sections of a formal outfit plus accessories and a matching *bonnet à papillon* that were in the required colour for the first day of a court presentation (*un habit de présentation*).<sup>239</sup> An after sales services like mending, altering

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<sup>237</sup> Pamela A. Parmal, 'Fashion and the Growing Importance of the *Marchande de Modes* in Mid-Eighteenth Century France', *Costume*, 31 (1997), 68-77. Madeleine Delpierre, 'Rose Bertin, Les Marchandes de Modes et la Révolution' in Madeleine Delpierre and Musée Galliera, *Modes et Révolutions* (Paris- Musées, 1989), p. 25.

<sup>238</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 207.

<sup>239</sup> The silk merchant Barbier supplied silk to Rose Bertin and the colour requirement for court presentations was referred to in Mary Schoeser, 'Letters to

and cleaning was available and these were charged for. Bills also showed charges when construction was sub-contracted to other suppliers. When merchandise was delivered, there was an additional charge for products to be sent to all areas of France and abroad. The merchandise sold to Queen Marie Antoinette by Bertin showed lavish trimmings for court dresses but also simple English straw hats which were part of the plainer fashionable daywear of the 1780s along with bouquets and branches of artificial flowers. At a period where the economy was depressed this could also reflect awareness of criticism of the queen's expenditure.<sup>240</sup> Two other examples of fashion merchants' merchandise demonstrate that they were able to target different levels of consumers with appropriate merchandise.

Figure 3 (on the right) shows that as well as selling Italian flowers, gauze, silk blonde lace and fans Madame Beaulard, whose clients included Louis XV's wife Queen Marie, is offering the more lavish and expensive occasion dressing required for masked balls, weddings, baptisms and court appearances. The trade card on the left shows that Mme Leclere was advertising a less comprehensive or expensive stock of trimmings for gowns, bonnets, headdresses, muffs, fabric, embroidery, flowers, feathers, fur and fans. A significant element in fashion merchants' increasing reputation was the link to new fashions and their 'exquisite taste' which allowed them to increase the turnover of goods and attracted clients. This also allowed them to build a reputation that was not necessarily

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Monsieur Barbier. Parisian silk merchant, 1755 to 1797', (unpublished master's dissertation, The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 1979), p. 53. Invoice for the Comtesse D'Argenteuil, 1785, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), Archives Privées, DE1 Polignac 4, A.P.

<sup>240</sup> James-Sarazin, Arianne & Régis Laspin, *Gazette des Atours de Marie-Antoinette: Garde-robe des Atours de la Reine, Gazette pour l'Année 1782* (Réunion des Musées Nationaux-Archives Nationales, 2006). Kraatz, Anne, 'La "Gazette des Atours" de Marie Antoinette in Centre Historique des Archives Nationales', in *Les Atours de la Reine: Art et Commerce au Service de Marie Antoinette* (Paris: Centre Historique des Archives Nationales, 2001).

linked to court clients although elite merchants like Bertin focused on French and foreign court clients.<sup>241</sup>

Amongst several hundred clients Bertin included many members of foreign royal courts including the Duchess of Devonshire in England, Princess of Nassau in the German states, the Countess of Guadalenza in Portugal, many of the Russian aristocracy including Maria Feodorovna, the wife of Tsar Paul I, and in America Mlle Bellanger.<sup>242</sup> However, there were clients of different social levels including actors and dancers like Mlle Sinvalle of the Comédie Française and Vestris of the Opéra. Merchants were also clients and in Amsterdam a *marchande de modes* called Lafond was one of the intermediaries.<sup>243</sup> These clients placed large orders but were often very slow to settle their accounts so that in January 1787 rumours even circulated that Mlle Bertin was being declared bankrupt. However, this was later thought to have been a ruse to encourage her clients, including the queen, to pay their bills, which in this instance was a success as Bertin received a note for 400,000 livres.<sup>244</sup> Commenting on her high prices Bertin is reputed to have said 'is the painter Vernet paid for his canvas and colours alone?'.<sup>245</sup>

These examples show that the fashion merchant had a clear approach to business and that reputation was an important factor in

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid., pp. 153–63. Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 307.

<sup>242</sup> There were some male clients making purchases for female relatives such as the Baron Duplouï who placed regular orders between 1778–1791. Clare Haru Crowston, 'The Queen and her 'Minister of Fashion': Gender, Credit and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France', *Gender and History*, 14:1 (April 2002), 99. Natalia Vershinina, N., 'Rose Bertin, Marchande de Modes de la Reine Marie Antoinette, et les Commandes de la Grande Duchesse de Russie, Maria Féodorovna', in *Fastes de Cour et Ceremonies Royales: Le Costume de Cour en Europe 1650 to 1800*, ed. by Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel and Pascale Gorguet Ballesteros (Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2009), pp. 234–41.

<sup>243</sup> Musée Galliera, *Modes en Miroir: La France et la Hollande au Temps de Lumières* (Paris-Musées, 2005), p. 122. For Bertin's business dealings in London see Kimberly Chrisman, *Rose Bertin in London?* 32 (*Costume*, 1998). For the example of a French *marchande de modes*, Mme Belsent, working in Italy between 1755 and 1784 see Caroline Fontaine, *Parcours d'une Marchande de Modes Française en Italie* (unpublished master's dissertation, University of Paris 1, 1997).

<sup>244</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, 'The Queen and her 'Minister of Fashion', p. 92.

<sup>245</sup> Anny Latour, *Kings of Fashion*, p. 16.

how merchandise was valued. However, as Crowston has pointed out Bertin appeared to be disregarding the image of the tradesman who lived by the creed of ‘honour and solvency’ preferring ‘publicity and financial gain’.<sup>246</sup> Promotion through her reputation was also demonstrated by the way that Bertin headed her bill to the Comtesse D’Argenteuil – as *Marchande de la Reine*.<sup>247</sup> Examples of her prices show a tremendous range such as a mere 8 livres for an English straw hat in 1781 but 240 livres for the decoration of a gown in 1782.<sup>248</sup> Profit margins were thought to be very high which may have been one of the attractions in becoming a fashion merchant.

However, depending on court clients also meant agreeing to long credit agreements. Bertin’s status, and that of her clients, enabled her entrenchment in networks of credit both for her business transactions and her property investments so that Crowston has stated that using her reputation was a key element ‘of her professional practice’.<sup>249</sup> Bertin’s business made her a fortune which she invested in property that she purchased in different ways; with loans, by instalments and sometimes in cash.<sup>250</sup> A house in Pontoise provided a rental income and she purchased a Parisian apartment building north of the Palais Royal in Rue du Mail for the same purpose (1788). Then when she moved her business in 1789, Bertin purchased the seventeenth century mansion Hôtel Brochart de Saron at 26 Rue de Richelieu.<sup>251</sup> As well as basing her operation here on the ground floor and second floor she kept apartments for her own use and rented out others.<sup>252</sup> This success shows that Bertin was able to successfully manage the credit and

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<sup>246</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, ‘The Queen and her ‘Minister of Fashion’, p. 93.

<sup>247</sup> Archives de Paris (AP), DE1 Polignac 4.

<sup>248</sup> English straw hat is listed in Emile Langlade, *La Marchande de Modes*, p. 92 and the decoration is in Pierre Nouvion and Emile Liez, *Un Ministre des Modes*, p. 53.

<sup>249</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, ‘The Queen and her ‘Minister of Fashion’, p. 94, p. 98.

<sup>250</sup> Some buildings were in Paris and others just beyond such as a country estate at Épinay-sur-Seine in 1782 and in Pontoise in 1783. Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, pp. 273-74.

<sup>251</sup> Jacques Hillairet, *La Rue de Richelieu*, p. 125.

<sup>252</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 274.

finance system of the eighteenth century and agrees with Crowston's assessment of it being empowering for women as gender did not restrict women's access to finance and credit.<sup>253</sup>

Dancourt's fictional character demonstrates that even in 1692 long periods of credit between the fashion merchant and the client was the norm. Mme Amelin supplied a *coiffure*, costing 310 livres. She is described by other characters as rich but is owed more than 10,000 livres by her clients including the bourgeois, Mme Angélique.<sup>254</sup> This reference to supplying head gear and selling merchandise on credit agrees with many accounts around the commercial practice of fashion merchants in Paris in the eighteenth century.<sup>255</sup> Sonenscher has stated that the normal time for payments was between six and twelve months and the production of luxury goods involved complex 'schedules of credit' but discounts could be offered for faster payments.<sup>256</sup>

Businesses operated by a mixture of cash and credit in a system that necessitated irregular payments to suppliers of goods plus regular wage-payments to their workers. The social inequalities of the relationship between the fashion merchant and the client are illuminated through the management of credit as the merchant often waited several years before accounts were settled. However, court clients brought credit in the form of prestige that built the reputation of a merchant. In the case of Rose Bertin she added interest to the money owed to her business by Queen Marie-Antoinette which may have been a demonstration of her own prestige as the most celebrated of fashion merchants. Status was also shown in the location of fashion merchants' premises, although most preferred to be linked to the palaces in the capital rather than Versailles, which testifies to the significance of Paris and its identity with fashion.

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<sup>253</sup> Ibid., p. 243.

<sup>254</sup> Florent Carton Dancourt, 'Les Bourgeoises à la Mode'.

<sup>255</sup> Explored by Clare Haru Crowston, 'Credit and the Metanarrative of Modernity', *French Historical Studies*, 34:1 (2011), 7-19.

<sup>256</sup> Michael Sonenscher, *Work and Wages*, p. 214.

From the seventeenth century to the eighteenth century most luxury shopping moved from Ile de la Cité to Rue Dauphine on the Left Bank and Rue St Denis and the Rue St Honoré and on the Right Bank near the Louvre and Palais Royal. The earliest surviving bill shows that Bertin had started her own business near the Louvre at Au Grand Mogol, rue St Honoré, by June 1772. Later in 1784 Rose moved the business a short distance to the north-west to 10 rue de Richelieu and again in 1789 to number 26 in the same street. This move to an area north of the Palais Royal shows the importance of being positioned in a fashionable location.

Bertin's boutique was known to have elegant window displays and she used her royal client as a way to promote her reputation. Her clients saw a portrait of Queen Marie-Antoinette as well as pictures of Bertin herself reminding them of the royal connection and high status of the fashion merchant. The fashion merchant also had her own carriage and horses along with the necessary staff dressed in livery giving her business a visible presence in Paris. The status of the client decided where a transaction would take place as she stated that only for the queen would Bertin travel 'all other clients would find her in her shop'.<sup>257</sup> Mme Beaulard who supplied Queen Marie, was near the palace in Rue Nicaise and Mme Leclere was along the less fashionable Quai de Gévres (Figure 3). Fashion merchants promoted their business identity through their location and premises and their merchandise on fashion dolls that were sent around France and abroad as well as using print literature from trade cards to bill heads. The press and trade cards show that there was a growing range of middling levels of consumers for fashionable merchandise that were attracted to fashion merchants as creative and innovative 'authorities'.

This agrees with historians, such as Roche and Crowston, that have identified the importance of a developing fashion press whose

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<sup>257</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 154.

readership included those in provincial urban centres. A range of newspapers and journals commented on fashion with references to individual fashion merchants as well as outfits worn by Marie Antoinette throughout France and Europe including the long-lived *Cabinet des Modes* which ran from 1785 to 1793.<sup>258</sup> Compared to writing about Parisian fashions in the seventeenth century, by the 1750s mentions of the dress of those in royal circles were rare and there was more often the attribution of novelty and authority to the fashion merchant.<sup>259</sup> Despite the gradual failure of Bertin's business during the Revolution, because of her connection to court clients, these findings examining Bertin and other fashion merchants show that the dependence on court clients could be lucrative and beneficial in building a reputation but was not absolute and that strategies were growing that would spread the risk such as targeting clients outside Paris and France of different social levels.

In this section, I have shown how the business of the fashion merchant came to dominate the clothing trades in the eighteenth century with their ability to provide a vast range of fashionable and luxurious merchandise. The merchants' reputations for novelty items of dress were linked to Paris as well as the court and their ability to access capital and manage credit demonstrated their business skills and reliability. The elements described all formed a model for the nineteenth century merchants to build upon.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have focused on the context of developments to French society including the frequent changes of regimes, with the sudden loss of imperial and royal courts, and the problems with the economy before focusing on issues directly connected to the commerce in luxury goods and the factors that impacted on the

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid. Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, p. 181-98. Raymond Gaudriault, *La Gravure de Mode Feminine en France* (Paris: Amateur, 1983).

<sup>259</sup> Between 1700 and 1800 there were 50 French periodicals promoting French fashion suppliers, Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 187-8. Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, pp. 151-57.

development of the fashion merchants' business. In the second section, I showed that an independent guild, whilst having the benefit of being a public declaration of confidence, was of limited significance to the fashion merchants as their reputation in business had already been firmly established. Finally, I demonstrated that this *métier* became the elite providers of fashionable dress through its association with a vast range of merchandise desired for its novelty and taste and promoted through links to court clients and Paris. In Chapter 2, I will investigate what the significant factors were in how the *métier* developed in the nineteenth century.



## **Chapter 2. Fashion Merchants: Pathways and Business Operation.**

In this chapter, I analyse how the trade of fashion merchant was operated by women and men in a pre-mechanised, post-guild environment highlighting both continuity with the eighteenth century and new developments due to the political, economic and social changes occurring between 1795 and 1855. I argue that pathways toward the trade of fashion merchant were affected by gender norms, class and family background. Individuals were also attracted to a sector in the sewing trades that was growing and for which women's traditional education gave them the manual skills not offered in men's schooling. Despite legal constraints on married women I reveal that they were not merely helpmeets but led partnerships with their husbands to the benefit of the family economy. Importantly, I agree with historians, Craig, Kay and Phillips, as I found no evidence that women retreated from business to the domestic sphere by the 1850s.<sup>260</sup> However, there is evidence for upward mobility in life style choices by successful merchants with sufficient means. In the nineteenth century, there was a hierarchical system for the production of luxury clothing for women which consisted of overlapping categories of workers.

The sewing trades were seamstresses/dressmakers (*couturières*), linen drapers (*lingères*), tailors and fashion merchants (*marchandes de modes*). At the end of the eighteenth century, the fashion merchant was recognised as occupying the most significant position with a reputation for innovation and the reward of high profits. I posit that they kept this position after the Revolution when a new generation of fashion merchants had to accept different ideas about luxury and dress. They developed businesses that both satisfied and stimulated consumer demand for fashionable products. In 1795

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<sup>260</sup> Béatrice Craig, *Female Enterprise Behind the Discursive Veil and Women and Business since 1500*; Alison C. Kay, *The Foundations of Female Entrepreneurship*; Nicola Phillips, *Women in Business*.

the Directory government supported what has been called a return to luxury but the first half of the nineteenth century had short unstable governments and periods of economic crises which added to the risks for those engaged in luxury commerce.

The early nineteenth century saw a rise in the number of bankruptcies in France, from 1% in the eighteenth century to 3.3 %, and 20 to 30 % of these cases took place in Paris.<sup>261</sup> Bankruptcy is a reminder of the serious nature of business and the risk that being engaged in any kind of trade entails. Crowston has examined the bankruptcies amongst fashion merchants in the eighteenth century and has shown that these increased between 1720 and 1792 with a significant rise after 1770 that relates both to periods of financial crisis and the growth in the number of fashion merchants.<sup>262</sup> However, I will demonstrate that individual fashion merchants of the period, such as Louis Hippolyte LeRoy and Marie Françoise Corot, show that economic success in business, with social credit and a comfortable lifestyle, was possible.

My analysis agrees with the contributions to a recent conference that examined production in the period between the Revolution of 1789 and 1815 and concluded that artisans adapted to new markets.<sup>263</sup> There were several recurring themes that are significant

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<sup>261</sup> Pierre Labardin, 'Accounting Prescription and Practice in Nineteenth Century France. An Analysis of Bankruptcy Cases', *Accounting History Review*, 21:3 (November 2011), p. 269 and p. 264. The percentage of bankruptcies in France continued to rise to 4.9 % in the twentieth century. In this article Labardin examined the effect of legislation on accounting practices. Coquery & Praquin noted more than 6,000 entries in the bankruptcy registers for Paris between 1695 and 1792. Natacha Coquery & Nicholas Praquin, 'Règlement des Faillites et Pratiques Judicaires. De l'Entre-soi à l'Expertise du Syndic 1673-1889', *Histoire et Mesure*, 23:1 (2008), 55. Pilbeam considers the period from 1825 to the Revolution of 1830 to have been one of high risk demonstrated in the increasing number of bankruptcies across France. Pamela Pilbeam, *1830 Revolution in France*, p. 46.

<sup>262</sup> Crowston's figures for 103 bankruptcies amongst fashion merchants are 6 from 1720s-1750s, 7 in the 1760s, 34 in the 1770s, 46 in the 1780s and 10 between 1790 and 1792. Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 213.

<sup>263</sup> 'Le Progrès de l'Industrie Perfectionnée: Arts et Manufactures de la Révolution Française au Premier Empire (France 1789-1815), 13 and 14 June, 2014 at the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art et Centre Allemande d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA), Paris. *Les Progrès de l'Industrie Perfectionnée: Luxe, Arts Décoratifs et*

to my investigation such whether the reputation for the quality and *savoir faire* of the artisan was maintained after the loss of the guild structure. This highlighted the question of how training was organised in order to maintain quality production as well as how skills and experience were passed on. The second key area was around the definition of luxury and whether it implied a superior quality in textiles or could also be applied to the development of substitute materials such as imitation lace. The third area concerned flexibility and specialisation in production that could be adapted to the desires of a new bourgeois market and stimulate demand for their products. Lastly, despite concerns about how production would be financed after the Revolution it was shown that a system of credit continued and other sources of finance appeared. These points will be addressed within the following sections.

I will consider issues around change or continuity in the trade of the fashion merchant between 1795 and 1855 in Paris by focusing on three main areas: pathways towards the *métier*, business finance then merchandise and clients. Firstly, I will examine the evidence for the different pathways towards the *métier* of fashion merchant in the light of concerns that standards for quality might not be maintained after the abolition of the guilds. The choice of *métier* and how skills were acquired will be considered by looking at how they were linked to gender, family, social levels and different kinds of partnerships including role models and mentors.

Secondly, I focus on the finances of the business and the factors, such as gender, family and social level, that had an impact on whether fashion merchants acquired capital and were embedded in the system of credit. Lastly, I show the risk factors to business longevity such as the complex nature of how businesses were valued and debts were managed. In the settlement of accounts, I

find some continuity with the eighteenth century but importantly, some examples of faster payments being received.

Finally, in the third section I argue that merchants constantly adapted their businesses in line with current developments in the clothing industry. Fashion merchants retained their dominant position in the hierarchy of clothing trades by stimulating consumption. I investigate the range of merchandise that fashion merchants produced and stocked looking for evidence of specialisation and any changes in the definition of luxury products. Merchandise was adapted for different kinds of clients and I consider how this was associated less with court clients and rather with an increasingly bourgeois consumer market. The sources will cover the fashion merchants that succeeded as well as those that failed in business.

These examples will include Mme Corot and M LeRoy, as well as a data base of fashion merchants compiled from those who had started bankruptcy proceedings. Appendix 2 shows that the 70 bankruptcy cases comprised businesses predominantly based on the right bank of Paris with only six based on the left bank. There were eighty-one individuals made up of 63 women and 18 men. The majority of the fashion merchants were single women (33) plus there were 30 who had married but at the time of the bankruptcy proceedings three of these were legally separated from their husbands and five were widows. Nine men appeared to be sole traders, seven worked with their wives and two others were in business partnerships with seemingly unrelated women: one, a single woman and one, a widow (Mlle Marie and Mme Julien). It was not always clear from the name on the bankruptcy file which individuals were concerned in running the business due to the complex nature of family participation and the many kinds of business partnerships.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Also discussed by Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 213.

### **Pathways: Apprentices to Partners.**

In this section, I argue that factors such as gender, family and social level directed the pathways that women and men followed towards ownership of a fashion merchant's business. Gender norms had not altered in the sewing trades of the first half of the nineteenth century and despite men's presence I find that women remained the dominant gender as proprietors. This is significant as, in agreement with the gender historians Craig, Kay, and Phillips, it questions the notion of a separate public and private sphere for men and women developing at this period.<sup>265</sup>

In the first part I examine how skills were learned or acquired differently according to gender through apprenticeship and work experience as well as comparing this with any lack of skill as noted by the receiver in bankruptcy cases. Then, I show how models and mentors of Parisian excellence, in the production and retail of *modes*, supplied examples of expertise that attracted individuals from foreign countries and the provinces or even attracted individuals to change sector. Secondly, I focus on the strategies adopted to succeed, from sole traders to different partnerships between related and unrelated people including married couples. Significantly, I find evidence of new partnerships that were possible because of the free trade environment created after the abolition of the guilds. Lastly, I show how professional publications and training schools were developed in a response to the needs of the clothing trade sector by the 1850s. Before starting the examination of education and training there is a brief discussion about the nature of the bankruptcy reports as a primary source that relates to skill, trustworthiness in business and gender.

From the 1840s, generally the bankruptcy files consulted contained a report to creditors by the receiver (*syndic*) which was clearly a way

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<sup>265</sup> Béatrice Craig, *Female Enterprise Behind the Discursive Veil* (2017) and *Women and Business since 1500* (2016); Alison C. Kay, *The Foundations of Female Entrepreneurship* (2009); Nicola Phillips, *Women in Business* (2006).

to discover where responsibility for the failure lay. A format was usually followed by the 1850s where the report ended with a summary of the reasons for business failure. The objective was to allocate blame or decide if there was criminal, fraudulent behaviour and the report was to guide the creditors in deciding what kind of agreement to reach: to accept repayment terms over several years or to liquidate all the debtors' assets and share these amongst the creditors. The judgement of the receiver was therefore focused on understanding why the business was not solvent and not necessarily on the type of business except when it affected the financial management. As these cases were of failed merchants it can be questioned whether they were representative of those that worked in the trade. These individuals may have lacked the skills and experience of the more successful merchants but that would still highlight the skills that were needed. However, all businesses carry risks that cannot always be foreseen such as regime changes, economic crises and clients that do not settle their accounts. All have to be navigated and many of the merchants studied here had achieved periods of success. Judging their efforts was the role of the receiver who was one individual with his own shortcomings and sympathies but he was also likely to be affected by the ideas about gender of the period. Scott has shown that the statistical survey of industry in 1847-8 revealed attitudes to female fashion merchants that depended on their place in what was called 'natural law', meaning that women were inside a family under the 'power and protection' of the male head of this unit. Female fashion merchants were described as 'upright and orderly' if living with employers or liable to 'dissipation and hardship' if living alone.<sup>266</sup>

Understanding the limitations of the report does not negate its usefulness in supplying information about the home town, family

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<sup>266</sup> Joan W. Scott, 'Statistical Representations of Work: The Politics of the Chamber of Commerce's *Statistique de l'Industrie à Paris*, 1847-8', in *Work in France*, ed. by Steven L. Kaplan and Cynthia J. Koepp (Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 359.

background and support, parents' trade, social level, marital status and responsibilities.<sup>267</sup> Education was not normally referred to but the training and experience was mentioned as it had implications for the person's seriousness and responsibility in entering business. All these merchants probably received the gender specific basic education that was available and which will be discussed as it would have been a foundation for their pathway towards becoming fashion merchants.

In eighteenth-century Paris, some children attended schools from the age of 10 to 12 and after the Guizot Law of 1833 the number attending increased. However, according to Sonnet before the Revolution there were only places for 25-30% of girls in Paris and Post-revolution, time was needed for new providers to replace the schools run by religious communities.<sup>268</sup> Children who were able to obtain places were taught reading and writing and girls of all classes were taught sewing to equip them with a professional skill to enable them to earn a living or as household management.<sup>269</sup> Also girls normally learned sewing at home reinforcing its association with female skills. For boys of the bourgeoisie there were public and private institutions at secondary level but for the girls there were only private establishments until 1880 when the Sée law created state secondary schools for girls.<sup>270</sup> The case of Mme Lemonnier, who later founded a professional school for the needle trades, provides an example of a girl's education.

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<sup>267</sup> The format of the report is also discussed in, Natacha Coquery and Nicolas Praquin, 'Règlement des Faillites et Pratiques Judicaires', pp. 43-83.

<sup>268</sup> The figures were from Martine Sonnet, *L'Education des Filles au Temps des Lumières* (Paris, 1987) cited in Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 187.

<sup>269</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, 'From School to Workshop: Pre-training and Apprenticeship in Old Regime France' in Bert De Munck, Steven L. Kaplan and Hugo Soly, *Learning on the Shop Floor: Historical Perspectives on Apprenticeship* (Routledge, 2007), p. 49. Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 267. Joan W. Scott and Louise A. Tilly, *Women's Work and the Family*, p. 106.

<sup>270</sup> Rebecca Rogers, *From the Salon to the Schoolroom: Educating Bourgeois Girls in Nineteenth Century France*, (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), pp. 3, 7. On the education of girls see also Françoise Mayeur, *L'Éducation des Filles en France au XIXe Siècle* (Perrin, 1979).

Marie Juliette Elisa Grimailh, was born in 1805 into a Protestant bourgeois family and received an education alongside her younger brother. At the age of eight their elementary classes consisted of reading, writing, grammar, a little arithmetic, geography, history and drawing. Lemonnier's biographer commented that this was 'quite a lot for 1813', stressing the poor quality of education for many girls, particularly of a lower social level.<sup>271</sup> Generally, the fashion merchants examined were from the lower middling level and so would be expected to earn their living after their basic education.

How the trade was chosen was affected by the choice of the parents in considering the family economy and gender norms as well as the options and economic prospects at a particular time. This could involve moving away from the family to another location if opportunities for work in their area were lacking.<sup>272</sup> Poorer families had less options and young people often had to start work for a wage to contribute to the family income as soon as possible.<sup>273</sup> The children with a longer education might become teachers and the children of the middle-classes could be taken into the family business or have the means to move to other trades.<sup>274</sup> Although historians have found the presence of women in a range of trades, English guides like the *London Guide to the Dressmaking and Millinery Trades* of 1843 stated that women's principal way of earning a living was either going into domestic service or choosing the needle trades. Service was said to provide more security but less of an income, or independence, whilst there was at least a chance that the needle trades could lead to the acquisition of capital and because of that, help for the family and security for the

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<sup>271</sup> Charles Lemonnier, *Élisa Lemonnier: Fondatrice de la Société pour l'Enseignement Professionnel des Femmes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Paris, 1874), pp. 8-9.

<sup>272</sup> Bert De Munck and Hugo Soly, 'Learning on the Shop Floor', p. 17.

<sup>273</sup> For example, a Parisian girl from a poor family wanted to become a teacher after further studies but became a seamstress as she had to speedily earn money to contribute to the family economy. Joan W. Scott and Louise A. Tilly, *Women's Work and the Family*, p. 107.

<sup>274</sup> These ideas were examined by David Garrioch, *The Formation of the Parisian Bourgeoisie*, pp. 105-122 and cited in Bert De Munck and Hugo Soly, 'Learning on the Shop Floor', p. 19.

individual in old age.<sup>275</sup> There was a work ethic for the lower-middle levels that made it imperative for girls and boys to earn their living.

From the age of 12 they could be expected to start learning business skills and gain work experience, even when they might be receiving a small allowance from their families.<sup>276</sup> However, the sample of fashion merchants studied agrees with historians such as Craig, Crowston, Kay and Simonton that there could be motivating factors, other than economic, for women to choose the needle trades.<sup>277</sup>

These areas provided opportunities to become designers, managers and owners in a trade that offered respectability and celebrity for the most successful and dynamic. A high-end fashion merchant's retail business communicated with clients that would be of a higher status than the employees and so lower-middle class individuals needed to display the attributes of 'manners and taste'.<sup>278</sup> An eighteenth century guide also said that the fashion merchant (milliner) had to be 'a neat needlewoman [...] and a perfect connoisseur in dress and fashion'.<sup>279</sup> These skills could be gained from the family and exposure to the trade networks and clientele in a fashionable urban centre like Paris. Traditionally, apprenticeships were the method of learning a trade but after the abolition of the guilds there was no prescribed route towards ownership. If the fashion merchants being

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<sup>275</sup> Devlin, James, *The Guide to the Trade: The Dress-maker and the Milliner* (London: Charles Knight, 1843), p. 5. On domestic service see Joan W. Scott and Ouise A. Tilly, *Women's Work and the Family*, p. 108.

<sup>276</sup> Hannah Barker gives an example from Leeds of 3 lower-middle class girls expected to train for a trade, Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>277</sup> Craig considered that many single women in particular became 'opportunity entrepreneurs', Béatrice Craig, *Women and Business Since 1500*, p. 190. Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, and Alison Kay, *The Foundations of Female Entrepreneurship*. These ideas are also explored for American milliners in the late nineteenth century in Wendy Gamber, 'A Precarious Independence: Milliners and Dressmakers in Boston, 1860-1890', *Journal of Women's History*, 4:1 (Spring 1992), 60-88.

<sup>278</sup> Craig used the example of retail that was appropriate for the middle class as selling china and silverware. Béatrice Craig, 'Petites Bourgeoises and Penny Capitalists', 221-22.

<sup>279</sup> R. Campbell, 'Of the Milliner', in *The London Tradesman* (London, 1747), p. 207.

studied lacked preparation for the trade it could explain business failure.

The age that apprenticeship started varied, but in Paris was stated by Crowston as being around 15.<sup>280</sup> The sample of fashion merchants working in Paris between 1789 and 1856 agrees with this figure as it shows that two women were apprenticed at the age of 15.<sup>281</sup> The sample had no examples of men being placed in an apprenticeship directly related to the commerce in *modes*. However, a study of apprenticeship in Essex and Staffordshire showed that between 1700 and 1799 two boys as well as 134 girls were apprenticed to milliners (*marchandes de modes*).<sup>282</sup> In Paris, the support for training was demonstrated in the 1847/8 Chamber of Commerce survey which showed that apprentices were mainly found amongst the clothing trades and were taken on by nearly half of the *modistes* in Paris.<sup>283</sup> The lack of formal contracts which were replaced by verbal agreements in the nineteenth century makes it difficult to know the detail of the arrangements.<sup>284</sup> However the survey stated that apprenticeships in the clothing trades could be for a month or six years but most were engaged for two or three years.<sup>285</sup> For the employer this was a method of acquiring an unpaid employee as their family normally paid a premium for them to

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<sup>280</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, 'From School to Workshop', p. 49.

<sup>281</sup> Mlle Colpaert and Mme Debar (Mlle Dubasty) were both aged 15 when they started apprenticeships: the former in 1842 and the latter in 1835. Mlle Colpeart and Mme Krafft entered *modistes'* businesses and Mlle Dubasty was placed in a *magasin de nouveautés* as a shop assistant.

<sup>282</sup> Deborah Simonton, 'Milliners and *Marchandes de Modes*', p. 23.

<sup>283</sup> The survey showed that 331 *modistes* out of the 879 questioned were employing apprentices. The other trades related to clothing were seamstresses (*couturières*), laundresses (*blanchisseuses*), linen drapers (*lingères*), shoemakers (*cordonniers*) and tailors (*tailleurs*). Chambre de Commerce, *Statistique de l'Industrie à Paris 1847-1848*, (Paris, 1851), pp.116-17.

<sup>284</sup> The predominance of verbal or other agreements for apprenticeships was noted in the survey into Parisian commerce where out of 4,886 apprenticeships only 426 had written contracts. Ibid. The lack of contracts, the setting up of apprenticeship schools and the decline in apprenticeships from the 1860s were also discussed by Yves Lequin, 'Apprenticeship in Nineteenth-Century France: A Continuing Tradition or a Break with the Past?' in *Work in France*, ed. by Steven L. Kaplan & Cynthia Koepp, *Work in France* (Ithaca, 1986), pp. 457-60.

<sup>285</sup> The figures given were 2,099 apprenticeships lasting for 2 years and 1,075 for 3 years dropping to only 269 for 4 years and 39 for 5 years. Chambre de Commerce, *Statistique de l'Industrie*, p.117.

learn a trade. However, the *Chambre de Commerce* found that not all apprentices paid a fee and often the employer had the cost of lodging, feeding and caring for the young person.<sup>286</sup> Table 2 shows that in the sample of bankrupt fashion merchants there were a range of training pathways from the high-risk position of no experience at all to other individuals who had some relevant training or experience.

**Table 2. Training and Experience Amongst Bankrupt Fashion Merchants, 1789-1855.**

TRAINING & EXPERIENCE	FASHION MERCHANTS	ADDITIONAL DETAIL
No experience	3 (2 female & 1 male)	
Unrelated work experience	2 (m)	1 in dom. service 1 a musician.
Experience in a related business	1 (f)	In a linen draper's
Production of fashionable goods	4 (3 f & 1 m)	2 in <i>passementerie</i>
Retail – sales assistants	5 (f)	
Bookkeeping	2 (1 f & 1 m)	
Apprenticeship/training	3 (f)	2 aged 15
Experience working for a <i>marchande de modes</i> .	6 (f)	
Previous business	9 (7 f & 2 m)	1 in artificial flowers
Family business ( <i>marchande de modes</i> )	1 (m)	
Total	36 = 28 f and 8 m	

Information was compared to the reasons for failure that were given by the receiver in order to examine whether there were significant limitations in their background training and experience and whether these related to gender.<sup>287</sup>

Starting with the three people that had no experience before purchasing the business, in the cases of the two women Mlle Laborde and Mlle Anselme, the receiver recorded their lack of knowledge and experience as a reason for failure along with their poor business skills. Lucile Laborde was described as without a

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Only some of the reports mentioned the background training and experience of the bankrupt fashion merchants and these were used to compile the table.

profession and living with her parents until her prospect of a marriage collapsed and she purchased a business. This implies that she was brought up without the idea of an apprenticeship to learn a trade and was destined to make a respectable marriage.<sup>288</sup> The receiver said that she had made mistakes in arithmetic and had underestimated how much capital would be required. Mlle Anselme was criticised for disorderly bookkeeping and being undisciplined, preferring a life of pleasure.<sup>289</sup> In contrast Mlle Rouillé purchased a business in 1853 after about 12 years' experience of working in a clerical position for several fashion merchants. Despite this experience the receiver stated that she lacked capital and her overheads were not covered by sales, which suggests that she did not learn all the necessary aspects of financing and managing a business.<sup>290</sup> She also had no experience of dealing with customers. A lack of experience in financial matters was also shown in the case of Meunier when it was stated that he paid too much for the business and he then underestimated the costs of refurbishing his premises.<sup>291</sup>

In the category of unrelated work experience, the examples were all male. M Hennin had worked in domestic service and M Pollet-Hoquet as a musician which would at least have given them experience of time keeping and a sense of self-discipline, working for and with others. Hennin's business had operated successfully for 12 years but he had relied on the management skills of an employee, Mlle Lovv, so that when she became ill the business suffered and medical costs added to their financial problems.<sup>292</sup> Other merchants that manufactured articles and therefore had

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<sup>288</sup> Mlle Laborde, 5 December 1851, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/145, File 10226.

<sup>289</sup> Mlle Anselme, 21 November 1853, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), DU11/168, File 11224.

<sup>290</sup> Mlle Rouillé, 30 May 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/200, File 12404.

<sup>291</sup> M. Meunier, 30 November 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/211, File 12840.

<sup>292</sup> M. Hennin, 19 March 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/196, File 12264.

construction skills were criticised for a lack of experience in business management and lack of capital such as M and Mme Gey. The couple made *passementerie* on looms and also sold the trimmings. However, they relied too heavily on an order from one particular *maison de commerce* so that when this business was withdrawn they were in difficulties.<sup>293</sup> In the sample the women with sales experience were criticised for granting credit to customers too easily showing a lack of knowledge or experience. Vuasse was also said to have given credit too easily and despite experience in bookkeeping he was criticised for overheads not being covered by sales.<sup>294</sup> These examples reveal gender differences in whether background training was related to the trade of a fashion merchant or not but lack of judgement in business was levelled at both sexes.

Many of the women examined had relevant experience and had started at a young age either in an apprenticeship or as retail assistants (*desmoiselles de magasins*). For example, Mlle Dubasty was born in Paris and placed in an apprenticeship in a *magasin de nouveautés* by her parents in 1835, when she was fifteen years old. This retail business would have sold a range of fabrics for the home as well as for clothing and possibly other ready-made items such as scarves, shawls and cloaks, sold at fixed prices.<sup>295</sup> At the end of this apprenticeship, whose length is unspecified, she worked for different *magasins* until nine years later, in 1844, when she worked in a female partnership to make *articles de Paris* for a further three years. The items were not described but this category included objects connected to clothing and accessories such as straw hats, artificial fabric flowers, fabric buttons, fans, parasols and

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<sup>293</sup> M Gey, 17 September 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/200, File 12664.

<sup>294</sup> M Vuasse, 4 October 1849, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/118, File 9079.

<sup>295</sup> The merchandise stocked in the 1830s by the *magasin de nouveautés* called *Aux Deux Magots* has been examined by Piedada da Silveira and Françoise Tetart-Vittu, *Des Magasins de Nouveautés aux Grands Magasins: Aux Deux Magots*, p.11.

umbrellas.<sup>296</sup> She started her own business after twelve years of experience and although the bankruptcy report of 1852 did not cite any lack of knowledge of the *métier* it did state that there had been poor management and administration. Either she lacked sufficient education, training and experience or she did not have an aptitude for those areas.<sup>297</sup> Similar comments were made about the business of Mlle Prevost in 1853. Although she had manufactured her merchandise with success she had administered her business affairs badly and this was the cause of her bankruptcy.

Mlle Prevost, like most of the artisans in her profession, has learned her trade but knows nothing about business: the first only requires taste and skill but for the latter reflexion and experience is necessary. <sup>298</sup>

The receiver gives no value to the creative skills necessary for the business, revealing his own lack of knowledge and possible prejudices. He points out the lack of business experience and judgement shown but another female merchant, Mlle Dezboroff, was praised for her business dealings and bookkeeping shown by her ability to clear some rental arrears during the bankruptcy proceedings.<sup>299</sup> The passing on of skills was shown in the businesses of Mme Lenoir and Mme Ouny, who noted apprentices, and Mlle Schneider had a fourteen-year old employee, Laure Vernon, who was probably an apprentice because of her young age. Her 18-year-old sister, Eléonore, was also employed in the shop and may also have served an apprenticeship there.<sup>300</sup> Six women in the sample had previously worked for fashion merchants and this included Mme Pilon who had been employed by LeRoy.

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<sup>296</sup> These items were part of the list associated with needle skills as *Articles de Paris* by the Parisian Chamber of Commerce in their 1847/8 survey. Chambre de Commerce, *Statistique de l'Industrie*, p. 35.

<sup>297</sup> Mme Debar (Mlle Dubasty), 23 January 1852, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/147, File 10289.

<sup>298</sup> Mlle Prevost, 19 December 1853, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/170, File 11278.

<sup>299</sup> Mlle Dezboroff, 19 November 1855, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/ 210, File 12805.

<sup>300</sup> Mlle Schneider, 18 May 1830, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/67, File 6290.

Jeanne Agathe Moriale (Mme Pilon) was an employee in the shop (*au magasin*) from 1819 until LeRoy's semi-retirement in 1821 and then she continued to be in different partnership associations with him until his death in 1829.<sup>301</sup> These experiences however were not enough to stave off bankruptcy and the receiver commented on bad decisions made that overstretched the finances as well as the loss of court customers in the July Revolution of 1830.<sup>302</sup> There was only one person in the sample who had followed the traditional route for training which was to progress in stages from apprenticeship to improvement towards supervisory roles and then to be the first hand (*première*). This person would allocate work to others, carry out fittings and generally be the manager in the highest position with the highest salary.

Victorine Perrin moved to Paris around 1846 having already gained some work experience. In Paris, she found employment as a first hand at two different shops before opening her own business. This failed in 1853 because of a lack of capital which could indicate problems in acquiring finance, a poor education or lack of business experience despite her background.<sup>303</sup> Some of the young women in the sample had moved away from their homes to train in Paris, which shows a growing market offering opportunities for lucrative employment. This also agrees with the points made by Simonton that, for the niche female gendered sewing trades, urban centres offered genteel and prestigious opportunities for women with 'enterprise and energy'.<sup>304</sup> Paris, as the fashion capital had the

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<sup>301</sup> Mme Pilon was paid 600 fr per year as an employee between 1819 and 1821. Fiona Ffoulkes, 'Louis Hippolyte LeRoy, 1763-1829: Grandfather of Haute Couture', Appendix 3, Employees. Grand Livre de Compte, No. 5 (1817 -1821), L.H. LeRoy, BnF, Fr.N.a., 5932, fol. 40 and 56.

<sup>302</sup> Dissolution of partnership M. LeRoy, Mlle LeRoy, Pilon and Brunet, 21 May 1824, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D2U3/1819. Louis Hippolyte LeRoy, inventory after death and will, 25 March 1829. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/CXVII/1138.

<sup>303</sup> Mlle Perrin, 22 March 1853, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/163, File 10876.

<sup>304</sup> Deborah Simonton, looked at cities including La Rochelle in *Female Agency*,

most to offer in the chance to learn the *métier* from the perceived leaders in the trade and in a growing clothing sector. One example arrived from the French provinces and another travelled from Germany.

Marie Léonie Poisson was born in 1803 in the rural community of Erné Mayenne, north-western France where there would not have been many opportunities for employment. She moved to Paris when she was very young and worked to learn the trade of *modiste*. Her parents died in 1851 leaving no inheritance so this may indicate a poor family who needed the help of their child's income. The second example was Mlle Elisa Colpaert who left her home in Frankfurt and arrived in Paris, in the 1840s, at the age of fifteen to learn the trade of *modiste*. No mention was made in the report about her family or her reasons for this choice but it demonstrates the attraction of Paris as the centre of luxury clothing production for women.<sup>305</sup> Another German-born milliner carried out her apprenticeship in Paris then worked in England before moving to America. In 1852, she opened her own business in Springfield, Illinois where she successfully managed her enterprise. The importance of the French training is shown by her thereafter being known as Madame Helme.<sup>306</sup> Single women probably had more freedom of movement than married women but moving could also be an indication that they needed to find work that was unavailable in their home towns and could be more easily found in a larger urban setting. The final example from Table 2 started from the most advantageous position during the *ancien régime*.

Beaulard was the only example of someone being trained in the family business and this was an enterprise led by a woman. His

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p. 103. Nichola Phillips also found that in London millinery and dressmaking were growth areas that offered opportunities for women at the same period, *Women in Business*, p. 145.

<sup>305</sup> Mlle Colpaert, 21 March 1853, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/163, File 10875.

<sup>306</sup> This example is taken from the article by Lucy E. Murphy, 'Business Ladies: Mid-western Women and Enterprise, 1850-1880', in *Journal of Women's History*, 3:1 (spring 1991), 65.

mother had been a celebrated *marchande de modes* with royal clients in the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1775, when he was 23 years old his parents ceded the business to him after he had been employed there.<sup>307</sup> He built a successful business with his wife, a *marchande de modes*, who brought capital, and he gained as high a reputation as his mother. However, he started bankruptcy proceedings in 1789 after risks taken when opening a branch in Moscow and he had large amounts owing from customers who had not settled their accounts.<sup>308</sup> Apart from Beaulard most of the men in the bankruptcy sample had very little relevant experience but there were other examples in the sample of successful male fashion merchants. Three of these demonstrate different pathways related to their gender as they moved into the business of *modes* from that of the wigmaker/hairdresser (*perruquier/coiffeur*): LeRoy, Herbault and Corot.

Louis Hippolyte LeRoy had been placed as an apprentice wigmaker/hairdresser at the age of twelve and another successful fashion merchant Edme François Herbault-Despavaux, known as Herbault, also started in the same sector.<sup>309</sup> Both of these men started their working lives during the late eighteenth century when fashion merchants were predominantly women and as Craig has stated, because of this 'gender norms' could have prevented men considering this as a trade.<sup>310</sup> The survey of Parisian commerce for 1847/1848 demonstrated that this remained the case in the nineteenth century as it stated that most of the 879 *modistes* were establishments run by women.<sup>311</sup> Neither LeRoy nor Herbault followed an apprenticeship within a family business unlike Jacques

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<sup>307</sup> Michelle Saporì, *Rose Bertin*, p. 95.

<sup>308</sup> The vagaries of success and failure in Beaulard's business is also dealt with in Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 224 and p. 226.

<sup>309</sup> M. Herbault-Despavaux, marriage contract, 13 Frimaire Year X (14 December 1801), Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/XXVIII/601.

<sup>310</sup> Béatrice Craig, *Women in Business Since 1500*, p. 189. For the feminization of the needle trades see Judith Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work* and Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing La Mode*.

<sup>311</sup> Chambre de Commerce, *Statistique de l'Industrie*, p. 116

Corot, who later ran a successful fashion merchant's business with his wife, and who had initially followed his father's profession as a *perruquier*.<sup>312</sup> LeRoy's father worked as a stage hand at the Paris Opera House and there is no information on the occupation, if any, of his mother but due to the family's success she may have been of higher status and brought capital to her marriage.<sup>313</sup>

Appendix 3 shows that LeRoy was one of a fairly large family where he had three brothers and one sister. There is little to indicate the social level of the family or education that the children received but his father was born in Paris and his mother was Belgian. Pierre Joseph was also born in Belgium but the family had moved to the capital by the 1760s.<sup>314</sup> There is no indication that the daughter received any training in a trade but the sons all followed different *métiers* from, architect to iron worker/locksmith suggesting that the family had the financial means to pay for apprenticeships. As there was no family background in running a business it may have been a combination of skills demonstrated by the individual as a child, their own wishes plus the economic possibilities in that trade that decided the different choices. When LeRoy and others changed *métiers* it was probably a response to market forces as the wearing of wigs was in decline by 1783.

Natural hair was favoured amongst men rather than the artificiality of wigs which were seen as old fashioned by the early nineteenth century.<sup>315</sup> The only men still wearing them were the elderly and those in professions such as the military, the clergy and the law.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> M. Corot's trade was recorded on his marriage contract, 5 May 1793, Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ETLVIII/583.

<sup>313</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, (Paris, 1829), p. 281.

<sup>314</sup> Pierre Joseph Leroy was born on the west of Belgium in Tournai 53 miles from Brussels. Deposit of birth certificate for M. P.J. Leroy, AN, MC/ET/CXVII/996.

<sup>315</sup> Colin Jones, *The Smile Revolution*, p. 160. Richard Corson, *Fashions in Hair: The First Five Thousand Years* (London: Peter Owen, 1980), p. 296 and p. 398.

<sup>316</sup> The wigmakers were part of an independent guild set up in 1673 and their numbers had grown dramatically by the eighteenth century, far above the rise in population. There were many journeymen and the masters numbered 200 in 1673, 835 in 1765 and 945 in 1771. According to social commentators they were to be found in every area of Paris whilst those with the highest reputations were

Therefore moving into the trade of a fashion merchant made economic sense and also these men had transferrable skills in the design and construction of goods, business administration, retail management and customer relations. Since the late eighteenth century, the commerce in *modes* had been a growing sector making it attractive to those choosing a trade and providing a related field for those individuals who had the flexibility that was necessary to survive in business. There is also evidence of the importance of role models and mentors for men and women starting in business and these could be related or unrelated.

LeRoy had followed the example provided by Rose Bertin and then acted as a mentor to Herbault.<sup>317</sup> These male examples were successful in their own lifetimes, with female partners or assistance, but they also founded family businesses that were carried on by women in the next generation: Corot's daughter Annette, Herbault's nieces and LeRoy's niece Esther.<sup>318</sup> They also trained other women as employees who then started their own businesses as *couturières*, such as Victorine and Pierrard (LeRoy), and *marchandes de modes* like Mlle Becard (Corot). The example of Marie Oberson and Jacques Corot shows how beneficial it could be to have the training and support of family members when learning to run a business. This couple were in their mid to late 40s when they ceded the business to their eldest daughter Annette. The advantage that the daughter of Mme Corot had over the sample of unsuccessful fashion merchants was the opportunity to train with her parents plus the mentoring agreement that they added to her marriage contract.<sup>319</sup>

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known to all. Michael Kwass, 'Big Hair: A Wig History of Consumption', pp. 635-36. For the decline in wig-making see Richard Corson, *Fashions in Hair*, p. 296 and p. 398.

<sup>317</sup> LeRoy stated his admiration for Rose Bertin in a letter saying that he was honoured to follow in her footsteps. Corbeille de Marriage Princesse de Wurtemberg et Prince Jérôme, LeRoy Invoices and Correspondence 1807. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), O/2/31.

<sup>318</sup> LeRoy and Herbault in *Manuel des Élégants*, (Paris, Year 14, 1805), p. 16.

<sup>319</sup> Marriage contract 21 March 1813, between Mlle Corot and M. Sennegon, Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/CVII/707.

On 25 March 1813 Annette Corot married Laurent Sennegon, the son of a silk merchant from Rouen. M and Mme Corot gave their daughter 30,000 fr in total and part of this was 15,000 fr representing the value of the business (*fonds et achalandage*) that was being transferred to their daughter, to include all the furniture, objects and equipment used in the operation of the enterprise. The business was to be in her sole ownership after three years on 1 August 1816, so, the young couple would gain the business without having to find the purchase price. At this time the lease of the premises, with the same terms and conditions, would also be transferred to their daughter and her husband. There was a further declaration that M and Mme Corot would continue to manage the business, with no interference or criticism from Annette and Laurent, during the three years, and they alone would enjoy the profits of the business.

This period, could have been problematic for the young couple but it would also have given them security and the opportunity to benefit from M and Mme Corot's experience. M and Mme Corot also agreed to introduce the couple to all the individuals connected to the business. These introductions would have enhanced their reputations in the trade with suppliers and clients and given them an advantage over newcomers in the same business. Also, if Annette and Laurent wanted to carry out commerce in silk (the Sennegon's family business) they only needed the agreement of M and Mme Corot and the profits from this part of the business would be exclusively for the young couple.<sup>320</sup> Compared to the sample in the bankruptcy cases Annette Octavie was very well trained and supported in all aspects of the business plus she had a marriage partner with experience of business in a related field. If the skills necessary to run a business were not possessed by the individual they were acquired through other means such as marriage,

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<sup>320</sup> M and Mme Corot agreed also to pay a *titre de forfeit* of 5,000 frs payable in four instalments between 1 August 1813 and 1 August 1816. Ibid.

business partnerships or by employing and managing those that could provide them. Beginning with marriage, there are examples amongst the successful and less successful cases which in the nineteenth century demonstrate the visibility of women in business.

Some marriages were examples of how skills and capital were brought to the business. In the eighteenth century, M and Mme Beaulard's marriage united a male mercer (*mercier*) and a female *marchande de modes*, although the business in *modes* appears to have been led by the husband with little evidence of the wife's role.<sup>321</sup> In 1796, LeRoy's marriage also combined a male mercer with a female fashion merchant but in this case his wife was much more visible in the business, after 1805.<sup>322</sup> The marriage is an example of a public 'joint sphere' of operation as described by the historians, Kay, Phillips and Barker.<sup>323</sup> Françoise Renée Guyot was a *marchande de modes* who had moved to Paris from Orléans.<sup>324</sup> LeRoy's obituary notice stated that Françoise did not have the talent or taste of her husband but she was tall and had provided an elegant model for his clothing creations.<sup>325</sup> This indicts an inferior, limited role but there is also evidence that she had an increasingly important place in the business particularly after the end of LeRoy's partnership with Mme Raimbaud in 1805. Married women needed the authority of their husbands to work and they were unable to be equal partners as this would have undermined the legal power of the man in marriage.<sup>326</sup> In 1805, in the accepted way, Françoise was

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<sup>321</sup> M and Mme Beaulard, 17 September 1789, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D4 B6/107, File 8104.

<sup>322</sup> The marriage contract recorded LeRoy's profession as mercer (*marchand mercier*). Marriage contract for Louis Hippolyte LeRoy and Françoise Renée Guyot, Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/LXX/633, 29 Prairial Year 4 (17 June 1796).

<sup>323</sup> Alison C. Kay, *The Foundations of Female Entrepreneurship*; Nichola Phillips, *Women in Business*; Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women's Female Enterprise*.

<sup>324</sup> See Appendix 3 for the LeRoy Family Dynasty.

<sup>325</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 283.

<sup>326</sup> Some married couples did try to create legal partnerships but the authorities took action against them and Craig found examples where they were declared null and void in the 1850s. A new article about this was later inserted in the 1872 version of the Civil Code. Béatrice Craig, *Female Enterprise*, pp. 70, 84-5.

authorised by her husband to make legal decisions about the business.<sup>327</sup> She also replaced LeRoy during fittings for the Empress Marie-Louise following Napoleon I's instructions. In this case her gender made her a more acceptable fashion merchant than her husband.<sup>328</sup> Mme LeRoy was mentioned in the memoirs of Miss Berry who visited their retail premises in Hôtel Boutin. She appeared to believe that Mme LeRoy was the head of the business which could have been because the trade was so associated with women. Françoise was described as very polite which was contrary to Miss Berry's expectations.<sup>329</sup> This was probably because LeRoy had a reputation for arrogance and it may highlight another important contribution by Mme LeRoy; as the person who was an easier and more tactful communicator. There were other examples of how married business partnerships operated by combining skills and, significantly, where the woman were not only helpers or deputies but also led the business and the family economy.

M Gey was described as a manufacturer of *articles de modes* but originally, he had been a carpentry worker (*ouvrier menuisier*) then a salesman for trimmings (*commis passementier*) and after that he was in the army until the end of 1846. On 31 December he married Mme Gey, who was a worker manufacturing trimmings (*ouvrière à façon en passementerie*), so the couple were able to combine their business experience in manufacturing working co-operatively together.<sup>330</sup> They failed due to poor skills in business and financial management. The following three examples demonstrate the wife's leadership as the person with the skills in fashionable commerce that became the focus for the family.

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<sup>327</sup> The authorisation for legal decisions to be taken over financial matters was given by M LeRoy to his wife, Mlle Guyot (Mme LeRoy), in 2 *Procurations*, 6 November 1805 (16 Brumaire Year 14) and 11 June 1806. Part of the authorisation was reproduced in the documents concerning the agreement for payments between M LeRoy and Aglae Samson where Mme LeRoy signed in place of her husband, 2/12/1806, Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/VII/579.

<sup>328</sup> *La Mode*, p. 317.

<sup>329</sup> *Voyages de Miss Berry à Paris, 1782-1836*, trans. by Mme Duchesse de Broglie (Paris, 1905), pp. 41-42.

<sup>330</sup> M Gey, AP, D11U3/200, File 12664.

The fashion merchant Marie Vuasse married Jules Alexandre in 1828, at the age of twenty-two, after she had arrived in Paris from the provinces. At the time, he was a cashier and bookkeeper, with no capital, but after a few years they had saved enough to start a '*magasin de modes*' with a partner, Dame Mauprizez, with whom they worked until 1843. After this the couple continued alone until 1849 when he was declared to be in a state of bankruptcy.<sup>331</sup> In the second example the couple worked together under the name Beausang and company although Mme Beausang was the only one entered in the trade directory for 1854.<sup>332</sup> Lastly, there is the clearest case of a wife leading the business in a way that made it highly successful. It also demonstrates that women were valued for their work ethic and skills as well as capital they might bring to a marriage, agreeing with Craig and Barker that these superseded their domestic role.<sup>333</sup>

The Corot family fortune was based on the trade of the wife and mother Marie Oberson as this was the business that the couple decided to concentrate on and Appendix 4 shows how the female line was followed. Her husband Jacques Corot abandoned the declining wig-making trade in 1798 to join Marie in the management of a workroom for female headgear (*un atelier de coiffures féminines*) in a *magasin de modes* where Marie had already been employed before her marriage in 1793. Three years later they were able to start their own business and M Corot divided his time between bookkeeping for the business and employment at the offices for the city of Paris.<sup>334</sup> Marie was the fashion merchant whose married name, Mme Corot, was the name under which the

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<sup>331</sup> Mme Vuasse, 4 May 1854, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/178, File 11579.

<sup>332</sup> 'Beausang (Eugénie) et cie modes et confection, Montmartre 146'. *Annuaire Général du Commerce, de l'Industrie par Frères Didot* (Paris, 1854), p. 103.

<sup>333</sup> Hannah Barker cited in Béatrice Craig, *Female Enterprise*, pp. 9, 246.

<sup>334</sup> Regarding the bookkeeping of Jacques Corot, a page of a book with debts receivable (*cahier de créances*) survived as it was sketched on by his son the artist Jean-Baptiste Camille and was reproduced in Alfred Robaut and Étienne Moreau-Nélaton, *Histoire de Corot et ses Oeuvres* (Paris: Flourey, 1905), p.10 and pp. 20-21.

business was known by clients and in the fashion press so this was probably an acknowledgement of Marie's skill and reputation and a rational business decision. This couple also demonstrated the complex nature of combining family and business.

The dates for the marriage (Appendix 4) and for the birth of their eldest child show that Marie was six months pregnant at the time of the marriage and by 1797 the couple had three children under five years old. They were starting a family when their growing business relied heavily on the expertise of Mme Corot. Rather than ceasing to work, when their son was born in 1796 he was given to a wet nurse, a popular practice in France at the time.<sup>335</sup> Generally working women in cities like Paris sent their babies to rural wet nurses and Jean-Baptiste Corot was sent to a woman near l'Isle Adam, department of Val d'Oise, about 40 kilometres north of Paris, where he remained until he was four.<sup>336</sup> This demonstrated the importance of the woman's role in the family economy, where the husband was the helper, so that abandoning the business to rear children in a separate domestic sphere was clearly not considered. It appears that the couple did not have the financial stability to consider a different lifestyle until they retired. Both partners only retreated from the business world when they retired in 1816 showing that a genteel lifestyle away from economic activity was a goal for both parties. Then they were both able to enjoy their profits and an income from rents, living between their property in Paris and in the countryside. The name of Mme Corot continued to give the business its identity and was used by her daughter Mlle Annette Corot although her actual married name was Mme Sennegon showing the importance

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<sup>335</sup> Ibid, p. 21. Sussman has drawn attention to the long history of wet-nursing in France and said it continued to be a 'significant commercial enterprise' in the nineteenth century. George D. Sussman, *Selling Mothers' Milk: The Wet-Nursing Business in France, 1715 to 1914*, (University of Illinois Press, 1982), pp.101-2.

<sup>336</sup> Alfred Robaut and Étienne Moreau-Nélaton, *Histoire de Corot et ses Oeuvres*, p. 21. Finding wet-nurses became problematic, as there was no safe substitute for breast milk until the end of the nineteenth century but by the 1860s there were not enough reliable wet-nurses available. Ibid.

of reputation. The dependency on female skills and economic power was shown in examples where it was the only income for the family.

M Lenoir relied on his wife's trade when his own business failed and M Fournier when he was unemployed.<sup>337</sup> With dependence on one person's income, if that person became ill it could cause disaster for the family. One example was Bernard Guillot who became involved in the commerce of fashion through his wife as his own *métier* was noted as stone cutter (*tailleur de pierre*). However, one of the reasons that the business failed was that when his wife became ill he was unable to manage the enterprise alone about which the receiver stated 'he knew nothing'.<sup>338</sup> There were also different types of partnerships where skills were acquired when there was no personal relationship. This agrees with Coffin's point that the abolition of the guilds had created opportunities to combine activities and increase profits.<sup>339</sup>

In the early 1800s LeRoy continued to develop his business by starting a partnership with a *couturière* Mme Raimbaud. Then around 1805 this short-lived association was dissolved but LeRoy was reported to have retained her patterns and employees.<sup>340</sup> This woman was a highly successful *couturière* and LeRoy was able to benefit from her skills and reputation to combine the clothing trades of *couture* and *modes*. There were also businesses where skills were combined differently but in a complimentary fashion.

Alphonse Izambard, was already established as an artificial flower merchant when he entered into a partnership with a widow, Mme Julien who was a fashion merchant. Initially this business also

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<sup>337</sup> M & Mme Lenoir, 29 March 1853, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/163, File 10885. Mme Fournier, 18 July 1854, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/182 File 11774.

<sup>338</sup> M Guillot, 21 October 1851, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/143, File 10158.

<sup>339</sup> Judith Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work*, p. 53,

<sup>340</sup> Mlle Avrillon, *Mémoires de Mlle Avrillon, Première Femme de Chambre de l'Impératrice sur la Vie Privée de Joséphine sa Famille et sa Cour*, rev. edn (Paris: Mercure de France, 1969), pp. 324-25.

included a single woman, Mlle Chapron and the receiver commented that it was the women that brought the skill and experience of the *métier* to the partnership. Izambard entered into this arrangement as he wanted to expand the market for his goods and he operated by seeking customers in the provinces through his own efforts and those of his commercial travellers.

All parties to this agreement had previously been in a state of insolvency but this may not have been known to the individuals involved, showing an aspect of risk.<sup>341</sup> Unmarried women often created partnerships and Simonton has seen this as a way to secure their independent lifestyle.<sup>342</sup> However, the bankruptcy cases demonstrated that there was still risk involved such as the examples of Vernet and Addison, and Leger and Durand. In both instances one woman in the partnership disappeared without warning when the business had problems and Mlle Addison was also accused of dishonesty.<sup>343</sup> Another difficulty could arise if one partner decided to dissolve the agreement and then was owed money from that business. This happened in the case of the Defour sisters who before 1847 had been in business with Mlle Labourelle and then owed her 6,000 fr when it ended, so that the debt became a factor in the sisters' bankruptcy.<sup>344</sup> Married but separated women could also experience restrictions based on their inability to operate in business without their husband's legal sanction.

Amongst the female fashion merchants who had been married there were three women, sole traders, who were legally separated (*séparation de corps*) from their husbands, at a time when divorce was forbidden: Mme Bonvallet, Mme Ramonot (known as Ouny) and

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<sup>341</sup> Société Julien et Izambard, 24 May 1854, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/179, File 11646.

<sup>342</sup> Deborah Simonton, *Female Agency*, p. 102.

<sup>343</sup> Mlle Vernet, 26 July 1854, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/182, File 11788. Mme Leger and Mme Durand, 16 November 1852, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/158 File 10696.

<sup>344</sup> Mlles Defour, 23 April 1850, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11/U3 126 File, 9443.

Mme Rebeyrol.<sup>345</sup> Mme Elisa Rebeyrol (Mlle Domery) had been born in Paris on 19 November 1819 and married Louis Rebeyrol, *marchand de nouveautés*, in 1836 in Paris. Married women had to be legally authorised by their husbands to be able to work so when the couple had separated, or the husband had disappeared, this caused problems for female merchants. For example, in 1834 M Krafft left his wife and child, without saying anything of his plans, and was never in touch again. As an abandoned wife, she could not receive her husband's authorisation to work which meant that legally she could not manage a business unless authorised by the *Tribunal de Commerce*. She may have worked outside the regulatory system for some years but eventually, on 25 June 1845, she received the tribunal's authorisation.

This woman was not stopped from working but the situation hindered rather than aided her.<sup>346</sup> The bankruptcies of Amélie Cantillon and Mlle Ouny (Mme Ramonot) reflected the complications that could occur when a woman, being legally separated, wished to be known under her maiden name. During the bankruptcy procedure that had started for Mlle Cantillon on 29 May 1855, the receiver noted that he had 'discovered' that she had been married since 1842 and that the separation dated from 1846. This confusion over the name could affect the authentication of debts to be recovered or that were owed, possibly even being considered as an attempt to avoid liability. On 26 June, 1855, the receiver legally

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<sup>345</sup> In France on 20 September 1792 divorce was legalised but under the 1804 Napoleonic Code the grounds for divorce were reduced and in 1816 it was abolished, not to be re-established until 1884. There were constant appeals for its reinstatement but under the Restoration government of Louis XVIII Roman Catholicism was again the official state religion and divorce was seen as revolutionary and republican. This meant that petitions for divorce were changed to judicial separation of body and property (*séparation de corps et séparation de biens*). Louise Hicks, *Women and the code Napoléon*. Hicks, Louise, 'Napoleon I's Code and Women's Rights', The Napoleon Series, ed. by R. Burnham (1995 to 2010) [http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/society/c\\_women.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/society/c_women.html) [accessed 10 January 2013]. Mme Bonvallet, 29 May 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris, (AP), D11U3/200, File 12399. Mlle Ouny (Mme Ramonot), 21 September 1852, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/157, File 10627. Mme Rebeyrol, 12 September 1851, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/141, File 10089.

<sup>346</sup> Mme Krafft, Mme, 14 September 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/206, File 12655.

changed the name of the proceedings to Madame Bonvallet née Cantillon.<sup>347</sup> This woman had sought help from a business professional, possibly because she was alone in the business and lacked experience, but the receiver stated that she had been badly advised by her business agent. Mlle Ouny was criticised for poor bookkeeping and an absence of records, whilst the married couples often allocated one partner to this post. However, where a bookkeeper was employed there were still examples of business failure as in the case of M Beaulard and Mlle Laborde.<sup>348</sup>

Although the bankrupt fashion merchants were not lacking in some skills and experience their lack of business knowledge and poor bookkeeping was often noted which points to a lack of training and experience or poor aptitude in those areas. An 1839 manual stressed the importance of understanding how to keep business records and accounts.

Through moral and religious instruction, you teach the children in your care to become honourable citizens; by teaching them bookkeeping, you can sow the seeds of all the qualities and skills needed by the budding tradesman.<sup>349</sup>

By the 1850s there were some new professional schools that offered training in these skills as well as the practical aspects related to the needle trades. The schools appear to be a response to the need to improve technical and business skills for men and women working in the clothing trades. It may also testify to changes in clothing and headwear that required more expertise in hand work. This was still an unmechanised industry so the labour force's skills were vital and more complex pattern cutting and construction techniques were developing by the 1840s.

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<sup>347</sup> Mme Bonvallet, AP, D11U3/200, File 12399.

<sup>348</sup> M. Beaulard, AP, D4 B6/107, File 8104.and Mlle Laborde, AP, D11U3/145, File 10226.

<sup>349</sup> Pierre Labardin gave examples of several publications (1811-1851) including the manual by Delpierre in 1839 that called for traders to be taught bookkeeping in order to bring down the bankruptcy figures. Pierre Labardin, 'Accounting Prescription and Practice', pp. 263-83.

The first professional training school for the fashion and tailoring sectors was founded by the tailor Alexis Lavigne in 1841. Lavigne's courses and developments improving equipment were intended to be a faster way of training individuals for industry and aimed to replace the need for long apprenticeships.<sup>350</sup> This was known as Guerre-Lavigne and was located in the area for luxury clothing businesses near the Palais du Louvre. In 1845, he was granted a patent for 15 years for his system of measuring and cutting for garments and he created courses in these methods.<sup>351</sup> He also had a successful business that was known for its riding habits with clients that included the Empress Eugénie whilst he continued to publish instructions for cutting and stitching women's clothes.<sup>352</sup>

Lavigne's inventions include the soft ribbon tape measure (*le mètre-ruban*) and different types of dress stands (*les bustes mannequins*) that could be used for men, women and children in the construction of garments. It was claimed that these reduced the number of fittings necessary and that they could also be used for display purposes. As a response to the political and economic crisis of 1848 at a time of social unrest and anxieties about female employment, another school more specifically aimed at women was opened by Mme Lemonnier.<sup>353</sup> Between 1852 and 1864 she had two schools where the general curriculum included French, arithmetic, history and geography which was followed for three years but there were also sewing classes and special courses in bookkeeping and subjects linked to business studies such as commercial law and

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<sup>350</sup> Today the school is known under the name ESMOD, École Supérieure des Arts et Techniques de la Mode <<http://www.esmod.ru/en/content/history-paris-esmod-school>> [accessed 5/6/2015]

<sup>351</sup> INPI, Institut National de la Propriété Industrielle <<http://bases.brevets19e.inpi.fr/Thot/FrmFicheDoc.asp?idfiche=0086693&refFiche=0061305>> [accessed 3 October 2015]

<sup>352</sup> Alexis Lavigne, *Méthodes de Coupe pour Tailleurs et Couturières* (Paris, 1869).

<sup>353</sup> In 1848, when many people were without employment Élisa Lemonnier created the *Société pour l'Enseignement Professionnel des Femmes*. Charles Lemonnier, *Élisa Lemonnier*, pp. 33-34.

business arithmetic.<sup>354</sup> The creation of these two professional schools by the 1850s could be considered as highlighting that education, apprenticeship and training at work was no longer sufficient to maintain a highly skilled labour force in the growing sectors of the clothing trades, like the *marchande de modes*. It was also an acknowledgement that a wide range of skills were needed from the technical and creative to business organisation, finance and administration.

In this section, I have demonstrated that the pathways towards the ownership of a fashion merchant's business were different for women and men and those without the support of a family or mentor. Importantly, it remained a female dominated sector and as the skills required were associated with women they were able to profit from the situation and lead the business even when working with male partners. Marriage and business partnership have revealed different cooperative ventures where, despite the legal position, the woman usually led the business.<sup>355</sup> Importantly there was no evidence of the woman being excluded from business towards the domestic sphere because of ideology. However, an easier genteel lifestyle was a goal when the business was successful showing that the work ethic was a necessity until the family had economic stability. Finally, I have shown that skills could be acquired in new ways in a free-trade environment by combining complimentary trades but that, as the clothing sector grew, professional schools were created to improve training. This appears to agree with weaknesses identified by the receiver and to show limitations in the length and quality of options for training in the free-market. The skills and knowledge needed to be successful as a fashion merchant will be demonstrated further in the next section which will examine the system of finance and credit that men and women worked within.

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<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>355</sup> LeRoy being one high-profile exception in the sample studied.

### **Business Operation: Finance and Credit.**

In this section, I show how nineteenth century fashion merchants started their businesses and engaged with the system of finance and credit revealing any factors that facilitated or hindered business such as gender, family, social level and reputation. Historians have expressed concerns about there being adequate finance for women in business. My findings are that capital was available and that gender did not affect access to credit or loans. This disagrees with Gamber and Crossick and Haupt and agrees with Craig for the nineteenth century. Continuity is also shown with Crowston's examination of fashion merchants in the eighteenth century.<sup>356</sup> However, I reveal the complex nature of the financial and credit system and how managing credit and debt caused problems for the success of the business.

Firstly, I demonstrate the range of ways that women and men acquired or started businesses, beginning by looking at how capital was acquired through marriage and inheritance. Secondly, I analyse how the value of a business was calculated for purchase showing how misunderstanding its complexity was a risk factor for new merchants. Merchants also needed trustworthiness, skill and good judgement to assess how much debt the business could stand and to be accepted into the merchant community. New businesses were at risk and I explore the factors that could lead to longevity before looking at how problems were tackled in the management and collection of debts owed to the business. Lastly, and contrary to eighteenth century practice, I identify some examples of fast payments for nineteenth century celebrity fashion merchants.<sup>357</sup>

Many of the nineteenth-century bankruptcy reports gave reasons for the failure of the business and these will be considered along with

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<sup>356</sup> Béatrice Craig, found that women of the 'petty-middle class' were able to access capital, *Female Enterprise*, p. 147 and "Lending Women, Borrowing Women", in *Women and Credit*, ed. by Beverly Lemire et al (Berg, 2001). Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 233 and pp. 383-84.

<sup>357</sup> For eighteenth century credit and time taken before settling bills, Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, pp. 219-25.

other successful enterprises. Starting with how capital might be accumulated, the examples of Beaulard and Corot show how fashion merchants acquired capital through marriage and the inheritance of their wives.

Jean Joseph Beaulard, through his wife, had inherited a half share in two houses, from his mother-in-law's estate, valued at 61,500 livres.<sup>358</sup> Jacques Corot married Marie Oberson in 1793 and the contract showed that they both had assets to bring to the marriage but that Marie brought more than her husband. Jacques brought money and assets, including personal clothing valued at 1,500 livres, in addition to the business of a wigmaker valued at 600 livres.<sup>359</sup> The bride had inherited property from her parents, in Fribourg Switzerland, and other assets from Versailles together valued at 10,000 livres. She also had personal assets worth 1,000 livres and 600 livres as her dowry towards the marriage partners' joint estate (*communauté de biens*).<sup>360</sup>

Property and 'circulating assets' were rare for working people, at the end of the eighteenth century, demonstrating that the Beaulard and Oberson families belonged to the wealthier merchant, lower-middle level.<sup>361</sup> Appendix 4 shows that the family maintained their social status and the four daughters in the second generation of the

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<sup>358</sup> The first house, valued at 115,000 livres, was on the corner of Rue Fossés Montmartre and the Place des Victoires and the other, smaller house, was valued at 8,000 livres, located at Rue du Chemin de Mesnil Montant. The inheritance was shared with Mme Robert, Mme Beaulard's sister. M and Mme Beaulard, AP, D4 B6/107, File 8104. As a comparison of estates Alexandre Hanotel, journeyman died in 1776 and left 16,000 livres and Jacques Chaudron, a mason's mate, died in 1783 and left 8,000 livres. Daniel Roche, *The People of Paris*, p. 87.

<sup>359</sup> Apparently, Marie Corot did not manage to realise the Swiss assets which were said to have been badly managed by her relatives. Gary Tinterow, Michael Pantazzi and Vincent Pomerede, *Corot* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), p. 6. Marriage contract between Marie-Françoise Oberson and Jacque Louis Corot, 1793, AN, MC/ET/LVIII/583.

<sup>360</sup> Roche has examined the wages and cost of living for the lower classes in Paris in the eighteenth century showing that by 1789 wages were behind the cost of living and rents had increased dramatically. Some idea of the value of these assets can be given in a comparison with the wages of a manual worker in Paris at the end of the eighteenth century who according to Roche earned 320 livres per year. Daniel Roche, *The People of Paris*, p. 87

<sup>361</sup> Ibid.

Corot/Sennegon family married Parisian merchants and the marriage contracts show that they received equal dowries valued at 28,000 fr.<sup>362</sup> The bankruptcy cases showed a range of financial backgrounds and social levels are revealed when it was noted that no marriage contract had been drawn up by a notary because the couple owned nothing of value.

This was the case when Eugénie Charlotte Pichaud married Isidore Hays in 1845 without a contract.<sup>363</sup> However, even when a female partner brought capital to the marriage there was some legal protection for women's property. Husbands were accountable for its use so that it would not necessarily help them if they were already in financial difficulty. The fashion merchant (and former musician) M Pollet-Hocquet married for the second time in March 1853 and a marriage contract was drawn up in which the system of 'community property' was adopted.<sup>364</sup> The bride, Mlle Marie Jouvente, an actress, brought 10,000 fr to the marriage although M Pollet-Hocquet stated that he only received 4,000 fr in cash and the rest was in the value of personal effects (*objets mobiliers*).

For several years before the marriage M Pollet-Hocquet had been pursued by creditors and after this marriage the pursuit against him became more threatening probably because he had acquired more capital. Following the declaration of bankruptcy his new wife successfully filed for a separation of property (*separation de biens*) and the debt of 10, 000 fr was then entered into the list of liabilities

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<sup>362</sup> The four daughters were given a trousseau valued at 3,000 fr plus 25,000 fr. Marriage contract between Marie Sennegon and Toussaint Lemaistre, 29 February 1832, AN, C/ET/I/860, Marie Louise Sennegon and Philibert Baudot, 23 October 1833, AN, MC/ET/I/871, Marie Dorothée Sennegon and François Chamouillet, 9 December 1835, AN, MC/ET/I/886 and Louise Sennegon and Christophe Charmois, 16 December 1844, AN, MC/ET/1002.

<sup>363</sup> Eugénie Charlotte Pichaud was born in Paris on 13 April 1826 and, at the age of nineteen, on 15 July 1845 she married Isidore Hays who was 26 and had inherited some family goods. Mme Hays, 30 August 1855, AP, D11U3/205, File 12615.

<sup>364</sup> M. Pollet Hocquet, 18 November 1853, AP, D11U3/168, File 11217.

(*passifs*) on the balance sheet.<sup>365</sup> As he had entered the marriage in a state of insolvency it was presumably regarded as a misuse of the assets that she had brought to the marriage. In 1843, M Pollet-Hocquet had also inherited some money and this applied to others in the bankruptcy sample such as the Gobley sisters. They started their business, in 1851, with the 3,000 fr that they had inherited after the death of their parents.<sup>366</sup> However, some new proprietors did not need to find the capital to purchase a business and so started in an advantageous position without debts.

M Beaulard and Mme Sennegon (Mlle Corot) are two examples where the first generation of a successful family business of *marchandes de modes* ceded this to the next generation with no purchase price involved. Other examples show businesses that started in a small way at home, like Mme Dron and M and Mme Vuasse, where the business was built up gradually in a similarly low risk beginning before perhaps moving to larger or more prestigious premises.<sup>367</sup> However, there were 13 examples, between 1849 and 1855, where the receiver had stated that lack of capital was one of the factors leading to bankruptcy. Generally, Appendix 5 shows that even when the merchants had some capital it was never quite enough to comfortably cover the initial set up costs. This could show that larger investors were not easily discovered or interested in this small-scale business or that new merchants were poor at understanding the finances. A potential problem for the purchaser,

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<sup>365</sup> The lawyer Louise Hicks has considered the impact, of Napoleon I's Code, on women's rights. Separation of goods under Napoleon's Code meant that, generally, the wife retained power over her movable property (furniture and possessions) - but not immovable property (buildings and land), which could not be sold without the agreement of her husband. The wife also paid a third of her income 'into the pool of assets as the expenses of marriage'. Even with a 'community property' agreement if the husband was seen to be misusing his power, as happened in Marie Jouvente's case, then this could be changed after marriage. Louise Hicks, *Women and the code Napoléon*, <[http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/society/c\\_women.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/society/c_women.html)>. Pollet-Hoquet, ibid. Some female merchants such as Mme Cokken (1849) had a marriage contract with a separation of property. Mme Cokken, 6 November 1849, AP, D11U3, File, 9137.

<sup>366</sup> Mles Gobley sisters, 2 March 1854, AP, D11U3/174, File, 11437.

<sup>367</sup> M & Mme Dron, AP, D11U3/195 File 12220. Mme Vuasse, AP, D11U3/178, File 11579.

particularly if lacking in experience, was underestimating the costs involved because of the complex way that business value was created and so this will be explored next.

The business was defined in a particular way to work out its value at the time of a sale or succession. In the eighteenth century, there was a growing discussion about the tangible and intangible parts of the business along with how monetary value could be assigned to these. The intangible elements were unpopular with creditors as they inflated the value of the assets on the balance sheet but these could not then be seized or liquidated to the same value. Intangible elements included the knowledge, trustworthiness and reputation of the trader, patents, the location of the premises and the present and future relationship with the clientele.<sup>368</sup>

However, the bankruptcy cases showed that when a business was purchased the price was sometimes based on the level of profits to be expected. When Mme Lecomte purchased a business from Mme Mouton in 1852 the level of profits was said to be 25,000 fr per year and this fixed the purchase price at 20,000 fr.<sup>369</sup> This was referred to by the receiver because it was later challenged by the purchaser and it had been referred to the Tribunal de Commerce who had upheld the purchase price. This purchase price was in the higher bracket of the sample as can be seen from the table below.

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<sup>368</sup> Alessandro Stanziani, 'Le Capital Intangible: Le Fonds de Commerce et son Nantissement', in *Le Capitalisme au Future Antérieur: Crédit et Spéculation en France, Fin XVIIIe-Début XXe Siècles*, ed. by Nadine Levratto and Alessandro Stanziani (Bruylants, 2011), pp. 143-70. Alessandro Stanziani, 'Fonds de Commerce', in *Dictionnaire de l'Économie-Droit: XVIIIe-XXe Siècles*, ed. by Alessandro Stanziani (LGDJ, 2007), pp. 185-93.

<sup>369</sup> Mme Lecomte, widow & co., 14 May 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/195, File 12209. Mme Lecomte, widow, 14 May 1855, AP, D11U3/195, File 12210.

**Table 3. The Price of Purchasing a Business, 1843-53.**

FASHION MERCHANT	YEAR	PRICE OF BUSINESS	ADDITIONAL COST IN FRANCS	TOTAL SET UP COSTS
Dezboroff, Mlle	1847	25,000 fr	Furnishings 5,000	30,000 fr
Laborde, Mlle	1846	22,000 fr	Clientele 2,098	24,098 fr
Pollet-Hocquet, M	1843	22,000 fr		
Lecomte, Mme	1852	20,000 fr	Equipment 7,000 Advance rent 2,350 Merchandise 3-4,000	32,350 fr — 42,350 fr
Bénard, Mlle	1851	10,000 fr		
Rouillé, Mlle	1853	7,000 fr (inc.clients)	Merchandise & Furnishings 1,753	8,753 fr
Lardy, Mlle	1847	4,028 fr		
Julien, Mme	1848	4,000 fr (orig. 8,000)		

Additional costs were often part of the purchase price along with the lease of the premises, the shop fittings, furniture, merchandise and the list of clientele. The importance of the clientele to the value of a business is shown in the example of Mlle Dezboroff. Table 3 shows that when she purchased the business as a going concern, with royal clients from the court of Louis Philippe, this enterprise was valued at 30,000 fr, including furnishings, however by the time of the bankruptcy proceedings in 1855 the value had been reduced to 10,000 fr because of the loss of part of the clientele in the Revolution of 1848.<sup>370</sup> There were different ways that merchants raised money to purchase the business from savings to loans and unexpected windfalls. For example, Mme Vuasse had saved 1,200 fr and her husband had received 5,700 fr in compensation after an accident at work.<sup>371</sup> Apart from the low levels of capital as a risk factor in business, Fontaine considers that new businesses were most susceptible to bankruptcy because they were the 'least well

<sup>370</sup> Mlle Dezboroff, AP, D11U3/ 210, File 12805.

<sup>371</sup> Mme Vuasse, AP, D11U3/178, File 11579.

integrated into the societal fabric of the merchant community' unlike family businesses where the new owners were already known to the community.<sup>372</sup> The sample of fashion merchants studied demonstrated some agreement with this point and will be explored further.

Beaulard's business had been well-known when owned by his mother and under the son's management remained in operation for 14 years. This was the longest in the bankruptcy sample and is a contrast to the new business of Mme Samson that only operated for seven months.<sup>373</sup> Of the 35 businesses, Appendix 5 shows that the majority (23) had been in existence for only up to 5 years, six for between five and ten years and six between 10 and 14 years. The longevity of companies has always been varied and the subject of study in order to understand the factors involved. Even when a company has survived over a long period of time such as 50 to 1,000 years it is likely that only elements of the original business have been retained such as the name, the ownership or the skills learned from experience.<sup>374</sup> In the first part of the 2,000s it has been estimated that only about 50 % of new companies in Europe lasted over five years which is a slightly lower figure than the example of bankrupt fashion merchants.<sup>375</sup> Defining features of many of the long-lived businesses are that they are owned by families and are small to medium in size.<sup>376</sup> However, studies have shown that it is the survival of a business to the second and third generations where problems occur; the former had a 30 % and the latter a 15 % survival rate.<sup>377</sup> M Beaulard was the second

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<sup>372</sup> Laurence Fontaine, 'Antonio and Shylock: Credit and Trust in France, c.1680-c.1780', *Economic History Review*, 54:1 (2001), p. 55.

<sup>373</sup> M and Mme Beaulard, AP, D4 B6/107, File 8104 and Mme Samson, AP, D11U3/109, File 8326.

<sup>374</sup> In 2006 the Japanese company Kongo Gumi, that had built temples and was the world's oldest company, lost its independent identity after 1,428 years. Maria Rosaria Napolitano, Vittoria Marino and Jari Ojala, 'In Search of an Integrated Framework of Business Longevity', pp. 955-56.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid., p. 956.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., p. 959.

generation of his family to run their business but eventually he faced insolvency and although in the Corot family the second generation successfully continued the business it was not handed down to a third generation. These examples demonstrate that business success did not necessarily guarantee longevity even when the succession was planned for. New businesses in the sample were often purchased with small amounts of capital and so were repaid in instalments but from the bankruptcy cases it appears that this kind of debt was difficult to manage successfully. In a French study, Fontaine found that the time to repay debts varied tremendously and could be as little as six months or as long as ten years.<sup>378</sup>

There was risk because merchants were relying on their profits to meet the repayment schedule. For example, in the case of Mlle Rouillé the money was to be paid partly up front, 2,500 fr on 29 November 1853, and partly in instalments.<sup>379</sup> These were fractional amounts, the last being due on 1 December 1855 with interest being added from 1 December 1854 on any money outstanding. Mlle Rouillé stated that she had about 3,000 fr at the time of the purchase which allowed her to make the first payment, but this meant that when she started the business she had no money so she had to borrow another 3,000 fr to be in a position to deal with the first orders. The bankruptcy report concluded that one of the main causes of business failure was lack of capital. Some of the fashion merchants started in a more cautious way such as Mlle Prevost who built up the business working from her small apartment, in 1842, but when she moved to retail premises she needed to borrow money and five years later she had a large debt of 28,000 fr.<sup>380</sup> According to the receiver she was ambitious to expand her clientele, sales and profits but she had given credit too easily. As can be seen in these examples loans could be taken out and there were no examples

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<sup>378</sup> Laurence Fontaine, 'Antonio and Shylock', p. 50.

<sup>379</sup> Mlle Rouillé, 30 May 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (A.P), D11U3/ 200, File 12404.

<sup>380</sup> Mlle Prevost, AP, D11U3/170, File 11278.

where they had been difficult to obtain. This agrees with Craig's findings for women working in the nineteenth century in the north of France where related and unrelated men and women granted loans. They showed a range of individuals from a middle level cross section of society such as proprietors living from rental income, shopkeepers, farmers and manufacturers.<sup>381</sup>

It seems logical to assume that an investor, whether a family member or not, would not invest in a business if they did not believe that their money would be safe and that the person operating the business was trustworthy and likely to succeed and repay the money. These investments also show confidence in the fashion merchants' businesses which supports the idea that it was a buoyant commercial sector in Paris. The bankruptcy sample shows loans from family members for at least four of the female fashion merchants who were either single or widowed. In the cases of Mlle Vernet, Mme Pilon (a widow) and Mlle Laborde these were from male relatives but Mlle Perrin borrowed money from her sister.<sup>382</sup> Importantly, there were also examples of money loaned by women and men that appear to be from unrelated individuals which signify confidence in the business and the proprietor.

Mlle Isbell called Drouart already had a successful history in the operation of a business, *commerce de modes*, between 1841 and 1852 that she ran with a female partner, Mme Marx. When this partnership was dissolved Caroline Drouart emerged with a profit of 12,000 fr so she was able to prove her ability in trade and bring some capital to a new business.<sup>383</sup> This track record of success plus having some money to put into a new business would have helped attract further funding. The second business the *société* Drouart, of which she was the sole director, had a silent partner

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<sup>381</sup> Béatrice Craig, 'Lending Women, Borrowing Women', p. 63.

<sup>382</sup> Mlle Vernet, AP, D11U3/182, File 11788, Mme Pilon, 19 October 1830, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/74, File, 6529, Mlle Laborde, 1851 Mlle Laborde, AP, D11U3/145, File 10226 and Mlle Perrin, AP, D11U3/163, File10876.

<sup>383</sup> Mlle Isbell dite Drouart, 5 September 1853, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/165, File 11095.

(*commanditaire*), a widow Mme Letellier, who invested 15,000 fr. She appears to have been an unrelated person to Mlle Drouart.<sup>384</sup> However, this set-up fund of 27,000 fr was not enough to cover the costs of an expensive rent and the money that was spent on furnishings amounting to 28,000 fr. Mlle Drouart was quickly in debt despite operating what the receiver described as quite a large business and he was critical of her appreciation of how far the start-up capital would stretch. In a different case, a widow attracted financial investment from her network of family and friends.

Mme Lecomte only entered the trade of fashion merchant after her husband died in 1850 but nonetheless she received help from friends and family to purchase a business from Mme Mouton in 1852.<sup>385</sup> On the same day she had formed an association with a male sleeping partner, M Kampf who brought capital of 40,000 fr. An agreement was signed for ten years which was a serious commitment to the business. However, Appendix 5 shows that even with this 40,000 fr, half of which was used in the purchase, the finances barely covered the various parts of the business acquired. At the time of the bankruptcy M Kampf was owed 20,000 fr and Mme Mouton was still owed 9,000 fr from the purchase of the business.<sup>386</sup> The receiver stated that the business had been expected to make good profits but the sales did not cover the overheads. Mme Lecomte had disputed the purchase price which she said had been based on profits that had not been realised. These cases show that some fashion merchants started their businesses while they were in debt and they optimistically relied on the operation of the business to give them enough profit to cover their commitments. Purchasing and developing the business was the beginning of a complex web of finance and the next step was to set up a system of credit. This will be examined in the following

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<sup>384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>385</sup> Mme Lecomte, widow, AP, D11U3/195, File 12210.

<sup>386</sup> The business agreement started on 1 July 1852. Mme Lecomte et cie, AP, D11U3/195, File 12209 and her personal bankruptcy was listed for the same day, File 12210.

section to show how important it was to be accepted and ‘embedded into a network of commercial and credit relationships’.<sup>387</sup>

Managing these complex relationships, being trusted by suppliers, and in turn being able to trust clients, was a vital part of creating a successful and solvent business.<sup>388</sup> The language used by receivers at the end of their reports to creditors in the 1850s demonstrated this by stating whether the person had any complaints against them and if they were ‘of good faith’.<sup>389</sup> Some suppliers, possibly because of the fashion merchant’s lack of reputation, were not willing to extend credit for too long and took legal action to recover the debts. For example, Mlle Catillot’s list of creditors showed that some bills and accounts had not been paid for about two years, totalling 2,102 fr.<sup>390</sup>

The significance of the system of credit was shown in the business of Mlle Colpaert in 1853. She had started as a worker (*ouvrière*), in a small apartment, but as her business grew she used the credit that was offered to her and in return was able to grant credit to her bourgeois clients. The receiver stated that in this way she could be seen as a trader implying that she had been able to develop her business and was operating in an appropriate manner. This also strengthens the idea that the network of credit was still common practice, as it had been in the eighteenth century.<sup>391</sup> In another example, Mlle Anceaume was able to purchase merchandise on

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<sup>387</sup> Natacha Coquery ‘Credit, Trust and Risk: Shopkeepers’ Bankruptcies in Eighteenth Century Paris’, in *The History of Bankruptcy: Economic, Social and Cultural Implications in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Thomas M. Safley (Routledge, 2013), p. 54.

<sup>388</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 9 and Fontaine, ‘Antonio and Shylock’, p.55. Charles Patrick Crouch, ‘The Petite Bourgeoisie of Paris during the Bourbon Restoration’, p. 131.

<sup>389</sup> One example with this language is the receiver’s report into the bankruptcy proceedings of Mlle Blin, 6 January 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/194, File 12166.

<sup>390</sup> Mlle Catillot, 7 November 1805, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/30, File 2028.

<sup>391</sup> The full quote in French is ‘Des ces premiers commencements votre debitrice n’était qu’ouvrière; mais ses affaires s’étendant elle usa du credit qui lui était offert, ce qui lui permit à son tour d’accorder credit à ses clients: c’est ainsi qu’elle à pu être considérée comme commerçante.’ Mlle Colpaert, AP, D11U3/163, File 10875.

credit when she started her business in Paris because she had been known in the business for a long time, even though she had worked mainly in Rouen.<sup>392</sup> Some merchants were regarded as irresponsible by the receiver because they abused their position in the network.

In the case of M Gey the receiver commented on the amount of credit he had accepted saying that he must have realised that eventually he would be forced to 'abuse the trust' of those who had granted him credit.<sup>393</sup> Mme Dron's business had problems because they had to set up a credit relationship with suppliers as well as clients to whom they sold for cash but also on credit. Some of these debtors were insolvent showing her poor judgement and this led to losses.<sup>394</sup> Other fashion merchants were criticised for giving credit too freely, but without any detail of the process they should have followed.

Bonnie Smith has given an example of a husband and wife who worked together in a textile business, from 1790, in the north of France. One of the tasks the woman carried out was to check on the credit of potential clients.<sup>395</sup> This demonstrated that there was a process for checking on the trustworthiness of new customers. However, judging the customer's ability and willingness to settle their bills was still a problem in the early 1900s, at least in London. The milliner, Mme Tucker Widgery, who operated from 69 Bond street, asked her new customers for 'trade references'.<sup>396</sup> Another London milliner, Mrs Peel, wrote about the risks to the business when she mentioned the 'perils in catering to society women spoiled by the practise of giving long credit'.<sup>397</sup> The importance of being able to assess the reliability of customers was stressed by the

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<sup>392</sup> Mlle Anceaume, 27 June 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3 /201 File 12468.

<sup>393</sup> M Gey, AP, D11U3/200, File 12664.

<sup>394</sup> M & Mme Dron, AP, D11U3/195 File 12220.

<sup>395</sup> Bonnie Smith, *Ladies of the Leisure Class*, p. 41.

<sup>396</sup> Fiona Clark, *Hats* (Batsford, 1982), p. 81.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid., pp. 79-80.

receiver in the cases of Mlle Rouillé and Mlle Marie who was in partnership with M Giraud.<sup>398</sup> He was critical of their ability to manage credit and judge their customer's solvency as well as how they managed their accounts. Connected to this system was when and how to collect the money owed and the balance sheets of the bankruptcy cases showed that the same categories of debt were used in the 1850s as they had been by M Beaulard in 1789.

The same categories of good, doubtful and bad to describe debts, were identified in the eighteenth-century bankruptcy records by Crowston.<sup>399</sup> Appendix 6 shows that Mme Julien's balance sheet, recorded a relatively small amount due in accounts receivable (good debts) of 650 fr however the figure of 20,000 fr was listed for M. Pollet Hocquet in 1853, and many others recorded figures of over 1,000 fr. These were considered as good debts likely to be recovered but many of the businesses also noted doubtful and bad debts (unlikely to be recovered). Of the 67 fashion merchants in the list of assets and debts, 30 per cent had doubtful debts, bad debts or losses. Mme Julien's file did not record any money owed in these categories as opposed to the 20,000 frs in bad debts listed for Marie & Giraud in 1854.<sup>400</sup> The most usual form of payment in the eighteenth century was in the form of a 'private acknowledgement of a debt' such as by bills (*effets*) or notes (*billets*). However, only six of the 67 fashion merchants spanning the dates under examination recorded these as receivables; from M and Mme Beaulard who recorded over 157, 624 livres in 1789, to Mlle Blin in 1855, who recorded 100 frs owed from bills.<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> Mlle Rouillé, AP, D11U3/ 200, File 12404 and Mlle Marie et M Giraud, AP, D11U3/189, File 12027.

<sup>399</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit Fashion*, Sex, p. 221.

<sup>400</sup> In the list of 67 fashion merchants' assets and debts 18 noted doubtful debts, bad debts or losses and 42 recorded figures for accounts receivable, Appendix 6.

<sup>401</sup> The three other fashion merchants who listed bills receivable were Mme Cokken, 1849 – bills for 464 frs; Mlle Colpaert, 1853 - bills for 4,971 -11 frs and Beausang, company 1854 – bills for 735 frs. Mme Cokken AP, D11U3, File, 9137, Mlle Colpaert, AP, D11U3/163, File 10875 and Beausang, 14 June 1854, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/180, File 11688.

The problem of collecting money owed by clients was a continuing problem for successful as well as unsuccessful business across the dates under investigation. It can be seen in Appendix 7 that 61 different clients owed money to the fashion merchant Mlle Rouillé and they were from Paris but also many different provinces of France. Other accounts show money owed from clients in a range of European countries including England (Beaulard) and Spain (Vuasse).<sup>402</sup> The receiver often wrote off many of the debts probably because of the cost in terms of time and money that would be involved in trying to recover them. In the case of Mlle Dezboroff's bankruptcy, although debts receivable amounted to 8,006-50 fr this had to be reduced by a quarter because of the difficulty of recovering the debts.<sup>403</sup>

Even when an employee could be sent to recover debts there was a risk to the proprietor because of the temptation it offered to be dishonest. In 1816 M Boissel, who had worked for LeRoy for three years, disappeared with 9,457-80 fr which was money collected as debts owed to the business.<sup>404</sup> Another case from 1850, involving an employee's dishonesty, led to violence. The male clerk to a fashion journal's manager embezzled the money owed to Mlle Julie Ribault, an illustrator, by forging her signature on a receipt. This was discovered when the woman complained to the manager that she had not been paid, and realising that his deception had been discovered, the clerk murdered Mlle Ribault and her companion Mlle Lebelle.<sup>405</sup> Even when money could be recovered it could be a costly and lengthy legal process as shown in the case against Mme

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<sup>402</sup> M and Mme Beaulard, AP, D4 B6/107, File 8104 and M Vuasse, AP, D11U3/118, File 9079 and Mme Vuasse, AP, D11U3/178, File 11579.

<sup>403</sup> Mlle Dezboroff, AP, D11U3/210, File 12805.

<sup>404</sup> LeRoy, BnF, Grand Livre de Compte, No. 4, Fr. Na. 5931.

<sup>405</sup> Julie Ribault was able to accuse M Laforcade before she died and he was imprisoned, found guilty and executed for the crime on 15 May 1851 at the Barrière St Jacques. The entire story was reported by Charles Dickens in *Household Words*. The V & A has one of Ribault's illustrations with information about the crime. <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O576710/fashion-plate-julie-ribault/>> [accessed 4 March 2015] and Charles Dickens, *Household Words*, 29 December 1850 (1851), p. 6. <<http://www.djo.org.uk/household-narrative-of-current-events/year-1851/page-6.html>> [accessed 5 March 2015]

Amelin who LeRoy pursued for 25 years. In 1826 the court finally upheld his claim for 3,155 fr for goods purchased in year IX (September 1800-1801).<sup>406</sup>

When Mlle Dezboroff lost a case where she was being pursued by one particular creditor she had to pay costs of 1,000 fr as well as having 10,000 fr added to the money she owed her creditors. The Tribunal du Commerce had refused this claim by the creditor Mme Bernage, who Mlle Dezboroff insisted had been paid, but Mme Bernage had then appealed to the *Cour Impériale* and won the case.<sup>407</sup> This demonstrates how a successful business could stand the risk of losing a case to reclaim money owed whilst for a business in financial trouble cases against them, if lost, could add to their debts and the legal costs might dissuade them from pursuing money rightly owed to them. The process of collecting money owed also depended on the fashion merchant understanding how long to wait and how many times to resend bills. The system was similar to that of the eighteenth century except that there is some evidence that bills were settled faster in the nineteenth century.

For the eighteenth-century French fashion merchants, Crowston has examined sales ledgers to assess how much of what was owed to the traders was eventually paid and how long settlement took. This examination showed that what proportion of the money outstanding was paid, varied from a low percentage of thirty-one to a high of eighty-nine per cent and the amount of time before payment was between one to three years. For example, Leveque & Boullenois charged clients 310,377 livres between January 1778 and July 1791 and were paid 276,249 livres (89 %); Giquel billed her clients for 17,771 livres between 12/1/1787 and 16/5/1788 and received

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<sup>406</sup> The judgement of the *Première Chambre de la Cour Royale de Paris* was reported in the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, 8 November 1826.

<sup>407</sup> Mlle Dezboroff, AP, D11U3/ 210, File 12805.

13,267 (75 %).<sup>408</sup> These amounts show the enormous problems faced by M and Mme Beaulard in 1789.

Appendix 6 shows that at the time of their bankruptcy they were owed more than 200,000 livres in accounts receivable as well as having doubtful and bad debts of 156,114 livres. Beaulard transferred money owed by clients from the list of good debtors to doubtful debtors after two years. He also had to reduce his expectations of being paid in full by one client, a widow, Mme Corler of Liege who was bankrupt leaving a debt of 1,554 livres 1 sol but of which Beaulard now only had hope of receiving 200 livres.<sup>409</sup> Some debts owed were by trusted clients but only part of the money owed had been received. Some merchants waited eight to nine years before placing the debt onto the ‘bad’ side.<sup>410</sup> Mlle Eloffe, who was a competitor of Beaulard and Bertin, normally sent bills to her clients quarterly or half-yearly but after the Revolution of 1789 she had tried to obtain payment more rapidly.<sup>411</sup> As a comparison, when salaries were paid they were also delivered in instalments over shorter time frames.

An employment contract for a first-hand worker *modiste* in 1854 showed that her salary would be 2,000 fr per year to be paid in three monthly instalments. Mlle Soubannier’s employers, M and Mme Blot, also met the costs for food and lodging plus the return transport costs from Paris to Georgia.<sup>412</sup> Julie Ribault was paid slightly more, 200 fr (2,400 per year) a month, for her illustrations in the *Petit Courrier des Dames* and the *Journal des Dames*. She was normally paid each month but complained when she had not been paid after

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<sup>408</sup> Clare Haru Crowston, *Credit, Fashion, Sex*, p. 219.

<sup>409</sup> M and Mme Beaulard, AP, D4 B6/107, File 8104.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>411</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 327.

<sup>412</sup> Employment contract (*Bail d’Industrie*) between M Blot and Mlle Soubannier, for work in Tiflis, Georgia, Russian Empire, for three years and 6 weeks from 15 July to 1 September 1854, Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/ LV/405, 22 July 1851.

two months.<sup>413</sup> Other ways of dealing with money owed were to threaten public humiliation and loss of reputation.

Vause has considered how debts were pursued for payment in nineteenth century Lyon. A baker sent three letters to an unemployed silk worker, Journet, demanding payment of a debt in the amount of 52 frs 25 centimes.<sup>414</sup> The last letter contained a threat to place his name on the list of bad debtors if the amount owing was not received within a week. The baker also said that a list of bad debtors would be sent to be displayed in a range of public places, including cafés. This example is a reminder of the humiliation that public disclosure of debts could bring including bankruptcy proceedings being published in newspapers. Finally, there are examples from the successful fashion merchants, LeRoy and Barenne, that show that payments could be received rapidly.

LeRoy noted some accounts as lost (*perdu*) between 1812 and 1821 but many others were marked as settled within three months.<sup>415</sup> His accounts for the wardrobe of the Empress Josephine were paid monthly although the totals were normally reduced by Napoleon I's civil service if it was a commission for a special order such as a royal trousseau. His accounts with his suppliers often showed that payment was made on the same day as the order was written.<sup>416</sup> Thirty years later there is also the example of Mme Barenne et cie who had a large operation with premises in London as well as Paris. The business supplied, *modes, robes et fleurs*, for the trousseau of Empress Eugénie at the time of her marriage to Napoléon III, in January 1853. The documents show a rapid settlement of the

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<sup>413</sup> Julie Ribault, <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O576710/fashion-plate-julie-ribault/>> [accessed 4 March 2015] and Charles Dickens, *Household Words*, p. 6. <<http://www.djo.org.uk/household-narrative-of-current-events/year-1851/page-6.html>> [accessed 5 March 2015]

<sup>414</sup> *Le Lyonnais*, 5 November 1837 cited in Erika Vause, 'The Business of Reputations; Secrecy, Shame, and Social Standing in Nineteenth Century French Debtors' and Creditors' Newspapers', *Journal of Social History*, 48:1 (2014), 47.

<sup>415</sup> LeRoy, *Grands Livres des Comptes*, No. 4 and No. 5, BnF, Fr. Na. 5931 and 5932.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid and Papers Relating to the Empress Josephine's Wardrobe, 1809, London, The National Art Library, V & A Museum (V & A), 86.UU. 1 & 2.

money owed to Mme Barenne in just over 3 weeks from the date of the invoice. The total of 4,700 fr for goods supplied on 29 January 1853 (with a small reduction from 4,750 frs) were in an invoice dated 3 February 1853 that was approved by the accounts department six days later and signed by the fashion merchant as received on 25<sup>th</sup> of the same month.<sup>417</sup>

I have shown in this section that related and unrelated investors were willing to lend money to female and male fashion merchants but that the capital was often less than was needed leading to cases where the business could not manage the debt. This under-funding could be the fault of the fashion merchant's poor calculations, the complexity of purchasing costs or show that larger investments were difficult to find. The bankrupt fashion merchants often showed a misplaced confidence in their ability to repay debt from the profits of the business and when this was not the case they were quite quickly overwhelmed by debt and the added costs of legal proceedings against them. Similarly, the bankrupt sample showed problems in managing the credit system and traders were often criticised by the receiver for giving too much credit to customers too often.

Continuity with the eighteenth century was found in the importance of reputation and trust in the system of financial management. However, I also showed change through the examples of LeRoy and Barenne which suggest that a faster and more rigorously managed circulation of finance was operating, at least for some fashion merchants, in the first half of the nineteenth century. In the last section, I will consider the factors affecting how fashion merchants selected their merchandise and targeted clients in nineteenth century Paris.

### **Business Operation: Merchandise and Clients.**

In the final section of this chapter, I will examine the factors that affected how the range of merchandise sold by fashion merchants

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<sup>417</sup> Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), O/5/2300.

changed in the first half of the nineteenth century as well as the type of clients that were targeted. I respond to two key points raised by Roche about the risk in the dependence of *marchandes de modes* on court clients in the eighteenth century but also their dynamic role in stimulating consumption.<sup>418</sup> I posit that fashion merchants retained their elite reputation that placed them above the other clothing trades for creativity and innovation. This had been particularly strong in the 1780s and was confirmed by the report for the 1867 International Exhibition which stated that fashion merchants had enjoyed 'long years of success'.<sup>419</sup>

In the first part, I will reveal how the range of production and retail of merchandise changed after the abolition of the guilds which for the first time allowed fashion merchants to combine products. Then, I explore the factors that enabled the sector for headgear to grow and dominate the trade by the 1850s. Factors were partly cultural but also due to technical developments in French straw hat production and luxury, substitute materials. Analysing pricing, I show the importance of reputation in a commercial environment that was increasingly competitive. The importance to the business of developing a regular, trustworthy and respectable, clientele was one of the problems for new businesses, which I analyse. Finally, I show the risks involved for merchants with court clients during regime changes as well as the opportunities to target middling level clients.

Sources for this chapter include information about successful merchants and 54 bankruptcy cases with inventories of their merchandise, with all but three being for the years between 1847

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<sup>418</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 327.

<sup>419</sup> The original text is, 'Autrefois, disons-nous, les maisons en vogue étaient seules maîtrises de la forme et de l'embellissement de leurs productions; souvent même, leurs conseils déterminaient le choix de la nuance d'une robe ou d'un mantelet; en un mot, les femmes élégantes n'achetaient ou ne faisaient confectionner aucun objet de toilette sans avoir consulté leur marchande de modes'. Michel Chevalier, *Exposition Universelle de 1867 à Paris. Rapports du Jury International*, 4 (Paris, 1868), p. 389.

and 1856. The early nineteenth century saw changes owing to the abolition of guilds which meant that businesses could be combined.

The successful example of a *marchand de modes* such as Louis Hippolyte LeRoy and the unsuccessful bankruptcy cases show that in the first half of the nineteenth century fashion merchants both manufactured goods on their premises and sold them as bespoke and ready-made items. If the business was small the merchant worked from home but the larger businesses operated from retail premises described as a boutique or *magasin*. The business of LeRoy had evolved from supplying headgear in the late eighteenth century to dealing with everything needed for a complete outfit. By 1804 his business combined the areas of *modes* (headgear, accessories and trimmings) with *couture* (clothing) and this was remarked upon in the memoires of Mlle Avrillon, *femme de chambre* to the Empress Josephine indicating that combining the two areas was an innovation worthy of note.<sup>420</sup> The trade card in Figure 4 from around 1820 shows that others in the *métier* had also combined these areas and, like LeRoy, were stocking the necessary materials for construction.<sup>421</sup> At this period fashion merchants not only controlled their own production but it was noted that elegant women consulted them as stylists.<sup>422</sup> By the 1850s, the evidence provided in the bankruptcy cases, and supported by the fashion journals from the 1830s, shows a move towards specialism. The merchandise from the bankruptcy cases can be seen in detail in Appendix 8 and is summarised in Table 4.

The table below shows that the merchandise was mainly for women with 11 merchants who supplied items for children and two who

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<sup>420</sup> Mlle Avrillon, *Mémoires de Mlle Avrillon, Première Femme de Chambre de l'Impératrice sur la Vie Privée de Joséphine sa Famille et sa Cour* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1969), pp. 324-25.

<sup>421</sup> Invoices for the fashion merchant L.H. LeRoy show the range of merchandise he produced and sold to the Empress Josephine and his account books provide further information about merchandise and clients. Papers relating to the Empress Josephine's wardrobe, 1809. V & A, 86.UU. 1 &2. LeRoy, Grands Livres de Comptes, No. 4 and 5 (1812-1821), BnF, Fr. Na. 5931 and 5932.

<sup>422</sup> Michel Chevalier, *Exposition Universelle de 1867 à Paris*, p. 389.

supplied items for men. This merchant, M. Beaulard, 1789, was also one of only two merchants in the sample who stocked purses and he was the only trader to sell fans.

**Table 4. Merchandise and Clients, 1789-1856.**

GENDER & MERCHANDISE	YEARS	FASHION MERCHANTS	PERCENTAGE OF 54
Women's wear Children's wear	1847-1855	11	20 %
Women's wear Lingerie (m & f)	1811-1855	8	15 %
Women's wear Men's wear	1789-1855	4	7 %

Table 4 shows that some merchants combined types of merchandise, with the most common addition being that of children's wear. The 11 fashion merchants that supplied merchandise for children can be further broken down into eight suppliers of headgear, three that had other items of clothing and accessories and one who supplied both. The headgear included *chapeaux* for boys and girls and the other items normally supplied by a linen draper, including trousers, aprons, booties and a *guimpe* which was a type of fill-in over the chest worn over or under the bodice. A soft-crowned hat (*capote*) for a child in the inventory of M & Mme Guillot, in 1851 showed that the same value, of 2 fr, was given for the hat as was given to an adult's hat showing that it probably cost the same amount to construct although the profit margin could have been different.<sup>423</sup> It seems to have been an important part of Mlle Anceaume's stock as her inventory in 1855 listed 30 children's hats (*chapeaux*).<sup>424</sup> Fashion plates of the 1840s and 1850s support this

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<sup>423</sup> The 11 fashion merchants are, in 1847, Campes, Montfort and Ronzière; in 1851, Guillot, in 1854 Gobley, Gosse and Muller and in 1855, Anceaume, Deloy, Dugardin and Meunier. For example, Mlle Anceaume, 1855, 30 children's *chapeaux*, Mme Campes, 1847, 9 children's *chapeaux*, Montfort, 1847, 1 child's Italian straw hat, Mlle Ronzière, 2 Italian straw hats for children, 2 round straw hats for children, 1847, M & Mme Guillot, 1851, a child's blue capote, untrimmed, value 2 fr

<sup>424</sup> Mlle Anceaume, AP, D11U3/201, File 12468.

vogue, often showing children with adults as dressed in a miniature form of fashionable dress in the same manner as their parents. This can be seen in Figure 5 from July 1844 where a mother is attending her eldest daughter's confirmation and the younger daughter is looking on. The mother and young child are dressed similarly and the girl is wearing a straw bonnet with a soft crown, decorated with ribbons, just slightly plainer than her mother's headgear. The inventories also described in detail the kind of materials that were kept for construction and the range of merchandise that was being produced.

Table 5 below, shows that all the fashion merchants stocked fabrics except Mlle Planat, all had trimmings such as ribbons, flowers and feathers and all except one of the fashion merchants stocked headgear.

**Table 5. Materials and Merchandise, 1789-1856.**

TYPE OF GOODS	FASHION MERCHANTS	PERCENTAGE OF 54
Textiles & trimmings	53	98 %
Headgear (adults & children)	53	98 %
Garments (adults & children)	4 wmn's 8 wmn's lingerie 3 men's 4 children's Total = 19	35 %

The only business not to have headgear listed in the inventory was Mlle Colpaert (1853) however she had all the materials needed to trim hats such as fabrics, lace, ribbons, feathers and flowers plus in the kitchen there were twelve hat stands.<sup>425</sup> There was a range of headgear listed by most of the fashion merchants including hats

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<sup>425</sup> This example demonstrates the limitations of the bankruptcy files as a source for understanding the merchandise of a fashion merchant as it shows the business at a particular time when it was failing and when the normal stock may have already have been sold. Mlle Colpaert, AP, D11U3/163, File 10875.

(*chapeaux*), *capotes*, bonnets and *coiffures* and these were constructed using all kinds of materials from straw, straw substitutes, felt, velvet, satin, fine cottons, silks, lace substitutes and lace. The range of headgear reflected the rising popularity and range of headwear available since the eighteenth century as well as the cultural appropriateness of covering the head for a respectable appearance. Sonenscher has considered that, for men, hats were part of an urban culture and identity in the eighteenth century and the wearing of headgear had similar connotations for women by the nineteenth century.<sup>426</sup>

Some fashion merchants such as Mme Julien had the items needed for the construction of headgear such as a bundle of brass wire (*laiton*) and four dozen hat crowns (*calottes*).<sup>427</sup> The inventory of Mlle Anselme described the finished headwear amongst merchandise made in the shop as twenty hats (*chapeaux*) on stands; half of them in velvet and the other half in silk satin and crepe.<sup>428</sup> However the most striking feature of the inventories, which was also supported by evidence in the balance sheets, was the presence of straw hats that had been purchased ready-made. This demonstrated a strategy that provided a fast and cheap way of producing hats that only needed to be trimmed, which would need some skill but less than those that were needed to create a bespoke hat. In the bankruptcy cases, 28 out of the 54 inventories listed straw hats as part of the merchandise with most of them using straw that was undesignated, two with Italian straw, one with Belgian straw and five of them listing some hats as untrimmed.<sup>429</sup> For example Mme Debar listed nine straw hats and one of the suppliers to whom

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<sup>426</sup> Michael Sonenscher, *The Hatters of Eighteenth Century France*, pp. 12-15.

<sup>427</sup> Mme Julien, 3 March 1851, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/134, File 9818.

<sup>428</sup> Mlle Anselme, AP, DU11/168, File 11224.

<sup>429</sup> The untrimmed straw hats were found in the inventories of Mme Pessemesse, 21 September 1849, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3, File 9051, Mlle Isabell dite Drouart, 5 September 1853, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/165, File 11095, Mme Deloy, AP, D11U3/201, File 12487. Mlle Dugardin, AP, D11U3/201, File 12465 and Mme Kraft, AP, D11U3/206, File 12655.

she owed payment (1,621 fr) was the manufacturer of straw hats and tresses, Dothée.<sup>430</sup> The balance sheet of Mlle Perrin also showed evidence of dressing hats rather than constructing them as it included two suppliers of straw hats, seven suppliers of flowers, another seven of lace, two for silk fabric and two for feathers.<sup>431</sup> The advantage of ready-made headgear was that it did not necessarily require fittings and although head sizes varied it was fairly easy and fast to alter hats, or have a range of sizes. By 1867 the growing sector for women's headgear was acknowledged as a *commerce considérable* in the report of the international exhibition.<sup>432</sup> There were several factors that raised its importance as a sector that were connected to culture, fashion, the development of new materials, and French straw hat manufacture.

One of the reasons for the technical development in women's hats was that women's hairstyles were much smaller in the nineteenth century, after the Revolution, and the abandonment of the large wigs worn during the *ancien régime*. This meant that hats and bonnets could be shaped more to fit the head and required more skill in construction. There were also technical developments in the range of straw plaits available for the making of hats and there were many styles that combined straw with other materials. Some examples of hats and straw materials are shown in Figure 6 and demonstrate the range being produced. The developments in straw hat manufacture were also evident in the French industry exhibitions and show changes that produced successful imitations of Italian straw and different qualities in straw at different prices.

The national exhibitions of the 1820s stated that the domestic production of straw hats had increased and this was shown by the figures for the company, M Dupré at Lagnieu in eastern France, whose output had grown from 8-10,000 hats in 1823 to 50-60,000 in

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<sup>430</sup> Mme Debar, AP, D11U3/147, File 10289.

<sup>431</sup> Mlle Perrin, AP, D11U3/163, File 10876.

<sup>432</sup> Michel Chevalier, *Exposition Universelle de 1867 à Paris*, p. 388.

1827.<sup>433</sup> The official inquiry of 1847/8 showed that the sector was large enough to be categorised into three parts, mounters and trimmers (*monteurs et garnisseurs*), laundresses and finishers (*blanchisseurs et apprêteurs*) and, with the highest turnover, straw plaits and embellishment (*fab. de tresses et agréments*).<sup>434</sup> Italian straw (*paille d'Italie*) came from Leghorn in Lombardy and had the highest reputation and value, prized partly because it was so fine that it did not need splitting. Traditionally straw was derived from the stalks of rice and wheat and then had to be prepared before use by being bleached and split. This was then woven into braids which were known as plaits or tresses such as spartre which was a type of woven straw. Research continued into the development of a straw or substitute for straw in France that would be as fine as the Italian variety. In 1822, the fashion journal *L'Album* had supported these developments and praised the straw hats being manufactured out of French straw by the *Maison de M Commis* saying that the hats were of the same quality as Italian straw and a great deal less expensive.<sup>435</sup> Other companies developed different methods for imitating the quality of straw from Florence such as Wild et cie who in 1843 were granted a five-year patent for straw plaiting that imitated Italian straw using hemp that was plaited on a loom and then given two finishing processes.<sup>436</sup>

Substitutes or imitations made of hemp or *paille de riz*, which was made of fine wood shavings, were increasingly available and featured in fashion journals showing their acceptability. However, *paille de riz* featured in only three of the inventories from between 1789 and 1855 showing that although this was one of the oldest forms of imitation straw it was probably being replaced by other

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<sup>433</sup> Adolphe-Jérôme Blanqui, *Expositions Nationales de Paris. Histoire de l'Exposition des Produits de l'Industrie Français en 1827* (Paris, 1827), pp.133-34.

<sup>434</sup> Chambre de Commerce, *Statistique de l'Industrie*, p. 184.

<sup>435</sup> M Commis, 6 Rue du Caire, Paris. *L'Album: Journal des Arts et des Modes*, 30 March 1822, p. 461.

<sup>436</sup> Institut National de la Propriété Industrielle (INPI), Paris. *Base Brevet d'Invention*, Wild, 1BA11943. <<http://www.inpi.fr/fr/services-et-prestations/bases-de-donnes-gratuites/base-brevets-du-19e-siecle.html>> [accessed 8 January 2015]

materials by the 1850s.<sup>437</sup> The quantities of straw hats listed in the inventories varied depending on the merchant and how much had been sold before bankruptcy proceedings had started but large amounts were shown for Beaulard (1789) who had 454 hats and for Mme Deloy (1855) with 138 hats.<sup>438</sup> These large stocks across the dates testify to the enduring popularity of straw hats, particularly in the summer as they protected the head and face from the sun whilst changing in size and shape according to the vagaries of fashion. Apart from having a function, hats and bonnets were decorative as they were elaborately trimmed in the first half of the nineteenth century as can be seen in the portraits of Figure 6. This decoration included flowers, feathers, ribbon and fabric as well as lace as a trimming or in the form of a hat veil. All these items were present in the fashion merchants' inventories. The listings also testify to the use of cheaper substitutes for lace as well as the authentic type which would enable merchants to produce merchandise that had a similarly fashionable and luxurious quality but that could be directed at different segments of the consumer market in a kind of semi-luxury.

The inventory of Mme Bonvallet in 1855 listed 300 m of imitation lace but only 200 m of Valenciennes and blonde lace.<sup>439</sup> She had both authentic and imitation lace as part of her stock of materials which indicated that she was producing merchandise at a range of costs which could increase her profit margin or, if the imitation was priced lower, it could appeal to a less wealthy customer. Mme Bonvallet's clients were mainly prostitutes (*femmes galantes*) which could have implied a professional necessity for fashionable headgear at a medium to low price. Apart from imitations, the price of other necessary decorative elements of headwear were also diminishing. The survey of 1847/8 reported that the quality of

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<sup>437</sup> M and Mme Beaulard, AP, D4 B6/107, File 8104, Mme Fournier, AP, D11U3/182 File 11774 and Mlle Anceaume, AP, D11U3/201, File 12468.

<sup>438</sup> M and Mme Beaulard, AP, D4 B6/107, File 8104 and Mme Deloy, 4 July 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris, AP, D11U3/201, File 12487.

<sup>439</sup> Mme Bonvallet, AP, D11U3/200, File 12399.

artificial flowers had vastly improved whilst at the same time there had been a great reduction in price.<sup>440</sup> Flowers had a range of uses from decorating a hat to being fashioned into an evening headdress, a bride's crown or a bouquet which could be carried as part of evening wear. For example, the inventory for Mlle Gosse listed crowns of flowers for a bride and also bouquets of flowers.<sup>441</sup> However, the price of finished clothing or headgear was not just the sum of its materials, as explained by the contemporary milliner Stephen Jones, but instead was dependent on other factors such as the reputation of the creator.<sup>442</sup> A guide for domestic economy in 1830 agreed with this assessment saying that the price was affected by the type of product, the season as well as the 'situation in life' and reputation of the maker.<sup>443</sup>

The importance of reputation was highlighted as the fashion merchants became more specialised and, as well as other *marchandes de modes*, they had to compete with hats that could be purchased in *magasin de nouveautés* and the new department stores as well as less wealthy women who had the confidence to trim and retrim their own hats. Jane Austen made two references to trimming hats in her novel *Pride and Prejudice*, firstly when Elizabeth Bennet was introduced to the reader, whilst trimming a hat at home, and later when Lydia Bennet has purchased a hat. Lydia and Kitty intended to treat their elder sisters to lunch but had spent their money.

you must lend us the money, for we have just spent  
hours at the shop out there [...] I have bought this  
bonnet. I do not think it is very pretty; but I thought I

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<sup>440</sup> Chambre de Commerce, *Statistique de l'Industrie*, p. 179.

<sup>441</sup> Mlle Gosse, 12 October 1854, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/187, File 11967.

<sup>442</sup> In the 1960s an American client complained about the \$100 bill for her turban. The famous milliner, Mr John, unravelled the turban and said, 'Madam, the materials are free'. Stephen Jones in, Oriole Cullen, *Hats: An Anthology by Stephen Jones* (V & A Publishing, 2009), p.14.

<sup>443</sup> M.U. Sears, *The Female Encyclopaedia of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge: Comprising every Branch of Domestic Economy* (London: W.J. Sears, 1830), p. 422.

might as well buy it as not. I shall pull it to pieces as soon as I get home, and see if I can make it up any better.<sup>444</sup>

Lydia made an impulse purchase for which she paid cash which indicates that there was no necessity to develop a relationship with the fashion merchant because credit was not involved in the transaction. However, Lydia says that she spent hours choosing a bonnet and this amount of time spent on the premises before making a decision also links it to a form of leisure activity. This fictional example of the acquisition of a ready-made hat can be contrasted with a real incident in 1829 that shows the importance of a bespoke order from a fashion merchant with a reputation.

In Paris, the Irish writer Lady Morgan was ridiculed by a French friend when she suggested that buying a ready-made hat would be acceptable to wear in good society. Instead, the French woman told her that it was imperative to make an appointment with the fashion merchant, Herbaut, and *couturière*, Victorine. Lady Morgan needed their style and furthermore the appointment would be at the convenience of the two merchants and not her own.<sup>445</sup> This shows that specialisation linked to reputation operated in the clothing trades in Paris by 1829 and this incident demonstrates the different status between ready-made, fixed price hats and bespoke hats. There is some continuity between the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century as the importance of high level fashionable head gear was established by the Revolution. It was a way of stimulating demand by linking headgear to quick changing fashions.

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<sup>444</sup> Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 1813, (Everyman's Library, repr. 1991), p. 4 and p. 206.

<sup>445</sup> 'Stop and buy a bonnet! Ah! *J'en mourirai* [...] so you think, that to be well dressed, one has only to stop and buy a bonnet [...] I will go to Victorine [*couturière*] and Herbaut [*marchand de modes*], and see what can be done for you [...] To be sure I will get their earliest day and hour; and *faire inscrire votre nom, sur leur livre rouge* [...] It would be impossible for you to go to a diplomatic ball, without being *habillée par Victorine et berretée par Herbault*. *Il vous faut leur cachet.*' Lady Morgan, *Lady Morgan in Paris* (London, 1829), pp. 242-4.

For example, in 1789 the Irish press reported on French fashions focusing on hats and *coiffures* as they were thought to have more novelty than garments.<sup>446</sup> At the time Beaulard was paid a monthly retainer by Mme Matignon to send her a new headdress every day.<sup>447</sup> Reputation continued to be linked to innovation and a merchant's particular design of headgear. In 1835, the fashion journal *Le Follet* stated that society women understood the individual styles of different *marchandes de modes*.<sup>448</sup> This also emphasised that there were many well-known fashion merchants by this date who had relationships with particular clientele. Visitors would not necessarily have the same service as regular customers and this was shown when Miss Berry visited the boutique of LeRoy in 1802. She entered the shop with a friend, Mrs Damer, but was not impressed by the merchandise they were shown.

if she [Mme LeRoy] had something pretty she treated us as foreigners and did not show us anything I would like to wear.<sup>449</sup>

Miss Berry felt that they were not treated as valued customers although Mrs Damer did make a purchase of a bespoke hat based on one in the shop that was decorated in lace and cost 62 louis. However, the version ordered was in a simpler form and much less expensive at 2 louis. This kind of occasional purchase did not necessarily make a large contribution to the turnover of a fashion merchant although it might have other benefits such as promoting the maker's merchandise and reputation in another country.<sup>450</sup> The importance of developing a regular clientele or *achalandage* is shown by the value attached to that list and its acquisition by would-be fashion merchants. A commercial dictionary of 1855 described it as the establishment of a mutually advantageous, complex

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<sup>446</sup> Evening Herald, Dublin, 9 January 1789, in Macushla Baudis, 'Smoaking Hot with Fashion from Paris': The Consumption of French Fashion in Eighteenth Century Ireland', *Costume*, 48:2 (2014), 153.

<sup>447</sup> Anny Latour, *The Kings of Fashion*, pp.17-18.

<sup>448</sup> *Le Follet*, 4 October 1835, p. 106.

<sup>449</sup> *Voyages de Miss Berry*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>450</sup> Ibid.

relationship between sellers and purchasers.<sup>451</sup> A mutually advantageous relationship implies that a successful client list would include those that at least made purchases that they needed or desired regularly as well as being solvent and willing to settle their accounts promptly. It might also be defined as having clients that were willing and able to make expensive regular purchases and who had the attributes and social standing to showcase the merchandise amongst other groups of potential clients. The quality of the clientele was commented on by the receiver in the bankruptcy cases and Mlle Blin's clientele was described as badly composed (*mal composée*). He further observed that this was often the case at the beginning of a business showing that it took time and effort to develop a regular clientele.<sup>452</sup>

Apart from the problem for new businesses, regular customers were not always loyal and Mlle Dugardin was said to have lost her clients due to her great age (61). This might have been a reference to a deterioration in the quality of her merchandise due to poor eyesight or arthritic fingers affecting her skills or even her lack of attention to changing fashions.<sup>453</sup> At the higher end of the hierarchy of merchants, LeRoy's clients were loyal even after regime changes and they were mainly from the royal and aristocratic groups of Europe. There were also some customers from other social levels with the simple title of Monsieur, Madame or Mademoiselle.

The middling level clients included a male doctor and stage performers such as the Italian opera singer Madame Grassini and French actresses such as Mlle Mars. Although both clothing and headgear was supplied their purchases were less frequent and the

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<sup>451</sup> *Encyclopédie du Commerçant. Dictionnaire du Commerce des Marchandises Contenant tout ce qui Concerne le Commerce de Terre et de Mer*, vol. 1 (Paris: Hachette, 1855), p. 8.

<sup>452</sup> Mlle Blin, AP, D11U3/194, File 12166,

<sup>453</sup> Mlle Dugardin, 26 June 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/201, File12465.

items were less expensive than those of the more elite clients.<sup>454</sup> The detailed accounts for LeRoy's business stop when he semi-retired in 1821 but it can be seen that in 1830 when LeRoy's former associate Mme Pilon started bankruptcy proceedings her clientele was still dominated by the same court clients. However, as well as advantages to profits and reputation there were risks to the business when regimes fell from power as they did in 1789, 1814, 1830 and 1848.

LeRoy's business was under threat in 1814 with the fall of Napoleon I because of his association with that court but his reputation, as the leading fashion merchant in Europe, secured him the business of the women at the court of Louis XVIII. However other merchants who supplied later regimes were not able to survive when this changed and the receiver commented on this as a factor in the bankruptcies of Mme Pilon and Mlle Dezboroff. The former lost clients from the court of Charles X (1830) and the latter from that of Louis Philippe (1848). The merchandise in their inventories was of high quality and for Mme Pilon included garments such as court dresses and 23 embroidery samples as well as 60 finished items of *modes*, probably hats (*articles de modes confectionnée*).<sup>455</sup> Mlle Dezboroff's inventory did not record an extensive amount of merchandise but there was no imitation lace just lace designated as blonde or black and there were 14 velvet hats and 15 *coiffures* made of blonde lace and flowers.<sup>456</sup> Other examples provided evidence for a growth in a middling level market.

In the early nineteenth century bourgeois and middling level clients were able to purchase ready-made hats from the boutiques of fashion merchants which were more affordable and probably more appropriate for their lifestyles than the more expensive elaborate bespoke products which may have been purchased less frequently.

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<sup>454</sup> LeRoy, Grands Livres de Comptes, No. 4 and No. 5, BnF. Fr. N.a. 5931 and 5932.

<sup>455</sup> Mme Pilon, AP, D11U3/74, File, 6529.

<sup>456</sup> Mlle Dezboroff, AP, D11U3/210, File 12805.

Fashion writing showed dismay over the inclusion of items for lower social levels which may be because it was a new departure for fashion merchants. In the early 1820s the fashionable merchant Mme Mure was criticised for making the cock's feathers, that she had created a vogue for, 'within reach of all grades of society by her low prices'.<sup>457</sup> By the 1850s there was an expansion of headgear available to purchase ready-made and also some ready-made outer garments were available that were directed at the middling market. Historians have associated the production and sales of mantles, pelisses and cloaks with the *magasin de nouveautés* but, as in the eighteenth century, they remained part of some fashion merchants' products. Parisian companies were praised in the industry exhibitions for this outerwear and so this may have stimulated their production. They required hand-sewing skills as sewing machines were not used commercially until the 1870s even though the first machine had been invented in 1829.<sup>458</sup>

The company Beausang sold these ready-made outer garments as well as *basquine bodices*.<sup>459</sup> Figure 7 shows an example of a surviving *basquine* and some mantles from the 1840s to 1850s demonstrating that this garment was loose in form in order to rest over a fashionably ample skirt which meant that it would not need to be fitted on the client. It was therefore suitable for construction in large quantities to be sold ready-made. The jacket bodice however was fitted at the waist and would normally be boned, therefore needing a fitting with the customer so this was probably a sample to encourage orders. The examples listed in the inventory were made

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<sup>457</sup> The fashion journal *L'Album* in 1821 advertised Mme Mure's business under the editorial about fashion, 'Modes', in *L'Album. Journal des Arts, des Modes et des Théâtres*, 5<sup>th</sup> book vol.1 (Paris, 1821), p. 104. The criticism by a journal is cited in Anny Latour, *The Kings of Fashion*, p. 50.

<sup>458</sup> Frenchman, Barthélémy Thimonnier invented the first machine that could stitch with thread in 1829, the *cousu-brodeuse*. This became the focus of protests by tailors in 1831. From the 1870s the new American and English machines were more dominant than the French verions, Judith G. Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work*, pp. 47-9, 76-81.

<sup>459</sup> Beausang et cie, 14 June 1854, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/180, File 11688.

of lightweight fabrics, pink tulle, black lace and taffeta. They demonstrated a range of effects created by different colours and textures and were valued differently at 18 fr, 25 fr and 30 fr respectively.<sup>460</sup> There were no skirts listed to be worn with these bodices and therefore it is possible that they were made as display models in order to promote the sale of the garment, as a bespoke item, when the client would discuss the colours and materials to be used. The company also held large stocks of materials from the heavy winter fabric, velvet, to lighter-weight satin, silk and tulle along with more than 400 m of braid, ribbon and lace - some of which was listed as imitation whilst other pieces were described as guipure. This demonstrates a strategy to target the middle-level market and to be part of the trend to offer some ready-made garments to customers in competition with other clothing suppliers. The Beausang's approach to business demonstrated their knowledge of an increasing popularity for ready-made items which may have carried risks of over-production but specialising in headgear also had problems because of the link to fashion.

For products that were linked to trends and seasons there would be a finite amount of time to sell merchandise before it began to look faded, soiled or, if too much time lapsed, old-fashioned. One of the reasons given for the bankruptcy of Mme Fournier was that she had sustained losses as a result of the depreciation in her merchandise when production outstripped demand during a fall in trade generally, between 1852 and 1854.<sup>461</sup> A similar problem was faced by the company Julien and Izambard as their inventory included 21 packets of faded flowers and 24 hats that had faded (*chapeaux fanés*).<sup>462</sup> This company also faced difficulties when their products did not sell in the season that they were created for. They could not sell their stock in Paris during the summer which was the dead season commercially because wealthy clients left the heat of the city and

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<sup>460</sup> Ibid.

<sup>461</sup> Mme Fournier, AP, D11U3/182, File 11774.

<sup>462</sup>Julien and Izambard, AP, D11U3/179, File 11646.

spent time at country estates or at coastal resorts. Instead Julien and Izambard tried to sell this merchandise in the resort of Boulogne-sur-Mer as they thought it would be crowded with foreign visitors. Possibly they thought these clients would be less aware of fashion and quality than the Parisian clients. However, this strategy was not successful so perhaps the merchandise was of too poor a quality. In a final example ten straw hats in Mme Muller's merchandise were described as faded and six hats of different fabrics and colours were described as having lost their freshness to the point that they were unsaleable.<sup>463</sup> These last examples show that understanding the consumer market was vital and overproduction meant financial loss that could be a factor in business failure.

In this section, I demonstrated that in the first quarter of the nineteenth century the free market allowed new combinations of merchandise to be produced and sold by fashion merchants, particularly *couture* and *modes* together. Then, in another response to a changed sector the businesses altered so that by the 1840s many were concentrating on headgear for different levels of consumers. A growing market of clients, new materials and lower priced textiles and decorations made this a more viable practice than it had been at the beginning of the century and cheaper goods could now still be seen as fashionable and luxurious. Many fashion merchants were less dependent on court clients, that could cause losses if the regime changed, and merchants were able to spread their risk by offering merchandise that was fashionable semi-luxury to middle level customers as well as retaining elite clients. Their trade was still considered as dynamic and able to stimulate consumption by using fashion, luxury and the reputation of the particular fashion merchant.

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<sup>463</sup> Mme Muller, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/189, File 12028.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have investigated issues around change or continuity in the *métier* of the *marchande de modes* between 1795 and 1855, in Paris, by focusing on three main areas which were pathways, then finance and lastly merchandise and clients. In the first section, I revealed a range of pathways towards the trade of fashion merchant which was differentiated by gender, family and social background. M and Mme Corot were an example of a successful, lower middle level family that were upwardly mobile and they offered mentoring and support to their daughter and her husband when the business was ceded to them. Although not a guarantee of success, this highlighted the risk of failure for those in the bankruptcy sample who had not received the same advantages. Significantly, despite the presence of men in the trade, I found that women's businesses often meant that they led the family economy and that their husbands were helpers. Even when a man was the proprietor he was reliant to some extent on the skills and knowledge of his wife, the female manager and workforce. Most of the fashion merchants studied had some relevant training and experience although this was not always very long or very wide-ranging, probably less than in the old guild controlled system. The beginning of professional schools was a reaction to the need for fairly fast training in creative, technical and business skills for a labour force that political groups were increasingly concerned with in the 1840s. In the second section about finance I found that those merchants that failed showed limitations in their skills and experience. They lacked sufficient capital and at times underestimated the profit necessary to even cover their overheads.

Purchasing a business in instalments with very little paid upfront could be seen as naïve or reckless and perhaps surprising that there seemed to be no lack of offers of small loans. This could be owing to the perceived buoyancy in this area of clothing production which was then unexpectedly affected by the changes in regimes and

economic crises. The system of credit and management of debt appeared to be similar to that of the eighteenth century although there was some evidence, through the businesses of LeRoy and Barenne, that suggested shorter time periods before the settlement of accounts were becoming more common. The last section on merchandise and clients revealed several major changes, from post-guild combinations of merchandise, such as *modes* and *couture* and *modes* and *lingères* until mainly specialising in headgear by the 1850s. This was explained partly by the reduced costs of materials and the increased quality and availability of ready-made straw hats plus new imitation materials for straw and lace in particular. The inventories showed a wide range of materials with some merchants stocking imitation lace as well as authentic lace showing flexibility in being able to produce luxury items for different levels of clients.

I found that the *métier* developed and changed from the late eighteenth century responding to the challenges and opportunities of the period. Fashion merchants continued to play a dynamic role in the production and consumption of clothing by offering a range of products to an increasingly varied consumer base. In the next chapter, I will consider how the target market of consumers was important in the choice of location and premises of the *marchande de modes*.

### **Chapter 3. Fashion Merchants and Location: The Changing Dynamics of Urban Space in Paris, 1795 to 1855.**

Great cities are like electric transformers. They create tension, accelerate the pace of change and constantly recharge human life.<sup>464</sup>

Braudel described vividly the power of a city and in this chapter my main argument is that developments to, and associations with, Paris as a capital were important factors in the commercial status that fashion merchants were able to achieve. It also affected how they managed their businesses in a variety of ways that I will investigate. In a response to the position taken by Mansel, that emphasised Paris as a court city, I will posit that before Napoleon III's empire, the capital became increasingly identified as a European centre of fashion, culture, and sociability that transcended the eighteenth-century association of these features as mainly linked to the court.<sup>465</sup> Although between 1795 and 1855 there were several royal courts and two empires, I will show that the capital rather than the court was the site where all social levels of fashion merchants' clients could display their status, knowledge of fashion, and taste.

With an increasing sector of the population being engaged in presenting a fashionable appearance, I will demonstrate that there was a growth in commercial and leisure spaces for the middling level female and male customer but that these also included the court and financial elite. Looking at fashion merchants and their clients, I will show how their physical proximity, status and relationships were affected by a hierarchy that maintained Old Regime deference and protected elite clients' privacy. However, I challenge the stress that historians such as Miller, Williams, Nord and Olsen have placed on the later nineteenth century changes to

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<sup>464</sup> Ferdinand Braudel cited in A. Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*, p. 22

<sup>465</sup> Mansel, Philip, 'Paris, Court City of the Nineteenth Century', *The Court Historian* (2008) <<http://cour-de-france.fr/article340.html>>[accessed 18 June 2014].

transport, urban planning by Haussmann and the department store era implying that Paris did not experience change that aided commerce, leisure and circulation before that date.<sup>466</sup> I will prove these points by examining change to the infrastructure after the Revolution with the creation of new roads like the Rue de Rivoli and the growth in the construction of pedestrian friendly commercial passages. In some cases, development was based on improving eighteenth century urban plans, as for the Boulevards and the Palais Royal showing the dynamism of the city before 1855. Urban spaces for leisure and commerce were not segregated by gender and the increased visibility of women in public may have helped build the concept of 'La Parisienne' as a female type associated with fashion. Although I do not focus on individual women in this chapter, I assert that the increasing sites for display offered the opportunity for this ideal to develop outside of the parameters of the court, and their celebrity female leaders. The Parisienne was developing as superior to the image of the provincial or foreign woman who had less access to the culture and fashion authority of the capital.<sup>467</sup> After the Revolution, a return to a visible, public sociability in Paris was noted by Napoleon Bonaparte a few months before the establishment of the Directory government in November of 1795.

Here in Paris, luxury, enjoyment, and the arts are resuming their sway in surprising fashion [...] Smart carriages and fashionably dressed people are seen about again: they have the air of waking up after a long

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<sup>466</sup> Philip G. Nord, *Paris Shopkeepers*, Chapter 2, Grand Magasins and Small Shops, pp. 60-99 and Chapter 3, Hausmannization, pp. 100-42. Michael B. Miller, *The Bon Marché: Bourgeois Culture and the Department Store*, p. 19. Donald J. Olsen, *The City as a Work of Art*, p. 44. Although Olsen does acknowledge the pre-Hausmann move to the west and Napoleon I's improvements to the city. Ibid., pp.144-5. Rosalind H. Williams, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth Century France*, p. 11.

<sup>467</sup> Agnès Rocamora, *Fashioning the City: Paris, Fashion and the Media* (I.B. Taurus, 2009), pp. 109-25. Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion: A Cultural History* (Berg, 1999), pp. 73-75.

dream, and forgetting that they ever ceased to display themselves.<sup>468</sup>

It suggests continuity with the *ancien régime* when Paris had been the European capital most associated with luxury and fashion.

During the Directory, contemporaries noticed an increasing number of fashion merchants on the streets of Paris along with other retail providers of fashionable and luxurious goods.<sup>469</sup> In the nineteenth century far from being a static space, there were growing numbers of people and vehicles in Paris and the city saw changes in modes of transport like the development of the railway system. Mansel has argued that despite the Revolutions of the nineteenth century Paris could still be described as a court city, for a variety of reasons, including the visual impact of the various building programmes undertaken by different regimes from monuments to aristocratic mansions.<sup>470</sup> Whilst not disagreeing with the positive nature of these changes, Paris was also a city that increasingly offered locations for the display of fashionable dress associated with the *bourgeoisie*. These areas, included the Tivoli, Tuilleries and Luxembourg gardens, the northern Boulevards, the Bois de Boulogne, Longchamps and the many theatres. I will discuss how these developments helped to shape the shopping areas that existed or were constructed and then chosen by Parisian fashion merchants.

In the first section of this chapter I will argue that significant developments and improvements to Paris, as a cultured commercial

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<sup>468</sup> This quote is taken from a letter written by Napoleon to his brother Joseph on 12 July 1795. *Napoleon's Letters*, ed. by J. M. Thompson (London: Dent, 1954), p. 43. Jones has discussed how Paris in the period of the eighteenth century enlightenment was seen as a public sphere for fashionable display and social interaction, Colin Jones, *The Smile Revolution*, pp. 92-93. Jones discusses the return of luxury 'after Thermidor both in Paris and other big cities' in, Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, pp. 541-43.

<sup>469</sup> The publications on the luxury industries in Paris include *Luxury Trades and Consumerism in Ancien Régime* ed. by Robert Fox and Anthony Turner (Paris: Ashgate, 1998). Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*. Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion*. Natacha Coquery, 'Shopping Streets in Eighteenth Century Paris'. Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing la Mode*.

<sup>470</sup> Philip Mansel, 'Paris, Court City of the Nineteenth Century'.

city, were made before Hausmann's plans of the late nineteenth century. I will reveal how this related to the business of fashion merchants and their proximity to their clientele along with how class and transport developments impacted on the circulation of people, their interaction with each other and the movement of goods. I will also examine what this flow into and out of the city reveals about reputation and lifestyle. Secondly, I will focus on what constituted a 'good location' and how this changed for fashion merchants in a post-Revolutionary capital. Factors for change, I discover, were the fashionable status of areas, not necessarily in proximity to the court, to an expansion in the type of premises that were available; from aristocratic mansions (*hôtels particuliers*) to new colonnaded streets, arcades and galleries. Finally, in the last section I will show that a major change also took place in the way that premises were identified, from signs to numbers, names and facades. Examining the interior of the premises will demonstrate how choosing the display, furniture and fittings were part of the skills needed by successful fashion merchants. They constructed an identity for the business showing their commercial knowledge of appropriate levels of luxury and privacy linked to the social level of the customer.

### **Infrastructure: Heritage and New Builds.**

In this first section, I will begin by briefly considering how Paris developed as a capital under the changing regimes, after the Revolution and before Hausmann's plans under Napoleon III's empire. The changing urban and commercial landscape affected the lifestyle and reputation of *marchandes de modes* working in the capital. It was an important factor in choosing a location and impacted on the relationship with clients. To examine the relationship between the capital, the fashion merchants and their clients I will consider the flow of people and goods into and out of the city for different impulses. I show how geographical proximity and social hierarchy also defined these relationships.

In the nineteenth century Paris developed as a fashionable, sophisticated European centre. Rocamora has examined the relationship that the city has developed with fashion and the media, as ‘a city of pleasure’ distinct from the provinces.<sup>471</sup> During the nineteenth century a powerful mythology about the dynamism of the city developed which provided a kind of theatre for display.

The *flâneur* was the sentient ambler through urban space. He – for the *flâneuse* was a rarity – was a characteristic figure of early nineteenth century culture. Walking the streets of the city, experiencing the distinctive anonymity of the urban crowd, drinking in appearances.<sup>472</sup>

Whilst the female *flâneuse* was seen as unusual, Rocamora has looked at the female ‘types’ that came to be identified with Paris, by the nineteenth century, as *la passante* (the female passer-by) and *la Parisienne* (the Parisian woman).<sup>473</sup> Although Rocamora focuses mainly on the period from the 1860s the ideas connected to gender roles about what she calls ‘the game of the gaze directed at others or received by them’ is relevant to this investigation as the physical sites for these behaviours existed and were developing in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>474</sup> In order to understand the urban developments in Paris the maps in Figure 8 show how the river Seine divided the city and how its dimensions altered.

Paris developed and grew in size from Celtic settlements around 5,000 BC on the Right Bank and after the Roman conquest on and around Île de la Cité. Then areas were developed on both sides of the River Seine: to the south, the Left Bank and to the north, the Right Bank. The wall of Philip Augustus (272 hectares) which had 12 gates was built between 1190 and 1215 and included his royal

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<sup>471</sup> Agnès Rocamora, *Fashioning the City*, p.18.

<sup>472</sup> Jones discussed the nineteenth century literary genre of *physiognomie* and *physiologie* as in part the legacy of the eighteenth century observational writing of Louis Sebastian Mercier, Colin Jones, *Paris*, pp. 319-20.

<sup>473</sup> The *Parisienne* and the *passante* are examined as female types from the 1860s. Agnès Rocamora, *Fashioning the City*, chapters 5 and 6, pp. 86-156.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid., p. 128.

palace the Louvre at the eastern limit on the Right bank. Charles V's defensive wall (439 hectares) was built between 1365 and 1390 encircling more space on the Right bank where most of the population lived. In the seventeenth century, the *Fossés Jaune* ramparts (Yellow Ditches, as it was the colour of the soil) were constructed (567 hectares) from 1634 to 1635 in order to protect the prestigious new town houses that were built for the wealthy elite.<sup>475</sup> These were located in the Marais near the Place Royale (today Place de Vosges), further west on the Right Bank and on the Left Bank in the area of the Faubourg Saint Germain. These defences included Faubourg Saint Honoré to the west and Faubourg Montmartre to the north.<sup>476</sup> Many large town houses were built near the palace of the Louvre including a residence for Cardinal Richelieu (later the Palais Royal) and around the Rue de Richelieu which ran north to south opposite the Louvre and at the side of the Cardinal's palace. Crossing this street from east to west were the streets Rue St Honoré to the south and the rue des Petit Champs to the north.<sup>477</sup> Under King Louis XVI, between 1784 and 1787, a new customs barrier, the Farmers General Wall, was built (24 km long and 2 m high) initially with expensive neo-classical toll houses. This was created with the aim of protecting commerce that was being affected by fraud and smuggled goods. However, it was very unpopular and in 1841 King Louis Philippe's government with his minister Adolphe Thiers decided to build a new wall, known as the Thiers fortifications.

This defensive wall was built between 1841 and 1846 and was between 1 and 3 km outside the existing city limits which stimulated development between the Farmers General Wall and the borders of the department of the Seine. There were 45 gates with entry points for railways and canals and there was a paved road generally on the

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<sup>475</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, pp. 163-64.

<sup>476</sup> The term Faubourg rather than Rue had signified the outlying extension of a road considered to be in the suburbs until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when they became part of the city. Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 561.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

site of the Boulevards des Maréchoux within the current ring-road circling the city, Boulevard Périphérique.<sup>478</sup> As the city grew extensive building was carried out particularly from the seventeenth century with palace-like architecture of private mansions (*hôtel particuliers*) changing the visual impact of the city. By 1700, the aristocracy were moving from the Marais in the east towards the centre and to the Faubourg Saint Germain on the Left Bank. Despite the presence of the court outside Paris, at the Palace of Versailles, the capital continued to grow with building speculation between 1760 and 1790 leading to a property boom, particularly in the north and north-western parts of the city, around Rue de la Chausée d'Antin (today's 9<sup>th</sup> arrondissement). From the mid-1790s this would become a fashionable location for the new wealthy elite as well as fashion merchants. During the Revolution and the 1790s only temporary structures for republican celebrations were created until the later regimes built monuments to glorify their reigns.<sup>479</sup>

Figure 9 shows two maps of Paris in 1789 and 1826 with the river, the two islands, the main palaces, monuments and gardens on the Left Bank (south) and Right Bank (north). Emperor Napoleon I stated that he wanted to 'make Paris the most beautiful city in the world'.<sup>480</sup> Along with his architects, Percier and Fontaine, the emperor favoured the fashionable Neo-classical style using the classical columns and motifs of ancient Greece and Rome. Napoleon planned and carried out some of his grand ideas for Paris which included monuments to his military victories like the triumphal arch at the top of the Champs Elysées and the column in Place Vendôme as well as the re-design of the Place Louis XV (now Place de la Concorde) and the church of the Madeleine in 1807.<sup>481</sup> Visitors, such as Lady Morgan, commented on these improvements to the city showing how significant they were to the attractions of the

<sup>478</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, pp. 335-37.

<sup>479</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 334. Anthony Sutcliffe, *Paris: An Architectural History*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>480</sup> Anthony Sutcliffe, *Paris*, p. 69.

<sup>481</sup> The architect of this building in the neo-classical style was Pierre Vignon. Ibid.

capital. Importantly, the Irish peer also thought changes were connected to the growing importance of society's third estate.<sup>482</sup> Parisians had for a long time used the city for leisure and shopping but previously these sites had been connected to the court.

As early as 1700 to the west of the Tuilleries gardens following the River Seine, wealthy Parisians paraded by coach, exchanged news, danced and took refreshment in the mile-long *Cours (Cours de la Reine)*.<sup>483</sup> They also went to promenade, socialise and shop in the *Galerie du Palais* which was based in the original royal palace on Île de la Cité, and site of the most important law court, the *Parlement de Paris*. The palace's vast hall had been rebuilt after a fire in 1618 and surrounding galleries included stalls selling all kinds of fashionable and luxurious items from ribbons, purses and mirrors to the lace collars seen in the illustration by Abraham Bosse in Figure 10.<sup>484</sup> In the 1690s a British visitor commented that

there are no people more fond of coming together, to see or be seen' and both the Galerie du Palais and the Cour de la Reine, along with the theatres, gardens and boulevards, provided a '*théâtre de l'univers*'.<sup>485</sup>

This combination of business and leisure activities was similar to that provided in the 1780s by the Palais Royal which reveals continuity in the use of space for commerce, leisure and social exchange.

Cold, worn-out, and dead indeed must the heart be that does not awaken to some throb of pleasure when Paris, after long absence, comes again in sight! For though a throne has been overturned, the Tuilleries still remain;

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<sup>482</sup> Lady Morgan, *Lady Morgan in Paris*, 1829, I, p. 53.

<sup>483</sup> Mark Girouard, *Cities and People: A Social and Architectural History* (Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 166-67.

<sup>484</sup> There was also a play based here and called *La Galerie du Palais* written by Pierre Corneille in 1632.

<sup>485</sup> Martin Lister, *A Journey to Paris in 1698*, (London, 1699) cited in Mark Girouard, *Cities and People*, p. 170.

[...] the Boulevards, with their matchless aspect of eternal holiday, are still the same.<sup>486</sup>

Visitors commented on the mix of attractions in Paris which did not depend on links to any one regime, or court. Frances Trollope visited Paris in 1835, during Louis-Philippe's reign, and noted the loss of the Bourbon dynasty's white flag and *fleur de lys* motif after the Revolution of 1830.<sup>487</sup> The atmosphere and enjoyment of the boulevards contrasted with the aspects of the city that were in need of improvement, including the main shopping streets. These were often described as 'narrow, muddy, smelly and overcrowded' in contrast to London where more streets had pavements for the comfort and security of pedestrians.<sup>488</sup> Commenting on Paris mud was not new as, in the eighteenth century, Mercier advised readers that mud had been incorporated into fashion as 'the latest colour'.<sup>489</sup> This shows how fashion merchants cleverly incorporated aspects of the city into the branding of their merchandise. In 1815 a visitor described the experience of navigating the streets as a pedestrian.

narrow streets with a gutter in the middle filled with mud and water, without any pavement for pedestrians who for shelter from carriages and horses must fly between the projecting stones about two feet high placed against the fronts of the houses.<sup>490</sup>

Figure 11 shows the painting by Boilly called *The Crossing (L'Averse)* which illustrates this problem when a fashionably dressed

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<sup>486</sup> Frances Trollope (1779-1863) was a writer and novelist who lived in England and America and she wrote about her experiences travelling in Europe and America. Her son Anthony also became a successful novelist. Frances Milton Trollope, *Paris and the Parisians in 1836*, (London: Richard Bentley, 1836), I, pp. 4-5.

<sup>487</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>488</sup> Marie Gillet, 'Innovation and Tradition in the Shopping Landscape of Paris', p. 184.

<sup>489</sup> Louis Sébastien Mercier, *Le Tableau de Paris*, (Paris. 1782-88) and *Le Nouveau Paris* (1798) cited in Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion*, p. 15. What was called in a guidebook 'an irregular and confused manner of driving' was helped in 1851 when the police created the rule of driving on the right-hand side of the road. Nicolas Papayanis, *Horse-Drawn Cabs*, p. 37.

<sup>490</sup> Fatalities in traffic accidents were about 20 per year including the son of King Louis Philippe who was killed in a carriage accident in 1842. Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 313. 'A Trip to Paris in August and September 1815', in *The New Monthly Magazine*, 29.5, 1 June 1816, p. 385.

family are caught in the rain and have to cross a street that is becoming muddy possibly churned up by the passage of carriages. The mud of a wet day also became dust on a hot summer's day showing some of the discomfort of city life.

In Paris the want of such a pavement [...] prevents the well dressed woman from venturing on foot into these streets.<sup>491</sup>

Mud also was thrown against the shop windows by passing carriages that drove too close.<sup>492</sup> A lack of pavement emphasised the status of those that could afford to arrive at the boutique of a

*marchande de modes* by carriage as the other image, from the late eighteenth century, in Figure 11 shows. The street has no pavements, like the Rue de Richelieu, and the carriage is outside allowing the passenger to descend directly into the boutique.

Although many streets were narrow, according to a visitor in 1815, after the fall of Napoleon I, the Rue St Honoré, Rue St Denis and Rue St Martin were 'tolerably wide'.<sup>493</sup> Great improvements took place from this period so that by 1822 there were 267 m of pavement. Private carriages were only possible for the wealthy, therefore extending pavements encouraged the presence of pedestrians and shoppers on the streets.<sup>494</sup> Frances Trollope noted these improvements in the 1830s.

It is true that the old streets are not quite wide enough to admit such enormous esplanades on each side as Regent and Oxford Streets; [...] a dozen years ago [...] whoever remembers what it was to walk in Paris then, will bless with an humble and grateful spirit the dear little pavement which, with the exception of necessary intervals to admit of an approach to the *portes-cochère* of

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<sup>491</sup> 'A Trip to Paris in [...] 1815', p. 387.

<sup>492</sup> *A Guide to Paris* (London, 1814), p. 127. Macadam was not used in road construction until 1849. Château d'Espeyran, *Voyages et Déplacements* (Archives de France, 2012), p. 12.

<http://C:/Users/my%20laptop/Documents/Articles%20on%20transport/Voyages-et-deplacements-by%20Chateau%20d'Espeyran%20archives%20de%20france%20pdf.pdf>.

[accessed 2 May 2015]

<sup>493</sup> 'A Trip to Paris [...] 1815', p. 385.

<sup>494</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 327.

the various *hôtels*, and a few short intervals beside, which appear to have been passed over and forgotten, borders most of the principal streets of Paris now.<sup>495</sup>

Trollope also noted areas that still needed work, such as the lack of drainage that produced a ‘muddy lake’ for several days in the Place de Louis XV (Place de la Concorde).<sup>496</sup> When an east wind blew Parisians also had to contend with the odours wafted in from the rubbish dump at Montfaucon.<sup>497</sup> However, the positive effects of shops that were using new gas lighting were appreciated.

There is another defect [...] This is the profound darkness of every part of the city in which there are not shops illuminated by the owners of them with gas. This is done so brilliantly on the Boulevards by the cafés and restaurants that the dim old-fashioned lamp suspended at long intervals across the pavé is forgotten. But no sooner is this region of light and gaiety left, than you seem to plunge into outer darkness.<sup>498</sup>

Trollope’s words emphasise the important contribution that commerce made to the visual impact, comfort and security of the city in the first half of the nineteenth century. The way that the city was structured administratively was another area that changed.

In 1795 the administrative divisions of the city altered from 48 sections to just 12 *arrondissements* and these are shown in Figure 12.<sup>499</sup> The top map shows the divisions before 1860 and the bottom map shows the 20 divisions in 1860, during Napoleon III’s empire, with the River Seine dividing the city and the two islands, Cité and St Louis to the east of the Louvre. These two sides of the river had different identities and therefore provided different contexts for the commercial premises of fashion merchants.

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<sup>495</sup> Frances Trollope, *Paris*, pp. 347-48.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>497</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 339.

<sup>498</sup> Frances Trollope, *Paris*, p. 118.

<sup>499</sup> The 12 arrondissements were also municipalities and these divisions remained until the Paris boundaries were extended between 1859 and 1860 creating 20 arrondissements. Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 276 and p. 561.

The northern Right Bank has been associated with commercial success and economic activity whilst the southern Left Bank has been associated with intellectual activity owing to the presence of the University of the Sorbonne. By the eighteenth century the Faubourg St Germain was where the aristocracy mainly had their mansions; such as the Hôtel de Clermont-Tonnerre, built in 1714, at number 118 rue du Bac.<sup>500</sup> When Miss Berry visited in 1802 she considered that the Faubourg St Germain had become unfashionable.<sup>501</sup> However the area went through a revival during Napoleon I's empire when the mansions were occupied by high level bureaucrats (*grand commis*), the imperial family or the nobility who had returned to France (*noblesse ralliée*). The mansions accommodated several families and many were transformed into hotels for travellers or rented out to foreigners.<sup>502</sup> A British visitor noted that there were fewer shops than on the Right Bank and the streets were cleaner.<sup>503</sup> The main roads that contained boutiques were du Bac, de Sèvres and Saint Dominique including sites for *magasins de modes et de nouveautés*. However, during the Directory government the capital's social centre moved from the Left Bank to the Right Bank as it was the location of the new financial elite who were an important client sector for fashion merchants.<sup>504</sup> In 1815 a visitor commented on the area near the Boulevards.

beyond one of these boulevards is a new quarter of the town called the Chausée d'Antin, consisting chiefly of houses inhabited by what are called genteel people.<sup>505</sup>

The image of the wealthy banker was epitomised by Jacques Récamier and his wife Juliette who lived in the street in 1798 and

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<sup>500</sup> *Le Faubourg Saint Germain: La Rue du Bac*, ed. by Bruno Pons and Anne Forray-Carlier (Paris: Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 1990), p. 190.

<sup>501</sup> 'Journal, 15 March 1802', in *Extracts of the Journals and Correspondance of Miss Berry 1783 to 1852*, ed. by Lady Theresa Lewis, 3 vols (London, 1865), II, p. 132.

<sup>502</sup> Françoise Tetart-Vittu, *Aux Deux Magots*, p. 25.

<sup>503</sup> 'A Trip to Paris [...] 1815', p. 385.

<sup>504</sup> Financiers who lived in this area included James de Rothschild, Casimir Périer and Jacques Laffitte according to Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 334. Aileen Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution* (Batsford, 1988), p. 112.

<sup>505</sup> 'A Trip to Paris [...] 1815', p. 386.

whose salon helped to make the street fashionable at a time when Paris had no court. By the 1820s it was a mixture of commerce and private residences including the home of the successful *marchand de modes* LeRoy who purchased a house at number 41. In 1821, he was semi-retired and chose to separate his home life from business, which was located at 36 Rue de Rivoli.<sup>506</sup> The popularity of this area, in the 1820s and 1830s, was due to its proximity to the commerce and entertainment to be found in the street itself as well as the boulevards and the Tivoli gardens. The pleasure gardens were a little to the north, where in 1852, the Église de la Sainte Trinité was built.<sup>507</sup> By the late nineteenth century its significance was emphasised by the building of the station of Gare Saint Lazare and prestigious department stores. *Galeries Lafayette* (1912) grew from a small shop started in 1894 on the corner of Rue Lafayette and Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin and *Printemps* had already been founded in 1865, close by on the new Boulevard Hausmann.<sup>508</sup> Boulevards had already been established in Paris by the eighteenth century long before the urban planning reforms of Hausmann. They were 'semi-rural promenades' in the eighteenth century but had been developed by 1815.

They are a road of great breadth paved in the middle, several miles in length [...] The houses on each side of this road are stone, and for the most part of elegant or grand architecture, like private gentlemen's houses yet interspersed with numerous shops, coffee houses, restaurateurs, public gardens and other places of resort [...]. Between these houses and the road there is a very wide space, with one or more rows of trees on each side, besides a sufficient interval between the trees and the houses for stalls.<sup>509</sup>

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<sup>506</sup> House purchase by L.H. LeRoy, 41 Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, 18 July 1821. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/CXVII/1106.

<sup>507</sup> Donald J. Olsen, *The City as a Work of Art*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>508</sup> Philip Nord, *Paris Shopkeepers*, Béatrice de Andia, *Les Cathédrales du Commerce Parisien: Grands Magasins et Enseignes* (Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 2006), p. 65 and p. 85.

<sup>509</sup> 'A Trip to Paris [...] 1815', p. 386.

In the evening in the ‘mild season’ chairs were delivered and soon occupied

by a crowd of loungers, chiefly well dressed females, whose only amusement is to sit there quietly to gaze and to be gazed at.<sup>510</sup>

For promenaders there were fashions in boulevards and they were poles of attraction to a cross-section of male and female Parisians and visitors from different social levels.<sup>511</sup> This included the duc and duchesse de Berry who enjoyed attending the theatres and even the simpler entertainments offered by ‘dwarves, conjurors and fairground slides’.<sup>512</sup> Figure 13 is a map of Paris showing the Boulevards running to the east of the Church of the Madeleine. Trollope noted that the development taking place in this north-western area of Paris was connected to a wealthy bourgeoisie.

The wide-spreading effect of this increasing wealth among the bourgeoisie is visible in many ways, but in none more than in the rapid increase of handsome dwellings, which are springing up, as white and bright as new-born mushrooms, in the north-western division of Paris. [...] The Church of the Madeleine, instead of being, as I formerly remember it, nearly at the extremity of Paris, has now a new city behind it; [...] An excellent market, called Marché de la Madeleine, has already found its way to this new town; and I doubt not that churches, theatres, and restaurants innumerable will speedily follow. <sup>513</sup>

At this time, the most popular boulevards (west to east) were des Capucines, des Italiens and de Montmartre and Figure 13 shows the Boulevard des Italiens. As well as being sites for display, fashion merchants were located in this area that was close to Rue de Richelieu and were embedded in the neighbourhood’s commercial and leisure activities. For example, the fashion merchant LeRoy,

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<sup>510</sup> Ibid.

<sup>511</sup> A review of the promenades, *The Journal des Dames et des Modes*, 25 Thermidor Year XII, 13 August, 1805, cited in Denise Z. Davidson, *France after Revolution*, p. 79.

<sup>512</sup> Philip Mansel, *Paris Between Empires*, p. 166.

<sup>513</sup> Frances Trollope, *Paris*, p. 356.

whose business was near the boulevard, organised a costume ball to celebrate the wedding of Maria Garneray, the sister of his friend and artist Auguste Garneray. A luxurious costume ball, based on a quadrille in the style of Louis XV, took place on Friday 11 February 1820. During this period, the duc and duchesse de Berry, LeRoy's clients, resided in the Elysée Palace, a short carriage ride away, and on Sunday 13 February they were in close proximity being entertained. This was the day of the assassination of the duc de Berry outside the theatre in Rue de Richelieu.<sup>514</sup>

On the same day (*Dimanche Gras*), nearby, LeRoy, organised a carnival parade with two curries to carry costumed participants along the boulevards for the admiration of the onlookers.<sup>515</sup> These carriages could seat up to four people and had a folding hood so probably the hood would have been folded down in order to display the passengers in their costumes. Hippolyte Auger was dressed in pink as one of four marchionesses and they were escorted by six pedestrians in costumes as abbots, musketeers, and cavaliers.<sup>516</sup> Similar displays in this area had been noted by a visitor in 1802.

The Boulevards, the Rue de la Loi, and the Rue St Honoré exhibited long processions of masks and grotesque figures, crowded both in the inside and on the outside of vehicles of all sorts.<sup>517</sup>

The boulevards were used as a stage, a site for self-conscious display during the carnival in the 'game of the gaze'.<sup>518</sup> These

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<sup>514</sup> The timing of the assassination by Louis-Pierre Louvel, 'a nationalist fanatic', was at about 10.58 in the evening when after watching the ballet the duchess decided to leave during an interval and the duke was stabbed after he had handed her into their carriage. Philip Mansel, *Paris Between Empires*, p. 166-68.

<sup>515</sup> Carnival entertainments occurred every year before the start of Lent and continued in Paris until 1914. These could be in the form of elite private balls or more public kinds of celebration. Dancing was popular as it was forbidden during Lent and, at that period, theatres were closed. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>516</sup> The costume worn by Auger had originally been created to celebrate the wedding of the duc and duchesse de Berry in 1816. Hippolyte Auger, *Mémoires*, p. 176.

<sup>517</sup> Francis William Balgdon, 'Letter LXXV, 3 March 1802', *Paris As It Was and As It Is, or A Sketch of the French Capital Illustrative of the Effects of the Revolution, 1801-2*, 2 vols (London: Baldwin, 1803), II, p. 456.

<sup>518</sup> Agnès Rocamora, *Fashioning the City*, p. 128.

examples have shown the flow of people from different social levels in these areas and reveals how the merchants and their clients shared the space and were interconnected even when separated by social hierarchy. By 1855, during Napoleon III's empire the area had grown in importance with attractions along the Boulevard de la Madeleine.<sup>519</sup> There were theatres, restaurants and cafés as well as shops and pavements for pedestrians. A guide also noted its popularity with the wealthy, 'elegant carriages occupy the road amidst cabs and omnibuses'.<sup>520</sup> The Rue Basse du Remparts just behind Boulevard des Capucines had livery stables nearby for the convenience of those with carriages and the area was within walking distance of the shops of the Palais Royal.<sup>521</sup>

The Palais Royal shopping arcades were built during the Old Regime, in the 1780s, by order of the duc d'Orléans and were the first of a series of new commercial builds provided for both female and male pedestrians rather than carriage customers encouraging impulse buying as well as shopping as a predetermined activity.

Figure 10 shows the shops and Figure 14 displays the garden of the palace, where there were boutiques on all sides but that are obscured by the trees. However, the apartments can be seen at a higher level and the palace is in the centre of the background above the gallery. Mercier commented on the Palais Royal's popular mix of commerce and social exchange by calling it 'the capital of Paris'.<sup>522</sup> In 1814 John Scott saw it as a response to the French climate and the habit of the 'middle and inferior classes' of living as much as possible outside their houses which implies that different levels of society were present. He agreed with the Parisians opinion that it was special.

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<sup>519</sup> The tree-lined appearance and the life of the boulevards were often admired by visitors, such as the Reverend Thomas Dibdin who stated that they 'could afford you singular gratification' T.F. Dibdin, 'Letter I, Paris 18 June 1818', *A Bibliographic Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany*, 2 vols (London; W. Bulmer and W. Nicol, 1829), II, p. 2.

<sup>520</sup> Edward Stanford, *Stanford's Paris Guide* (London, 1855), p. 52.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid.

<sup>522</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 330.

[...] without its equal in the world. The crowds of the Palais Royal are thus formed and it puts on its air of bustling dissipation, [...] at an early hour of the morning. The chairs that are placed out under the trees are to be hired, with a newspaper for a couple of sous a piece: they are soon occupied: - the crowd of sitters and standers gradually increases – the buzz of conversation swells to a noise: the cafés fill the piazzas become crowded; [...] the shops of the Palais Royal are brilliant. They are all devoted to toys, ornaments or luxuries of some sort.<sup>523</sup>

The Palais Royal lost its reputation and popularity in the 1820s and 1830s partly due to new regulations that forbade prostitution and then gambling (1828 and 1836) as well as the growing competition from the new forms of undercover shopping in galleries and passages.<sup>524</sup> Many of these were built between the 1820s and 1840s as speculation by private individuals and they were based on the same principles of boutiques with residential apartments above.<sup>525</sup>

The Palais Royal's shopping arcades had been based on neo-classical columns, in line with other public buildings, but the new galleries and passages of the nineteenth century retained a fashionable aesthetic but took advantage of innovative building techniques. The later arcades were more enclosed and formed with an iron skeleton with glass sections in the roof that let in as much natural light as possible. From 1817, gas lighting was introduced which would have brightened dark days and evenings in the winter and extending opening hours.<sup>526</sup> They were decorated to a greater or lesser extent depending on the target clientele. The decorative Passage Véro-Dodat, built in 1826, had one entrance in Rue du Bouloi opening on to an interchange for public carriages to

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<sup>523</sup> John Scott, *A Visit to Paris in 1814* (London: Longman, 1815), p. 121.

<sup>524</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 330.

<sup>525</sup> Bertrand Lemoine listed 62 passages and galleries built between 1786 and 1935 with 25 still used for commerce. Bertrand Lemoine, *Les Passages Couverts en France*, p. 246 and p. 253.

<sup>526</sup> Ibid.

encourage shoppers. Two other shopping galleries were built just to the north of the Palais Royal, Gallery Vivienne (1823) and the Galerie Colbert (1826) enhancing the attraction of shopping in one area. The idea of the colonnaded street also continued in the newly constructed Rue de Rivoli and the Rue Castiglione which led into the seventeenth century Place Vendôme, linking the elegance of the new with older architecture.

In the early nineteenth century, Place Vendôme, Rue de la Paix and Rue de Castiglione contained hotels aimed at wealthy tourists and so offered an attractive proposition for businesses in luxury goods. The luxury clothing trades moved to these locations to the west of the Palais Royal during the Restoration firstly with *magasin de nouveautés* and then the *couturières* and *marchandes de modes*.<sup>527</sup> These areas are another example of the successful mix of sites for commerce, leisure and social exchange as they were within walking distance of the Tuilleries garden and the Louvre. Figure 15 shows the Tuilleries' gardens where in 1835 Frances Trollope spent some time almost everyday and she described the crowd that flocked to the garden on a Sunday

The next change shows the gradual influx of best bonnets,— pink, white, green, blue. Feathers float onwards, and fresh flowers are seen around: gay barouches rush down the Rues Castiglione and Rivoli; cabs swing round every corner, all to deposit their gay freight within the gardens [...] everything seems to speak of taste, luxury and elegance.<sup>528</sup>

One of the reasons for her enjoyment may have been the knowledge that the entrance was controlled and what Frances referred to as 'sentinels' had the right to refuse admission to those people not 'properly dressed'. This was a place to see and be seen which reinforced the desire to be fashionably dressed and therefore

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<sup>527</sup> Thierry Sarmant, Luce Gaume and Béatrice de Andria, *La Place Vendôme*, pp. 242-43 and p. 251.

<sup>528</sup> Frances Trollope, *Paris*, p. 104 and p. 266.

the need to patronise *marchandes de modes* for ‘best bonnets’.<sup>529</sup> Trollope makes it clear that this was the place for people who could afford carriages; an elite defined by appearance and wealth and not the context of a court. Even public omnibuses were too expensive for the working-class population at that time.<sup>530</sup>

As the railway had little impact until 1870, except between Paris and the northern ports, most of Paris’s population was confined to walking or riding which emphasised differences in status and wealth between pedestrians and those in carriages.<sup>531</sup> Kessler considers that, in the 1850s, the bourgeois and aristocratic female pedestrian chose to separate and distinguish herself from the lower orders by wearing a bonnet veil.<sup>532</sup> For those who wished or needed a form of transport the most expensive and prestigious option was the private vehicle but most people relied on carriage hire and public transport which was highly visible. The staff of the public conveyances wore livery in the colours of the different monarchs from the green and gold of Napoleon I and his nephew Napoleon III, to blue, silver and red for Louis XVIII and his brother Charles X and finally red and silver for Louis Philippe.<sup>533</sup> The cost of owning a horse and carriage was equivalent to a year’s salary for a first hand or bookkeeper.<sup>534</sup> In the eighteenth century a horse cost around 350 livres and a carriage between 600 and 1,800 livres. In 1804 a nearly new town carriage was advertised for sale at 3,000 fr which was also what

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<sup>529</sup> Ibid., p. 110.

<sup>530</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 334.

<sup>531</sup> Between 1852 and 1869 the number of rail passenger kms rose from 0.99 thousand to 4.10 thousand and for commodities, from 0.6 to 6.2 thousand. David Harvey, *Paris Capital of Modernity*, pp. 109-10.

<sup>532</sup> Kessler also examined the importance of the veil as a protection against Paris dust and cholera when the capital became a vast building site. Marni Kessler, ‘Dusting the Surface, or the Bourgeoisie, the Veil, and Haussmann’s Paris’, in *The Invisible Flâneuse? Gender, Public Space, and Visual Culture in Nineteenth Century Paris* (Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 49-64.

<sup>533</sup> Philip Mansel, ‘Paris, Court City of the Nineteenth Century’, p. 3

<sup>534</sup> For example, the salary for LeRoy’s first hands, Mlle Victorine and Mme Pierrard was 1,800 fr in 1815 and in 1854 the first hand *modiste* Mlle Soubannier was to be paid slightly more at 2,000 fr. Fiona Ffoulkes, ‘Louis Hippolyte LeRoy, 1763-1829: Grandfather of Haute Couture’, Appendix 3 and Grand Livre de Compte, No. 4, Fols 202-3 and 405. BnF, Fr. Na. 5931. Employment contract between Blot and Soubannier, AN, MC/ET/LV/405.

LeRoy paid for a vehicle in 1813.<sup>535</sup> Alternatively, they could be hired for about 2 fr an hour (1846) or borrowed and sometimes Auger used the carriage belonging to Prince Galitzine.<sup>536</sup> By 1825 there were more than 2,000 companies in France that would move both merchandise and passengers.<sup>537</sup> Papayanis has examined the number of cabs in Paris and he has concluded that by the 1780s there were 1,000 hackney coaches (*fiacres*) and 800 four-wheeled livery coaches (*carrosses de remise*).<sup>538</sup> By 1818 the number had nearly doubled to 2,948 registered carriages from *fiacres* to curricles (*cabriolets*) and by the middle of the nineteenth century there were 5,400 carriages available to Parisians.<sup>539</sup> As the number of vehicles rose so did the development of lighter and more comfortable carriages as well as improvements to the roads in France. The other factor in the speed of travel was the power provided by the horse, that could reach 10 mph. However, when a mail coach averaged 9 mph the horses only had a life expectancy of around three years. Good carriage horses that were well fed and treated more considerably were expected to average 6 or 7 mph.<sup>540</sup> Between 1782 and 1848, the time for some journeys taken by carriage had been shortened by two-thirds so for example, the journey between Paris and Lille in 1782 took 48 hours, 34 hours in 1814, 22 hours in

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<sup>535</sup> Nicholas Papayanis, *Horse-Drawn Cabs and Omnibuses in Paris: The Idea of Circulation and the Business of Public Transit* (Louisiana State University Press, 1996), p. 13. *Petites Affiches de Paris*, no. 151, 21 February 1804. LeRoy's accounts from 1813 also showed that he had this carriage repainted and varnished showing the maintenance necessary. LeRoy, *Grand Livre de Compte*, No. 4, Fol. 208. BnF. Fr. Na. 5931.

<sup>536</sup> Dangeard, 1 Rue Boucherat, hired a range of carriages starting at 6 fr for 3 hours and 2 fr for each hour after that, *Annuaire Général du Commerce* (1846), p. 702. Hippolyte Auger, *Mémoires*, p. 172. In 1802 Miss Berry commented on the improvement of neat and attractive 'long stands of cabriolets to hire' with numbers painted on them and lamps that had to be lit at night. 'Journal 15 March 1802', in *Extracts of the Journals and Correspondance of Miss Berry*, II, p. 133.

<sup>537</sup> Château d'Espeyran, *Voyages et Déplacements*, p. 5.

<sup>538</sup> Nicholas Papayanis, *The Coachmen of Nineteenth Century Paris* (Louisiana State University Press, 1993), pp. 20-21.

<sup>539</sup> Ibid.

<sup>540</sup> Hazel Jones, *Jane Austen's Journeys* (London: Robert Hale, 2014), pp. 73-75.

1834 and 16 hours by 1848.<sup>541</sup> Crossing to London from Paris using the Steam Packet and the railways could take as little as 11 hours by 1851 which benefitted the number of visitors that could appreciate French goods at the Great Exhibition.<sup>542</sup> These examples have shown how the speed of transport improved before the impact of the railway from the 1870s. Other factors that affected circulation to and from Paris were the state of the roads and access points across the River Seine.

When examining the movement across the river between the fashionable districts of the Left Bank and Right Bank it is clear that the most practical bridge to use was Pont Royal, seen in Figure 16 which had been completed in stone in the seventeenth century for carriage and pedestrian traffic. This was also a fairly short crossing as it spanned a narrow point of the River Seine being just 110 m long and from the Left Bank brought people to one side of the Tuilleries Palace at Pavillon de Flore. As a site for the fashion merchant Corot, it was prestigious being opposite the court, close to the Right Bank, accessible to pedestrians and carriage clients and distinct from competitors. The other nearest bridge serving this area was Pont Neuf to the east until the bridge Pont de la Concorde was constructed in the 1790s (153 m) leading directly to the Place de la Concorde, then to the Rue St Honoré and the Boulevard Madeleine. Apart from the infrastructure there were other factors that had an impact on location and circulation including, times of unrest, war and crises for the economy and health such as cholera outbreaks.

Major events affected the migration of fashion merchants as well as the flow of visitors to the city at a time when only the wealthy travelled as tourists and these individuals were part of the fashion

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<sup>541</sup> Alfred de Foville, *La Transformation des Moyens de Transport et ses Conséquences Économiques et Sociales* (Paris, 1880), pp. 7-8. Château d'Espeyran, *Voyages et Déplacements*, p. 14.

<sup>542</sup> French and English railway companies with the Steam Packet companies also increased their services from 1 May 1851 in order to accommodate travellers to the international exhibition in London. *First Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 to the Right Honourable S.H. Walpole*, Appendix, 24 (London: HMSO, 1852), IX, p. 111.

merchants' potential clientele. Fashion merchants also targeted provincial clients taking Parisian merchandise and skill to their towns. This strategy showed the reputation of the capital's fashion merchants and seamstresses plus the distinction of goods defined as 'fashionable and Parisian'. Figure 17 shows Mme Allipa's tradecard from around 1800 showing that she travelled outside the capital transporting people and goods.

Mme Allipa, *modiste de Paris*,

Has the honour to inform you that she will be arriving in this town with a large amount of crates (*caisses*) containing objects that are currently the most fashionable in Paris.

Flowers, bonnets, chapeaux, capottes, veils, fichus, embroidered sleeves [...] fabric [...] rouge, fans, umbrellas [...] male and female chemises

She also lets you know that she will be accompanied by the most able workers from Paris who can construct clothing and ball dresses as well as other work concerning the art of the *modiste* or those of *lingerie* and marriage *corbeilles*.<sup>543</sup>

This trade card had the address of the *magasin* as *Hôtel du Cerf Marché aux Grains*. This may be the same hotel in Ghent (*Gand*) which in 1809 was named in an advert for Noel Dumoulin of Brussels who would be selling clocks from this address. The same journal carried an advert for Dessaux a *marchand de modes* from Brussels who would be in the same city at *Hôtel Royal* for 12 to 15 days selling all kinds of *modes*.<sup>544</sup> These examples demonstrate that taking Parisian fashions to foreign and provincial markets was not unusual and probably common practice. In another case, in 1843, Mme Hocquet sold her successful business in Paris to create a new business in Russia. The quality of French luxury goods had

<sup>543</sup> Waddesdon, The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust).  
<http://collection.waddesdon.org.uk/search.do?view=detail&page=1&id=42303&db=object> [accessed 8 June 2015]

<sup>544</sup> *Annonces, Journal du Commerce du Département de l'Escaut*, 1 May 1809 and 28 May 1809.

long been recognised by the Russian elite and in the late eighteenth century the fashion merchant M Beaulard had started a business in Moscow. Mme Hocquet was able to take advantage of the sustained high reputation connected to this *métier* which was combined with the distinction of being a Parisian *modiste*.<sup>545</sup> These examples show the skill of the fashion merchant and their knowledge of market opportunities. However, there were cases where political and economic problems in France forced merchants to move abroad depending on their reputation to find work.

At the collapse of the regime of Louis-Philippe in 1848, when Paris was in crisis, the fashion journal *Petit Courier des Dames* wrote that many fashion businesses (*maisons de modes*) had moved abroad and only started to return six months later.<sup>546</sup> Mme Krafft made several journeys to England to work as a *modiste* to support her family after her husband deserted her. The precise year was not given but the dates indicate that it was probably during the problems of 1848.<sup>547</sup> There were other examples where necessity forced individuals to move outside France or Paris. Mme Julien was widowed with a young daughter when she moved to Paris from Marseille in 1845 and found work with a *marchande de modes*. She also worked for a time in Holland before moving back to Paris in 1847.<sup>548</sup> The business association that she developed with M Izambard in 1852 depended on sales from the provinces although their production and *magasin* was based in Paris. Izambard also had bases in Rouen and Lille from which to find orders and he managed a team of travelling salesmen.<sup>549</sup> The difficulty of selling in

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<sup>545</sup> Mme Hocquet sold her business to M Pollet in order to start a new business in St Petersburg. This was reported in the fashion journal, *Le Follet*, 17 September 1843 and was cited in Henriette Vanier, *La Mode et ses Métiers: Frivolités et Luttes des Classes, 1830-1870* (Armand Colin, 1960), p. 87. M Pollet-Hocquet, AP, D11U3/168, File 11217.

<sup>546</sup> *Petit Courier des Dames*, 10 July 1848.

<sup>547</sup> Mme Krafft, 14 September 1855, AP, D11U3/206 File 12655.

<sup>548</sup> Mme Julien, 13 March 1851, AP, D11U3/134 File, 9818.

<sup>549</sup> M Izambard owned a house in Rouen in the north of France and his father lived in the northern town of Lille. Julien & Izambard, AP, D11U3/179, File 11646.

a place where you were not known was shown in the case of Mlle Anceaume as well as the risk of the costs connected to travelling.

Anceaume attempted to establish a business in Paris after twenty years of working and developing a reputation in Rouen but, as she found it impossible to sell her merchandise in the capital, she decided to return to where she was known.<sup>550</sup> The journey itself was not difficult because she could have travelled by coach or railway.

There were four trains a day from Paris to Rouen by 1847 taking four hours and costing 16 fr, 13, fr or 10 fr if travelling first, second or third class.<sup>551</sup> She stayed in this city for two months selling her merchandise and as this was a successful strategy she decided to return for two seasons each year. However, this plan could not be carried out as the profits in the business were absorbed by the costs involved which came to 11,000 fr for her travel, transport for the merchandise, rental of *magasins* and material plus the rental of an apartment.<sup>552</sup> These trips were a financial burden and were one of the reasons for her bankruptcy.<sup>553</sup> The importance of reputation to the relationship with a clientele, and the costs that this incurred to the business, is shown by this case. The hierarchical nature of the relationship was another feature of commerce.

In 1829, when on a visit to Paris, Lady Morgan was told that she must go to the fashion merchant Herbault and *couturière* Victorine and make appointments at their convenience.<sup>554</sup> This indicates that

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<sup>550</sup> Rouen was the capital of Normandy with a population of around 100,000 in 1851 with a thriving textile industry, mainly in cottons and printed cottons. The port was 78 miles northwest of Paris to which it was connected by the River Seine and the railway by 1843. As a commercial centre the city attracted shoppers from the smaller surrounding districts such as the fictional Mme Bovary who ordered part of her trousseau there. Ronald Aminzade, *Ballots and Barricades: Class Formation and Republican Politics in France 1830 to 1871* (Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 88. Gustave Flaubert, *Mme Bovary* (Paris: Wordsworth Classics, 1857, repr. 2010), p. 20. Mlle Anceaume, AP, D11U3/201, File 12468.

<sup>551</sup> 'Chemin de Fer de Paris à Rouen', *Annuaire Général du Commerce*, (Paris: 1847), p. XVII.

<sup>552</sup> Mlle Anceaume, AP, D11U3/201, File 12468.

<sup>553</sup> The costs of travel were also given as a reason for the bankruptcy of Mlle Parrottan, who worked between Paris and Brittany between 1851 and 1853. Mlle Parrotton, 9 March 1855, AP, D11U3/196, File 12242.

<sup>554</sup> *Lady Morgan in Paris, 1829-1830*, p. 242.

she was not of a high enough rank for the fashion merchant to travel to see her or to show her any deference. This is supported by the report in a fashion journal that associated the sight of Mme Barenne's carriages taking staff to customers' homes, in order to carry out fittings for hats, with luxury.<sup>555</sup> LeRoy or Mme LeRoy normally discussed orders with clients at Maison Boutin but the highest status clients such as the Empress Josephine, the Empress Marie-Louise and the Duchesse de Berry expected LeRoy to go to wherever they were and at a time of their choosing. M LeRoy went to the Château at Malmaison frequently to consult with the Empress Josephine and when Louis XVIII and his family returned to France in 1814 LeRoy went to the Château de Saint Ouen to discuss outfits for the duchesse d'Angoulême.<sup>556</sup> Malmaison was about 12 km (7 ½ miles) west of the centre of Paris and Saint Ouen was 14 km (9 miles) north of the centre.

These journeys by horse and carriage would have taken a maximum of an hour and two hours if the horses walked or trotted and less time if urged to canter or gallop.<sup>557</sup> The expectation of elite clients was that merchants would respond to their wishes and the power dynamics were clear. On one occasion, when LeRoy travelled from St Ouen to Malmaison for an appointment with Josephine he urged the coachman to push the horses to perform at maximum speed so that he would not be late for the meeting. This nearly caused an accident as, entering the driveway, they locked wheels with the carriage of Tsar Alexander of Russia and Frédéric-Guillaume III of Prussia as they were leaving the château.<sup>558</sup> This sense of panic was also shown in 1810, on the celebration of the signing of the

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<sup>555</sup> *La Sylphide: Journal de Modes, de Littérature, de Théâtre et de Musique*, 6 December 1840, p. 210.

<sup>556</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 149.

<sup>557</sup> Hazel Jones has examined the time taken for various journeys by horse and carriage in the early nineteenth century in England. Hazel Jones, *Jane Austen's Journeys*, p. 75. On average a horse walks at 2-5 mph, trots at 8-12 mph, canters at 10-17 mph and gallops at 35-40 mph. *Equestrian and Horse*, 2012.

<<http://www.equestrianandhorse.com/equus/gaits.html>>[accessed 3 May 2016]

<sup>558</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 149.

marriage contract between Napoleon and Marie-Louise, at the palace of St Cloud. LeRoy was late in arriving with the Empress's outfit so several couriers had been sent to Paris in a relay system in order to complete the journey in the fastest possible time.<sup>559</sup> An order for the Restoration court even meant a temporary relocation to the client's residence.

In 1818, on the morning that a masqued ball was to be held, LeRoy was called to the Elysée Palace by the duc and duchesse de Berry. He was told that the duchess needed a costume for that evening and the duke refused to let him leave the palace because it was so important that the outfit be finished. Instead, six members of LeRoy's staff and the necessary materials were transported to the palace into an improvised workroom and six hours later the order was completed in time for the duchess's appearance at the ball.<sup>560</sup> On other occasions staff members would travel alone for fittings as when Mlle Rosalie from the garment workroom (*atelier des robes*) went to Cassel in Westphalia with merchandise for Princess Catherine and the costs were added to the bill: 310 fr for travel and 10 fr for the passport.<sup>561</sup> Clearly, the highest status clients expected the process of acquiring fashionable clothing to be at their convenience. LeRoy understood and complied with this system for the advantages it brought to his reputation and profits. He referred to the importance of his elite clients by their carriage ownership saying, 'this hat would never be on foot'.<sup>562</sup> LeRoy owned a number of different carriages for his business such as a *cabriolet*, *coupé* and *dormeusee*. The *cabriolet* was a curriole, a two-wheel carriage drawn by a single horse with a curtain to protect driver in rain which would be suitable for short distances and could be driven by LeRoy or a coachman.<sup>563</sup> For longer distances the other two carriages

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<sup>559</sup> Ibid., pp. 317-18.

<sup>560</sup> Ibid., pp. 157-58.

<sup>561</sup> Henri Bouchot, *La Toilette à la Cour de Napoléon* (Paris, 1895), p. 58.

<sup>562</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 312.

<sup>563</sup> The *dormeuse* (sleeper) was a carriage where the seats could be converted into a bed for passengers to sleep on a long journey. Napoleon I had a carriage

would be more comfortable and faster as they would have a coachman, be drawn by four horses and were closed carriages. The vehicles were described by Auger as ‘the most elegant’ and the staff wore light blue livery that had black velvet piping and collars.<sup>564</sup> LeRoy consulted Napoleon I before deciding to have his own carriages for his business and the emperor approved this idea as he said they would rival those of London merchants. This showed how competition with London could stimulate change in Paris and how LeRoy was able to enhance the reputation of his business. Examples of successful merchants like LeRoy and Corot show how they accepted the social norms and chose to use their wealth to adopt some of the lifestyle of the bourgeoisie.

When they started their businesses, both had lived and worked at the same premises. Then, whilst working from Hôtel Boutin in Rue de Richelieu, M and Mme LeRoy purchased a house at 7 Rue Montmorency on the outskirts of Paris. This was sold in 1818 and another house was acquired in 1822, further from Paris in Franconville.<sup>565</sup> Similarly, M and Mme Corot had invested in property as a country retreat.<sup>566</sup> Moving outside Paris in the summer was not new as in the eighteenth century those outside the aristocracy did this and it was considered a sign of social mobility.<sup>567</sup> LeRoy’s country house was next to that of his daughter Adèle, and her husband Henri Lucas. One of his neighbours was the judge who had presided over the dissolution of LeRoy’s business association in

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of this type at the battle of Waterloo in 1815. Château d’Espeyran, *Voyages et Déplacements*, p. 20. Hubert, Gérard and Nicole Hubert, *Musée National des Château de Malmaison et de Bois Préau* (Paris: RMN, 1986), p. 126.

<sup>564</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, pp. 315-16.

<sup>565</sup> This property, which consisted of a two-storey house with coach gate, stables and 30 acres, was described as ‘in the village of Boulogne, Rue de Montmorency on the main road between Paris and St Cloud’. It was sold to Saltmarsh in March 1818 for 20,000 fr. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/VII/621.

<sup>566</sup> The house at Ville d’Avray had 2 bedrooms on the ground floor and 5 on the first floor, plus a dining room and salon on the ground floor. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/I/1082 Inventory after death, Marie Oberson, Mme Corot 3 April 1851.

<sup>567</sup> Garrioch gave examples of a butcher from the Faubourg Saint Germain who had a country house at Arcueil and a merchant grocer from Faubourg St Antoine with a property in St Maur. David Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community in Paris, 1740 to 1790* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 171-72.

1824, showing how embedded his lifestyle was with the wealthy middling levels of society.<sup>568</sup> The residences of LeRoy and Corot can be seen in Figure 18 and show large detached houses that offered the kind of comfort and privacy associated with status. Franconville is 21 km (13 miles) north of Paris in the Vallée de Montmorency in the direction of Pontoise and would have taken around two hours in a horse-drawn vehicle. M and Mme Corot's country residence was at Ville d'Avray which was 14 km (8 miles) south-west of Paris just past Sèvres which was closer, at just over an hour away. These examples have shown that distance and journey times were not a problem for commercial or domestic lifestyle if merchants were successful in business and could afford the costs involved. They used their capabilities to adopt some of the comforts of their elite clients in the same manner as *ancien régime* merchants.

In this section, I considered changes to the infrastructure and character of Paris and argued that these were significant to the continued development of the city as a place of culture and sophistication long before Hausmann's plans under Napoleon III. I demonstrated how these connected to the reputation, location and business operation of fashion merchants when clients and traders lived and worked in close proximity. The popularity of various sites for shopping and sociability on the Right Bank were related to the growing numbers of middling level and bourgeoisie in society but these spaces, particularly around the Boulevards, were also shared by the court elite. Faster and more comfortable transport facilitated the circulation of merchants and clients before the railway had much impact. I have shown that reputation - of the city and the merchant – plus social hierarchy, drove the relationship between *marchandes*

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<sup>568</sup> Adèle had been given an education by a private tutor and her marriage, promoted by the Empress Josephine, was to a well-known mineralogist in charge of galleries at the Museum of Natural History, Jardin des Plantes, Paris, Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, pp. 354-55. See also Fiona Foulkes, 'Muse, Cliente et Amie? L'Impératrice Joséphine et LeRoy, Marchand de Modes', *Synergies Royaume-Uni et Irlande*, 7 (2014), 118.

*de modes* and clients. I will examine how this was manifested in the choice of a particular location in the next section.

### A Good Location?

In this section, I will examine the areas of Paris where fashion merchants were based in the first half of the nineteenth century revealing some continuity but more differences from the eighteenth-century locations of fashion merchants. I posit that they became less linked to the location of the court and more connected to fashionability, cost and the status of both the merchant and the clientele. Finally, I determine the factors that might drive decisions to relocate.

The importance of location has long been acknowledged as part of the *savoir faire* that demonstrated the skill of a merchant and was a factor in business success. In the seventeenth century merchants were advised to understand the ‘commercial geography’ as well as the ‘key commercial places’.<sup>569</sup> A nineteenth century American guide to milliners also stated ‘many a business [...] has failed because it was in the wrong place’.<sup>570</sup> The right place, according to the guide, depended on the neighbouring businesses as if these were not of good character they would impact on the customer and dissuade them from entering the street. This links to Bernard Rouleau’s system for analysing location where he divided goods according to necessity or luxury into three sectors: daily needs such as food, occasional use such as some clothing, barbers and joiners and a third sector of luxury and leisure trades.<sup>571</sup> Clothing and accessories, it could be argued, were both necessities and at times a luxury. According to Rouleau, when analysing the location of a business, it was the sector that merchants worked in that was more important than the commodity they dealt with.<sup>572</sup> These ideas will be addressed by using three different ways of surveying fashion

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<sup>569</sup> Natacha Coquery, ‘Shopping Streets in Eighteenth Century Paris’, p. 60.

<sup>570</sup> Philo, *Twelve Letters to a Young Milliner* (New York: Hill Bros, 1883), p. 6.

<sup>571</sup> Natacha Coquery, ‘Shopping Streets in Eighteenth Century Paris’, p. 60.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid.

merchants and their locations between 1804 and 1855. The first analysis focuses on the commercial survey undertaken in Paris by the Chamber of Commerce during the crisis of 1847/8. Table 6 summarises these locations for fashion merchants taken from the list of trades and locations recorded in Appendix 9.

**Table 6. Locations for Fashion Merchants in 1847/8.**

FASHION MERCHANTS	MODERN ARRONDISSEMENT	ANCIENT ARRONDISSEMENT
c 50 % of turnover	9	2
	2	3
	8	1

The highest level of business amongst *marchandes de modes* took place in the second arrondissement (today the 9th arrondissement) where the turnover was nearly half of the total amount.<sup>573</sup> This area included the Boulevards and the Rue de la Chausée d'Antin which was to the north of the Bibliothéque Nationale (du Roi), the Palais Royal and the Tuilleries Palace showing a change in location from the eighteenth century that is significant because it is a move away from the court. Eighteenth century fashion merchants had been mainly located in the Rue St Denis which was further east and the Rue St Honoré which ran parallel to the River Seine towards the west from the Palais Royal. In the early nineteenth century, they were mainly between the Boulevards, the Palais Royal and Rue de Richelieu. In 1847/48 this was still the second most significant area for the cluster of fashion merchants (today's 2nd arrondissement) along with the merchants who had moved west to Place Vendôme and Rue de la Paix and arrondissement one (today's 8th

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<sup>573</sup> The turnover of 5,186,042 fr from a total of 12,326,113 fr was recorded for modistes located in arrondissement 2. Chambre de Commerce, *Statistique de l'Industrie*, p. 113.

*arrondissement*).<sup>574</sup> This shows a clear move to the west including the Place de la Madeleine and the Avenue des Champs Elysées, away from the court. It demonstrates that proximity to Louis - Philippe's principal residence was not necessary for a fashion merchant's reputation.

*Arrondissements*, 9, 2 and 8, were also listed as locations for other clothing trades including seamstresses (*couturières*), linen drapers (*lingères*) and shoemakers (*cordonniers*). All three were located on the Right Bank demonstrating that the figures for those located on the Left Bank, by the late 1840s, were not very significant in the overall turnover for the fashion merchants of the period. The survey of 1847/8 showed that the Right Bank was six times more important than the left regarding turnover, number of owners and workers.<sup>575</sup> Here, the outcome supports the evidence for the growth in popularity, by the new elites and middling social levels, of life on the Right Bank away from the associations that the Left Bank had with the Old Regime's aristocracy.

Other trades, in the 2nd *arrondissement*, were clothing for men and women, coaches and saddlery, fine jewellery and food including chocolate; agreeing with Rouleau's analysis of the importance of sector rather than commodity.<sup>576</sup> It also demonstrates the mixed gendered nature of luxury goods and their locations in the west. The coach-makers were located close to the richest consumers in the western part of the city on the Right Bank in today's *arrondissements* 8 and 9 as well as on the Left Bank in today's 7<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement*. They were particularly numerous around the Champs Elysées.<sup>577</sup> This shows that the fashion merchants were

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<sup>574</sup> The arrondissements changed from 12 to 20 under the law passed by Napoléon III's regime on 16 June 1859. Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), *Correspondance Entre les Anciens et les Nouveaux Arrondissements de Paris*.

<sup>575</sup> Figures for the Right Bank were – turnover = 1,253,860,021 fr., owners = 51,630, workers = 293,185. Figures for the Left Bank were – turnover = 209,768,329 fr., owners = 13,186, workers = 49, 345. Chambre de commerce, *Statistique de Paris*, p. 47.

<sup>576</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>577</sup> Ibid.

close to the wealthiest consumers in 1847/8. The second analysis is of the fashion merchants that supplied the royal trousseaux during the first half of the nineteenth century and will reveal whether the location of the most prestigious businesses changed during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Appendix 10 lists the *marchandes de modes* and their addresses between 1807 (Napoleon I) and 1853 (Napoleon III) and Figure 19 ABC shows their locations on maps. They demonstrate some continuity in the reputation of streets on the Left Bank near the river and close to Rue du Bac and on the Right Bank near the Palais Royal and the Stock Exchange (*Bourse*) which had been highly fashionable in the early nineteenth century: Rue de Richelieu, Rue de Ménars, Rue Neuve St Augustin and Rue des Filles Saint Thomas. This may be partly due to their proximity to the Boulevards and also the presence of luxurious hotels in the vicinity. For example, in 1803 there were 235 *Hôtel Garnis* listed including 13 that were located in Rue de La Loi (Rue de Richelieu).<sup>578</sup> The association with accommodation for visitors continued and in 1839 a guide for English visitors praised *Grand Hotel de Paris* which had one entrance at 111 Rue de Richelieu and another on the Boulevard des Italiens.

This hotel which has lately been constructed in the most brilliant style, richly and elegantly furnished presents rather the appearance of a palace than the residence of distinguished travellers. Frequented only by the nobility and gentry [...] it may justly be said that this hotel gives foreigners an idea of the luxury and splendour of Paris.<sup>579</sup>

The area slightly to the north-east in today's 9th *arrondissement* was also fashionable in the late 1820s particularly around Rue de la Tour des Dames and Place Saint Georges and was the most important

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<sup>578</sup> La Tynna et Duverneuil, *Almanach du Commerce*, 1803 (Paris, 1804), pp. 99-103.

<sup>579</sup> *The Indispensable English Vade Mecum or Pocket Companion to Paris* (Paris, 1839), p. 199.

area for fashion merchants in the 1847/8 survey.<sup>580</sup> However the maps also show a shift to the west by fashion merchants with royal clients, between 1843 and 1853, with locations around Place Vendôme: Rue de la Paix, Place de la Madeleine and Rue Faubourg Saint Honoré. In 1853 the two fashion merchants that supplied merchandise for Eugénie, Countess of Teba for her marriage to Napoleon III were based in Rue de la Paix (Ode, sisters) and Place Vendôme (Barenne & cie). The square and the streets south and north were popular with the wealthy and contained residences and hotels for visitors. New mansions added to its fashionable reputation, such as the Renaissance style Hôtel de Pourtalès at 7 Rue Tronchet, behind the church of the Madeleine.<sup>581</sup> This sample has shown that, when fashion merchants chose a location, fashion and proximity to the wealthy outweighed proximity to the court. As these were the most fashionable suppliers the trade directories were then consulted to test whether they agreed with these findings and to investigate whether there were significant clusters of fashion merchants and streets.

The listings for fashion merchants in trade directories for 1804, 1820, 1840 and 1855 were analysed and they show that these *marchandes de modes* were located predominantly on the Right Bank across the dates, agreeing with the other examinations.<sup>582</sup> For example, in 1820 there were 92 listings for *marchandes de modes* and only 12 were based on the Left Bank. However, both sides of the river saw certain streets retaining and increasing their

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<sup>580</sup> Alexandre Gady, *Les Hôtels Particuliers de Paris du Moyen Âge à la Belle Époque* (Paris: Parigramme, 2008), p. 39.

<sup>581</sup> This mansion was designed by the architect Félix Duban. Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>582</sup> The trade directory entries represent the businesses that were successful enough to pay for entries and to be on a scale that merited advertising. However, they still only represent a small number of the fashion merchants operating in Paris. In 1807 the worker's passbooks (*livrets*) showed 2,500 fashion merchants and the trade directory listed 77 merchants/proprietors. All figures are likely to be underestimations. The trade directories listed fashion merchants, in 1804 - 69, 1820 - 92, 1840 - 298 and 1855 - 574. Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, pp. 285-86 and *Almanach du Commerce par La Tynna et Duverneuil*, Paris, 1797-1838, *Almanach Général des Commerçans de Paris*, 1839-41, *Almanach Bottin du Commerce*, 1842-56.

associations with the trade. The most striking result was on the Left Bank where Rue du Bac (modern *arrondissement* 7, ancient 10) was the most popular street with fashion merchants between 1804 and 1855. In 1804, it was the only street with their presence but during the next forty years the locations became more widespread across *arrondissement* 7 but also 6 (ancient 11) around Odéon further away from the river and the Palace of the Tuilleries. On the Right Bank, there was a similar pattern where some roads remained popular, like the Rue St Honoré. This had been a centre of luxury commerce in the eighteenth century but the density of fashion merchants increased between 1804 and 1855.

**Table 7. Fashion merchants in Rue St Honoré, 1804-55.**

DATE	FASHION MERCHANTS IN RUE ST HONORÉ
1804	4
1820	7
1837	8
1855	23

When examined in detail the locations for this street showed that there was a cluster of fashion merchants that moved west away from the court, the Palais Royal and the Louvre beyond the church of St Roch (number 296, and today number 284). Supporting the previous findings, by 1855 they had moved towards the Place Vendôme (number 350, next to 2 Place Vendôme). The other change was that by 1855 most *arrondissements* were represented - 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9,10 and 11 (todays) - showing that most areas of Paris then had the presence of at least one fashion merchant. Significantly, the results agree with the previous clusters that were identified but also show that these merchants were becoming more visible across the city. Some areas showed a decline in the presence of *marchandes de modes* such as the Palais Royal where the listings showed its popularity in the early nineteenth century but

by the middle of the century it was much less fashionable and so not as desirable a location.

**Table 8. Fashion Merchants in the Palais Royal,  
1804-55.**

DATE	FASHION MERCHANTS IN THE PALAIS ROYAL
1804	12
1820	5
1837	7
1855	3

The passages and galleries (Table 9) were mainly built from the 1820s and so feature particularly in the 1837 and 1855 trade directories. Generally, they do not show clusters of fashion merchants in the former; just between one and three. The Passage du Saumon had the most fashion merchants for both dates: three fashion merchants in 1837 and nine in 1855. Appendix 11 shows how fashion merchants were located in the newly built shopping arcades and Table 9 has a summary of the information.

**Table 9. Fashion Merchants in Passages and Galleries,  
1804-55.**

DATE	NUMBER OF PASSAGES & GALLERIES WITH FASHION MERCHANTS	NUMBER OF FASHION MERCHANTS
1804	0	0
1820	2	5
1837	9	12
1855	15	28

Figure 20 shows the Passage du Saumon and the Galerie Colbert where the premises featured are probably those of Mme Durieux who was based at number 11 Galerie Colbert, in 1829. This was in the *Grande Rotonde* which was described in a guide to Paris as

tasteful and magnificent with sumptuous boutiques.<sup>583</sup> Later Mme Hermann was located in the gallery at number 6 and she was the only fashion merchant entered in the trade directory for the gallery in 1833 and 1837.<sup>584</sup>

Appendix 12 shows how fashion merchants were also increasingly located across the different Boulevards and Table 10 below summarises the breakdown across the dates showing that they increased in popularity as a location.

**Table 10. Fashion Merchants in the Boulevards, 1804-55.**

DATE	NUMBER OF BOULEVARDS WITH FASHION MERCHANTS	NUMBER OF FASHION MERCHANTS
1804	0	0
1820	4	8
1837	7	15
1855	13	55

The Boulevards that had the most fashion merchants between 1820 and 1855 were Boulevard Poissonière, Boulevard Bonne Nouvelle and Boulevard des Italiens. Figure 21 has a map where the red line indicates the position of these Boulevards. Table 11 below shows how their numbers rose dramatically between 1837 and 1855.

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<sup>583</sup> Richard, *Guide de Paris* (1828), p. 165 cited in Bertrand Lemoine, *Les Passages Couverts en France* (Paris: Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 1997), p. 94.

<sup>584</sup> Durieux, Mad., 'Modes', in *Almanach du Commerce* (Paris: 1829), p. 184. Hermann, Mad., Gal. Colbert, 6, 'Modes', in *Almanach du Commerce* (Paris: 1833), p. 197, Hermann, Mad., Gal. Colbert, 6, 'Modes' in *Almanach du Commerce* (Paris: 1837), p. 220.

**Table 11. Fashion Merchants in the Bd des Italiens, 1804-55.**

BOULEVARD DES ITALIENS MOD ARR 9 & 10	FASHION MERCHANTS
1804	0
1820	2
1837	3
1855	10

Table 12 below examines the roads nearby to the south and north of the Boulevards, Rue de Richelieu and the Rue de la Chausée d'Antin where both streets increased the number of fashion merchants across the dates. This shows that the modern *arrondissements* 2 and 9 still retained their large numbers of fashion merchants as recorded by the survey of 1847/9.

**Table 12. Fashion Merchants in the Rue de Richelieu and Rue de la Chausée d'Antin, 1804-55.**

DATE	RUE DE RICHELIEU	RUE DE LA CHAUSÉE D'ANTIN
1804	5	0
1820	6	1
1837	8	1
1855	22	16

In 1855 the Rue de Richelieu retained its popularity and its decline as a commercial street only occurred later, after competition from Rue du Quatre-Septembre, a wider street created as part of Hausmann's plans in 1868.<sup>585</sup> The fashionable area in 1855 that was to continue its links with fashion and luxury to the modern day was Place Vendôme and the road running north, Rue de la Paix which also increased its numbers by 1855 as can be seen below in Table 13.

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<sup>585</sup> Philip Nord, *Paris Shopkeepers*, p. 126.

**Table 13. Fashion Merchants in Place Vendôme and Rue de la Paix, 1804-55.**

DATE	FASHION MERCHANTS IN PLACE VENDÔME	FASHION MERCHANTS IN RUE DE LA PAIX
1804	0	0
1820	0	4
1837	2	3
1855	3	7

Analysis of the trade directories shows that in the first half of the nineteenth century fashion merchants were ranged across Paris whilst there were also still clusters of fashionable streets. This demonstrates that the business of the fashion merchant had become both a luxury and a necessity. Part of the skill excercised by successful fashion merchants was awareness of what constituted a good location and what determined the cost of the appropriate rent for an apartment that normally included business premises and personal living space. The variety available also reveals the hierarchy amongst merchants that this visibly represented.

many of the miniature shops in the Temple are kept by the wives and daughters of artisans, who are not possessed of sufficient capital to establish themselves as regular *marchandes* in the city.<sup>586</sup>

This quote from *Fraser's Magazine* in 1843 demonstrated the expense that premises represented. Bankruptcy cases showed that the merchant often had to pay six months' rent in advance at the start of a lease and that the owner of the premises was often the first creditor to start legal proceedings if the tenant had rent arrears.<sup>587</sup> The table below shows the price of rents across a range of locations and dates.

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<sup>586</sup> *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, May 1843, p. 544.

<sup>587</sup> For an example of six months' rent paid in advance see Mme Pessemesse, AP, D11U3/117 File, 9051.

**Table 14. Fashion Merchants' Location and Rent, 1800-1855.**

DATE	FASHION MERCHANT	ADDRESS & MODERN ARRONDISSEMENT	RENT PER YR
1800	LeRoy, M	89 Rue de Richelieu. Arr. 2	5,000 fr
1825	Pature, Mme	4 Rue Vivienne. Arr. 2	3,000
1828	Jardin, Mme	34 Galerie Vivienne. Arr. 2	1,800
1830	Pilon, Mme	18 Rue de Rivoli. Arr. 1	8,000
1844	Colpaert, Mlle	Rue de l'Echiquer. Arr. 10 (a small apartment)	390
1847		Rue Mazagran. Arr. 10	1,000
1849	Pessmesse, Mme	13 Rue du Bac, L.B. Arr. 7	1,900
1850	Lardy, Mlle	5 Rue de Ménars. Arr. 2	1,800
1850	Planat, Mlle	60 Rue de Richelieu. Arr. 2 24 Place Vendôme. Arr. 1	5,200 9,000
1855	Julien & Izambard	4 Bd des Italiens. Arr. 9	3,000

The examples between 1800 and 1830 are all in fashionable and popular locations and show a range of prices. Although these partly reflect the size of the premises and number of rooms, they also reveal the expensive rent paid by LeRoy in 1800 for premises in a former aristocratic mansion. In addition, he also paid 50 % of the costs involved for use of the garden.<sup>588</sup> The rent paid by his former partner Mme Pilon in 1830 also shows the high cost of commercial space on the newly built and fashionable Rue de Rivoli. These two examples also demonstrate what was appropriate for a supplier to the imperial court of Napoleon I and the Restoration courts of Louis XVIII and Charles X. These findings agree with Garrioch's point that 'trade and locality often reinforced each other' when considered as part of the hierarchy within trades and locations.<sup>589</sup> Mme Colpaert's two examples show less expensive rents in streets slightly east of the fashionable streets and where her clients were called *bourgeois*. Mlle Planat's rent reflected the fashionable reputation of Place

<sup>588</sup> Lease for Hôtel Boutin, LeRoy, 12 Prairial Year 10 (1/6/1802), A.N., MC/ET/888.

<sup>589</sup> David Garrioch, 'House Names, Shop Signs in Western European Cities', p. 35.

Vendôme where commerce was aimed at wealthy and high-status clients. It was nearly twice the rent of Rue de Richelieu at the same period, four times that of Rue du Bac and three times that of the Boulevard des Italiens. The merchant increased overheads by accepting these high rents and faced the danger of falling into arrears more quickly if sales were low. The areas shown in the previous tables that were particularly popular for the location of *marchandes de modes* were the Boulevards, Rue de Richelieu, Rue de Rivoli and Place Vendôme.

A visitor in 1818 described the Boulevard des Italiens and its attractions when it included Tortini, the most fashionable café in Paris.

A very broad roadway flanked by 2 rows of trees on each side, within which the population of Paris seems to be in incessant agitation – lofty houses, splendid shops [...] all manner of merchandise exposed in the open air – prints, muslins, kaleidoscopes, trinkets.<sup>590</sup>

The 1855 trade directory listings included two fashion merchants, Mme Marx at number 33 and Mmes Noël at Maison Tortini, that supplied French court clients: Princess Joinville and Princess Mathilde.<sup>591</sup> This shows that it was deemed an appropriate location for the wealthiest clientele and this is supported by a photograph from 1843 in Figure 22 showing a large mansion with carriages outside. A visitor in 1815 had also recorded impressions of a prosperous lifestyle.

[the houses] are built of stone, four, five and more stories high. Between the ground floor and the first floor there is frequently a low story called *entresol*, but the first floor is very lofty with what are called in England Adam's windows. These, and the cornices carved in front of the

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<sup>590</sup> Reverand Dibdin, 'Letter I, 18 June 1818', p. 2.

<sup>591</sup> Marx, Mme Charles, 'fournisseur de Mme la princesse de Joinville, boul. des Italiens, 33', 'Modes', in *Annuaire Général du Commerce* (Paris: 1855), p. 731. Noel, Mmes, fournisseurs de SAI Mme la princesse Mathilde, boul. des Italiens, maison Tortini, entrée rue Taitbout, 2', 'Modes', in *Annuaire Général du Commerce* (Paris, 1855), p. 731.

houses between the stories, the ornaments about the windows, the ornaments about the windows, the iron balustrades, and Venetian blinds, give an air of grandeur to these buildings.<sup>592</sup>

The bankruptcy cases had six examples of other fashion merchants based along the Boulevard between 1811 and 1854. Four of them were based near Rue de Richelieu close together at number 4, Julien and Izambard in 1854, Mlle Isabell dite Drouart at number 6 in 1853, Mlle Bénard in 1853 at 7 and earlier in 1811, M. Thibault at number 11 on the corner or Rue Favart near the theatre *Opéra Comique*. Two more fashion merchants were further west at numbers 29 and 34, M. Guillot (1851) and Mme Julien (1851). The businesses listed in the directory for 1855 show a similar cluster of five businesses between numbers 25 and 33 and the earlier businesses in 1820 and 1837 closer to Rue de Richelieu. Mme Julien had already been in a state of bankruptcy in 1851 at number 34 on the Boulevard but chose to remain in the area for her next business venture. Her insolvency would have been known to suppliers, clients and other traders so she must have considered that the advantages would outweigh the disadvantages. However, the receiver stated that they had few clients from the city and sold mainly in other parts of France suggesting that they had not built a reputation in Paris despite their fashionable location.

The area south of the Boulevards, around the Palais Royal towards the Stock Exchange (*Bourse*) still attracted fashion merchants in the 1850s and Figure 23 shows a depiction of Rue de la Banque with the viewer standing with the *Bourse* behind them and looking towards Rue des Petits Champs. The sketch marked *Wild editeur* as being at number 15 but the trade directory for 1855 listed Wild and the fashion merchant Mme Bouchon at number 19. On the left-hand side of the street on the corner the word *Modes* can be seen painted on the façade. The buildings vary between those with a

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<sup>592</sup> The low *entresol* storey was between the ground floor and the first floor. A *Trip to Paris*, 1815, p. 385.

ground floor, entresol plus 2/3 storeys above to higher buildings in des Petits Champs with 4 storeys and a ground floor. The successful fashion merchant LeRoy was based in this street at 736 Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, facing Rue Chabanais, which today has retained the five-storey building constructed in 1770. Auger described it as a little sad so possibly it was less expensive and appropriate at a time when LeRoy was building his business.<sup>593</sup> This address was given on the marriage contract of Louis Hippolyte LeRoy and François Renée Guyot in 1796 but in 1800 he signed a lease for a higher status building, in the nearby Rue de Richelieu which was a grander private mansion (*hôtel particulier*) at number 89 (today 79).<sup>594</sup> The lease located Maison Boutin, on the corner of Rue de Richelieu and Rue de Ménars and this can be seen in Figure 24.

The Hôtel Boutin is an example of how a building changed its use from starting in the eighteenth century as the private residence of Simon Boutin, *Receveur-Général des Finances de Tours* then after the Revolution it became a place of multi-occupancy with some commercial use. It could be classified as a 'good' location as the area had a reputation for luxury commerce with a wealthy clientele linked to its past elite residents. LeRoy based his business and family here between 1800 and 1821, signing an initial lease for six years starting on 1 January 1800. With its Old Regime grandeur, it was an appropriate symbol of his reputation as supplier to empresses and royal family members, known as the leading *marchand de modes* in Europe. The mansion had been developed from the main part of the former Hôtel Ménars by Simon Boutin in 1733.<sup>595</sup> The original building had been designed by the prestigious architect Germain de Boiffard (1667-1754) and was listed in a guide

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<sup>593</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 311.

<sup>594</sup> During the Revolution, the name of the street, which had been named after Cardinal Richelieu, changed to Rue de la Loi (1793) and the number was given as 305. In 1806, the name reverted to Richelieu. Lease for Hôtel Boutin, A.N. MC/ET/888. LeRoy and Guyot, marriage contract, 17 June 1796, AN, MC/ET/LXX/633.

<sup>595</sup> Jacques Hillairet, *La Rue de Richelieu* (Minuit, 1966), p. 77.

from 1716 that pointed out the impressive buildings in the area.<sup>596</sup> As a young man Boffrand worked under Jules Hardouin Mansart and later supervised the building of the Orangerie at Versailles and the construction of Place Vendôme in the 1690s.<sup>597</sup> The Hôtel de Menars was one of several private mansions Boffrand designed in Paris and his style for the exterior was in the classic grand Italian style. He was critical of extravagant Rococo styles and his approach to design was based on good taste and common sense with an ideal of ‘noble simplicity’.<sup>598</sup>

The mansion was demolished in 1869 but there is some surviving evidence for the appearance of the building including a map of 1739 Figure 24, the lease and an 1850s report that described the building.<sup>599</sup> Privacy for elite clients was catered for by a carriage entrance on Rue de Richelieu and the main part of the building (*corps de logis*) was between two courts with two wings backing onto Rue de Richelieu. At the back of the second court there was a building used as stables and a coach-house with apartments above. To the north, a smaller building had a carriage entrance leading on to Rue de Ménars.<sup>600</sup> The façade which had 14 windows measured 43-90 m on Rue de Richelieu and 80-30 m on Rue de Ménars. A balcony projected from the third floor and on the fourth floor there was a square brick terrace. It was a five-storey building including an entresol with a carriage door (*porte cochère*) of sculpted and dressed stone.<sup>601</sup> The apartments for rent consisted of two apartments on each floor, on the Rue de Richelieu side, which were

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<sup>596</sup> Claude-Marin Saugrain, *Les Curiositez de Paris*, Paris, (1716), p. 64.

<sup>597</sup> Joseph Michaud & Louis Lichaud, *Biographie Universelle, Ancienne et Modern*, Vol. 4 (Paris: Michaud, 1811), pp. 670-72.

<sup>598</sup> *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. by Jane Turner (London: Macmillan, 1996), p. 226.

<sup>599</sup> The mansion was demolished as part of the opening of Rue Quatre Septembre and the enlargement of Rue de Ménars. The land registry recorded its appropriation after a decision by jury taken on 26 April 1868 for the sum of 2,600,000 fr. Sommier Foncier, Rue de Richelieu, Paris, Archives de Paris, (AP), DQ18 241. The maison’s demolition date is given in Jacques Hillairet, *La Rue de Richelieu*, p. 79.

<sup>600</sup> Ibid., p.77

<sup>601</sup> Building report, 89 (new number 79) Rue de Richelieu, 1852-55, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D1P4/952.

accessed via the main staircases (*grands escaliers*) to the left and right of the carriage door. In the main part of the building (*corps de logis*) on Rue de Ménars there were another two apartments accessed by a central staircase. Lastly there was an apartment at the back of the courtyard with its own staircase.

The building inspector commented on the location and elegance of the rooms stating that their quality and decoration must make it possible to rent them out for a high price as they would be desirable to business people as well as wealthy merchants.<sup>602</sup> Auger was clearly impressed with the mansion and described Hôtel Boutin as magnificent, luxurious and elegant and in 1803 Bertie Greatheed called it a rather splendid hotel.<sup>603</sup> When the lease finished in 1821 LeRoy went into semi-retirement and separated his domestic living space from his business. However, at the time of his death in 1829 he had been in partnership with Mme Pilon under the name LeRoy and co. and this business was located in the new commercial street at 36 Rue de Rivoli. In 1814 when John Scott visited this area he commented on the

new streets and triumphal monuments; the Louvre is finishing; the gardens of the Tuilleries are cleared on all sides; and the Rue de Rivoli that runs on one side, produces an imposing effect.<sup>604</sup>

Lady Morgan also praised the new street calling it splendid and a monument ‘justifying in itself the Revolution’.<sup>605</sup> The first section, which was constructed to the west towards Place de la Concorde between 1802 and 1835 was named after one of Napoleon I’s military victories in 1797. It was designed by Percier and Fontaine in the same neo-classical style as Rue des Colonnes, the arcades of the Palais Royal and Rue de Castiglione. The second section east

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<sup>602</sup> Ibid.

<sup>603</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *Mémoires*, p. 172. *An Englishman in Paris: 1803. The Journal of Bertie Greatheed*, ed. by J. P. T. Bury and J. C. Barry (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1953), p. 43.

<sup>604</sup> John Scott, *A Visit to Paris in 1814*, p. 280.

<sup>605</sup> Lady Morgan in Paris, pp. 54-55.

towards Saint Antoine was built later between 1849 and 1856.<sup>606</sup> Figure 25 shows the neo-classical building style opposite the gardens of the Tuilleries Palace. This open arcade necessitated a small ground floor but included an *entresol* and three floors above with three continuous balconies at the *piano nobile* level. The third floor had less height and was designated as the attic with a roof containing dormers.<sup>607</sup>

Mme Pilon worked with LeRoy from number 36, located towards Place de la Concorde, and then alone at number 18 where she transferred in July 1829.<sup>608</sup> The smallness and lack of light in the spaces designed for businesses on the ground floor may explain why both businesses were located on the first floor. The rooms at number 36 had views either over a courtyard or Rue de Rivoli - the *magasin* overlooked the latter which would have given customers a pleasant view across the road to the Tuilleries gardens. Figure 25 shows that Mme Pilon's premises at number 18 had the same view and from a description could have been at either side of the Place des Pyramides. A little further towards Place de la Concorde were the other expensive and prestigious areas for locations: Rue du Castiglione, Place Vendôme and the Rue de la Paix.

No doubt the Place Vendôme and the Rue de la Paix claim precedence [to Rue de Richelieu and Rue Vivienne], on the score of magnificence and comfort, to either of these or to any other streets.<sup>609</sup>

Reverand Dibdin stated that this area had pavements unlike most of Paris so this is probably what he referred to as comfort. These features can be seen in Figure 26 showing the space compared to the surrounding streets on a map of 1739 soon after it was complete and then later in the nineteenth century with the uniformity of Rue

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<sup>606</sup> Anthony Sutcliffe, *Paris*, p. 70. Bertrand Lemoine, *Les Passages Couverts en France*, p. 16.

<sup>607</sup> Anthony Sutcliffe, *Paris*, p. 71.

<sup>608</sup> Louis Hippolyte LeRoy, inventory after death and will, 25 March 1829. Paris, AN MC/ET/CXVII/1138. Bankruptcy of Mme Pilon, AP, D11U3/74, File 6529.

<sup>609</sup> The Reverend Thomas Froggall Dibdin, 'Letter I, 18 June 1818', p. 21.

Castiglione continuing the colonnaded building style of Rue de Rivoli. Place Vendôme (Louis Le Grand) was constructed between 1698 and 1720. The square has retained its reputation for wealth and luxury and is today the location for *haute joaillerie* and the Ritz Hotel. From the end of Napoleon I's Empire clothing suppliers were located in the area including the first known specialist in mourning for men and women who started in 1818 at 16 Rue de la Paix.<sup>610</sup> The area's luxury status was well established by the second Empire (1852-1870) when Charles Frederick Worth opened his clothing business at 7 Rue de la Paix in 1858 and this reputation would have directed his choice.<sup>611</sup> The street continued to be a location for high quality fashion houses including Paquin (number 3) and Caroline Reboux (number 23) for *modes* until the First World War.<sup>612</sup>

Place Vendôme had listings for three *marchandes de modes* in 1855 and Figure 27 shows where their premises were situated in the square. The proximity to high status clients is demonstrated by considering the year 1849 when Mme Barenne's business at number 14 was next door to the future Empress Eugénie who was staying with her mother in Hôtel Baudard de Sainte James.<sup>613</sup> Generally clothing merchants were located on the first floor and less often on the second floor which was more modest.<sup>614</sup> The fashion merchant Mme Barenne (born Julie Boissy)<sup>615</sup> was based on the first floor at 14 Place Vendôme between 1841 and 1858 and in 1842 a guide for visitors to Paris praised Mme Barenne and described her

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<sup>610</sup> The name of the business was Duterre, *magasin de nouveautés*, Piedada da Silveira and Françoise Tétart-Vittu, 'La Mode', in *La Place Vendôme*, p. 242.

<sup>611</sup> The trade directory in 1861 listed Worth under *couturières* as 'Worth et Bobergh, Maison Spéciale, robes et manteaux confectionnés, soieries, haute nouveautés, Paix, 7'. *Annuaire Almanach du Commerce, de l'Industrie*, p. 718.

<sup>612</sup> The painting of c. 1902 by Jean Béraud shows the employees leaving Maison Pacquin in Rue de la Paix, *La Sortie des Ouvrières de la Maison de Pacquin*, Paris, Musée Carnavalet.

<sup>613</sup> Today number 14 is the location in France for J.P. Morgan Chase Bank and the jeweller Chaumet (formerly Nitot) is based at number 12. Béatrice de Andia, 'Royale, Impériale et de Grand Luxe', in *La Place Vendôme*, p. 30.

<sup>614</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>615</sup> Julie Boissy, Mme Barenne was widowed but married for the second time in 1842, M Delcambe a well-known lace manufacturer. Piedada Da Silveira and Françoise Tétart-Vittu, 'La Mode', in *La Place Vendôme*, p. 246.

premises as having a distinguished air.<sup>616</sup> The table below shows the high status of the occupants that included the owner, Marquis Maison, and aristocrats, alongside business people and an archaeologist.

**Table 15. Inhabitants of 14 Place Vendôme in 1855.**

<b>Annuaire Général du Commerce, de l'Industrie par Frères Didot, 1855</b>	<b>14 Place Vendôme</b>
<b>Inhabitants</b>	<b>Inhabitants</b>
Maison (marquis) owner of building	Murat (comte Joachim), <i>député du Loi</i>
Barenne & cie, <i>modes</i>	Saint-Chamans ( <i>vicomte &amp; vicomtesse</i> )
Broët, sec. <i>du chemin de fer de Lyon</i>	Waddington (William), an archaeologist
Gudin (cte), O.	Lutterworth (Henri)
Bonneau de Salignac	Hébert, C. <i>avocat cour imp.</i>

Apart from the quality of the chosen location another factor that might affect the success or failure of the business was the continuity of the premises particularly when the operation was ceded to a successor. The celebrated fashion merchants Barenne, LeRoy and Corot kept their businesses at the same address for a long time where the reputations of the area and the luxury trades would have reinforced one another. Barenne stayed in Place Vendôme for 17 years, LeRoy for around 20 years in Rue de Richelieu and Corot more than 30 years at 1 Rue du Bac, where the business continued under her daughter's ownership. These very successful businesses never located to a pedestrian only location, possibly because they needed more space than they provided plus the importance of accommodating high status carriage clients. In the 70 cases of bankrupt fashion merchants the businesses did not always have this continuity or longevity.

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<sup>616</sup> Francis Hervé, *How to Enjoy Paris*, p. 324.

In the new world of commerce, the smart shopkeeper did not wait for customers but went to them. He moved to the new streets in hot pursuit of his market.<sup>617</sup>

Philip Nord stated the above when examining the 'Haussmannization' of Paris streets linking the increased circulation of traffic and 'a vast clientele in motion' with the new wide streets and Haussmannic buildings that had appropriate new commercial spaces.<sup>618</sup> However, as has been shown, fashion merchants were already active in seeking markets and the bankruptcy cases contain other examples. Mlle Planat explained that she moved away from Rue de Richelieu to Place Vendôme in order to be closer to her clientele emphasising her knowledge of changes to fashionable locations.<sup>619</sup> Moving often meant upgrading premises as LeRoy and others had done successfully. However, for some merchants it proved to be a risky venture, particularly if the location was overly relied on to bring financial success by targeting a wealthier clientele.

Mlle Prevost started her business in 1842 from a small apartment at 102 Rue de Richelieu, near the Boulevard des Italiens and the café Frascati. Mlle Prevost then improved her premises and moved to a small boutique at 51 Rue Lafitte (also known as Rue d'Artois), north of the Boulevards. By 1849 she had moved again to number 54 and larger and more 'appropriately luxurious' premises, on which she spent 15,000 fr, because she thought this would lead to more clients and more profits.<sup>620</sup> However, the receiver criticised this move, and her judgement, as trying to expand her business beyond her capabilities. She had become insolvent and was being pursued for debt when she decided to move again thinking she could resolve her difficulties by changing her clientele. She then rented two

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<sup>617</sup> Philip G. Nord, *Paris Shopkeepers*, p. 125.

<sup>618</sup> Nord makes particular reference to the *couturières* based in the Rue du Quatre-Septembre in today's 2nd arrondissement, originally opened as Rue Réumur Prolongée in 1868 and renamed in 1870. *Ibid.*

<sup>619</sup> Mlle Planat, 13 August 1850, Paris, Archives de Paris, (AP), D11U3/128, File, 9580.

<sup>620</sup> Mlle Prevost, 19 December 1853, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/170, File 11278.

apartments at 2 Boulevard Montmartre for 5,500 fr per year and paid 800 fr in advance but bankruptcy proceedings started before this change could be completed.<sup>621</sup> Other individuals changed their location away from a fashionable location to a different sector of the market. In the case of Mme Deloy, *marchande de modes et lingerie*, in 1855 the causes of her bankruptcy included the ‘considerable costs’ involved in a change of area from Rue Neuve des Petits Champs to Rue Faubourg St Antoine and the work carried out to the new premises. This was an area with a population of workers between Bastille and Nation in the east of the city.

The move had been prompted by Mme Deloy’s first bankruptcy in September 1848 and may have been a response to the lack of commercial activity after the uprising in February of that year. It could also have been an attempt to reduce her costs by changing to a less expensive area where she thought there would be a local clientele. However, after the barricades in June that year in the Rue Faubourg St Antoine and the violent clashes with troops, it seems a surprising location to choose. It could have been prompted by the idea that with the abdication of King Louis Philippe royal and aristocratic clients were gone forever. It may also indicate that she and her husband were politically in sympathy with the protestors. There was a risk for the business as she would be unlikely to take her clientele with her to a less prestigious area and was then dependent on developing local custom.<sup>622</sup> Criticising her judgement, the receiver deemed Mme Deloy’s premises and their cost as inappropriate for the neighbourhood in which she was based. The cost of the rent was described as a burden and the location too large which required a vast assortment of merchandise than was practical for the clientele. This was supported by the statement that there had not been sufficient sales in the seven years spent in the location.

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<sup>621</sup> Ibid.

<sup>622</sup> Mme Deloy, 4 July 1855, Paris, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/201, File12487.

In this section I have shown that ‘good’ locations for fashion merchants were clustered in north of centre and west of centre locations close to a wealthy elite, rather than the court. They were also more densely and widely scattered across the *arrondissements* by 1855. I have demonstrated that there were many kinds of high status locations available to fashion merchants, from existing areas like Rue St Honoré and Place Vendôme, to new streets, *passages* and galleries. These testified to the importance of comfort and privacy in commercial surroundings linked to the target customers, whether pedestrians or carriage clients. The range of premises available since the Revolution had expanded and the costs varied considerably depending on the size of the premises and the reputation of the area. Fashion merchants’ locations placed them within a hierarchy of merchants and how their selection was made depended on their skill and their finances. Location was an important factor in success but if their judgement was poor it could also be a disastrous way of incurring debt. The last section of this chapter will consider how a fashion merchant’s business was branded, fitted, decorated and signposted.

### **Signalling, Branding and Presenting Premises.**

In the last section of this chapter I focus on how fashion merchants gave their businesses an identity and what that demonstrated about the skills that were necessary to develop a relationship with clients. I will consider the exterior and interior of business premises and what they reveal about the need for privacy, luxury and comfort in the relationship with a clientele of different social levels. In this enquiry, I am responding to the work of Cox and Walsh who have pointed to the lack of studies into retail before the era of the department store. They have disagreed with the idea of a ‘revolution’ in practice at this time and argue that marketing strategies branding the shop were in place in the eighteenth

century.<sup>623</sup> Retail history in the first part of the nineteenth century has received little attention except in considering the sales practices and display techniques of the *magasin de nouveautés* as forerunners of the department store.<sup>624</sup> I will join the discussion by firstly examining how fashion merchants demonstrated their knowledge and judgement in how their businesses were distinguished from others and branded to attract clients in the changed context of post-revolutionary Paris. Then, I will consider the position of commercial spaces within buildings and the way rooms were designated, for what they might reveal about attitudes to privacy, status and luxury. In the final section, I analyse the meaning that can be attributed to changes in the arrangement and type of furniture, fittings and methods of display.

After the Revolution of 1789, there were visible changes in the landscape of the capital that would have affected how the streets were navigated and how businesses were located. With the secularization of Paris important landmarks had been lost, including statues of saints that had stood on street corners as well as saint's names on houses and shop signs.<sup>625</sup> Also the state created a system of numbering in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century and restricted the use of large and potentially dangerous 'gross appendages' hanging over the street.<sup>626</sup> A guide to Paris in 1814 explained to the British visitor that the numbering and street names of buildings were painted in red letters if they ran parallel to the River Seine and in black if they were at right-angles to the river. The numbers started with the section closest to the river or if a parallel

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<sup>623</sup> Claire Walsh and Nancy Cox 'Their Shops are Dens, the Buyer is their Prey', pp. 76-115. Claire Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in the Eighteenth Century' (unpublished master's dissertation, Royal College of Art/V&A Museum, 1993).

<sup>624</sup> Françoise Tétart-Vittu and Piedada da Silveira, *Aux Deux Magots 1813 to 1881 and Au Pauvre Diable et au Coin de Rue*.

<sup>625</sup> David Garrioch, *The Making of Revolutionary Paris*, p. 304.

<sup>626</sup> Laws were passed to restrict the size of signs and their position over the street in 1761. Legislation passed, particularly in 1791 and 1805, introduced an enduring system for numbering properties which simplified the collection of taxes. L.S. Mercier's negative comment was cited by David Garrioch, 'House Names, Shop Signs', p. 37.

street, from the east and even numbers were placed on the right-hand side of the road. Figure 28 A shows how the depiction of numbers on buildings became more ornate during the nineteenth century. Figure 28 B shows hanging shop signs in the Passage des Panoramas and a life-size statue, *The Persian*, from after 1814 showing that these forms were still used at the same time as numbering. John Scott mentioned ‘handsome shop signs’ that reflected the neo-classical art to be seen in the Louvre and also commented on their artistic skill.

The shop signs in question [...] might be hung up as pictures in an academy exhibition invite you to examine a display of goods.<sup>627</sup>

However, signs that had been seen as elegant in 1814 and extravagant in 1820, by the late 1850s were ‘an institution [...] falling into disuse’ and by the end of the nineteenth century it was thought that only around 100 remained in Paris.<sup>628</sup> Signs carried representations of people, symbols and objects, but historians have found that few signs represented the trade carried out. Instead many elite merchants used visual images of royalty and royal patronage on the facades of their shops.<sup>629</sup> Figure 29 shows how the fashion merchant M Beaulard used the portrait of Queen Marie Antoinette on his trade card which probably matched the sign over his premises. Next to this is the boutique owned by the jeweller Nitot showing the imperial emblem of Napoleon I. These two examples reveal how ideas were transmitted about the identity and status of the businesses and their proprietors. In the early nineteenth century merchants increasingly used their own names above the business and Garrioch has explained this as a way of

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<sup>627</sup> John Scott, *A Visit to Paris in 1814*, p. 92 and p.103.

<sup>628</sup> The fall in the use of signs was mentioned by Berger in *Les Enseignes de Paris*, 24 May 1858 and cited in David Garrioch, ‘House Names, Shop Signs’, p. 21. *A Guide to Paris* (1814), pp. 127-28.

<sup>629</sup> David Garrioch, ‘House Names, Shop Signs’, p. 31. According to Mansel, in the nineteenth century around 500 shops used ‘de l’Empereur’ or ‘du Roi’ on invoices, signs and facades, Philip Mansel, ‘Paris, Court city of the Nineteenth Century’, p. 3.

extolling male achievements in commerce.<sup>630</sup> However, in the trade that is under examination, female fashion merchants also placed their names above their premises. Marie Oberson, Mme Corot, displayed her name in yellow letters above her premises on the first floor of the corner of Rue du Bac and the Quai d'Orsay.<sup>631</sup>

### MME COROT

#### MARCHANDE DE MODES

Another change was that as shop fronts developed, and merchandise was visible through the increasingly large glass windows, they replaced the use of lavish signs.<sup>632</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century the facades of boutiques could be ornate showing the same design features as fashionable private mansions. Figure 30 A, B, C shows how these changed between the reign of Louis XVI and Napoleon III's empire with a separate commercial aesthetic. The first images are of a surviving oak shop front from around 1775, photographed around 1900 and when the building was demolished. This shop front was designed in the 1770s by the carpenter and joiner (*menuisier*) Étienne Séjournant and a drawing exists showing the plan which was altered in the execution to have more fashionable neo-classical features; with simpler columns and less of the earlier ornate Rococo style.<sup>633</sup> The wooden façade would originally have been painted and therefore has some link to the drawing of Rose Bertin's shop front and the surviving façade of a pharmacy, now in the Musée Carnavalet. These images show a *faux* marble painted effect emulating the expensive, luxurious

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<sup>630</sup> David Garrioch, 'House Names, Shop Signs', p. 25 and p. 40.

<sup>631</sup> Gustave Geoffroy, *Corot* (Paris: Nilsson, 1924), p. 17.

<sup>632</sup> Garrioch considers these elements together 'surpassed the signs as eyecatchers', David Garrioch, 'House Names, Shop Signs', p. 45.

<sup>633</sup> This building was demolished in 1916 and then the shopfront was acquired in 1917 by the decorating firm, Carlhian, Paris though it had lost its doors and some carving. The façade entered the collection at The Metropolitan Museum after a gift from J. Pierpont in 1920. Musée D'Orsay, <<http://www.musee-orsay.fr/fr/collections/catalogue-des-oeuvres/notice.html?nnumid=23760>>.

[accessed 1 September 2015]. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The Wrightman Galleries for French Decorative Arts* (New York: The Metropolitan Musem, 2010), pp. 38-39.

Sienna marble. All these facades demonstrate the development of larger, less expensive panes of glass from the small rectangular panes of the 1770s to the larger longer panes used in the examples from around 1810. A guide for visitors from 1842 described the positive use of plate glass.

a long range of immense squares of plate glass not only have an ornamental appearance but have the effect of throwing so powerful a light upon the premises that every possible advantage may be afforded for the examination of the goods.<sup>634</sup>

In Figure 30 C Bertin's neo-classical shop front and the drawing of a shop front from 1861 show some similarities, both emphasising vertical lines. However, this design shows a move away from colourful and decorative shop fronts to a simpler form but with large sheets of glass. The individual shopfronts shown here from the Napoleonic period were less uniform than the new commercial builds from the same period and later, such as the Rue de Rivoli. Shopping arcades (*passages*) such as the Galerie Vivienne were rented with certain restrictions which controlled the aesthetic impact for the pedestrian and had certain disadvantages for the merchant and the shopper. An agreement with a new tenant in 1825, for a boutique in the Galerie Vivienne, stated that the merchant Mme Jardin could not alter the exterior and could only put her name and occupation over the entrance in the place designated for that purpose. It was also forbidden to place a hanging or projecting sign outside the premises or cover the exterior in any way.<sup>635</sup>

Fashion merchants in other locations added a decorative marquee (*marquise*) to the exterior of their premises which were a kind of projecting hood or roof at the top of a door. They were rigid unlike an awning, usually constructed of metal with glass panels in a rectangular shape or semi-circle and according to an architectural

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<sup>634</sup> Francis Hervé, *How to Enjoy Paris*, pp. 343-44.

<sup>635</sup> Lease, Mme Jardin, 33 Galerie Vivienne 28 June 1825. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/VII/666.

definition, ‘these gave accent to the main entry’.<sup>636</sup> Mme Deloy had a painted iron and zinc marquee outside her shop in 1855 at 88 Rue du Faubourg St Antoine.<sup>637</sup> The other method of drawing a customer’s attention to the business was to display examples of merchandise on the exterior of the building. Figure 31 shows the boutique of the *marchande de modes*, Mme Melcion, in the wooden gallery of the Palais Royal showing a number of hats hanging on the outside of the boutique advertising what was sold inside. This is similar to a description by Prudhomme in 1804 when a fashion merchant in the Wooden Gallery had headgear ‘hung up like ham and sausages in butchers’ shops.<sup>638</sup> By 1814, this was apparently less acceptable as the *Almanach des Modes* stated that at Mme Doyen-Deffond, 5 Rue Vivienne, hats were on display and this was rarely a sign of good taste.<sup>639</sup> This could reflect different levels of appropriateness depending on the market or location. Mme Deloy used a display case with glass doors for merchandise outside her shop in Rue Faubourg St Antoine which may have been because she did not have large enough panes of glass in her windows to display items inside that would be visible outside.<sup>640</sup> The mayor of the second *arrondissement* praised the window displays of the shops in his area in 1807.

The arrangement, the design, the variety and the nuances of colour were particularly studied in the organisation of displays. It is a science really essential

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<sup>636</sup> *The Elements of Style: An Encyclopedia of Domestic Architectural Detail*, ed. by Stephen Calloway (Mitchell Beazley, 2002), p. 109. Ernest Burden, *Illustrated Dictionary of Architecture* (McGraw-Hill, 2002), p. 199.

<sup>637</sup> The marquee was valued at 30 fr., Mme Deloy, AP, D11U3/201, File 12487.

<sup>638</sup> Mme Melcion was recorded at this address in *Le Figaro*, 26 April 1826 and by 1833 at number 2 in the new Galerie d’Orléans that replaced it. *Almanach de Commerce*, 1833. ‘Les bonnets et les chapeaux de femmes sont exposé en étalage comme les jambons et les cervelas (Boulogne sausage) aux boutiques des charcutiers’. Louis Marie Prudhomme, *Miroir de l’Ancien et du Nouveau Paris*, (Paris: Prudhomme fils, 1804), pp. 72-73.

<sup>639</sup> ‘a des chapeaux en étalage, et c’est rarement un signe de bon ton’. *Almanach des Modes*, 1814.

<sup>640</sup> Mme Deloy, AP, D11U3/201, File, 12487.

for the salesman with responsibility for this area in boutiques and shops.<sup>641</sup>

In 1835 Frances Trollope wrote, ‘the shops and coffee houses have the air of fairy palaces’ demonstrating the good impression that facades and displays could create.<sup>642</sup> The costs of installation and refurbishment were a factor in insolvency and so testify to continuity in the importance of the aesthetic appearance of the premises to the success of the business. Meunier demonstrated his knowledge of the commercial imperatives by considering that he must ‘conform to an image of luxury’ presented by his competitors but lack of judgement when he decorated his shop in such a way that it absorbed all his ‘feeble resources’.<sup>643</sup>

Table 16 below shows similar improvements carried out for Mlle Richelandet in 1848 at her premises just north of the Boulevards and the high costs which represented a first hand’s annual salary.<sup>644</sup>

**Table 16. Refurbishments for Mlle Richelandet,  
3 bis Rue Lafitte.**

WORK COMPLETED
Carpentry
Metal work and locks
Decorative masonry
Painting
TOTAL COST 2,000 fr

<sup>641</sup> ‘La forme, le dessin, la variété et les nuances des couleurs sont singulièrement étudiés dans l’arrangement des étalages. C’est une science très essentielle pour le commis marchand chargé de cette partie dans les boutiques et magasins’. Rapport du maire du deuxième arrondissement, 1807, Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), F20 255 cited in Jean Tulard, *Nouvelle Histoire de Paris. Le Consulat et l’Empire*, p. 66.

<sup>642</sup> Frances Trollope, *Paris*, p. 112.

<sup>643</sup> One of the creditors was Boncorps, a mason (*entrepreneur de maçonnerie*) living at Vitry sur Seine who was owed 130 fr. M Meunier (AP), D11U3/211, File 12840.

<sup>644</sup> Mlle Richelandet, 21 January 1848, Archives de Paris (AP), D11U3/102, File 8072.

The interior layout of merchants' premises designated areas for production and sales along with space for domestic use and Balzac noted how this had changed in the fictional account of a perfumer.

The workshop for our people, in the attic! Passers-by shall no longer see them gumming on the labels, making the bags, sorting flasks, and corking the phials. Very well for the Rue Saint Denis, but for the Rue Saint Honoré – fy! bad style! Our shop must be as comfortable as a drawing room.<sup>645</sup>

The labour of production was not expected to be on show to consumers though in the less fashionable Rue Saint Denis this might still be acceptable. Birotteau modelled his shop on a domestic drawing room that would be visually pleasing and luxuriously 'comfortable'. He also planned to separate his domestic space for himself and his family implying that this was the goal for upwardly mobile merchants.<sup>646</sup> The evidence in the bankruptcy cases from 1830 to 1855 agrees with these developments in the commercial designation of 'salons' and the attempt to separate the space for living and working which could be on different storeys. The position of the rooms for selling and producing merchandise were not necessarily on the ground floor in Paris, as they were in London.

unprivate shops are only customary in London for at Paris all their finest shops are upstairs.<sup>647</sup>

The fashion merchants with the highest status clients were often located on the first floor such as Mme Corot at 1 Rue du Bac and Mme Barenne at 14 Place Vendôme. Privacy was also offered if premises were situated within a courtyard, as at Leroy's business in Hôtel Boutin. The lease that LeRoy signed in 1800 was for a suite

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<sup>645</sup> Honoré de Balzac, *Rise and Fall of César Birotteau*, trans. by Katharine Prescott Wormely (Republished Classics, 1837 repr. 2013), p. 7.

<sup>646</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-7.

<sup>647</sup> Stated by Matthew Boulton and cited in Carolyn Sargentson, *Merchants and Luxury Markets*, p. 133.

of rooms for business and personal use.<sup>648</sup> These were located on the first floor and second floor in the main building at the back of the courtyard – the most prestigious part of the maison, (*corp de logie*) plus two cellars. The main rooms were composed of an apartment on the first floor and this consisted of five large rooms and five smaller rooms that included a kitchen, bathroom and boudoir.

These rooms all received light from windows overlooking the courtyard and garden or the streets Rue de Ménars and Rue de Richelieu. On the second floor, there was a large room used as a wardrobe plus another narrow room. The ground floor is not mentioned in the lease so this may mean that the area for a boutique was in a separate contract. In 1802, Miss Berry had mentioned visiting the premises on the ground floor.<sup>649</sup>

Mme Pilon, LeRoy's former partner, lived and worked in expensive but slightly smaller premises on the first floor of 18 Rue de Rivoli comprising a *magasin* in two parts with a salon at the back, overlooking Rue de Rivoli and Place des Pyramides, a workroom (*laboratoire*) with two windows overlooking Place des Pyramides, an office and then seven other rooms including two bedrooms, a dining room, a kitchen and a bathroom plus two cellars.<sup>650</sup> These two examples, who had court clients, can be contrasted with Julien and Izambard, 4 Boulevard des Italiens, whose clientele was of a more middling and provincial level. Their premises although located on a fashionable street do not give the same impression of size and comfort. The accommodation consisted of a reception room, a shop (*magasin*), a salon, and a workroom plus five rooms including three bedrooms (two located on the fifth floor), a dining room and a kitchen. All the rooms were over the courtyard and not on the boulevard which, though private, would have been darker and with a

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<sup>648</sup> Lease as *principal locataire* for Hôtel Boutin, from 1 Nivose Year 9 (22 December, 1800) until 1 Nivose Year 15 (22 December, 1806), Document dated, 12 Prairial Year 10 (1 June 1802), Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/V/888.

<sup>649</sup> 'Journal, 16 March 1802', in *Extracts of the Journals and Correspondance of Miss Berry*, II, p. 136.

<sup>650</sup> Mme Pilon, AP, D11U3/74, File, 6529.

less attractive view. The *magasin* and the salon both appeared to be for the use of the clientele although the salon was next to the *atelier* on the entresol level which would have had a lower ceiling than the other storeys. It did at least have two windows whereas the storey of the *magasin* was not specified but it had only one window.<sup>651</sup> Advice to a young milliner in the 1880s demonstrates the continued importance attached to a cheerful and bright atmosphere, rather than a dark dingy room with a funereal ambience. The customer should not step from bright sunlight into a dark room.<sup>652</sup> The lighting of the interior with hanging lights, gas or oil lamps, and candles would have been a considerable cost to the business and so as much natural light as possible would have been economically sensible as well as giving a cheering atmosphere to promote sales.

Mme Deloy's premises had six gas lights of which three had bronze fittings and one was described as having the shape of a lyre showing that they were both practical and decorative.<sup>653</sup> The owner of the Galerie Vivienne, the notary Marchoux, had an arrangement with the gas company Pauvels so that if the tenant wished to light the premises with gas then they had to use this company.<sup>654</sup> Apart from the importance of light, nineteenth century merchants were advised that neatness, cleanliness and freedom from dust was important even if there was not enough capital to have the highest quality premises. This agrees with the findings of Claire Walsh who has studied the interiors of eighteenth century English merchants and found that neatness was important.<sup>655</sup> Roche considered that the eighteenth century commercial interiors revealed a 'feminine

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<sup>651</sup> Julien and Izambard, AP, D11U3/179, File 11646.

<sup>652</sup> Philo, *Letters to a Young Milliner*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>653</sup> Mme Deloy, AP, D11U3/201, File 12487.

<sup>654</sup> Lease of a boutique, Galerie Vivienne, 27 October 1827. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), MC/ET/XCIII/476.

<sup>655</sup> Claire Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in Eighteenth Century London', *Journal of Design History*, 8:3 (1995), 157-76.

space' and a 'scene of conspicuous calm' with 'a few trinkets on display' where a counter separated sales staff and customers.<sup>656</sup>

Figure 32 shows the interior of fashion merchants' premises from 1769 and 1840. They appear to show continuity in the main items of furniture such as counters and stools or chairs separating the buyer and seller, as described by Roche, but other sources provided more information. The sample of merchants revealed that there was often a unifying colour scheme supplied by the interior wall decoration, curtains and upholstered items. In 1842, a guidebook that recommended the best suppliers praised Mme Barenne and described her premises in Place Vendôme.

even the manner in which her lofty and noble saloons are arranged display an elegance of conception, there is a chasteness which pervades the whole, the furniture as well as the decorations of the room are either of white or ebony and gold, preserving that degree of keeping which is inseparable from a truly classical taste.<sup>657</sup>

Figure 33 gives an impression of the space, light and opulence of this salon that has similarities to the interior of M LeRoy's premises at Hôtel Boutin. The *hôtel*'s architect, Boffrand, was known for employing the best painters and workmen as well as a preference for oval and round forms that he used both in room shapes and corners. Figure 34 shows the decorative wood carving in the drawing of the dining room by Nicolas Pinceau and could explain why Auger said LeRoy's premises were like a 'fairy tale'.<sup>658</sup> Miss Berry was impressed with the suite of mahogany furniture and the elegant silk curtains 'purple lustring, festooned à l'antique with a deep orange fringe'.<sup>659</sup> Meunier also had a unifying colour scheme provided by bright red (*grenat*) upholstery contrasting with white

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<sup>656</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, p. 320.

<sup>657</sup> Francis Hervé, *How to Enjoy Paris*, pp. 126-27.

<sup>658</sup> 'Boffrand' in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. by Jane Turner, p. 226. Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 315. Emile Biais, *Les Pinceau, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs des Bâtiments du Roy, Graveurs, Architects, 1652 to 1886* (Paris, 1892), p. 158.

<sup>659</sup> 'Journal, 16 March 1802', in *Extracts of the Journals and Correspondance of Miss Berry*, II, pp. 136-37.

muslin embroidered curtains and dark mahogany furniture.<sup>660</sup> Not all inventories listed counters and there were differences in how much furniture was present as well as the number of more luxurious items such as gilt mirrors, pictures, frames, ornate clocks and pianos.

As an example of the continuity in the use of counters, in 1855 Mme Deloy had two large oak counters in her shop and there was another one at the back of the boutique with drawers that was probably used to store cash or details of credit sales. The mirror was another practical as well as decorative object needed by *marchandes de modes* and these could be various in number, shape and size. On a practical level, they reflected light into a room as well being necessary for fittings. The full-length *psyché* mirror was present in many inventories but not all. Mme Deloy had two mirrors measuring 1-10 m by 44 cm and one that was described as being in three pieces that together measured around 5 ½ feet high and 3 feet wide (1-66 m by 96 cm). This appears to be a cheaper way of providing customers the way to see their reflection full-length.<sup>661</sup> The furniture used by Mme Muller in 1854 was of better quality than reflected a higher-grade area and clientele on the Boulevard Beaumarchais.

Mme Muller's boutique opened onto the boulevard and inside there were no counters listed but instead there was a matching set of mahogany seats: a mahogany *tête-à-tête* and three matching chairs with green woollen damask covers. For the cash and details of sales there was a small mahogany desk with green top and four small drawers, two of which closed with a key for security. The level of quality in interiors varied and three examples will be analysed in more detail starting with Julien and M Izambard at 4 Boulevard des Italiens (1854) comparing it to that of Mlle Dezboroff in 1855, at 51 Rue de Luxembourg (Rue de Cambon). The Appendices 13 and 14

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<sup>660</sup> M Meunier, AP, D11U3/211, File 12840.

<sup>661</sup> Mme Deloy, AP, D11U3/201, File 12487.

list the rooms and contents that were considered as commercial furniture for the two businesses.

Julien and Izambard's business had an entrance or reception room but there was no real display, only practical items: an umbrella stand and 17 white wooden boxes. There was a difference between the type of furniture in the salon and the *magasin* although neither contained counters which could have been a deliberate strategy to create a domestic style interior more suitable to the space. Also, large counters may also have been considered an unnecessary expense. The salon and the *magasin* contained fireplaces that would provide some light and the comfort of a fire in the winter as well as simple muslin curtains but little that could be considered luxurious or decorative.<sup>662</sup> This room also had small carpets and the items of furniture to be found in a domestic interior such as a matching set of velvet covered seating and small tables. The most impressive item was a full-length sculpted and gilded *psyché* mirror and there was ample lighting in the room to assist at fittings. In contrast, the *magasin* contained very little comfort having simple unupholstered chairs and practical items such as a table and hats on stands creating a space mainly connected to storage and display that may also have been used as a workroom.

No room was designated as an atelier but merchandise in the form of headgear was found across the commercial and domestic space including the bedroom and dining room. This contained a walnut dining room table with eight chairs and a screen which may have been to separate from view 33 stands, 62 hats, 29 bonnets and *coiffures*. There were some marked differences to the inventory for Mlle Dezboroff's higher level interior particularly as the rooms for personal use had no items of merchandise or production listed

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<sup>662</sup> The word comfort is used in its modern sense here as 'well-being' rather than luxury. Annik Pardailhé-Galabrun has discussed the changing meanings attached to 'confort' and 'bien-être' in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Annik Pardailhé-Galabrun, *The Birth of Intimacy: Privacy and Domestic Life in Early Modern Paris* (Polity Press, 1991) p. 117.

demonstrating that to an extent she separated work from her living space.<sup>663</sup> However a mahogany piano and stool were listed as personal items in the salon showing that this was a multi-functional area. Although the receiver listed the merchandise in the *magasin* no items of furniture were recorded but there were two salons with a set of matching seating as well as tables and clocks and a workroom used for the business. They showed a wide range of high quality furniture which together were valued at double that listed for Julien and Izambard. In the small salon, there were two decorative stands supporting a display of artificial flowers under a glass dome. At an earlier period in 1830, Mme Pilon's interior presented the most luxurious collection of furniture amongst the bankruptcy cases some of which she had purchased from M LeRoy's estate in 1829 and these can be seen in Appendix 15.

Mme Pilon's business had a colour scheme of green and grey supplied by the curtains and upholstery and most of the furniture listed was of expensive mahogany with additional gilded decoration. Like Mlle Dezboroff, Mme Pilon owned a piano that was part of the salon's furniture and she had a clock by Thomire, probably part of LeRoy's original furnishings as Thomire also supplied Napoleon I's court. The description of the gilded mahogany furniture corresponds to the style fashionable at that time when his business also had visual reminders to customers that he supplied clothing to the Empress Josephine in the form of a bust and portraits.<sup>664</sup> These were part of the decorative elements of the interiors but also reminders to customers of the status of the merchants. The bankruptcy cases did not have these signs of royal patronage but they did demonstrate examples of interior display using floral decorations and objects that included hat stands, mannequins, boxes and structures for support that could also be decorative.

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<sup>663</sup> It must be noted that as the inventories were taken at a time of insolvency certain items may already have been sold or forfeited to creditors. It seems unusual that no lighting was recorded for Mlle Dezboroff.

<sup>664</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 153.

Philo's guide recommended show cases both in order to protect goods and as a way of displaying them in an attractive fashion.

Flowers and ribbons kept in boxes and put out and into them twenty times a day soon lose their freshness. A spray of flowers loses a bud or a leaf, a roll of light ribbon shows a finger mark and a reduction must be made from the price before a sale is affected.<sup>665</sup>

The importance of the 'freshness' of merchandise was stressed

Side or standing show cases for Hats and large articles are equally advantageous and in the end will repay their cost many times in preserving the stock from flies, dust and too much handling.<sup>666</sup>

This problem is illustrated by the example of Mlle Muller as her inventory listed 26 bouquets of artificial flowers, soiled and in a bad state which had been used for display.<sup>667</sup> She also had a large mahogany cabinet fitted with glass, drawers and shelves which would have been partly display and partly storage. Mme Deloy had a cheaper, lower grade of wood and a simpler type of furniture. In her boutique to the right of the entrance was a large oak display case (*montre*) and on the left, was a large *cassier* that had 80 large drawers with metal handles. There were 107 wooden hat stands (*champignons*) and a large rosewood hat stand (*porte chapeaux*) designated for display along with other metal hat stands (*champignons*). There was another rosewood stand for lace and two wicker baskets. Two dozen metal rods and metal display structures with branches were listed and shirts (*chemises*) were displayed on a cardboard structure showing that there were a variety of ways to display merchandise that were relatively inexpensive.<sup>668</sup> The more expensive heads (*têtes*) and life-sized mannequins were also available to nineteenth century fashion merchants.

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<sup>665</sup> Ibid., Philo, *Letters to a Young Milliner*, p. 9

<sup>666</sup> Ibid.

<sup>667</sup> Mlle Muller, AP, D11U3/189 File 12028.

<sup>668</sup> Mme Deloy, AP, D11U3/201, File 12487.

The higher status of Mme Pilon (Appendix 15) was demonstrated by her ownership of two mannequins and these had also been used by fashion merchants, like Rose Bertin, in the eighteenth century.<sup>669</sup> Figure 35 A, B, C shows how these developed including a rare surviving example from 1765 which was made of wood with the face painted in oils. It stands on a pedestal that could turn to enable a customer to see the complete garment from all angles. These figures were articulated and manufactured in the same way that they would be for artists. In the late eighteenth century, Paris became the European centre of their production and development with the aim of creating as ‘natural’ a mannequin as possible. Paul Huot produced what was called the ‘perfected mannequin’ but these figures were very expensive, as they took more than a year to manufacture, emphasising the prestige of the merchants that could afford them.<sup>670</sup> The availability of the highest-quality Parisian supplies was another significant aspect of how fashion merchants were able to enhance their reputations within the hierarchy of the trade.

I have shown in this section how the identity of locations and premises changed, in the use of images of royal patrons and the painted signs of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, to numbering and the use of the merchants’ names; female or male. The decorative façade or display of merchandise on the exterior also gradually changed to be replaced by large plate-glass windows that

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<sup>669</sup> The mannequins of Rose Bertin are noted in Janet Munro, *Mannequin d'Artiste, Mannequin Féliche*, trans. by Jean François Allain and others (Paris: Paris Musées, 2015), p. 39.

<sup>670</sup> The exhibitions on mannequins stated that there was no cheaper mass production of mannequins until the end of the nineteenth century when there were a few models to choose from but less choice than before. Exhibitions about the historical use of mannequins were held in England and France recently and resulted in publications. ‘Silent Partners: Artist and Mannequin from Function to Fetish’, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge from 14 October 2014 to 25 January 2015. Janet Munro, Alyce Mahon and Sally Woodcock, *Silent Partners: Artist and Mannequin from Function to Fetish* (Yale University Press, 2014). ‘Mannequin d'Artiste, Mannequin Féliche’, Musée Bourdelle, Paris, 1 April to 12 July 2015. Janet Munro, ‘Le Mannequin Réaliste: Invention et Évolution’, in *Mannequin d'Artiste, Mannequin Féliche*, trans. by Jean François Allain et al (Paris: Paris Musées, 2015), pp. 31-57.

used the visibility of merchandise to arrest the gaze of potential clients. Lighting and displays in shop windows enhanced the city's appeal, and could give the merchant a competitive advantage, but the decorations involved the skill of the merchant in judging what was affordable against the appropriate level of luxury for the clientele. There was a concern with privacy and comfort which meant first floor location, identified as a feature of Parisian commerce, or carriage entrances with courtyards. The interior plan of rooms also demonstrated these concerns and the skill of the merchant where in the highest status locations, from the late 1820s, production was to be moved out of sight. At the same time, there was a move away from neat retail premises with counters towards a more complex combination of rooms including salons and a luxurious domestic style of interior that varied in quality and comfort depending on the location and level of clientele. Lastly, I found that being able to afford the highest level of comfort in interiors and supplies, like mannequins, reinforced the fashion merchants' position within the trade hierarchy and the authority of Paris fashion.

## **Conclusion**

I have argued in this chapter that Paris was a vibrant city that between 1795 and 1855 went through significant positive changes in building projects and transport that helped to construct the image of the capital in terms unrelated to the court. Importantly, this was before the grand urban plan was introduced under Hausmann and the impact of the railways or the department stores during Napoleon III's empire.

The first section found that Old Regime associations made the Left Bank less fashionable whilst the Right Bank housed commerce but also the new moneyed elite. Many of the improvements were pedestrian friendly and the new commercial centres encouraged the middling level consumers. Court customers and carriage clients were still catered for with privacy considered and deference given.

However, I found proximity to the court to be less important in the period studied as businesses moved north and west of the Tuilleries. I found that fashion merchants and consumers lived in close proximity in a way that was connected by lifestyle but where relations in commerce were controlled by social traditions of hierarchy. This impacted on the reasons for the city to be navigated although the flow of people and goods in and out of the city was also connected to sales opportunities in the provinces and abroad. I found that being identified as a Parisian fashion merchant also made these journeys commercially viable.

In the second section, my analysis of three surveys revealed what constituted a 'good' location between 1804 and 1855 and how skill was needed in choosing an appropriate place. I found that though there was an increasing range of areas and range of premises available, fashions changed as the wealthy elite moved west and north. Costs for the most fashionable areas were high and although location was important to business success the bankruptcy cases demonstrated merchants could not always afford the luxury provided by their competitors. There were some clusters of merchants in the fashionable areas but I also found that merchants were located across most of the *arrondissements* of Paris. This demonstrated that there were now local markets and that fashion merchants' merchandise had become both a luxury and a necessity.

Finally, in this chapter I found that on the exterior of their premises female and male fashion merchants moved away from the use of signs to numbers and names. There was a similar move away from a decorative façade, associated with eighteenth century shops to a display seen through large glass windows. Display inside the premises was simple apart from mannequins and hat stands for merchandise and the identity of the business relied more on the quality and comfort of commercial spaces that were similar to domestic salons whilst production was placed away from the customer's gaze. In the final chapter, I will examine the way fashion

merchants were able to employ different promotional strategies to build their reputations, status and visibility.

## **Chapter 4. Fashioning Promotion: Opportunities for Display and Persuasion.**

In this final chapter, I will argue that during the first half of the nineteenth century there were a growing range of opportunities for fashion merchants to promote and advertise their businesses contrary to the general stance taken by historians, such as Coffin, Williams and Wischermann that have stressed changes after the 1850s.<sup>671</sup> Furthermore, these were not all dependent on court clients although they continued to provide opportunities for some elite merchants. Different regimes gave their use of luxury clothing a political significance which provided fashion merchants with more publicity as together they created distinct appearances for their courts. However, I posit that the style authority awarded to fashion merchants increased so that by the 1830s they were less dependent on elite court clients to develop a reputation. A visitor illustrates this key point in the quote below.

Nothing short of the creative genius of the French could contrive to give, again and again, a new form to things the most common. In vain do females of other countries attempt to vie with them; in articles of tasteful fancy they still remain unrivalled. From Paris these studious mistresses of invention give laws to the polished world. After passing to London, Berlin, Hamburg, and Vienna, their models of fashion are disseminated all over Europe [...] Thus, the fold given to a piece of muslin or velvet, the form impressed on a ribband, by the hand of an ingenious French milliner, is repeated among all nations.<sup>672</sup>

Blagdon's comment on the reputation of Parisian millinery (*modes*) drew attention to creativity ('creative genius'), novelty ('new form') and taste ('tasteful fancy' and 'give laws') defining them as the dominant force in that clothing sector across Europe. This constant creation of novelty in goods, defined by the economist Marina Bianchi as 'a mismatch between present and past

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<sup>671</sup> Judith Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work*; Rosalind H. Williams, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth Century France*; Clemens Wischermann, 'Placing Advertising in the Modern Cultural History of the City', *Advertising and the European City: Historical Perspectives*, ed. by Clemens Wischermann and Elliot Shore (Ashgate, 2000).

<sup>672</sup> Francis William Blagdon, 'Letter LII, 18 January 1802', *Paris As It Was*, (1803), II, pp. 181-82.

'experience' was a force for stimulating consumer demand.<sup>673</sup> Blagdon also commented on the speed that fashion changed, saying 'a fashion here does not last a week' explaining that a French woman of 'bon ton' must appear in something new and different from other people.<sup>674</sup> Individuals who transmitted ideas about fashion and their merchants through letters and conversation were important to building a reputation.<sup>675</sup> Professional women also made the journey to Paris from Britain attracted by the city's reputation for fashionable merchandise. An example from a small town in Scotland demonstrates the capital's continued significance. Between the 1860s and 1920 the owner of the clothiers and drapers *Mochrie's* in Stenhousemuir travelled to Paris to gather intelligence on fashionable clothing and headgear.

The old lady [Margaret Mochrie] had no fear of travelling long distances, and up to a few years ago made the journey to London and Paris as clock work in order to secure for her customers the very latest fashions.<sup>676</sup>

This business offered fashionable clothing and headgear to its customers and shows that despite other methods of gaining information it was still deemed important to physically be in the capital city, visiting different premises, seeing and probably purchasing some items. The movement of people was further stimulated in large numbers by special events where French textiles, clothing, headgear and accessories were placed on display: from a royal or imperial wedding to national and international industry exhibitions. In 1851 over 6 million people visited London's Great Exhibition including, 58,427 foreigners and in 1855 Paris's industry exhibition received over 5 million people.<sup>677</sup> New opportunities were

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<sup>673</sup> *The Active Consumer: Novelty and Surprise in Consumer Choice*, ed. by Marina Bianchi (Routledge, 1998), p. 2.

<sup>674</sup> Francis William Blagdon, 'Letter LII, 18 January 1802', *Paris As It Was*, p. 182.

<sup>675</sup> This was discussed by Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, 'French Connections: Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire, and the Anglo-French Fashion Exchange', *Dress*, 31 (2004), 12.

<sup>676</sup> This redoubtable lady's business which she ran with her husband passed to her two daughters. An obituary notice for Margaret Mochrie, born 1834 and died 1920 was placed in *The Falkirk Herald*, 3 January 1920.

<sup>677</sup> Between 1 April and 30 September 1851, the visitors included 27,236 from France, Germany 10,440 visitors, U.S. 5,048, Belgium 3,796 and Holland 2,952 visitors. *First Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851*, Appendix, 24, IX, p. 113. Figures for the 1855 exhibition were given in Wolfram Kaiser, 'Vive la France! Vive la

present in the form of these industry exhibitions as will be shown in this chapter. However, I will begin by showing that supplying court clients for high-profile events continued as an accepted method to publicise a fashion merchants' elite status in the hierarchy of merchants. This will be studied through focusing on orders for two elite trousseaux from the regimes of Napoleon I and Louis XVIII. In the second section, I reveal how the fashion merchants were represented in the national and international exhibitions and how this demonstrated their significance to a wide social level of consumers. The final section shows how fashion merchants took opportunities to promote their businesses through an increasing range of printed literature from trade directories and bill heads to the new use of trade cards and advertisements in the press.

### **Displaying Luxury: Imperial and Royal Trousseaux.**

In this section, I will show how, in post-revolutionary France, there were new ways as well as traditional ways that court trousseaux were promotional opportunities for fashion merchants. To do this, I will focus on the weddings of Napoleon I to Archduchess Marie Louise (1811), and after the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty, the duc de Berry to Princess Marie Caroline of Two Sicilies (1816). In exploring their significance as events, as well as lucrative commercial orders, I am responding to the analysis of the court historian, Mansel, who has noted a different approach to public and private events by the regimes of Napoleon I and Louis XVIII.<sup>678</sup> Through studying these commissions, I will analyse how these regime differences are revealed as well as how they highlighted the reputation of a fashion merchant. I will show that this was achieved through the clothing, the trade and their individual association with two regimes' use of authority and spectacle.

Firstly, I will analyse the meaning and traditions around the trousseau and *corbeille* in France with how these were promoted by the fashion press. Next, I will examine the publicity around the marriage *corbeille* for the

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République? The Cultural Construction of French Identity at the world Exhibitions in Paris 1855 to1900', *National Identities*, 1:3 (1999), 227.

<sup>678</sup> Philip Mansel, *Louis XVIII* and for Napoleon I, *The Eagle in Splendour*.

Archduchess Marie Louise. Finally, I will investigate the value of the more public promotional opportunities connected to the marriage and *corbeille* of Princess Marie-Caroline. These included the princess's reception by Louis XVIII on French soil, the wedding in Notre Dame Cathedral and the public display of her *corbeille* and trousseau.

The trousseau was traditionally regarded as a prestigious possession treasured by rich and poor alike. In France, there were two words for this collection of wedding items: *trousseau* and *corbeille*. *Trousseau* derives from 'tourse' meaning the bringing together of things, particularly clothes and household linen; given by the parents of the woman and forming part of her dowry.<sup>679</sup> The marriage *corbeille* was given by the future husband and, when there was a royal wedding, by the king or emperor. It was an opportunity to display wealth and taste and was generally made up of clothing and accessories such as fans, gloves, jewellery and hats.

The objects making up both the *trousseau* and the *corbeille* were traditionally displayed to friends and family between the signing of the wedding contract and the day of the wedding itself. The two terms however were not clearly defined and documents of the early nineteenth century used both interchangeably. The *corbeille* also referred to an ornate piece of furniture (marriage coffer) used to store the wedding gifts along with the smaller *sultan* which might contain scented gloves, fans and lace. These gifts connected to marriage signified the transition from youth to adulthood for a woman and also were a demonstration of status.<sup>680</sup> Rank was associated with the monetary value as well as the number, range and quality of the objects. Fashion merchants and other clothing suppliers listed these special orders as part of their merchandise and fashion journals gave advice on the kind and number of articles it should contain; for a variety of budgets. When the *corbeille* was displayed, a journal said that it should be decoratively arranged using

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<sup>679</sup> The word *trousseau* originates from 1175 to 1225 and the middle French words *troussel* or *trousse* meaning parcel or bundle <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/trousseau> [accessed 12 September 2015].

<sup>680</sup> Susan Hiner, 'Unpacking the Corbeille de Marriage' in *Accessories to Modernity: Fashion and the Feminine in Nineteenth Century France* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), pp. 45-76. Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*, pp. 155 and 265.

bouquets of artificial flowers, which echoed retail practices.<sup>681</sup> The containers, *sultans* and *corbeilles* were also expected to be ornamental and in the early nineteenth century the fashion merchant supplied these items. They were covered in silk fabric that was trimmed or embroidered and this may be why they were part of their merchandise rather than that of a cabinet maker who made travel cases (*necessaires*).<sup>682</sup> The table below shows the items recommended for a *corbeille* in a fashion journal.

**Table 17. The Marriage Corbeille in *Almanach des Modes*, 1814.**

NO OF ITEMS	TYPE OF ITEM	VALUE
1	Corbeille, with lace and pearls	2,400
1	Necessaire	2,400
8	Dresses including 1 of cashmere	7,800
4	Cashmere shawls	10,000
	Lace, flowers, gloves, fans, purses (with 200 dble Napoleons), hankies	12,300
	Jewellery and buttons, including diamonds, emeralds and pearls	37,400
	TOTAL VALUE	72,300 fr

The journal has listed luxury materials such as cashmere and lace as well as accessories with precious stones and further advised the use of a carriage drawn by two beautiful horses ‘to carry to my betrothed the tribute of my love’, costing an extra 12,000 fr. The total amount for the trousseau suggested by the journal is vast in contrast to the 3,000 fr allocated by the fashion merchant Mme Corot (Sennegon) to her daughters.<sup>683</sup> By equating the quality of marriage gifts to the level of

<sup>681</sup> *Almanach des Modes* (Paris, 1821), p. 56.

<sup>682</sup> A surviving silk *corbeille de mariage* belonging to the Empress Josephine is part of the collection of the Musée National des Châteaux de Malmaison et Bois-Préau. This was displayed in the exhibition ‘Joséphine’, Paris, Musée du Luxembourg, 12 March to 29 June 2014. *Joséphine Intime: L’Album de l’Exposition*, ed. by Christophe Pincemaille and Amaury Lefébure (Paris: RMN, 2014), p. 77.

<sup>683</sup> The four daughters of Mlle Corot and M Sennegon married between 1832 and 1844. Marriage contracts between Marie Sennegon and Toussaint Lemaitre, AN, C/ET/I/860, Marie Louise Sennegon and Philibert Baudot, AN, MC/ET/I/871, Marie Dorothée Sennegon and François Chamouillet, AN, MC/ET/I/886 and Louise Sennegon and Christophe Charmois, AN, MC/ET/1002.

affection the journal was illustrating an ideal which was also represented by court trousseaux. These marriage gifts had large budgets as they represented the prestige of the regime and in the marriages of Napoleon I and the duc de Berry they were 5 million fr and 1.5 million fr, respectively.<sup>684</sup> Both marriages were strategic, politically significant events because they were motivated by the desire to continue their dynastic lines. The two grooms were men of about 40 marrying in order to produce an heir which necessitated partners that were twenty years younger, in both cases aged 18. Youth and high rank made Marie Louise and Marie-Caroline assets as clients who could promote the businesses of fashion merchants. The clothing given to them was part of the new French visual identity that was to be created for the foreign brides.

An imperial or royal trousseau was of interest beyond the family circle of a normal wedding. Unlike most orders the suppliers, including the fashion merchant, had not met the prospective brides and, as far as is known, the brides had no input into the design and type of clothing being produced. This meant that the trousseaux and corbeilles were evidence of the creativity and skill of the merchants and their employees possibly with some suggestions from family and regime members, because of their political significance.<sup>685</sup> The general public could read about the trousseau, see images of the bride and groom and sometimes have the opportunity to see the items. Napoleon I and Louis XVIII encouraged competition amongst merchants by forcing suppliers to exhibit their merchandise to a small group of people in order for the products to be judged and evaluated. Merchants were subjected to the opinion of competitors in their field as well as civil servants. These complex relationships between fashion merchants and different regimes between 1810 and 1816 will be examined next in order to consider how the

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<sup>684</sup> Frédéric Masson, *L'Impératrice Marie-Louise* (Paris: Joyant et cie, 1902), p. 44. Vicomte de Reiset, *Marie-Caroline, Duchesse de Berry, 1816-1830* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1906), p. 33.

<sup>685</sup> For example, in 1807 when the *corbeille* was ordered from LeRoy for Jerome Bonaparte's wedding to Catherine of Württemberg the designs and content were supervised by Jerome and the Empress Josephine. AN, 0/2/31. This *corbeille* is discussed in All That Glitters...LeRoy and Embroidery, *Text: for the Study of Textile Art, Design and History*, 24, (1996), 17-21.

reputation of a fashion merchant was constructed and how valuable court orders were to them as a promotional tool.

The pragmatism of clothing suppliers was shown when, after Napoleon divorced Empress Josephine in 1809, her suppliers worked for the state and created Archduchess Marie Louise's trousseau and *corbeille*. A proxy marriage took place on 11 March 1810, in Vienna, between the eldest daughter of the Emperor of Austria and Napoleon I. Her appearance and style of dress was of great interest to those in Paris and Metternich wrote

once she is well dressed and her hair arranged,  
she should be quite charming.<sup>686</sup>

This quote illustrates the contemporary belief in the superiority of French clothing and the expectation that the empress would patronise the leading fashion merchants and other suppliers. The protocols for the wedding were to be modelled on those of the marriage of the future Louis XVI to the Archduchess Marie Antoinette, Marie-Louise's great aunt.<sup>687</sup> Some of the clothing and accessories were sent from Paris so that when Marie Louise arrived in Altheim for the formal handing-over ceremony, she changed into French clothing, confirming her French identity. Mme de Chastenay recorded the interest shown in the event.

Nothing else is talked of but Marie-Louise's trousseau and its magnificence.<sup>688</sup>

The civil marriage ceremony took place on 1 April at the Château of Saint-Cloud and the next day the couple drove in the coronation coach, with a large military escort through the Bois de Boulogne and the Etoile. At the Palace of the Louvre, the religious marriage ceremony was held and was an elite, private affair.

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<sup>686</sup> Barbara Scott, 'An Imperial Trousseau: The Marriage of Marie-Louise and Napoleon I', *Country Life*, 24 December 1981, p. 2266.

<sup>687</sup> Frédéric Masson, *L'Impératrice Marie-Louise*, p. 37.

<sup>688</sup> 'On ne s'occupa; plus que du trousseau et de sa magnificence'. Barbara Scott, 'An Imperial Trousseau', p. 2267. *Mémoires de Mme de Chastenay*, 1771-1815, 2 vols (Paris: Alphonse Roserot, 1896-97), II, p. 116.

primarily a court ceremony, celebrated in the chapel of one of the Emperor's palaces rather than in the cathedral of Paris. It was watched by Napoleon's court and by selected well-dressed Parisians, not by the public.<sup>689</sup>

The wedding dress was part of the *corbeille* and Marie Louise wore the embroidered velvet mantle of an empress originally created by LeRoy for Josephine. The cost of the *trousseau* and *corbeille*, which included fine jewellery, cost Napoleon 5,000,000 fr.<sup>690</sup> No records survive that say that the contents of the *corbeille* were displayed to the public, despite their interest, although a range of people would have either seen the items or heard about them. These included the merchants and their employees, the household of Marie Louise including Mlle Aubert, the woman responsible for the Empress's wardrobe (*garde d'atours*), and Napoleon's Intendante Générale's bureau who organised the evaluation. Information about the clothing and jewellery given as part of this gift, plus other presents, was also recorded in all the European newspapers. Two items have survived: one is a red cashmere court train given to the new Empress by Mehemet Ali, Sultan of Turkey and the other is a blonde lace and silver court dress (*grand habit de cour*) which is thought to have been supplied by the fashion merchant, LeRoy.<sup>691</sup> Documents give the names of all the suppliers and how the evaluation (*expertise*) was conducted showing that this was a very particular kind of exhibition with quite negative connotations for those involved. It was a judgement that generally led to a reduction in price and therefore in the profit of the merchant.

The clothing suppliers were divided into different groups for the *trousseau* or the *corbeille*. For the former, the linen drapers L'Olive de Beuvry was

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<sup>689</sup> The intimacy of the ceremony was portrayed in the painting by Georges Rouget, 'The Marriage of Napoleon I and Marie Louise of Austria, 2 April 1810', Versailles, Musée National du Château. Philip Mansel, *The Eagle in Splendour*, p. 56.

<sup>690</sup> Napoleon set amounts for the *trousseau* as 120,000 fr, the *corbeille* as 100,000 fr and shawls as 80,000 fr, Frédéric Masson, *L'Impératrice Marie-Louise*, p. 44.

<sup>691</sup> The lace historian Anne Kratz noted that this dress was likely to have been part of the *corbeille* supplied by LeRoy. It fits the description of an outfit in LeRoy's invoice described as 'un grand habit de blonde, chenille, argent'. This outfit and the cashmere court train are both held in the Palais Galliera, Musée de la Mode et du Costume de la Ville de Paris. Anne Kratz, *Dentelle* (Paris: Adam Biro, 1988), p. 111. LeRoy's invoice, Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), O/2/41.

the main supplier and, for the latter, LeRoy was the main merchant. Various companies provided lace, shawls and footwear, as can be seen below.

**Table 18. Suppliers for part of Marie Louise's Trousseau and Corbeille, 1810.**

LACE	CASHMERE SHAWLS	FOOTWEAR
L'Olive de Beuvry	Herbault = 3	Tessier = stockings
Lesueur	Corbie = 10	Janssen = shoes
Lenormand	Lenormand = 5	
LeRoy		

Other suppliers provided jewellery (Nitot), travel cases (Biennais) and fans but the table shows that, whilst linen drapers supplied the trousseau, LeRoy supplied clothing, headgear and accessories for the *corbeille*. His business supplied 41 gowns of different kinds including the wedding dress, 12 *redingottes*, 1 fur trimmed pelisse and 6 riding outfits. Then there were three *fichus*, 4 veils and 12 trimmings with large amounts of other accessories such as 60 dozen gloves and 2 dozen fans. Lastly the headgear which was simply designated as *modes* (for 3,000 fr) plus 2 dozen *coiffures* and bouquets.<sup>692</sup> This major order for a high-profile client would have resulted in worthwhile profits for the business and emphasised LeRoy's continued elite status in the hierarchy of merchants. It was a public acknowledgement that he remained the supplier to the new Empress of France as he had previously been *marchand de modes* to the Empress Josephine. The position of supplier to the imperial court was not secure, as in 1808 LeRoy had lost an order to supply the *corbeille* for the Princess d'Aremberg because he had refused to submit to the evaluation. He had also complained about the unfairness of the procedure in 1807 when he supplied the *corbeille* for Princess Catherine

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<sup>692</sup> *Corbeille* and evaluation for Archduchess Marie Louise, 1810, AN, O/2/30 and O/2/41. Marie-Louise as a client is discussed in Fiona Ffoulkes, 'Louis Hippolyte LeRoy, 1763-1829: Grandfather of Haute Couture', pp. 69-71 and Appendix 10.

of Würtemberg at the time of her marriage to Napoleon I's brother, Prince Jerome Bonaparte.<sup>693</sup>

Perhaps having tested the limits of his status and privileges, there is no evidence that, in June 1810, LeRoy protested about the *expertise*. The draft of a letter to the comtesse de Lucay, lady-in-waiting responsible for the Empress's clothing (*dame d'atours*), stated that on the orders of the Emperor no payments to the suppliers could be made until the appraisal had taken place.<sup>694</sup> Each *métier* had two different 'experts' from the same field, totalling eight in all, and there were two female fashion merchants selected to evaluate the work of LeRoy: Mlle Louvet and Mme Lasnier, Rue de la Féronnerie. Letters were sent out to inform LeRoy and the other merchants that their presence would be required at the Palace of St Cloud, making it clear that this was a compulsory event. The report stated that the reason for the *expertise* was 'to determine the amount, quality and price of the objects'.<sup>695</sup>

LeRoy attended two sessions on the 5 and 6 June and later the total for goods submitted was reduced by 2,230 fr, from 129,226 fr to 126,996 fr.<sup>696</sup> Not all his merchandise was reduced, notably the white velvet *corbeille* (marriage coffer) that was decorated with embroidery, and other ornaments, and the wedding gown; both retained the value of 12,000 fr each.<sup>697</sup> The 13 cashmere shawls provided by Corbie and Herbault all held their price (total 25,300 fr) but most objects received some kind of reduction. The comment was made next to Corbie's name that the shawls had been correctly priced (*étaient portés à leur juste valeur*) but other items just said 'reduced after the valuation'. The purpose of the exhibition was to judge the suppliers for the quality of their company's design and handwork plus the merchant's honesty in setting a fair price for their merchandise. Unlike an industry exhibition, there was no

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<sup>693</sup> Correspondance concerning the *corbeille* shows that the order was switched to Lenormand whose goods were less expensive. AN, O/2/30. The marriage *corbeille* for Princess Catherine, AN, O/2/31.

<sup>694</sup> AN, O/2/41.

<sup>695</sup> 'de constater les quantités qualités et prix des objets', Ibid.

<sup>696</sup> Ibid.

<sup>697</sup> Ibid.

element of choice in whether to submit to the evaluation. If there was any motive to encourage production, it was only through a spirit of competition to gain the order. Cost was emphasised, stressing that merchants should keep profit margins low. The system also had the embarrassment factor of the judgement of peers that merchants did not necessarily respect; as in the case of LeRoy. The series of celebrations around the marriage to Marie Louise were lavish but generally took place under the gaze of the imperial family and the court.<sup>698</sup> Another opportunity to promote luxury clothing was offered under the court of LXVIII with the additional advantage of a public display of the royal *corbeille*.

The marriage of the duc de Berry had enormous significance to the restored Bourbon dynasty because the continuation of the royal line depended on it. Louis XVIII returned to the throne after the defeat of Napoléon I and the succession was seen as vital to the stability of the restored dynasty. Louis XVIII was childless and his heirs were his brother, comte d'Artois and his brother's sons the duc d'Angoulême and the duc de Berry (1778-1820). As the duc and duchesse d'Angoulême were childless the duc de Berry's marriage was expected to produce heirs. His future bride Marie-Caroline (1798-1870) was his cousin, chosen from another branch of the Bourbon house. She was the daughter of the King of Naples and Two-Siciles and both parts of the family were descended from Louis XIV. This union generated a series of public, high profile events that contributed to the publicity value for all the suppliers of luxury goods including the fashion merchant. In June 1816, a newspaper article stated that Madame Guérin, *marchande de modes*, had been 'trusted with all that concerned the *modes* and the *corbeille*', significantly for the status of the trade, she was the only supplier to be named.<sup>699</sup>

Louis XVIII and his ministers organised formal events using luxury to remind the public of the family's link to the *ancien régime* whilst

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<sup>698</sup> Ségur, who had planned the coronation, was responsible for organising the wedding. Along with state banquets and receptions for domestic and foreign officials there was an appearance on the balcony of the palace, Philip Mansel, *The Eagle in Splendour*, p. 56.

<sup>699</sup> *Le Moniteur Universel*, 3 and 4 June 1816.

attempting to temper possible accusations of extravagance with prudence and acts of charity. When the Chamber of Deputies awarded the event a budget of 1,500,000 fr the king stated that there would be no pointless splendour or ostentation and instead of the proposed fireworks to celebrate the union Louis preferred that the money was spent on giving dowries to 15 female orphans.<sup>700</sup> The protocol for the events around the wedding celebrations were based on those of the *ancien régime* including Louis XVIII's marriage to Marie-Joséphine in 1771.<sup>701</sup> Mansel has commented that the king showed 'a constant desire to bring his court into contact with the public' and the events and displays to celebrate the marriage of the duc de Berry support this idea in contrast to the more private approach of Napoleon I.<sup>702</sup>

On the 24 April 1816, in the cathedral of Naples, the duke and Marie-Caroline were married by proxy with the blessing of Cardinal Ruffo, the archbishop of Naples. After the ceremony, the city was illuminated by fireworks and the royal party celebrated with an official dinner and a gala at the Frondo theatre. Whilst Caroline was preparing for her departure the *corbeille* of clothing that was to be offered by Louis XVIII was already in preparation with an invoice from the fashion merchant Mme Guerin showing the date 27 April.<sup>703</sup> On 14 May, the new duchess left by ship for France with an entourage, all the while exchanging letters with the duke. In one of the letters he mentioned that he had seen the wedding *corbeille* that the king had given her and expressed the hope that she would be happy with it 'there is especially a ball dress that I will be charmed to see my adorable little wife wearing'.<sup>704</sup> The duke saw the duchess's clothing as demonstrating her status and as a reflection of his own. During their marriage, he maintained an interest in her appearance and her clothing suppliers.<sup>705</sup> Reputation and personal recommendation was important in how merchants were selected as was shown in the four names of the

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<sup>700</sup> Vicomte de Reiset, *Marie-Caroline, Duchesse de Berry*, p. 33 and p. 35.

<sup>701</sup> The marriage expenses of the duc de Berry, AN, O/3/804.

<sup>702</sup> Philip Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, p. 338.

<sup>703</sup> The marriage expenses of the duc de Berry, AN, O/3/804.

<sup>704</sup> Vicomte de Reiset, *Marie-Caroline, Duchesse de Berry*, p. 26.

<sup>705</sup> The duke's involvement with his wife's appearance was also discussed in chapter 3.

*lingères* under consideration for the *corbeille*: Mme Colliau, Mlle Lebeuf and L’Olive de Beuvry & co. plus M. Lesueur.<sup>706</sup>

The documents had comments next to some of the names with the most information given for Mlle Leboeuf who it was said was known to the duc de Maillé, the comtesse de Sérent and the comtesse de Montmorency. She had also supplied the *Maison de Monsieur* and even the king until 1792. L’Olive de Beuvry & co, who had supplied the trousseau of Marie-Louise, were recommended by the Prince de Poix for their ‘beautiful merchandise’.<sup>707</sup> The final choice left out this last business and that of Lesueur and in the choice of fashion merchant LeRoy was also passed over in favour of Mme Guerin. These three traders had all supplied the court of Napoleon I but then Mme Minette was chosen as one of the linen suppliers and she had also served the previous court. LeRoy was the fashion merchant for the duchesse d’Angoulême at the Restoration but a humorous story by Thomas Moore in 1818, *The Fudge Family in Paris*, suggested that he was no longer fashionable as he was still identified with the Bonapartists.<sup>708</sup> However, after the marriage the duc de Berry engaged LeRoy to dress his new wife as he thought that she did not appear to the same advantage as the duchesse d’Angoulême.<sup>709</sup> Although nothing is recorded, the prices charged by the different suppliers may also have been a determining factor in the decision.

The overall cost of the trousseau was carefully monitored and the goods supplied were evaluated and slightly reduced.<sup>710</sup> Despite the negative associations of the evaluation process, in this instance, the merchants had another more the public opportunity to display their merchandise. Demonstrating that it was more important to promote the superiority of French products and the regime’s taste, than to please the duchess, many of the public saw and assessed her clothing before the bride herself. The newspapers announced that from the 13 May the trousseau

<sup>706</sup> No similar notes survived in the file for the consideration of the *marchandes de modes*. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), O/3/803.

<sup>707</sup> Ibid.

<sup>708</sup> Thomas Moore, *The Fudge Family in Paris* (London: Longman 1818), p. 135.

<sup>709</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 156.

<sup>710</sup> AN, O/3/803 and O/3/804.

would be available to be viewed at the Hôtel de l'Intendance des Menus-Plaisirs, 22 Avenue de Paris, Versailles.<sup>711</sup> Such a display before the new duchess had even arrived in France would have helped to create excitement and anticipation for the marriage at a time when the regime of Louis XVIII was still in its early phase with a need for public support. It was also a method of demonstrating how the money allocated had been spent whilst at the same time showing the political link with England plus support and patronage of French products and particular merchants. The exhibition had been slightly delayed which added to the mounting excitement in the country.

When can we see the trousseau? Where can we see the trousseau? Have you got tickets to see the trousseau? <sup>712</sup>

The opening day was reserved for the royal family, the second for the court and French nobility and then the four following days were for those who had 'enough influence and credit' to obtain tickets from the Tuilleries; implying that there was some vetting of those that could attend.<sup>713</sup> Lady Morgan described the excited and noisy reaction of the crowd who were finally let into the exhibition after queuing for two hours and having to pass through a hallway, mount the grand staircase and pass through four barriers with armed soldiers. After what she described as, the most dangerous and frightening event she had ever seen, Lady Morgan arrived at the 'sanctum sanctorum of the royal toilette'.

a long suite of beautiful rooms [...] whose lofty walls were thickly covered with *robes* of every hue, tint, web and texture; from the imperial drapery of coronation-splendour, to the simple *robe-de-chambre* of British lace and British muslin; from the diamond coronet to the *bonnet-de-nuit*.<sup>714</sup>

Lady Morgan said that there were not dozens of articles of female dress, but hundreds. She compared the spectacle with the period of Louis XIV when a lavish trousseau was supplied to the favourite royal niece Mlle

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<sup>711</sup> It was said that the exhibition would be delayed at least until the 20 June.  
*Le Moniteur Universel*, 13 May 1816.

<sup>712</sup> Lady Morgan, *La France*, 2 vols (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1817), II, p. 280.

<sup>713</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>714</sup> Lady Morgan, *La France*, p. 281.

D'Aubigné on her marriage to the duc de Noailles. This was probably a deliberate act by Louis XVIII and testified to the continued quality of nineteenth century clothing. Apart from the official trousseau other items were donated including twenty-one robes given by the Commerce de Lyons and fourteen other companies or individuals such as the silk weaver, Grand Frères, and embroidery designer Bony. The display had a theatrical setting designed with raised areas, arches and curtains. It was decorated with large amounts of taffeta mainly in green with some white and pink, trimmed with braid and fringing.<sup>715</sup> Mirrors and glass were supplied and the main items of display and decoration were composed of the two *corbeilles*, 4 *sultans*, 1 *jardinière*, artificial flowers and the fashion merchant Mme Guerin supplied 18 hat stands plus a range of containers and boxes.<sup>716</sup>

The newspaper account praised the taste shown in the exhibition and gave a detailed description of the last salon where the *corbeille* was placed, for impact, at a higher level on a stage. There were many visual references to the house of Bourbon and the royal bride and groom. The drawings and paintings adorning the walls referred to the home of Princess Marie Caroline with temples, grottos and bridges from Naples and Sicily. The symbol of the Bourbons, the lily, and the arms and the monograms of the duc and duchesse de Berry were used in the decoration. On a white marble stage, there was a pedestal covered in crimson velvet and embroidered with an enormous lily which had silver flowers and golden leaves. Here the *corbeille* was displayed which again had been given the form of a lily made of white and silver velvet. Beside it, there were stands laden with garlands of flowers and cashmere fabric. Then placed at the sides of the salon the pink satin *sultan* and the gold embroidered crimson bag for the duchess's prayer book (*sac d'église*) were positioned.<sup>717</sup> This was a display of luxury emphasising royal

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<sup>715</sup> M Fazy supplied the silk fabrics: 385 *aunes* of green taffeta, 30 *aunes* of white taffeta and 15 *aunes* of pink taffeta plus pink *gros de naples*. Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), O/3/297.

<sup>716</sup> AN, O/3/297

<sup>717</sup> *Le Moniteur Universel* 3 and 4 June, 1816 and Lady Morgan, *La France*, p. 281.

lineage in Europe, and French commercial *savoir faire* shown by the *Le Moniteur's* report.

The state's newspaper praised the invention of French industry in the realm of women's clothing and when the royal family toured the display it was stated that the duc and duchesse d'Angoulême and the duc de Berry paid particular attention to the French items and stopped to speak to the suppliers.<sup>718</sup> Lady Morgan referred to their presence too, saying that the rooms were 'under the surveillance of the priests and priestesses of the toilette'.<sup>719</sup> This shows that the merchants used the opportunity to be personally identified by members of the public with their merchandise and could have handed out business cards and spoken to potential clients. Appendix 16 shows the 13 suppliers of clothing for the *corbeille* with headgear plus accessories such as fans and gloves produced by the fashion merchant Mme Guerin.<sup>720</sup> If assessed according to the value of goods supplied, Mme Guerin was fourth highest above the *couturières* but lower than two linen drapers and Fazy who supplied fabric. However, this shows the financial benefits to a business of the special order. During the time that the *corbeille* was being scrutinised, the new duchess left Naples by ship for France on 14 May and arrived at Marseille where she then had to spend ten days in quarantine.

The official entrance of the duchess into the city took place on 30 May with associated presentations and celebrations.<sup>721</sup> Figure 36 shows that this event was recorded and available to the public and after being greeted at the quay-side a formal ceremony was held in the town hall. The climax of this occasion was when the duchess was declared to be French, in French clothing, and this was announced to the waiting crowd by the firing of 36 cannons. To confirm this inclusion into French nationality most of the people who had accompanied her to France then returned to Naples.

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<sup>718</sup> *Le Moniteur Universel* 3 and 4 June 1816.

<sup>719</sup> Lady Morgan, *France*, 2 vols (New York: James Eastburn & co, 1817), I, p. 257.

<sup>720</sup> AN, O/3/297.

<sup>721</sup> Vicomte de Reiset, *Marie-Caroline, duchesse de Berry*, pp. 18-24. AN, O/3/804.

The ‘handing over’ ceremony after a proxy marriage ceremony had also occurred in the past for Marie-Louise and Marie Antoinette although for the latter it had taken place on neutral territory. This had occurred on an island in the Rhine and had involved the princess physically entering a temporary wooden pavilion as Austrian and leaving through the other side as French. Mme Campan’s father-in-law was present and related that she also changed into French clothing and this ceremony was again carried out when Josephine of Savoy married the comte de Provence three years later.<sup>722</sup> It appears then that the restored Bourbon regime carried on this tradition.

For Marie Caroline, parts of the French *trousseau* and *corbeille* had been sent by the king and after the ceremony those items of dress were presented to the new duchess in her apartments. She changed her garments so that symbolically she was dressed entirely in French apparel emphasising the superiority of French clothing and her new French identity. Mme Guerin’s invoice listed the items that had been sent to Marseille separately. They amounted to 1,612 fr and included seven different kinds of white or lilac fabric hats, embroidered with silver, plus items of lace and *coiffures* of pink and white roses, with bouquets. There were also three dozen pairs of gloves, 2 ornate ivory and mother-of-pearl fans and the pink satin embroidered wedding coffer, the *sultan*.<sup>723</sup> The new duchess appeared in different outfits from the marriage gifts for all the following public events thereby promoting the fashion merchants’ work along with the other suppliers. For example, Marie-Caroline left the town hall with her entourage to meet with various dignitaries and attend mass at the cathedral.

Here, 30 young women dressed in white offered the duchess flowers and Figure 36 shows that the same kind of ceremonial was held for Marie Louise, in 1810, at Compiegne Palace to welcome another proxy bride.

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<sup>722</sup> John Hearsey and other historians have expressed some doubt about the change of clothing event but Antonia Fraser decided that Mme Campan had received this information from her father-in-law who had been present and was therefore a reliable witness. John Hearsey, *Marie Antoinette* (London: Constable, 1972), p. 11 and Antonia Fraser, *Marie Antoinette* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2010), pp. 70-74.

<sup>723</sup> AN, O/3/297.

The ceremonials were similar which gave the impression of authority and continuity to the public. For the duchesse de Berry, the day finished with an appearance at the theatre and the next day the journey towards Paris started with stops for formal, public celebrations at Valence on 6 June and Lyons on the 8 June, where she arrived at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. A triumphal arch had been erected in the Place de la Charité where 130 women and girls waited to greet her. The duchess recorded the formal dress that she chose to wear from the trousseau.

I wore a *grand toilette* to attend the archbishop's musical mass  
and then I went to the town hall where I dined in public  
dressed in a rich and charming dress which was part of the  
gifts.<sup>724</sup>

The next day, Lyons' Chamber of Commerce presented the new duchess with samples of their manufacture and during this ceremony she replaced the shawl she was wearing with one offered by the city. It was a political gesture of appreciation and support for their industry probably stage managed by her French advisors. Most likely this was the shawl listed as made of cashmere and manufactured by Grand Frères.<sup>725</sup> In another example of a staged event that showcased clothing, the first official meeting between Marie-Caroline and the French royal family, including her future husband, took place in the forest of Fontainbleau on 15 June.

Continuity was stressed, as the occasion consciously echoed the moment, in 1725, when Louis XV met his future bride Marie Leczinska. This was two days before her marriage to the duke and the duchess fully embraced her new French identity to the extent that when she was addressed in Italian she responded 'in French if you please, I now know no other language'.<sup>726</sup> For this meeting at Fontainbleau she wore the prescribed French court dress in white tulle with a gown, train and sleeve ruffles decorated with a design of grapes in columns that were embroidered in silver. The fashion merchant Mme Guerin supplied the

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<sup>724</sup> Vicomte de Reiset, *Marie-Caroline, Duchesse de Berry*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>725</sup> There was a list of the products given by 13 silk weavers and embroiderers. One example was a white satin robe with a long train embroidered in gold by M Bony, *dessinateur-brodeur*. AN, O/3/297.

<sup>726</sup> Vicomte de Reiset, *Marie-Caroline, Duchesse de Berry*, p. 23.

*coiffure* of roses with a diadem of pearls and diamonds along with hanging lappets (*barbes*) which had been required as part of French court dress since 1814, when it had been created by LeRoy for the duchesse d'Angoulème.<sup>727</sup> Figure 37 shows how the event was recorded emphasising its significance.

The painting by Lecomte, which was commissioned by the king, was exhibited at the salon in 1817 and thus displayed to a wider audience where the new duchess was seen wearing the highest quality French court dress. On 16 June, the royal party entered Paris, displaying the new bride to the population and generating excitement for the deliberate splendour of the upcoming nuptials. Instructions had previously been issued to M Dugourc, *dessinateur*, and all concerned, that the wedding ceremony at Notre Dame Cathedral should have a sense of continuity with the royal past.

have the same splendour and magnitude of the coronation of Louis XVI, gathering the threads of history together.<sup>728</sup>

Those directing the work responded to the brief by including statues of the couple's royal ancestors, Louis XII and Louis XIV, which would be seen by a large crowd in stands built to accommodate 14,000 people. Some of the decorative motifs were also produced on the clothing such as the *fleur de lys*, the couple's initials that were interlaced, and their coat of arms. The wedding outfit of the duchesse de Berry was created by the *couturières* Mmes Germon et Huchez. It was richly embroidered in silver and included the traditional wedding decoration of orange blossom. The gown was made of white tulle lined with satin and there was a white velvet train which was embroidered all over in silver and diamonds. This conformed to traditional ideas of luxury for an elite client. It was a bespoke order that used the finest materials ornamented with labour intensive hand embroidery with precious metal and precious gems, it

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<sup>727</sup> Hippolyte Auger, *La Mode*, p. 152 and LeRoy, Grand Livres de Comte, no.4, BnF Fr. Na. 5931.

<sup>728</sup> 'dans la même dimension de celui du sacre de Louis XVI, pour faire suite aux fastes du monarque, que doit recueillir l'histoire'. Dépenses: Trousseau de la duchesse de Berry, AN, O/3/297.

included the lily as a sign of her royal status and it was expensive. The wedding ceremony was recorded, first of all in a drawing by Dougourc that was exhibited in the salon of 1817. In contrast to the image of Napoleon's wedding and the promise of a new dynasty, this painting and the way generally that the marriage was celebrated emphasises continuity with the Bourbon dynasty. The splendour and scale of the wedding ceremony at the moment of benediction is shown as more important than the participants. However, to coincide with the wedding, many images of the bride and groom were produced and a poem was published by M le comte Henri de Valori, a retired general who had served Napoleon I.

tell us that under the laws of the three Bourbon dynasties that  
you will still give patronage to commerce and the arts.<sup>729</sup>

This poem refers to the lineage of Naples, Spain and France and pleads for the couple to support French arts and industry. Valori emphasises the importance of state patronage whilst reminding the duke and duchess, plus the reader, that Napoleon's regime had aided the recovery of France's luxury industries.<sup>730</sup> The events around the marriage demonstrate an awareness of those responsibilities to luxury commerce which fashion merchants benefitted from, perhaps because Louis XVIII had to make his support clear to the public, in a way that Napoleon had already done by the time of his second marriage.

In this section, I have shown how Napoleon's wedding to Marie Louise and the duc de Berry's wedding to Marie Caroline functioned as promotional events for fashion merchants. I found that although both weddings followed pre-revolutionary royal protocols they nonetheless reflected the nineteenth century regimes that they were created for. As court orders, I discovered that they became part of political spectacles that continued for months and were reported through individual experience, verbal communication, visual images and print media. They

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<sup>729</sup> 'Dis nous que sous ses lois la riche Trincrie, du commerce et des arts fut toujours la patrie', *Le Moniteur Universel*, 16 June 1816.

<sup>730</sup> Mansel has suggested that Lyon showed its support for Napoleon I on his return from exile in March 1815 because of the city's gratitude for the emperor's earlier patronage of their silk industry. Philip Mansel, *Dressed to Rule*, p. 90.

reflected on the reputation of merchants through the selection process and when the clothing was assessed, worn and displayed. Such displays of quality garments showcased the French luxury clothing industry and links to the next section where I will focus on the formal national and international exhibitions held in Paris and London.

### **Displaying Industry: Fashion Merchants and Clothing.**

National and international industry exhibitions were vast public vehicles that could emphasise the supremacy of Parisian luxury goods and the display of French clothing to potential consumers. To understand why fashion merchants were less visible in these exhibitions before 1855, the first part of this section will discover what made the concept of 'industrial products' and their classification so problematic for fashion merchants and other clothing suppliers. I will focus particularly on the exhibitions held from the 1820s, in Paris, before considering the international exhibitions of 1851 (London), focusing on problems and opportunities for French fashion merchants and related exhibitors, and 1855 (Paris). Lastly, I will analyse in more detail how the industry exhibitions increasingly became linked to commerce and sales and how fashion merchants profited from this development.

Hitherto it was thought by historians, such as Coffin and Williams, that clothing was only included from the 1880s or apparel has only been examined from 1889 to 1900 because there was a larger fashion presence.<sup>731</sup> Dress historians Tétart-Vittu and da Silveira acknowledged the clothing in the exhibitions of 1851 and 1855 but have focused mainly on the garments produced by the *magasins de nouveautés*.<sup>732</sup>

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<sup>731</sup> Judith Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work*, p. 62. Rosalind H. Williams, *Dream Worlds*, p. 11.

<sup>732</sup> Piedada da Silveira examined garments exhibited at the 1851 and 1855 international exhibitions including those by Worth for Masion Gagelin in 'Maisons Celebres', *Au Paradis des Dames*, p. 42. Françoise Tétart-Vittu, 'La Mode aux Expositions Universelles', *Sous L'Empire des Crinolines*, pp. 166-70.

The early French national exhibitions have received little attention for how they promoted clothing and accessories.<sup>733</sup> However, a range of relevant materials or garments, headgear and accessories were increasingly displayed to producers and retailers in the French fashion industry and the public. Technical and artistic advances that affected dress were displayed in twelve industry exhibitions held in Paris, between 1798 and 1855, the details of which are shown in Appendix 17. The idea for an exhibition came in 1797 and was established in 1798 by M François Neaufchâteau, Minister of the Interior. After the Revolution, this was a significant event because it celebrated the anniversary of the establishment of the republic by displaying the achievements of French industry. Seen in the context of the abolition of the guilds in 1791, it also demonstrated that industry had not been disadvantaged by the changes to training and production. Europe was to be shown that Paris was still a competitive producer of goods and the minister saw it as an offensive movement against British competition.<sup>734</sup> There were gaps between exhibitions attributed to the periods of war and changes in regime, but in 1819, during the Restoration, Louis XVIII declared that they should take place at least every four years. The king's order stated support for these events as

the best way of encouraging the arts, stimulating competition and hastening the progress of industry.<sup>735</sup>

The Minister of the Interior would be in charge of the event and would contact the prefect of each department who should nominate five male members to select objects for the exhibition. The criteria for their choice, was that they were to be knowledgeable about the arts and have the ability to judge products. The items should be well made or have a great

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<sup>733</sup> Brief comments are made that clothing was part of the 1798 exhibition by Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 286. In a short text Piedada da Silveira examined the relationship of all the exhibitions with *magasins de nouveautés* and publicity in *Au Pauvre Diable*, pp. 14-15. François Boucher stated how important their presence was between 1798 and 1849 in *A History of Costume in the West*, p. 370. More consideration is given to clothing in the exhibitions from 1839 in Henriette Vanier, *La Mode et ses Métiers*, pp. 133-71.

<sup>734</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 286.

<sup>735</sup> Charles L.E. Bachelier, *Description des Expositions des Produits de l'Industrie Française fait à Paris jusqu'à celle de 1819 Inclusivement* (Paris, 1824), p. 13.

usefulness (*une grande utilité*) including basic, low-priced objects for general use and they should represent local production.<sup>736</sup> This would stimulate effort and competition amongst manufacturers to perfect their products to the highest degree. The language used in the official publications does not use the terms that would obviously include fashionable items of dress, unlike newspapers and fashion journals. In 1827, *Le Journal de Paris* commented on the luxury items in the industry exhibition and praised Parisian products, such as headgear (*modes*) and shawls, associating them with skills connected to fashion knowledge, creativity and innovation as they

required taste and variety (*goût et variété*), such as for *modes*, shawls and jewellery plus other items such as furniture, bronzes, wall paper, musical instruments and clocks.<sup>737</sup>

The 1827 industry exhibition listed clothing and headgear under 'Various Arts' and examining how products were classified in the exhibitions and the processes that had to be negotiated by a would-be exhibitor allows a consideration of factors that could deter clothing businesses from taking part. Until 1851 their category grouped together items relevant to fashion merchants and *couturières* such as straw hats and corsets but they shared the class with unrelated products like cutlery.<sup>738</sup> This weakened their authority and impact in the exhibition where they probably also had less space. However, the French and foreign fashion press gave any Parisian clothing and accessories publicity and also drew attention to issues about how to treat clothing and those that produced them.

In 1839, the fashion journal *Le Colifichet* made a distinction between the manufacturers engaged in mass production and the artisans or artists producing clothing and headgear for individual clients.<sup>739</sup> As the exhibitions in the first half of the nineteenth century were concerned

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<sup>736</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>737</sup> *Journal de Paris*, 28 August 1827.

<sup>738</sup> *Exposition de 1834. Notice des Produits de l'Industrie Française* (Paris, 1834), p. XVII.

<sup>739</sup> *Le Colifichet*, 1 June 1839 cited in Henriette Vanier, *La Mode et ses Métiers*, p. 134.

mainly with large scale businesses that contributed ready-made products for exports as well as the domestic market this may provide the reason that successful fashion merchants and other clothing producers were not included in these events until a large ready-made (*confection*) sector developed. Corsets had been admitted to the national exhibitions in 1834 but the problem around the inclusion of clothing was illustrated by the review written in 1855 about a corset maker. This may have been written by Mesdames Bourgogne or a more disinterested writer but nonetheless it provides an idea of how clothing was perceived.

Mesdames Bourgogne [...] obtained, at the exhibition of the products of national industry in 1844 [...] the bronze medal that was awarded by the jury as the just reward for their talent; the gold and silver medals were only given to the businesses that were the most serious and necessary to France.<sup>740</sup>

In the last paragraph, the writer called for this kind of product to be taken more 'seriously'.

The work of the Mmes Bourgogne is of a type that under a frivolous appearance hides serious outcomes and deserves the encouragement of everyone who takes public health seriously.<sup>741</sup>

Here the term 'serious' is applied to a corset's significance for health but it could also imply that the sector was not large enough to be important to the French economy. These negative associations may have been applied to other kinds of clothing and explain why many articles were excluded for so long. Ready-made garments such as *mantelets* and cloaks were being produced in the 1840s and yet they were not included in the French exhibitions during that period. In 1847, a review of Mme

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<sup>740</sup> The corsets were for children (aged 10), young women (15-18) and adults, for all occasions including pregnancy. 'Mesdames Bourgogne [...] ont obtenu à l'exposition des produits de l'industrie nationale de 1844 [...] la médaille de bronze qui leur a été décernée par le jury, comme étant la juste récompense de leur talent; les médailles d'or et d'argent n'étant accordées qu'aux industries plus sérieuses et plus nécessaires à la France'. 'Revue Industrielle', in *Annuaire Général du Commerce, de l'Industrie, de la Magistrature et de l'Administration* (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1855), p. 2261.

<sup>741</sup> Ibid.

Nattier's business in artificial flowers spoke about the problem with classification, between art and industry, that was taking place.

[...] battle that was taking place against the exhibitions where artificial flowers were considered less as items for *coiffures* than as subjects for botanical study.<sup>742</sup>

The writer supports their use as headgear.

nothing could be better than being able to appreciate a wonderful display of flowers on the heads of all the most elegant women of Europe.<sup>743</sup>

Other suppliers of headgear like fashion merchants also had reasons not to exhibit. At the international exhibition of 1867, in Paris, headgear had its own section under 'Chapeaux de Paille, Modes et Coiffures de Femme'. Three or four *Maisons de Paris* who took part in the exhibition were said to be of an honourable level and specialised in the construction of headgear (*modes*) for export. However, the quote below shows that others had declined the invitation to take part.

the most celebrated makers, whose creations are in a way the image of Parisian taste, did not feel able to take part in the event. This unfortunate abstention was doubtless due to the fear that this would give premature publicity to their latest models.<sup>744</sup>

This shows that their products were appreciated and acknowledged and demonstrated that the writer understood the importance of secrecy implying that their designs would be copied if information on their 'novelty' was not protected. Therefore, a lack of copyright protection was one of the factors in the refusal of some of the leading fashion merchants to take

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<sup>742</sup> Mme Nattier may have written this herself as a paid advertisement, 'a lutte des expositions nationales, où les fleurs artificielles, après tout, figurant moins comme articles de coiffure que comme un sujet d'étude pour la botanique'. 'Revue Industrielle', in *Annuaire Général du Commerce*, (1847), p. 1516.

<sup>743</sup> 'Nous approuvons complètement Mme Nattier, et nous pensons comme elle que ses délicieuses montures ne peuvent pas être plus convenablement exposées et appréciées que sur la tête de toutes les dames élégantes de l'Europe'. Ibid.

<sup>744</sup> 'Les grands faiseuses, celles dont les créations sont en quelque sorte l'image du goût parisien, n'ont pas cru devoir se présenter au concours, Cette abstention regrettable tient sans doute à la crainte de donner à leurs modèles nouveaux une publicité prématuré'. Ibid., p. 389.

part in these exhibitions including that of 1851. However, the first international exhibition gave all the fashionable clothing producers an opportunity to reach an international public that was unprecedented.

The Great Exhibition was held in London from 1 May to 31 October 1851 and was 'intended to represent the actual state of industry or science'.<sup>745</sup> It originally planned to display the products of different countries solely by classification but because of the problems in receiving information from all the foreign competitors in time to produce a catalogue this was altered to separate areas and listings. The Society of Arts had proposed the four main sections suggested by Prince Albert and are shown in the table below.

**Table 19. Main Sections for Products in the Great Exhibition 1851.**

SECTION 1	Raw materials.
SECTION 2	Machinery – used to work upon those materials.
SECTION 3	Manufactured articles – produced from the above.
SECTION 4	The art employed 'to impress them with the stamp of beauty'. <sup>746</sup>

These four sections were then subdivided into 30 classes, as shown in Appendix 18 with the largest one being for manufactured items with 19 divisions (section 3) including clothing in class 20. There was no charge to exhibit but foreign articles were only accepted if they had been sanctioned by that country's central authority.<sup>747</sup> Decisions about which items to include were based on the responses given by prospective exhibitors to the questions listed in the table below.<sup>748</sup>

<sup>745</sup> *First Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851*, p. xiii.

<sup>746</sup> Ibid., p. xxxii.

<sup>747</sup> Ibid., p. xiii and pp. 15-16.

<sup>748</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

**Table 20. Description Required for Exhibits to Enable Selection, 1851.**

A & B	The uses and the novelty.
C & D	Superiority of execution & improved forms.
E	Increased efficiency or economy.
F & G	New use of known material or new materials.
H	New combinations of materials.
I	Importance of the article.
J & K	Place, history of manufacture, no. of employees & if patented.
L	Where price is an element for consideration.
M	Any other feature.

The criteria for the fine arts in section 4 were only slightly different with added vocabulary to ‘novelty’ – ‘novelty in design or treatment’.<sup>749</sup> The word ‘design’ does not appear in relation to manufactured products which would have been relevant to clothing and headgear. Regarding point L, it was further stated that prices should not be fixed to products and attendants representing the proprietors were

Forbidden to invite visitors to purchase the goods [...] the Exhibition being intended for the purpose of display only and not for those of sale.<sup>750</sup>

However, this shows that the owner of the business or a representative was expected to be present which was an opportunity to meet potential consumers and organise future sales. Items to be included started arriving from 12 February 1851 but some foreign packages arrived later. The French exhibitors had been given instructions by the French Commission about delivering their exhibits to the Gare du Nord railway station before 10 February.<sup>751</sup> They would then be examined and judged again by the Central Jury from the 1849 National Exhibition before being

<sup>749</sup> Ibid.

<sup>750</sup> Ibid., p. xiii.

<sup>751</sup> *Commission Française pour l'Exposition Universelle de Londres en 1851. Instructions Générales pour la Reception à Paris et l'Envoi à Londres des Produits Destinés à l'Exposition* (Paris, 1851), p. 1.

finally accepted for the event in London. The exhibitors would have to pay for the repackaging of their products and for the construction and decoration of their places in the exhibition including display cases and tables.

This reveals why there were so many comments about the exhibitions' similarity to shops. Generally, the products were not subject to customs' duty as they were intended for exhibition and not consumption but if the products did not return to France they would be liable for duty payable to agents acting for British customs.<sup>752</sup> Despite the protestation that this was an industry exhibition, it was clearly expected that products would be sold, particularly by foreign exhibitors who would then avoid the cost of returning the objects to their country of origin. The French fashion merchant Mlle Perrin, attempted to send merchandise to the exhibition but some articles were lost and others were retained by customs. A financial loss of 2,400 fr was noted which included the costs for travel and living expenses showing that she was ready to appear at the exhibition to promote her products or that she went later to try and recover her goods.<sup>753</sup> Mlle Perrin's experience showed the risks involved in taking part and there was a cost in money, time and effort for those that wanted to have their products included in the exhibition. Nonetheless, the official catalogue listed 1,741 French exhibitors including a fashion merchant and items linked to millinery such as head blocks, textiles, ribbons and lace, as well as embroidery, artificial flowers and feathers.<sup>754</sup> Clothing was the 20th class, 'Articles of Clothing for Immediate Personal or Domestic Use'. Previous classes had dealt with 'what could be regarded as the raw material of clothing' whilst class 20 was the finished product for 'personal or domestic use'.<sup>755</sup> The table below shows how these were sub-divided.

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<sup>752</sup> Articles 5 and 21, *Ibid*, p. 3 and pp. 6-7.

<sup>753</sup> Mlle Perrin, AP, D11U3/163, File 1087.

<sup>754</sup> The company Danjard, 40 Rue St Germain Paris displayed 'moveable blocks for milliners' and there is an example in the collection at the V & A Museum marked with their name. It is made out of wood with a painted face and padded kid leather cap shape for gripping headwear. London, V & A Museum, number T.383-1984. Robert Ellis, *Great Exhibition. Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue*, 3 vols (London: Spicer Brothers, 1851), III, pp.1168-259. The entry for Danjard is listed on p. 1178.

<sup>755</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 575.

**Table 21. Sub-Classes for Clothing Classification, London 1851.**

SUB – CLASS	ARTICLE OF CLOTHING
A	Hats, caps, bonnets of various materials.
B	Hosiery, cotton, wool and silk.
C	Gloves, leather and other materials.
D	Boots, shoes and lasts.
E	Under clothing.
F	Upper clothing.

Headgear for men and women was listed by material that was gendered differently. Men's headgear was made of silk, beaver and other materials whereas straw or substitutes like wood chips, wicker and grasses were stressed in the construction of women's headgear as well as silk and trimmings of crin.<sup>756</sup> There were no French representatives from the straw-hat making manufacturers although they had had a strong presence at the earlier French national exhibitions. This may have been because they acknowledged the quality of the competition posed by the English manufacturers in Luton as well as the Swiss and Italian producers. It is significant that women's headgear was linked to straw and new trimmings of crin which could be used in bonnets as they were an important part of fashion merchants' merchandise.<sup>757</sup> However, for the first time there was one fashion merchant's business listed as an exhibitor, Brie et Jeoffrin, 81 Rue de Richelieu and 2 Ménars who presented 'millinery articles; headdresses, bonnets, caps etc'.<sup>758</sup> The section called 'upper clothing' listed women's garments and included articles by a *magasin de nouveautés*, Maison Gagelin, Opigez et Chazelle and these were noted as

Various articles of dress for ladies; rich Lyons silk embroidered fabrics. Shawl, the texture of needlework, India imitation.<sup>759</sup>

The 1851 exhibition confirmed France as the country identified with women's clothing as only this company exhibited ready-made outerwear

<sup>756</sup> *Le Palais de Cristal: Journal Illustré de l'Exposition de 1851 et du Progrès des Arts Industriels* (1851), p. 7.

<sup>757</sup> See Chapter 2 Section 3 on the merchandise of fashion merchants.

<sup>758</sup> Robert Ellis, *Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue, Great Exhibition*, III, p. 1218.

<sup>759</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1193 and p. 1218.

in the form of cloaks and *mantelets* along with embroidered shawls and silks for which they were awarded a first-class medal.<sup>760</sup> In Paris, four years later, the industry exhibition included a larger number of French exhibitors of headgear and ready-made clothing.

The first French international exhibition was held under Napoleon III's empire and the scale of the event reflected the emperor's desire to expand the display in the style of London's exhibition. The findings also agree with Rocamora's assessment that it became an advert for Paris's 'excellence in the arts, trade and industry' which provided a significant promotional opportunity for the exhibitors.<sup>761</sup> The increase in French exports after the display confirmed the exhibition's success.<sup>762</sup> Women's and men's clothing, headgear and accessories were classified with umbrellas, fans, flowers and feathers in Group VII, Class XXV, 'Clothing, Manufacture of Fashionable and Imaginative Products' (*Vêtements, Fabrication des Objets de Mode et de Fantaisie*). The table below summarises exhibitors that submitted women's clothing, their nationality and how medals were awarded. No country was awarded a Grand medal of honour in this category.<sup>763</sup>

**Table 22. Clothing for women in the 1855 Paris International Exhibition.**

NUMBER OF EXHIBITORS	COUNTRY	TOTAL MEDALS	1 <sup>ST</sup> CLASS	2 <sup>ND</sup> CLASS	HON. MEN.
23	France	12	4	5	3
13	Foreign	7	1	0	6
<b>Total = 36</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>

Appendix 19 shows the detail of how the medals were awarded and it can be seen that Norway displayed regional dress but the jury stated that only

<sup>760</sup> Musée Galliera, *Sous l'Empire*, p. 167. *Catalogue Official de la Grande Exposition, 1851*, p. 213.

<sup>761</sup> Agnès Rocamora, *Fashioning the City*, p. 166.

<sup>762</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 384.

<sup>763</sup> 'Groupe VII, Classe XXV', in *Rapport du Jury Mixte International. Exposition Universelle des Produits de l'Industrie* (Paris, 1855), pp. 1172-173.

France submitted clothing so that it was to be concluded that other countries were creating clothes based on French designs. The most prestigious *magasins de nouveautés* were said to be the most important for ready-made (*confection*) objects and were maintaining the ‘superiority of Paris fashion’.<sup>764</sup> The official report stated that Maison Gagelin had played a part in the development of the production of ready-made ‘elegant women’s clothing by the number of tasteful models that they had created’.<sup>765</sup> The stress given to ready-made clothing for women agreed with the focus of earlier exhibitions and is strengthened by the report in the 1889 exhibition which said that the creation of an industry for ready-made clothing was one of the most important features of the century.<sup>766</sup>

Charles Worth was a partner at Maison Gagelin by the time of the 1855 exhibition when the business was awarded a first-class medal for two court trains, dresses including a wedding dress and again the successful *mantelets*.<sup>767</sup> Paris based companies dominated in the submission of fashionable garments. Three other companies were awarded first-class medals and second-class medals were awarded to four other businesses including a *couturière*, Mme De Baiseux, who had a royal warrant to supply clothing to Princess de Joinville and the Duchess of Aumale.<sup>768</sup> Women’s headgear was placed in the same class under the category *coiffure* and included straw hats. Section 5 was divided into three groups.<sup>769</sup>

Group 1. Straw hats and 5 sub-groups.

Group 2. Men’s hats (*chapeaux et casquettes*).

Group 3. Women’s headgear (*modes et coiffures*).

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<sup>764</sup> Ibid., p. 1172.

<sup>765</sup> Musée Galliera, Piedada da Silveira, *Au Paradis des Dames*, p. 42.

<sup>766</sup> Alfred Picard, *Exposition Universelle Internationale de 1889 à Paris: Rapport Général, Mobilier, Tissus, Vêtements* (Paris, 1891), p. 507.

<sup>767</sup> For Maison Gagelin and Worth at the 1855 exhibition see Musée Galliera, Piedada da Silveira, *Au Paradis des Dames*, p. 42. Amy de la Haye and Valerie Mendes, *The House of Worth: Portrait of an Archive* (V & A publishing, 2014), p. 13.

<sup>768</sup> Mme De Baiseux’s business was based at the prestigious, 8 Place Vendôme, *Annuaire Générale du Commerce et de l’Industrie* (1855), p. 568 and p. 2261.

<sup>769</sup> ‘Classe XXV, Coiffures’, in *Exposition Universelle. Rapport du Jury Mixte International* (1855), p. 1186.

The Straw-hat group had 72 exhibitors including 28 from France and Appendix 20 shows how the medals were awarded. The Grand medal of honour was awarded to two foreign competitors: Switzerland and Tuscany. France received two First Class medals, seven Second Class and seven Honourable Mentions. The category *modes et coiffures* was exclusively represented by six businesses from Paris. The table below shows that five out of the six exhibitors were awarded medals and all these companies were listed under 'Modes' in the trade directory for 1855.<sup>770</sup>

**Table 23. Medals for *Modes et Coiffures*, 1855.**

1 <sup>st</sup> CLASS	2 <sup>nd</sup> CLASS	HON. MEN.
Mme M. Brun et cie <i>9 Rue de la Paix</i>	Mlle Alphonsine <i>12 Rue Helder</i>	Mme Gérard-Viault <i>355 Rue St Honoré</i>
	M.M. Pelissier & Prin <i>152 Rue Montmartre</i>	Mme Plé-Horain <i>2 Basse Rempart</i>

The report demonstrates the growth in the sector of headgear supplied by fashion merchants so that there are a range of target markets signified. Mme Plé-Horain, who successfully exported her *modes*. Pelissier and Prin attracted a Parisian clientele whereas Mlle Alphonsine's products were directed more towards the provinces and foreign countries. The highest medal went to Mme Brun's headwear that was generally 'gracious and elegant' and she was praised for the creation of *coiffures* and the richness and distinction of her trimmings. The display of clothing and headgear in the exhibition also reflected the different levels of the market from elite luxury to more affordable items. Position within the display reflected this hierarchy such as those that were grouped together on the ground floor in the Main Avenue making them more visible and emphasising their importance. A guide for tourists described the items.

Passing again into the Main Avenue we come to a pavilion containing some gorgeous specimens of the "Industry of

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<sup>770</sup> *Annuaire Général du Commerce, de l'Industrie* (1855), pp. 729-31.

Paris", including a magnificent Court mantle by Gagelin, diamonds by Bapst, fans by Vagnies, jewellery by Bruneau, Duron & Dafrique, artificial flowers by Perrot, Petit & co., fairy slippers by Thonnerieux, parasols by Cazal, bonnets by Mélanie Brun & co., gloves by Jouvin.<sup>771</sup>

This quote offers a contrast to the way the previous articles of footwear, woollen fabric, shawls, dresses and fans had been described. The writer referred then to, an 'admirable show' of cloth and a shoe 'department', whereas in the Main Avenue the collection of items was 'gorgeous' and gives more of an impression of luxury, appropriate for Napoleon III's imperial court. Clothing and headgear were represented by the court train supplied by Maison Gagelin and the bonnets by the fashion merchant Mélanie Brun. Some of the bonnets supplied by Mme Brun can be seen in the illustration from *Le Journal Pour Rire* reproduced in Figure 38 where they are displayed clearly on stands of different heights in a cabinet with large panes of clear glass. This publicity was a factor in the success of her business as she was also awarded a medal at the London exhibition in 1862.<sup>772</sup> Other clothing and headgear at a range of prices was displayed in a different area on the ground floor of the exhibition near the northern corner of the Eastern Gallery.

assortment of the hats, caps and bonnets made and worn in the gay city of Paris, corsets in large numbers [...] braces [...] wigs and wig blocks. A large collection of clothing from 2 franc waistcoats to the purple velvet morning gown at 2,000 fr. A case or two of court costumes set up on most imposing looking ladies and gentlemen of cotton and other materials, with exquisite faces.<sup>773</sup>

This acceptance of prices on at least some items had been part of earlier French exhibitions, unlike London in 1851, and makes clear the link to commerce. Apart from the innovation in the acceptance of clothing and headgear as a category in the exhibitions, there were displays of the materials they used in production that allowed merchandise to be offered

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<sup>771</sup> Edward Stanford, *Stanford's Guide to Paris* (London, 1855), p. 178.

<sup>772</sup> *Annuaire Almanach du Commerce, de l'Industrie, de la Magistrature et de l'Administration* (Paris, 1864), p. 980.

<sup>773</sup> *Stanford's Guide to Paris*, p. 179.

in a range of qualities and prices. The public would have learned about these innovations in the manufacture of fabrics, straw and straw substitutes, lace, imitation lace, ribbons and artificial flowers.

Appendix 21 shows that the catalogue for 1823 recorded seven companies that were displaying *robes*, shawls and scarves but these were supplied by businesses that produced lace, textiles or embroidery and the word *robe* was used to refer to the shaped pieces needed to construct a dress rather than the finished garment. However, some companies displayed constructed garments to display their merchandise as can be seen in Figure 35 C where a life size mannequin is dressed in Chantilly lace from the exhibition of 1823. The seated figure wears a long-sleeved dress with a matching shawl around the shoulders and *fichu* around her head. Mlle J. Gard included a mannequin for her exhibit along with her completed lace outfit.

A glass case containing the name and address above enclosing a mannequin, a chair and a carpet to display a complete dress of blonde trimmed with four flounces, bodice and sleeves, lined in lilac satin, a black lace square shawl and a white blonde *fichu* over a coiffure with a pearl comb.<sup>774</sup>

In 1827, as in 1823, the gold medal was awarded to Moreau bros, Chantilly, who displayed their manufacture in the form of a blonde white dress (*robe*), with rich embroidery, and a black shawl with rosettes. Other luxury textiles like embroidery were represented and in 1844 Mlles Beauvais and co., 57 Rue Vivienne, Paris, were awarded a bronze medal for a range of samples, a court train and three embroidered dresses or dress lengths (*robes*).<sup>775</sup> The fashion press reported on the clothing stressing the quality of the materials.

Among the toiletts which are the most distinguished at the exhibition of the Louvre, this year, may be cited a dress of *côte pali*, of a steel grey colour, trimmed with two flounces of the same

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<sup>774</sup> At the top of the list of items on the invoice, ‘une montre fermée d'une glace portant le nom et l'adresse ce dessu renfermant un mannequin, une chaise et un tapis servant à exposer’. Exposition Nationale, 1823, Paris, Archives Nationales (AN), F/12/986-7 and F/12/991.

<sup>775</sup> ‘Sixième Partie: Tissus Divers, Section III’, in *Exposition des Produits de l’Industrie Française en 1844. Rapport du Jury Central*, 3 vols (Paris, 1844), I, p. 556.

material, bordered with a small fringe, forming arbour work [...] A *canezou* of embroidered tulle, and a Leghorn hat ornamented with an immense white plume, completed this beautiful toilet.<sup>776</sup>

This writer was clearly describing an ensemble of clothing demonstrating the use of complete garments and headgear to promote individual products. There were several merchants that supplied headgear for women for the 1823 exhibition although they were not *marchandes de modes*. These included 10 hats of satin and *sparterie* supplied by a *marchand de nouveautés* in Paris, five companies including three from Paris, that manufactured straw hats (*chapeaux de paille*) and Mmes Manceau of Paris who supplied 21 women's hats plus 12 described as 'fantasy' and others designated as for men. The heading of the company's invoice stated that they manufactured hats (*chapeaux*) for men and women 'to replace the most beautiful Italian straw'.<sup>777</sup>

In 1827, the exhibition listed two producers of straw hats that were awarded prizes and these companies demonstrated that French producers were still driven by their attempt to imitate Italian straw hats and to replace them if possible. The straw-hat manufacturer M Dupré at Lagnieuix was awarded an Honourable mention for his products in 1823 and then a silver medal in 1827. The report also said that the company produced Italian style straw hats in a great range of qualities with the resultant costs from 2 to 200 francs for each piece.<sup>778</sup> The other producer, Pecherand, Dubois et cie, was described as new but already imitating Florence hats, offering a range of products of fine quality and employing 600 workers. In 1839 the company Poinsot was praised for its search for materials to rival imports for straw hats, such as the palm leaves that they had brought from Cuba, and in 1844 the same company received a silver medal for women's hats (*chapeaux de dames*).

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<sup>776</sup> 'The Parisian Toilet', *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, 22 September 1827, XXVI, p. 234.

<sup>777</sup> The *marchand de nouveautés* was Cochet Dehenne, 97 Rue St Denis, maison Picarde, *Almanach de Commerce*, Paris, 1823, p. 388. Mmes Manceau, Rue Ste Avoye, 57, hôtel St Aignan, 'Ces chapeaux à l'usage des hommes et des dames, sont destines à remplacer les plus beaux tissue de paille d'Italie'. AN, F/12/986-7 and F/12/991.

<sup>778</sup> *Rapport sur les Produits de l'Industrie Française*, 1827, p. 150.

These examples displayed in the industry exhibitions demonstrate that the manufacture of straw hats for women was growing and improving in the early nineteenth century and their products were seen by fashion merchants and other potential customers. This gave the sector for women's headwear a higher profile at these exhibitions which would have stimulated interest and consumer demand. Artificial flower makers were also well represented in the exhibitions and their products were an important component in the headgear supplied by fashion merchants as well as being seen as decorative items for display in the commercial or domestic interior.

In 1827, the exhibition's official report stated that, although Italy had originally developed the skill in creating artificial flowers, for a long time France and particularly Paris had taken these to a high level of production; so that by 1827 they were unrivalled. The balance sheet of the bankrupt fashion merchant Mlle Dezboroff, who had royal clients, showed that in 1855 one of her suppliers for artificial flowers was Tilman who had exhibited at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851.<sup>779</sup> At this exhibition there were 136 exhibitors of artificial flowers with 43 from England and 16 from France of whom 11 had received awards.<sup>780</sup> Mme Tilman had been awarded an Honourable mention and praise for her flowers and at the same time the Grand medal was awarded to Constantin of Paris who supplied the highly successful fashion merchant, with premises in London and Paris, Mme Barenne. Constantin's products were highly praised in the report where he was called 'a botanist, manufacturer and artist'.<sup>781</sup> It was stated that his plants were created for botanical study as well as decoration and the construction, shape and grace of the batiste cotton flowers were 'very remarkable'.<sup>782</sup>

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<sup>779</sup> Exhibitor no. 698, Tilman, 2 Rue de Ménars, *Catalogue Official de la Grande Exposition des Produits de l'Industrie de toutes les Nations*, 1851, p. 219. Mlle Dezboroff owed Tilman 421 fr at the time of her bankruptcy proceedings and his address was listed as 104 Rue de Richelieu in 1855, AP, D11U3/210, File 12805.

<sup>780</sup> Natalis Rondot, *Rapport sur les Objets de Parure, de Fantaisie et de Goût, fait à la Commission Française du Jury International de l'Exposition Universelle de Londres* (Paris, 1854), p. 49 and p. 53.

<sup>781</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>782</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

These two examples indicate that amongst articles of very good quality there were still different levels of products available that would have been priced to reflect this, allowing fashion merchants to have flexibility in pricing their products for a range of customers. The 1847/8 survey had endorsed this when stating that one of the factors in the exports of fashion merchants, valued at 2, 646, 708 fr, was the possibility of varying the trimmings with artificial flowers.<sup>783</sup> The public was drawn to articles of clothing as was shown in the media and this was noted at the 1834 exhibition when Parisian industries were stated to be of the highest level with shawls, including those of imitation cashmere, being noted as gaining the most attention from the public.<sup>784</sup> Boucher in examining the history of clothing noted a comment about the impact of the national and international exhibitions.

in their temporary galleries the public learned to appreciate the continual improvements brought about in clothing techniques.<sup>785</sup>

This indicates the importance of the exhibitions in educating the public and supports the idea of a shared pride in the production of French clothing. Jones has also made the link between the normal consumer's experience of shopping and the exhibitions.<sup>786</sup> Products on view were quickly available for purchase and Da Silveira has examined this in the merchandise sold in *magasins de nouveautés*.<sup>787</sup>

One example was the company *Le Pauvre Diable* that stated at the top of their bills that they were selling shawls that had been shown at the national 1823 and 1827 exhibitions.<sup>788</sup> The idea of exhibiting products to attract customers was used by individual merchants to some extent during the same period as the national and international exhibitions, showing their merchandise at their own premises or others. For example,

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<sup>783</sup> Chambre de Commerce, *Statistique de l'Industrie à Paris*, p. 110

<sup>784</sup> The next most popular products with the public were listed as carpets and musical instruments.

<sup>785</sup> François Boucher, *The History of Costume*, p. 370.

<sup>786</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 386.

<sup>787</sup> Piedada da Silveira, *Au Pauvre Diable*, p. 14.

<sup>788</sup> Ibid.

the head of an invoice from 1844 for the *magasin de nouveautés*, Maison Gagelin, is headed by the words Annual Exhibition (*Exposition Annuelle*).<sup>789</sup> They promoted seasonal goods showing new products in September for the coming winter. After the exhibitions retailers gained new attention and in 1839 *La Mode* stated that with the loss of the industry exhibition they would be looking at the fashionable shops such as the *magasin de nouveautés*, Gagelin-Opigez and the fashion merchant, Maurice Beauvais to write their weekly bulletins.<sup>790</sup> The link between purchasing and looking to appreciate French products was also supported by the visits of royalty to the industry exhibitions and the way that subsequent purchases were reported in the press.

In 1823 the duchesse d'Angoulême visited the national exhibition and certain articles were selected for her to examine. They consisted of 26 different small items that would normally be available from retailers ranging from a crystal vase to perfume and chocolate. There were a few objects that related to clothing such as a piece of white merino cloth, an artificial rose from Mlle Didier, 338 Rue st Denis, and a lily made of bone (*baleine*) from M Achille, 8 Bd St Martin.<sup>791</sup> The exhibitors were invited to price these items but most declined and said that it was enough recompense to be honoured by being admitted for the duchess's attention. It was not recorded whether these were purchased or not but twenty years later documents show that the Queen, the king's sister Mme Adelaide, the duchesse d'Orléans and the comtesse Rambuteau all purchased articles from the 1844 exhibition including woollen and cotton fabrics, shawls and handkerchiefs and in the case of the countess, unspecified knitted *bonneterie*, such as stockings or bonnets.<sup>792</sup> In 1851 the fashion press commented on the popularity of tasteful French clothing in the east (Turkey) after purchases by a foreign ruler.

a rich dress of gilly-flower coloured taffeta having three flounces à *disposition*, composed of Turkish stripes. This

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<sup>789</sup> Musée Galliera, *Au Paradis des Dames*, p. 40.

<sup>790</sup> *La Mode*, 27 July 1839, cited in Henriette Vanier, *La Mode et ses Métiers*, p. 134.

<sup>791</sup> Exposition Nationale 1823, AN, F/12/986-7, F/12/991.

<sup>792</sup> Exposition Nationale 1844, AN, F/12/5005A.

dress has been chosen by the Califat of Constantine, and his choice thus proves that good taste as understood in France is progressing even in the east. He also made a complete razzia amongst the mantles etc (*confections*) admitted to the exposition at London.<sup>793</sup>

Figure 38 shows an illustration of the public visiting the 1855 exhibition in Paris. The image to the right shows a conversation taking place and the man suggests going to see the diamond jewellery worth 500,000 fr but the woman would rather look at the dress lengths at 13 fr.<sup>794</sup> Such a comment emphasises an interest in items that could be purchased. These images were part of a page of illustrations with comical captions about the visitors to the exhibition entitled *Le Public à l'Exposition (Industrie)*.<sup>795</sup> They demonstrate the behaviour of the public as being more akin to shoppers than museum visitors and the exhibition organisers responded to this interest in September 1855.

A new gallery, with the idea of helping household budgets and aimed at working people, showed low-priced objects. *Galerie des Articles à Bas Prix* was erected in the garden adjoining the Palais de l'Industrie. The articles included household linen, children's clothing, menswear from the *magasin de nouveautés*, La Belle Jardinière, and women's clothing such as ready-made lingerie, corsets and lace. There was headgear from at least two *marchandes de modes*, Mme Paillard and Mme Gay. In a newspaper article, Mme Paillard's clients were described as being from several boarding schools so these would probably have been young children and young women from the middle classes. She exhibited silk hats decorated with ribbons and flowers plus feathers could be added at different prices.<sup>796</sup> Mme Gay, from the fashionable Rue de la Paix,

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<sup>793</sup> *Le Moniteur de la Mode: Journal du Grande Monde, Paris and London*, monthly edition, 7, July 1852, p. 99.

<sup>794</sup> *Le Journal Pour Rire*, 215, 17 November 1855, p. 4.

<sup>795</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>796</sup> Mme Paillard's prices for hats with feathers ranged from 4.50 fr to 12 fr, Louis Jordan for *Le Siècle*, 18 September 1855. An E. Paillard, *modes*, was listed in the trade directory as based near the Quai du Louvre at 16 Rue des Prêtres St Germain l'Auxerrois. *Annuaire Général du Commerce, de l'Industrie* (1855), p. 731.

displayed hats for all events from marriage to mourning and ‘coiffures that were simple and inexpensive without renouncing good taste’.<sup>797</sup>

These examples demonstrate the new promotional opportunities provided by inclusion in the industry exhibition that were available to fashion merchants representing different levels in the hierarchy of the trade and significantly, not restricted to those working with court clients. It shows both the necessity of headgear and the expectations of the population for products of fashion and quality across French society which supports the argument that the fashion merchant was an active part of a growing sector in the first half of the nineteenth century. They both responded to and stimulated demand for headgear with pricing a part of their strategy to attract all parts of society.

In this section, I found that until the 1850s the industry exhibitions concentrated mainly on mass produced items which included the straw hat making sector but did not take account of the smaller more artisanal production of luxury items. Garments and headgear were present as a way of showcasing materials. However, the exhibitions encouraged and rewarded producers and provided high quality models for others to follow and aspire to as well as disseminating knowledge of, and pride in, French products. I revealed that fashion merchants exhibited headgear at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851 and this presence had grown by the Paris Exhibition of 1855. There were at least eight *marchandes de modes* who exhibited headwear, acknowledging their importance. Ready-made clothing was dominated by the exhibits such as *mantelets* that were sometimes provided by fashion merchants but were more often supplied by their competitors, *magasins de nouveautés*.

I found that national and international exhibitions involved and educated the public in what constituted high quality in materials and design and encouraged the idea of examining products and judging items for

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<sup>797</sup> Mme Gay's prices for hats were 8 fr, 9 fr and 16 fr. Jordan stressed the quality of the hats on display and praised Gay's efforts to keep the price low whilst not sacrificing elegance. Louis Jordan for *Le Siecle*, 18 September 1855 cited in Henriette Vanier, *La Mode et ses Métiers*, p. 170.

themselves. This also promoted a sense of excitement in the idea of seeing new products and ready-made articles which could be exploited by fashion merchants. For the first time *marchandes de modes* had the opportunity to promote their merchandise to a vast number of potential customers from France and a range of foreign countries. They were well-represented in 1855 whilst other clothing categories like *couturières* were less evident demonstrating that fashion merchants retained their high status. In the final section of this chapter, I will examine other methods available to fashion merchants to publicise their businesses in the first half of the nineteenth century.

### **Communicating Fashion: Print Promotion and Advertising.**

Most historians have focused on the late eighteenth century or the second half of the nineteenth century to analyse print promotion and advertising. However, I agree with the nineteenth century historian, Hahn, that significant practices using promotion and advertising were taking place in the first half of the nineteenth century. Hahn's position highlights the late 1820 and 1830s as the period when the fashion press and retailers promoted shopping and consumption whereas I add to this discussion by finding significant changes during that period but also earlier and later.<sup>798</sup> In this section I will also respond to the work of Wischermann, Coquery, Berg, Clifford and Scott in order to reveal how fashion merchants were actively engaged in promotional methods to gain commercial advantage before 1860.<sup>799</sup>

Merchants utilised a variety of traditional methods for promotion in print literature which had developed from eighteenth century practices, but that had a wider range of advantages in the nineteenth century. Importantly,

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<sup>798</sup> Hazel Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity: Culture and Consumption in the Nineteenth Century* (Routledge, 2009), p. 3.

<sup>799</sup> Clemens Wischermann, 'Placing Advertising in the Modern Cultural History of the City'; Natacha Coquery, 'French Court Society and Advertising Art: The Reputation of Parisian Merchants at the End of the Eighteenth Century', in *Advertising and the European City*; Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, 'Selling Consumption in the Eighteenth Century', *Cultural and Social History*, 4:2, (2007), 146-47; Katie Scott, 'Archives and Collections: The Waddesdon Manor Trade Cards: More Than One History', *Journal of Design History*, 17:1 (2004), 93-94.

these were combined with completely new opportunities to interact with consumers at industry exhibitions and through possibilities to advertise in a growing number of newspapers and journals in the fashion press. In the first part, I analyse how fashion merchants were able to adopt and, to a great extent control, the commercial literature, such as bill headings, trade cards, trade directories and guides. Secondly, I analyse the growing use of advertising in the form of *réclame* and the insertion of small advertisements in newspapers which increased the reach of fashion merchants to wider consumer markets. Lastly, I focus on the growing specialised fashion press to demonstrate the new possibilities of visibility in journals during the period and show how the celebrity of elite merchants attracted publicity.

Firstly, the meaning of advertising and how to analyse its effects has changed over time. Coquery has pointed out that in the eighteenth century ‘advertising’ was still about ‘the public nature of a thing, or something that had a public use’ and the meaning of ‘advertising’ was not defined as ‘a way of exerting influence on the public for commercial ends’ until 1829.<sup>800</sup> Historians have also linked the use of advertising with the mass production and consumption of consumer goods in the last half of the nineteenth century as a more necessary competitive tool.<sup>801</sup> The approach of this section departs from Wischermann’s periodisation but agrees with his point that the historical context is important in understanding the history of advertising. Examining eighteenth century trade literature, Coquery, Berg and Clifford also challenge the emphasis on the late nineteenth century by concluding that bill headings can be considered an early form of advertising that combined text with an image.<sup>802</sup>

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<sup>800</sup> Natacha Coquery, ‘French Court Society and Advertising Art’, p. 97 and p. 110.

<sup>801</sup> These points are made by Clemens Wischermann in, *Advertising and the European City*, p. xvii and p. 9.

<sup>802</sup> Natacha Coquery, ‘The Language of Success: Marketing and Distributing Semi-Luxury Goods in Eighteenth Century Paris’, *Journal of Design History*, 17:1 (Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 73. Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, ‘Selling Consumption’, pp. 146-47.

Bill headings were part of the traditional commercial literature that was available to fashion merchants in the nineteenth century along with trade cards and trade directories. A study of their form and content agrees with an active use of these sources but also reveals changes that gave nineteenth century merchants more ways to create a distinctive identity in response to an increasingly competitive market. Figures 39 A and B show a selection of bill headings from the fashion merchants who supplied elite clients demonstrating how these changed between 1804 and 1853. Imagery that reminded the consumer of the creativity of the trade and range of merchandise offered was replaced in the 1830s by a sign of an industry elite: royal warranty.

The example from 1804 is the heading of the invoice from the fashion merchants LeRoy and Raimbaud who supplied the clothing for the Empress Josephine for the coronation ceremony. The next heading is when LeRoy was working only with his wife as a partner and when in 1810 they supplied the marriage *corbeille* for the Archduchess Marie Louise for her marriage to Emperor Napoleon I. Both bill headings are fairly simple and descriptive, giving information such as the name and address of the business as well as the merchandise offered to clients. There is some decoration to the text that links to the flourishes of eighteenth century rococo design and there is even more of a link to this style in the heading of Mme Guerin's invoice from 1816 as the vignette is dominated by a decorative bow. However, by the time of the royal weddings between 1832 and 1853 some suppliers were incorporating the arms of their prestigious clients.

The three examples in the figure show much plainer bill headings with the main design features being the royal arms which are positioned very close to the names of the fashion merchants. The two headings for Mme Thomas show that as Princess Louise married the King of Belgium in 1832, by 1837 the fashion merchant had added the Belgian royal arms. The text has also changed to reflect this and both headings carry the word patented (*brévetée*) demonstrating the importance that Mme Thomas attached to the status that the royal warrants gave her business.

Generally, there has been a change to more imposing and less decorative headings that do not visually convey any sense of the trade that they are representing but instead highlighted the name of the merchant and the royal association. This may have been a competitive response to the bill headings of other kinds of merchants that had been awarded medals in the industry exhibitions and used this in their advertising. Figure 40 shows two lace manufacturers, Moreau brothers and D'Octagne and sons, who supplied the marriage *corbeille* of Princess Louise in 1832. They both prominently display the medals that they had been awarded at the industry exhibitions, held between 1806 and 1827, by using the medals' images or shapes in the centre of the heading with the company name placed under it. Other related items, available as a form of advertising, were trade cards (*carte d'adresse/carte de commerce*) and their design and function went through striking changes by the 1850s. Card designs moved away from visual images, stressing their artistic trade, to a minimalist association with business where the card relies on font type and size, similar to those used in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Unlike the past, they also were used differently to encourage sales.

In the eighteenth century, cards were used as an aid to memory reminding customers of the objects sold by merchants because the paper image could be wrapped around merchandise. Trade cards or bill heads have also been found inside the lids of boxes showing a deliberate strategy for encouraging repeat custom.<sup>803</sup> These cards could be purchased in a standard size and format and their quality is partly linked to technical developments in printing. Steel and copperplate engravings slowly replaced wood cuts in the eighteenth century making it possible to produce finer and more complex designs by the nineteenth century.<sup>804</sup> The size of French cards varied between 6 cm x 9 cm and the much larger 25 cm x 34.5 cm. The examples in Figures 41 A, B and C show

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<sup>803</sup> Jacques Savary des Bruslons (1723-1730) *Dictionnaire Universel de Commerce* (Paris, 1723-1730) cited in Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, 'Selling Consumption in the Eighteenth Century', 149-51 and in Katie Scott, 'Archives and Collections: The Waddesdon Manor Trade Cards: More Than One History', *Journal of Design History*, 17:1 (2004), 93-94.

<sup>804</sup> Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, 'Selling Consumption', p. 147.

how the combination of text and image developed between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries linking to the worlds of art and business in their layout and design. Until the nineteenth century they had no clearly designated word in French and they were variously known as *etiquette* (label), *adresse* or *enseigne* (sign).<sup>805</sup> In Figure 41 A, the eighteenth-century cards drew attention firstly to the name of the merchant which is in the largest type and then either the trade or the sign of the business such as the card at top-left *A la Reine des Fleurs* or top-right *marchande de modes* and bottom left mistress seamstress/dressmaker (*maitresse couturière*). The top two cards are for Mlle La Grange and Mme Legrand who are selling *modes* and using an almost identical card template which has no direct visual reference to the goods being sold but does link to interior design of the period with a line drawing similar to the gilt frame of a rococo style mirror and the line drawing includes the *fleur de lys* in the corner. In the late eighteenth century production was expensive and therefore not within the reach of all merchants and traders.

The price variants were the same as they are today and included the quality of the paper, size and type of design plus the number to be purchased. An English eighteenth century example showed that creating the plate alone was half the weekly wage of a journeyman.<sup>806</sup> Furcault selected a card that showed creativity and skill of high quality which was probably expensive to produce and may have been linked to the status of his clientele. In contrast the card for a *couturière*, Mme Picard, is similar to the basic cards shown above for the two female fashion merchants with no visual sign that differentiated it from another *métier*. Figure 42 gives an example of a larger trade card (c. 8" x 5" or 204 mm x 144 mm) which today, would be described as a flyer, for Mme Allipa, c. 1800. This shows that it was selected from a stock design which had etched visual signs of the trade of *modiste*, from headgear to reticules, scarves and feathers arranged all around the frame. The text in the centre was engraved

<sup>805</sup> Katie Scott, 'Archives and Collections', p. 93.

<sup>806</sup> In 1788 William Bailey offered 100 trade cards for 2s 6d or 500 for 9s and 1,000 for 16s, if paid for in ready money. Creating the plate in 1772 cost the customer 15s when the weekly wage for a journeyman engraver was 30s. Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, 'Selling Consumption', p. 149.

according to Mme Allipa's requirements which were to advertise her presence in a particular location in order to sell her goods and services which could then be completed by pen and ink as desired for different towns. The language is intended to be persuasive as well as informative when her merchandise was described as the 'most fashionable Parisian articles'.

A later trade card which was also quite large belonged to Mme Lenormand (Figure 4) and gave even clearer visual signs of the *métier* and included text in English as well as French, 'Milliner's shop, the newest fashions'.<sup>807</sup> This demonstrated that the fashion merchant was aware of the potential for sales in targeting the large numbers of British who were living in, or visiting Paris after the Restoration of Louis XVIII in the summer of 1814.<sup>808</sup> Figure 41B shows how the style of the trade cards changed again during the 1840s. Although it is not known how representative these examples were of cards of the period they show both individuality and similarities. The top two cards were produced by the painter, engraver and lithographer Eugène Leroux (1811-63) who was known for his skill in producing tones from black to white. The lowest card which shows similar skill in tone but has a less fluid style of drawing was produced by Alexandre Collette (1814-76).<sup>809</sup> All three have a relationship to romantic finely detailed narrative paintings of the time and there is a sense of activity in the different scenes linked either to the merchant or the customer and their lifestyle. This could have been a

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<sup>807</sup> Mme Lenormand's trade card was produced on quite thick woven paper. It was donated to the Museum of Metropolitan Art between the 1930s and 1950s by Bella Landauer and is part of an album, compiled by the museum, of nineteenth century French trade cards. Allison Rudnick, Assistant Curator, Department of Drawings and Prints, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Reproduced in Michael and Ariane Batterberry, *Fashion: The Mirror of History* (Columbus Books, 1982), p. 221.

<sup>808</sup> Philip Mansel, stated that 68 % of the visitors to Paris in 1816 were British when there were also 29,000 living there, *Paris Between the Empires*, p. 144.

<sup>809</sup> Leroux worked in Paris from 1833 on trade cards and posters but both Leroux and Collette went on to produce a range of work as painters, illustrators and engravers.

Eugène Leroux, London, British Museum (BM)

<[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search\\_the\\_collection\\_database/term\\_details.aspx?biold=117378](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/term_details.aspx?biold=117378)>[accessed 12 September 2015] and Alexandre Collette,  
<[http://data.bnf.fr/14971819/alexandre\\_collette/](http://data.bnf.fr/14971819/alexandre_collette/)>[accessed 12 September 2015]

deliberate strategy to make the cards long-lasting desirable objects that would be more likely to be circulated amongst the purchaser's circle.

The card for Mme Bourdon-Leroux has a romantic image of women walking and reading in the countryside or garden wearing different kinds of headgear which reflected the genteel occupations of potential middle-class clients. The lower card depicts the interior of a fashion merchant's premises with hats on display, being trimmed and one client is leaving whilst another is shown a hat by a saleswoman. Comparing these illustrative cards with a fashion merchant's card from 1851 shows that this artistic style had been abandoned in favour of a simple business image.

Figure 41 C shows the card from the *marchandes de modes*, Brie et Jeofrin, along with two suppliers of artificial flowers who were also exhibitors at the Great Exhibition.<sup>810</sup> The fashion merchants' card states that English was spoken, which may have been a specially ordered trade card to be handed out to encourage potential customers to engage in a dialogue whilst visiting their display in England or premises in Paris. All three are small cards, very similar to those used today (c. 8.5 cm x 5.5 cm), with addresses and some relationship between style and trade as in the flower merchants' cards. Exhibitors for this event and the exhibition of 1855 in Paris would have had the opportunity to distribute printed information to a wide international range of potential customers who visited their stands. This would not have been possible for eighteenth century traders as historians believe they only distributed cards to customers after a sale to reinforce a business identity and encourage repeat custom.<sup>811</sup> Entries in trade directories and guides to the city of Paris were a supplementary form of reinforcing a business identity using only text. The former was under the control of the merchant in the nineteenth century but the latter depended on reputation for inclusion.

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<sup>810</sup> These trade cards have survived because they were collected as part of the organisation of the Great Exhibition. London, V & A, The National Art Library (V&A), Ex1851,131, v.12 and v. 16.

<sup>811</sup> Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, 'Selling Consumption', 149-51.

Trade directories changed their format across the period studied with the important innovation of the addition of adverts from 1847. As the merchant controlled the text they demonstrate how a business identity was created. The first available trade directory for the dates of the thesis is for 1797 to 1798.<sup>812</sup> The information did not include a general list of inhabitants but names and addresses were listed by profession. The category *marchande de modes* could be listed as *modes et nouveautés*. There is no clear definition for each category given and not all the entries have descriptive text, although this did increase slightly towards the 1850s. The 1797/8 edition was the only one to divide the list of *marchandes de modes* into male and female merchants and although later directories indicated, in the use of titles, female marital status such as widow and sometimes give first names, they indicate a masculine identity only by the lack of title. Despite the listing of twenty-four women and thirty-two men, the heading of the *métier* used the female spelling of *marchande* supporting the generally held association of the trade being seen as feminine. Apart from indicating gender, the only information for the fashion merchants was the name and address as was the case for most of the categories except *négociants* where some were listed as wholesalers (*en gros*) or manufacturers (*fabricants*). The price of the directory was not shown, but by 1810, according to Grand-Carteret, the cost had increased from eight to ten francs and 13 francs for other parts of the French Empire.<sup>813</sup> However, the authors said that any changes could be made free of charge to the purchasers indicating that businesses paid for an entry by becoming subscribers. Similar comments were made by the notice in 1829, in a new directory.<sup>814</sup> In the first edition the author stated that the information had been sent to their office with the text to be included in the directory showing that the fashion merchant controlled the description of their enterprise. Often the entries gave information about a change of ownership, address or type of business. They also reveal different ways of constructing an identity by text relating

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<sup>812</sup> *Almanach du Commerce de la Ville de Paris* (Paris, 1797-1798, Year VI).

<sup>813</sup> John Grand-Carteret, *Les Almanachs Français* (Paris: Alisie et cie, 1896), p. 327.

*Almanach du Commerce de Paris* (Paris, 1810).

<sup>814</sup> *Répertoire du Commerce de Paris* (Paris, 1828-9).

to elite clients, trustworthiness through longevity, specialist merchandise and target markets.

One example is when, in 1809, M Herbault altered his business from *coiffeur* to *marchand de modes*. This was a change or extension of his trade for which he had already built a reputation; as coiffeur to the Empress Josephine. In another example, from 1855, Mme Burrier advertised the longevity of her business stating it had been founded in 1808 and then said that she specialised in *coiffures* for children plus the manufacture of straw hats.<sup>815</sup> These entries served to inform existing customers of changes and therefore were a strategy to maintain clients as well as to attract potential clients by using a brief text to state a specialisation or give the rank of French or foreign clients. After the international industry exhibitions, some fashion merchants, who had taken part, included this mark of distinction in their entries. From 1857, Mélanie Brun started listing her first-class medal, gained in 1855, and continued to reference this award into the 1860s.<sup>816</sup> For fashion merchants this was a significant change in how they could advertise their authority and expertise in a way that was not linked to a court elite.

For other fashion merchants like Mlle Dezboroff, who had been through the public procedure of bankruptcy, in 1855, the trade directory was a way of reinstating her position and communicating that she was continuing to operate her business from her usual address. In 1855, her entry in the trade directory merely listed her name and address but the following year she emphasised her status by listing her reputable past and present high-ranking clients.

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<sup>815</sup> Mme Burrier, ‘specialité coiffures d’enfants, fab. de chapeaux de paille, Passage Delorme 21, A la Mère de Famille’, *Annuaire Général du Commerce* (Paris, 1855), p. 730.

<sup>816</sup> Brun (Mélanie) et cie, ‘modes et parures de cour, méd. 1ère classe 1855, Ménars, 7 ci dev. Rue de la Paix’, *Annuaire Almanach du Commerce, de l’Industrie* (Paris: Firmin Didot et Bottin, 1857), p. 738 and (1864), p. 980.

Dezboroff, Mlle, successor to Mme Thomas, patented supplier to the Queen of England and several foreign courts, Luxembourg, 51.<sup>817</sup>

However, there was more potential to advertise a business from 1847 when the trade directory the *Annuaire Général du Commerce, de l'Industrie* added a final section, ‘Revue Industriel’, which carried large adverts with some images and smaller adverts, with text only. The traders listed changed each year and the text was written in the style of *réclame*. The text read more as an independent review in what Hahn has called a ‘blending of recommendation and advertising’.<sup>818</sup> In 1847 under ‘Modes’ Alexandre et Beaudrand were included as the leading *maison* of its kind with their address, 41 Rue Neuve St Augustin. Then in 1855, three different businesses were entered – Mlles Ode, Mme Euphrosine Lesas and Mlles Paul Normant. The text considered their position within the sector of *modes*. This was done by considering who their clients were and what kind of reputation they had acquired plus if they were known for a particular type of merchandise. For example, the Ode sisters were described as having risen to the highest level in their type of business, being known throughout Europe and with clients that included the French Empress and the Grand Duchess of Russia.

Their hats and their floral *parures* have a distinctive, elegant and graceful style that is an expression of their art. These qualities, together with the honourable character of the *maison* Ode, clearly explain their excellent reputation in commerce and the numerous relationships they have with the most distinguished families in France and abroad.<sup>819</sup>

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<sup>817</sup> Mlle Dezboroff, ‘fournisseur, brev. de la reine d’Angleterre et de plusieurs cours étranger’, *Annuaire Almanach du Commerce* (Paris, 1855), p. 730 and (1856), p. 725.

<sup>818</sup> Hazel Hahn, ‘Fashion Discourses in Fashion Magazines and Mme Girardin’s Lettres Parisiennes in July Monarchy France, 1830 to 1848’, *Fashion Theory*, 9 (2005), 216. See also Hazel Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity*, pp. 5-6 and François Tétart-Vittu, ‘De l’Enseigne à la Griffe’, in Musée Galliera, *Au Paradis des Dames*, p. 48

<sup>819</sup> ‘Leurs chapeaux et leurs parures en fleurs, ont un cachet de distinction, d’élégance et de grâce qui est l’expression de l’art. Ces qualités, jointes à l’honorables caractères de la Maison Ode, explique parfaitement l’excellent renommé dont elle jouit dans le commerce et les nombreuses relations qu’elle entretient avec les familles les plus distinguées de la France et de l’étranger’. Ode sisters, 30 Rue de la Paix, near Place Vendôme, ‘Revue Industrielle’, *Annuaire Général du Commerce, de l’Industrie*, 1855, p. 2267.

The text, which was an expense to the business, offers an insight into how the identity of the business was constructed: through the creativity of the company's merchandise, their honourable reputation in business and their connection to the highest status clients. Other printed sources such as guides for visitors were not under the control of the fashion merchant and so their inclusion was only open to businesses that had acquired status and reputation.

*The Picture of Paris*, written in 1814 for British visitors to the city, stated how the information had been obtained.

The author is indebted to several friends who have kindly contributed the most recent information from the French capital [...] In selecting the names of [...] merchants and tradesmen [...] he conceived that he should render the traveller a service by mentioning a few of those, whose reputation for integrity and ability was established.<sup>820</sup>

It appears that the selection was made using the criteria of reputation rather than fashion merchants writing and paying for their own entries. In common with other guides for foreigners the most well-known merchants were listed in different categories and gave their addresses, sometimes with information such as who their clients were, stressing their status. Thirty-two milliners (*marchandes de modes*) were noted as opposed to 15 *couturières* showing the popularity of headgear. The importance of reputation linked to the status of fashion merchants' clientele was shown when it was noted that L.H. Leroy had supplied 'the late Empress'.<sup>821</sup> *The Paris Directory* of 1814 also gave commercial information listing five milliners, one straw bonnet maker and five *couturières* in alphabetical order. Mme Corot and Mlle Bécard were listed on the Left Bank and on the Right Bank Mlle Dispaux (Despaux) was stated as supplying the duchess of Angoulème. In 1842, a guide to visitors praised the headgear of Mme Barenne stressing her reputation across Europe.

in England, Russia, even Greece, ladies of the high ton must send to Paris for their hats and bonnets, and have them from

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<sup>820</sup> Edward Planta, *Picture of Paris*, 1814 (London, 1814), p. iv.

<sup>821</sup> Ibid., pp. 209-11.

Madame de Barennes, in the Place Vendôme, which is not merely an idea, but a fact that they really are replete with that exquisite taste for which they are so justly famed.<sup>822</sup>

Guides were published to present positive aspects of Paris fashion but newspapers had a wider readership and could carry positive and negative aspects of commercial activity, such as a declaration of bankruptcy.

By the late eighteenth century most men and women living in Paris had at least 'a basic literacy' and at the time of the Revolution, in 1789, newspapers were an important medium for transmitting information.<sup>823</sup>

The first daily newspaper, *Journal de Paris*, was published in 1777 and in the 1780s was producing 10,000 copies each day. There was also an increase in the number of periodicals, with at least 300 starting in 1790.<sup>824</sup>

Between 1815 and 1871 was a period of technical developments in newspaper production, improvements in education and the increasing prosperity of the lower middle class.<sup>825</sup> The circulation of newspapers increased quickly between 1836, when the French press had a circulation of 70,000, and 1865, when *Le Petit Journal* alone printed around 259,000 copies.<sup>826</sup> The origins of advertising in France have been linked to the criers of the middle ages and in the seventeenth century to the activities of Théophraste Renaudot who had an agency for small adverts that in the 1630s appeared in *La Gazette de France*.<sup>827</sup> However it was not until the

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<sup>822</sup> Francis Hervé, *How to Enjoy Paris in 1842*, p. 126.

<sup>823</sup> In Paris 90 % of men and 80 % of women were considered literate by the time of the Revolution. Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 258.

<sup>824</sup> Colin Jones, *Paris*, p. 216.

<sup>825</sup> Lawrence C. Jennings, 'Review of *Histoire Générale de la Presse Française*, II, ed. by Claude Bellanger and others', *The Journal of Modern History*, 43:3 (1971), 518.

<sup>826</sup> Ibid. The most popular daily newspapers had a circulation of 120,000 in 1840 and by 1829 there were 197 periodicals. William M. Reddy, *The Invisible Code: Honour and Sentiment in Post Revolutionary France, 1814 to 1848* (University of California Press, 1997), p. 186.

<sup>827</sup> Gilles Feyel, 'Presse et Publicité en France (Dixhuitième et Dixneuvième Siècles)', *Revue Historiques*, 628, (2003), 838-39. Réjane Bargiel, *150 Ans de Publicité. Collections du Musée de la Publicité* (Paris: Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs, 2004), p. 16. Stéphane Pincas and Marc Loiseau, *Une Histoire de la Publicité* (Taschen, 2008), p. 17.

end of the 1820s that it became normal practice for newspapers to accept adverts.<sup>828</sup>

Advertising that was paid for could be produced in a range of styles in newspapers, from adverts to the more hidden *réclame*, or editorial puff.<sup>829</sup> *Réclame* might be on the front page but poster style or simpler texts were normally on the last page. They were present in newspapers such as *Le Siècle* by the late 1830s but even in the 1840s adverts were expensive to place in Paris newspapers and so they were relatively rare.<sup>830</sup> They could be placed via an agency and prices were fixed for the different kind of advert by the individual papers with lower prices for those with very small circulation. The table below shows the prices for some of the more popular newspapers in Paris and it can be seen that editorial coverage was the most expensive form of advertisement.<sup>831</sup>

**Table 24. Cost of Advertising in Parisian Newspaper in 1840s.**

NEWSPAPER	COST PER LINE	SPECIAL NOTICE	EDITORIAL
<i>La Presse</i>	1 fr for each insertion		
<i>Le Siècle</i>	1-50 fr for 4 insertions 1fr for 10 insertions	3 fr per line	5 fr per line
<i>Nation &amp; Débats</i>	0-75 fr for 4 lines 0-50 fr above 150 lines	2 fr per line	3 fr per line
<i>Galignani's Messenger</i>	0-75 fr for each insertion 0-50 fr above 300 lines		3 fr per line

Placing advertisements was profitable for newspapers, particularly *La Presse*, *Le Siècle*, *Débats* and *Constitutionnel*. For example, in 1847 *La Presse* received 300,000 fr from their two pages of advertising.<sup>832</sup> These

<sup>828</sup> For a history of newspapers in France see *Histoire Générale de la Presse Française*, ed. by Claude Bellanger and others, 5 vols (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1969). Gilles Feyel, 'Presse et Publicité', p. 838.

<sup>829</sup> Henry Sampson, *A History of Advertising from the Earliest Times* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1874), p. 603.

<sup>830</sup> *Le Siècle* was launched in 1836 and had a small number of adverts in 1837 that steadily increased each year. *Ibid*, p. 598.

<sup>831</sup> Henry Sampson, *A History of Advertising from the Earliest Times*, pp. 598-99.

<sup>832</sup> *Ibid*, p. 599.

costs could explain why, on the whole, it was only the most successful fashion merchants that used this form of publicity, in the 1840s, and in turn this may have been a factor in their continued success. Figure 43 is an example where the successful *marchand de modes* Maurice Beauvais purchased space to advertise his business in the newspaper *La Presse*, in 1844, and can be compared to the text in the trade directory for the same year. In the latter, it is stated that he is supplier to the main European courts but for the newspaper, which would have had a wider general circulation, the text refers to a clientele that is much more wide ranging, from court to financial circles, and it is stressed that he only supplies crepe hats that are 'so young, light and gracious' to fashionable Parisians. Writing in the *réclame* style gives the impression of a disinterested party assessing the quality of Maurcie Beauvais in an impartial manner when in reality this is how the merchant constructed the image of his company. Mme Barenne also made use of a range of advertising throughout the life of her business and Figure 44 shows several newspaper advertisements for the *marchande de modes*, placed between 1843 and 1858.

In the top advert (1843) the fashion merchant is part of a list of luxury suppliers, from silk to chocolate, being recommended to foreigners.<sup>833</sup> In the middle advert three highly successful *marchandes de modes* (1854) are listed together and finally there is a longer and more expensive advert (1858) informing Barenne's clients of a change of address and emphasising her status as a supplier to royalty Mme Barenne's budget for advertising also included the more expensive editorials. For example, in November 1855, in *Le Figaro*, the vicomtesse de Renneville discussed fashions for the winter with references to several Parisian suppliers, including the headgear of Mme Barenne.<sup>834</sup> Other opportunities for fashion merchants to publicise their businesses existed as apart from adverts and pieces on fashion in newspapers there was also a developing

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<sup>833</sup> For a similar cluster of luxury goods but in locations, see chapter 3.

<sup>834</sup> 'Les Modes de Paris', *Le Figaro*, 4 November 1855, p. 5.

specialist fashion press, in the first half of the nineteenth century. This grew from earlier printed visual images and fashion dolls.

Clothing and millinery businesses had developed practical methods for showing customers their merchandise that had started with dressing small dolls in the latest fashions. Fashion dolls (*poupées*) were mentioned in French royal accounts in the fourteenth century and the doll as a transmitter of information about fashionable dress and textiles is linked to the nobility or royal family.<sup>835</sup> In 1727, Lady Lansdowne wrote to Mrs Howard in Britain relating fashion news.

I have sent you a little young lady dressed in the court dress, which I desire you would show to the queen and when she has done with it, let Mrs Tempest [famous milliner] have it. She was dressed by the person that dresses all the princesses here.<sup>836</sup>

The French fashion doll in the above quote was referred to as a 'young lady' and could also be known as the *Petite* or the *Grande Pandora*, or the 'doll from Rue Saint Honoré'.<sup>837</sup> The name Pandora (*Pandore*) is thought to have derived from Madeleine de Scudéry along with the fashion for names derived from Ancient Greece that were popular at the Court of Louis XIV.<sup>838</sup> The link was also made with the fashion doll and the street that predominantly sold luxury goods in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The writer Mercier took someone to show them the fashion dolls because he said

I met a foreigner who refused to believe in the *poupée de la rue Saint Honoré*.<sup>839</sup>

This shows that the dolls could be used for display when not being sent to other places. There was a relationship between the fashion doll

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<sup>835</sup> Barbara Spadaccini-Day, 'La Poupée, Premier Mannequin de Mode', in *Fastes de Cour et Ceremonies Royales: Le Costume de Cour en Europe, 1650 to 1800*, ed. by Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel and Pascale Gorguet Ballesteros (Paris: RMN, 2009), p. 226.

<sup>836</sup> Ibid.

<sup>837</sup> François Boucher, *The History of Costume*, p. 318.

<sup>838</sup> In ancient history Pandora was the woman who inspired writers, painters and musicians. Madeleine de Scudéry held salons and was admitted to Versailles where she composed poems praising the king. She was thought to have transposed the latest fashions onto a doll to keep her friends in the provinces informed about dress at court. Barbara Spadaccini-Day, 'La Poupée', pp. 226-27.

<sup>839</sup> Mercier's quote was cited in Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion*, p. 25.

(*mannequin poupée*) and the child's toy that could be ambiguous. They may have been used initially to display clothing and then had a second use as a child's doll. Figure 45 A shows a doll dressed in fashionable clothing in the hands of a child although the clothing looks like an accurate depiction of eighteenth century dress in an expensive woven silk fabric. The accounts of the *marchande de modes*, Rose Bertin, show that although she used these dolls as a professional tool she also would supply one intended for a child.<sup>840</sup> The regularity of their use and the value placed on these dolls as representations of Paris fashions is shown in an event that occurred in 1778. A passenger, in a carriage on the way to London, accidentally hit a covered object with his trunk and when he heard the shrieks of horror from its guardians thought it must be a child that had been hurt. However, it was 'only' a fashion doll that was sent every month from Paris to London.<sup>841</sup> Figures 45 A and B show examples of fashion dolls from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century demonstrating that they continued to be produced into the 1800s. The company Jumeau exhibited *poupées* in London at the Great exhibition in 1851 and the French report mentioned the care and taste shown in the trousseaux for dolls as well as dressed dolls that 'displayed French fashions to foreigners'.<sup>842</sup> Although the fashion doll as a visual image of fashionable clothing has retained a certain place in French fashion up to the present day, in the nineteenth century it was mainly superseded by two-dimensional fashion plates and illustrations.<sup>843</sup>

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<sup>840</sup> The status of the client may also have been a factor in this order that was supplied, in 1777, to the Prince de Guéméné for a friend's daughter. Bertin supplied a large doll (*grande poupée*) on a stand and 15 items of clothing. Barbara Spadaccini-Day, 'La Poupée', pp. 227-28.

<sup>841</sup> This event was taken from *Le Babillard*, 1778, and was cited in Jonathan Conlin, *Tales of Two Cities: Paris, London and the Birth of the Modern City* (Atlantic Books, 2013), pp. 1-4.

<sup>842</sup> 'poupées habillées qui portent les modes françaises à l'étranger'. Natalis Rondot, *Rapport sur les Objets de Parure*, p. 175. A contemporary quote from a London toyshop owner in 1875 showed that dolls were still used as models of Paris fashions by 'dress and bonnet makers'. Juliette Peers, *The Fashion Doll from Bébé Jumeau to Barbie* (Berg, 2004), pp. 1-2.

<sup>843</sup> An example of a twentieth century fashion doll is one from the fashion house of Madeleine Vionnet wearing an evening dress inspired by Greek ceramics and embroidered by maison Lesage, 1921-22, Paris, Musée Galliera, GAL1985.1.171. Sophie Groissiord and others, *Les Années Folles* (Paris Musées, 2007), p. 119 and pp. 311-12.

Fashion journals developed from the engraved images of fashion that were available by the seventeenth century, before there was a fashion press, but the first publication that included illustrations was the *Mercure Galant* (1672-1701).<sup>844</sup> By the eighteenth century the success of French fashion journals was shown by the number of copies that were illegally made of the illustrations that then appeared in other European fashion magazines. For example, in 1790 the German periodical *Journal der Moden* included an illustration of the *coiffure à la Bernice* which was a copy of the French original that was called *au charme de la liberté*.<sup>845</sup> These were not credited to a particular merchant but the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* did include names of suppliers including *marchandes de modes*, particularly between 1788 and 1789.<sup>846</sup> In 1797, *Le Journal des Dames et des Modes* was launched and significantly had a readership across the social levels.<sup>847</sup>

The readership was mainly female and ranged from working people to the nobility and wealthy aristocrats with the typical age being between 18 and 40. There were some foreign subscribers and half of the regular readers lived in the provinces with the overall readership for this magazine, as well as *Petit Courier des Dames* and *Le Follet*, varying between 1,000 and 2,500.<sup>848</sup> The number of fashion journals increased from two or three up to 1829, around 12 in the 1830s and to about 20 by the 1840s of which around 12 were still being published at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>849</sup> The first journal to focus entirely on fashion merchants, called *Journal des Marchandes de Modes*, was not published until 1866.<sup>850</sup> Fashion journals had certain similarities such as consisting of around

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<sup>844</sup> This journal is discussed in 'Fashion Culture in Print' by Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, pp. 25-39 and Corinne Thépaut-Cabasset, *L'Esprit des Modes au Grand Siècle, extr. du Mercure Galant 1672 to 1701* (Paris: CTHS, 2010).

<sup>845</sup> Françoise Tétart-Vittu, 'Presse et Diffusion des Modes Françaises', in Madeleine Delpierre and Musée Galliera, *Modes et Révolutions*, p. 133.

<sup>846</sup> Ibid., p.134.

<sup>847</sup> Annemarie Kleinert, *Le Journal des Dames et des Modes ou la Conquête de l'Europe Féminine 1797 to 1839* (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2001), p. 1.

<sup>848</sup> Ibid., pp. 8-10, 128 and 208.

<sup>849</sup> Jean-Pierre Vittu, 'Le Printemps de la Presse de Mode', Musée Galliera, *Au Paradis des Dames*, p. 57.

<sup>850</sup> The editor was Gérant Léon Goudeau, *Le Journal des Marchandes de Modes*, 20 Rue St Marc, 15 July 1866 to 1884.

eight pages with one coloured fashion plate but they differed in how much focus there was on fashion as opposed to other subjects and reviews.<sup>851</sup>

Some fashion journals gave their opinions about different *couturières* and *marchandes de modes* which could be positive or negative. The journal *Almanach des Modes* described the businesses of particular merchants in 1821 such as praising the turbans of Mme Guérin and stating that her clientele was made up of the elite of the Faubourg Saint Germain (Left Bank). However, the same writer also made a rather negative assessment of the fashion merchant Corot saying that although the company still had a great deal of business it ‘shone less brightly’ than when it was run by the proprietor’s mother.<sup>852</sup> In a review of *Les Modes Parisiennes*, in 1847, the writer commented that along with a small number of this type of fashion journal, that were not connected to the various business for *articles de modes*, the items were chosen as examples of the best, to show the variety and examples of taste.<sup>853</sup> This shows that most of the fashion press accepted advertising and had a connection to certain fashion businesses that were promoted through their journals.

In the late eighteenth century, some journals like the *Cabinet des Modes* had carried advertisements although only a few merchants were named in the text and not next to the images in the plates. This was an example of *réclame* where the editorial included naming shops as part of its imparting of ‘fashion news’ paid for by the supplier. The fashion press in the early nineteenth century used hidden, editorial advertising as the norm with a limited amount of explicit advertising on the last page. Editorial adverts could be competitive and persuasive such as when Mme Rose Druelle’s headgear was favourably compared to the most fashionable merchants like Herbaux and Thomas with the only difference being that they cost a

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<sup>851</sup> Jean-Pierre Vittu, ‘Le Printemps de la Presse de Mode’, p. 57.

<sup>852</sup> *Almanach des Modes et des Moeurs Parisiennes* (Paris, 1821), pp. 166-73.

<sup>853</sup> ‘Revue Industrielle’, in *Annuaire Général du Commerce, de l’Industrie*, (Paris: 1847), p. 1520.

lot less.<sup>854</sup> Hidden advertising was considered ‘less commercial and vulgar’ so that when, in 1837, the *Journal des Dames et des Modes* started including explicit advertising some upper-class subscribers cancelled their subscriptions.<sup>855</sup> Around the mid 1820s fashion plates started to have illustrations where the suppliers and makers were named, showing specialism in the type of merchandise that merchants sold. Illustrations from the 1830s gave more detailed credits probably because they were paid for by the suppliers and this was income for the magazine. In 1838/39, adverts could account for up to 40 % of some issues and each advert cost the merchant 20 to 30 fr which was more expensive than advertising in a newspaper, so would have only have been available to the wealthier merchants.<sup>856</sup> Figure 46, from October 1846, demonstrates the financial benefit to the journal as Mme Baudry is credited for the hat (*chapeau*) as one of eight different suppliers credited under the illustration of two fashionably dressed women. Fashion journals also commented on special events such as the industry exhibitions and sometimes used these to publicise Parisian clothing and headgear, though not showcasing the fashion merchants who took part, showing that entries were probably paid for. The 1855 industry exhibition was also extensively reported in *Le Petit Courier des Dames* and the first-class medal awarded to Maison Opigez Gagelin was reported in their November edition.<sup>857</sup>

*Le Moniteur de la Mode* responded to the interest created by the Great Exhibition in 1851 by publishing a monthly edition, from 1 April that year, in English as well as French which was also available in New York.<sup>858</sup> Figure 47 shows a fashion plate and two adverts from the English version of *Le Follet* that also relate to the industry exhibition. On the left is the fashion plate *Visit to Crystal Palace*, showing *chapeaux* from Maison

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<sup>854</sup> *Journal des Femmes, Gymnase Littéraire*, 30 November 1833 cited in Henriette Vanier, *La Mode et ses Métiers*, p. 132.

<sup>855</sup> Hazel Hahn, ‘Fashion Discourses in Fashion Magazines’, p. 217.

<sup>856</sup> Annemarie Kleinert, *Le Journal des Dames et des Modes*, p. 276.

<sup>857</sup> *Le Petit Courier des Dames*, 17 November 1855.

<sup>858</sup> This journal was first published in 1843 in French only and continued until 1913. *Le Moniteur de la Mode: Journal du Grande Monde*, Paris and London, no. 7, July 1852.

Hocquet, lace by Violard and garments by Camille.<sup>859</sup> By illustrating Crystal Palace behind the two female figures the image both publicises the international exhibition and informs the reader how to dress fashionably for a visit. The two adverts shown use the word 'exhibition' in their titles which would have drawn attention from the reader, although they are not referring to the industry display but to events of their own. The target reader for both adverts was professional, as Mr Roper said his 'Great exhibition of fashions' was 'important to milliners and dressmakers', and Mrs Wills 'Royal exhibition mantle' addressed 'shippers, wholesale buyers, drapers and milliners'.<sup>860</sup> Mrs Wills stated that she was 'in communication with several of the leading houses in Paris' and they kept her informed about new designs on a monthly basis.<sup>861</sup> Similarly, Mr Roper said that for his millinery, dress and cloak pattern he had an arrangement with 'some of the first Parisian Houses'.<sup>862</sup>

These adverts gave practical information such as addresses and dates but they also used references to Parisian fashion to place their businesses on a higher level than competitors and they used persuasive language to increase their customers. Apart from special events the fashion journals also reported on anything that affected the commerce in fashionable goods including what was perceived as a lack of support from Louis-Philippe's regime. *La Sylphide* criticised the royal princesses for not providing fashion leadership or high standards in dress.

When we see royal princesses in the street in slightly dirty black taffeta, in muddy shoes and black stockings we do not know what is happening.<sup>863</sup>

These criticisms showed that the writer saw it as the royal family's role to show leadership, as in earlier regimes, but celebrated suppliers were more likely to be seen as fashion authorities in the

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<sup>859</sup> *Le Follet*, August 1851, II (May 1851 to December 1852).

<sup>860</sup> Advert for Mr Roper, *Le Follet*, October 1851, II and Mrs Wills, *Le Follet*, March 1851, I (January 1849 to April 1851).

<sup>861</sup> *Le Follet*, March 1851.

<sup>862</sup> *Le Follet*, October 1851.

<sup>863</sup> 'Lorsqu'on voit des princesses royales aller dans la rue en robe de taffetas noir un peu sale, en souliers crottés et en bas noirs, on ne sait plus à quoi s'en tenir'. Mme J. D'Abrantès wrote this piece for *La Sylphide*, 25 November 1839, p. 3.

journals. An examination of the successful fashion merchants such as M LeRoy, M Herbault, Mme Corot and Mme Barenne shows that they paid for and received publicity in the fashion journals throughout their careers. In the case of LeRoy his celebrity status meant that events in his life were reported in the newspapers, as well as through the advertising that was placed in journals, and he continued to be talked about even after his death in 1829, in the English fashion press as well as in France.<sup>864</sup>

Normally journals recommended fashion merchants to readers promoting their reputations by using particular language appropriate to the period and regime. In 1799, the journal *Le Mois* made many references to LeRoy calling him Citizen LeRoy and praising his ingenuity in inventing new styles of *coiffures* as well as his dedication to beauty. His clients were referred to in a way that was not tied to status but instead to their intelligence. They were called the ‘most brilliant women’ who visited his premises almost every day.<sup>865</sup> It seems likely that LeRoy paid for these editorial entries.

In 1805, at the height of his career, and a year after the coronation of the Empress Josephine and Napoleon I, the *Manuel des Élégants* featured this fashion merchant throughout its publication. He was praised as ‘an artist’ and his work was ‘his art’ which he had carried to ‘the height of perfection’ (*au maximum de la perfection*). As the main clothing supplier to the Empress, the knowledge of their relationship would have confirmed him as a person of interest to the public particularly as he continued to count the ‘first ladies’ of France as his clients throughout his career. Male fashion merchants were working in the trade in the late eighteenth century but despite this, the fashion journal *Almanach des Modes à Paris*, in 1814, stated that this was a purely Parisian phenomenon where they were encroaching on female territory, and the writer even attacked the

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<sup>864</sup> LeRoy was called a genius and a Napoleon of fashion, the ‘emperor of men-milliners’, in *The Ladies Monthly Museum*, March 1830, pp. 130-31.

<sup>865</sup> ‘son étonnante sagacité à inventer des formes neuves, son zèle à servir la beauté’, *Le Mois* 1799, p. 2.

masculinity of these men.<sup>866</sup> This shows that in the early nineteenth century men were only reluctantly accepted as part of the trade but by 1835 the attitude of fashion journals had changed. In its report on current fashions, *Le Follet* stated that male fashion merchants were ‘holding the sceptre of fashion.’<sup>867</sup> Status was also conferred on male and female merchants when they supplied court customers.

Mme Barenne was one of the leading fashion merchants, from the 1840s, and she paid for editorial comment (*réclame*) from the early years of her business (1839). In 1841 *La Sylphide*’s section on fashion contained much praise of the luxury of the *maison* and praised her talent in creating new forms of headgear, even calling her the leading establishment in Paris in her *métier*, whilst also giving practical information about a change of location to Place Vendôme.<sup>868</sup> Lastly, many of the less well-known fashion merchants that were listed in the trade directories, or who were declared bankrupt, appear not to have invested in publicising their businesses in this way as they may have considered it unnecessary or too expensive.

Mlle Dezboroff, despite financial difficulties leading to bankruptcy proceedings, had continued to invest in advertising her business. Her headgear was credited in fashion plates during the 1850s and in an issue of *Le Petit Courier des Dames* for 10 November 1855 she was praised as a ‘young artist’ in the editorial *réclame* where the writer says that she will have to visit her fashionable salons several times in the coming winter to see her novel and charming merchandise. The receiver praised her

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<sup>866</sup> ‘This rapport with taste gives rise to the thought that nature has made some error in their regard’ (cette conformité de goût donne lieu de penser que la nature pourrait bien avoir commis quelque erreur à leur égard), Part 2, Chapter 4, *Almanach des Modes à Paris*, p. 111. Further research is needed to examine the role of the male fashion merchant both in Paris, the provinces and other countries. The London trade directory Holden’s Directory, for 1814/5 lists male as well as female milliners pp. 62-64. Hannah Barker, though mainly concerned with female milliners, includes some information from trade directories and correspondence, about an English male milliner Robert Ayrey, in the 1820s and 1830s whose business was based in Leeds. Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>867</sup> Male fashion merchants such as Maurice Beauvais, Herbaut and Alexandre Beaudrant were singled out for praise and their headgear, which had names, were described. *Le Follet: Courier des Salons*, 4 October 1835, IX, pp. 105-6.

<sup>868</sup> ‘Modes’, *La Sylphide*, 4 April 1841 written by Baronne Marie de L’Epinay.

ability to manage her business and perhaps her understanding of the value of publicity was a factor in her ability to survive in business, at least into the 1860s.<sup>869</sup>

In this section, I have shown how fashion merchants advertised their businesses using traditional forms of trade literature but also how they grasped new opportunities to advertise in a growing newspaper and fashion press. Court clients continued to be used to build a merchant's reputation in the printed literature but there were alternative ways to show fashion authority such as longevity of business, specialism in merchandise or target market and participation in the industry exhibitions. Continuity was also shown with Old Regime trade literature, although the style of trade cards reflected developments at different periods and by 1851 had lost associations with art, in favour of business. Significantly, there were new ways of distributing these cards to stimulate sales such as handing them to consumers at the industry exhibitions. Between the late eighteenth century and 1855 there were more newspapers and fashion journals available that were reaching a wider social level of consumers in France and abroad. Latterly these had space for small ads as well as the traditional *réclame* in editorials and I have demonstrated that *marchandes de modes* made use of all these methods, particularly from the 1840s. The costs involved appear to have been the only barrier from merchants using newspapers and journals on a regular basis.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have shown that between 1795 and 1855 there were a range of methods available for fashion merchants to disseminate information about their merchandise in order to promote their products above those of their competitors, and increase sales. Firstly, I demonstrated how different courts continued to offer opportunities for publicity through elite orders for trousseaux. Displaying this luxury clothing to a section of the public gave merchants, for the first time, the same prominence as the products in national industry exhibitions. In the

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<sup>869</sup> Mlle Dezboroff, AP, D11U3/210, File 12805. Dezboroff, Mlle, *modiste*, Luxembourg, 47. *Annuaire Almanach du Commerce* (1863), p. 964.

second section I revealed that, even before their inclusion as a trade in the international industry exhibitions of 1851 and 1855, headgear and garments were increasingly present. Consumers were being educated about developments in the materials that affected innovation, quality and price. From 1851, fashion merchants' names could also reach a larger number of French and foreign consumers of different social levels.

Finally, I showed that industry awards as well as royal warrants were used in commercial literature as a mark of distinction. Fashion dolls and the developing fashion press, which credited individual merchants or accepted adverts for their businesses, emphasised that Parisian fashion merchants were style authorities. These entrepreneurial business people showed that they understood the benefits of promoting their enterprises with traditional as well as new methods which ensured their elite position in the hierarchy of clothing merchants. In the thesis conclusion, I will provide a summary of my findings from the four chapters.

## **Conclusion.**

I started the investigation for this thesis with the general aim to examine how the *métier* of the *marchande de modes* changed and developed, in Paris, in the first half of the nineteenth century. Secondary research questions concerned factors that might have had an impact on change such as the abolition of the guilds, gender, court consumption, luxury and class within a context of political, economic and social change.

These ideas were prompted by my earlier research carried out for a master's dissertation into the work of one successful male fashion merchant and published works by Roche that had called eighteenth century fashion merchants dynamic agents for change who stimulated consumer demand by producing and selling fast changing fashionable goods.<sup>870</sup> The high status of the trade by the 1780s showed that women were in a powerful position in this sector whilst the male position was less clear and little considered in published works.<sup>871</sup> This research was also a response to the emphasis that has been given by historians, including Perrot, to the changes that took place in the last half of the nineteenth century such as the production of ready-made clothing (*confection*) and the development of retail practice in department stores.<sup>872</sup>

These points of emphasis, along with the lack of research into the beginning of the nineteenth century, determined my dates for this enquiry as 1795 to 1855. The sixty-year period saw different regimes but the advantage of covering these dates, rather than focusing on one regime, has been that the courts did not carry on seamlessly from one to another and they took different positions towards luxury clothing and display.

Different academic areas of gender, dress and textiles history plus business history were the fields that were particularly strongly indicated as relevant to an investigation. In my study, I also looked for the significance of court patronage and for whether the non-elite sector was

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<sup>870</sup> Fiona Ffoulkes, 'Louis Hippolyte LeRoy, 1763-1829: Grandfather of Haute Couture', Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*.

<sup>871</sup> Carol Lee Loats, Gender, Guilds and Work Identity, pp. 15-30. Judith Coffin, 'Gender and the Guild Order', pp. 768-93.

<sup>872</sup> Michael B. Miller, *The Bon Marché*.

targeted as clients. I was also aware that opening the market to producers and traders with no fixed training, after the abolition of the guilds, had implications for the loss of a cohesive group and a possible loss of quality in the merchandise that was produced. Therefore, I considered the effect of these changes to the fashion merchants' *métier* across four chapters.

In the first chapter, I analysed the political, social and economic context that the fashion merchants operated within. Although luxury fashion had never been suppressed there were periods without a court, a growing middling level in society and major fluctuations in the economy. The guild section demonstrated the limited opportunities for female workers and fashion merchants within the patriarchal system that gendered certain trades as female or male. Being granted their independent guild in the reforms of 1776 gave public endorsement to the success in business of fashion merchants, and women, as it was perceived as 'female'. However, the longevity of their trade was probably more important to their reputations and how they operated their businesses. The career of Rose Bertin demonstrated that the *métier* was well established by the 1780s as both a creative, innovative and lucrative trade that had the highest status amongst the clothing providers for women. I then analysed the position of the trade Post Revolution until 1855.

The second chapter looked at the pathways for fashion merchants towards employment and proprietorship. Despite concerns that have been expressed by historians, that there had been a loss of skills and *savoir faire* after the Revolution and the abolition of guilds, my research did not support this idea.<sup>873</sup> Although there may have been some loss of training, which contributed to the risk for those starting a business, training and apprenticeship was shown to have continued in the first half of the nineteenth century. These operated through family networks and mentoring, apprenticeships and employment opportunities until by the 1840s there were also professional training schools. Fashion merchants

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<sup>873</sup> Concerns about quality were examined in the conference *Le Progrès de l'Industrie*.

based in Paris attracted young women from the provinces and abroad wanting to learn or improve their skills in the trade showing that these businesses enjoyed an enduring high reputation for the production and retail of fashionable clothing. Women continued to dominate the *métier* as owners and employees.

Despite the factors that restricted their participation in work, women had not disappeared from business by 1855 and so this thesis agrees with the findings of Barker, Craig and others.<sup>874</sup> Crouch stated that between 1814 and 1830 women were particularly active in the clothing industry as sole traders.<sup>875</sup> The sample I studied agrees with this, and fashion merchants like Mlle Dezboroff operated like the 'opportunity entrepreneurs' referred to by Craig and Philips.<sup>876</sup> Only ill health or the choice of retirement took women away from the public commercial world to a more domestic one. As most of the businesses examined were small to medium sized the investigation also supports Barker's point that the discussion about women's work has been too restricted to the examination of their lack of presence in large, capital intensive companies during industrialisation.<sup>877</sup>

Smith found that bourgeois women retreated from large scale production during the nineteenth century but the fashion merchants were from the lower middle level showing that class should be considered along with gender.<sup>878</sup> Furthermore, I found that often the family economy was based on the woman's trade in *modes*.<sup>879</sup> Women were educated in needlework but young males were not and so male fashion merchants acquired these skills in a range of ways. Some brought transferable skills like LeRoy, Herbault and Corot, who moved from the traditionally male area of *perruquier/coiffeur* that was declining, to a related area of the market that was developing. Skills and finance were also acquired through business partnerships, employees and marriage.

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<sup>874</sup> Béatrice Craig, *Women and Business*, pp. 189-90.

<sup>875</sup> Charles Patrick Crouch, 'The Petite Bourgeoisie of Paris during the Bourbon Restoration, 1814-1830', p. 150.

<sup>876</sup> Béatrice Craig, *Women and Business*, pp. 189-90. Nicola Phillips, *Women in Business*, p. 253.

<sup>877</sup> Hannah Barker, 'Women and Work', *Women's History*, p. 125.

<sup>878</sup> Bonnie G. Smith, *Ladies of the Leisure Class*, pp. 34-36.

<sup>879</sup> For example, the Corot family and the Beausang family.

Mme Beaulard, Mme Corot and Mme Pollet-Hoquet brought more to the marriage than their husbands and there were other examples where either only one person or neither partner had assets. To start a business without capital added to the risk involved and was cited as a factor in business failure. The set-up costs were linked to the provision of an appropriate level of luxury, necessary to attract clients, and strategies to acquire a business included paying by instalments. Merchants relied on profits to meet payments so that when these did not materialise the businesses fell into debt. I showed that family members loaned money demonstrating that these fashion merchants were from middling level families. Importantly, loans were also given by unrelated men and women as well as sleeping partners demonstrating that the business was seen as a good investment, indicating the healthy condition of the sector. Generally, there was no lack of finance available, although the amounts may have been relatively small. Managing a system of credit, with its categories of debt, remained the normal way of trading and the fashion merchant's reputation, as an honourable person in business, continued to be important. However, there was some evidence of accounts being settled more promptly than in the Old Regime in the examples of LeRoy and Mme Barenne. The range of clothing that *marchandes de modes* produced and sold changed across the dates investigated.

In the early nineteenth century, the range of merchandise created and sold reflected the opportunities available in a free market, such as combining dresses and other garments (*couture*) and headwear and all accessoires (*modes*), fashion and linen drapery and fashion with artificial flowers. The specialisation in headgear, from the 1830s, reflected its long reputation for novelty and Parisian taste. Significantly, I showed that fashion merchants could target a range of customers with hats at different prices because of the availability of a range of textiles, trimmings and flowers plus cheaper substitutes and imitations for straw and lace. They retained a luxury bespoke service but also stocked what could be called semi-luxury goods where a large stock of straw hats, purchased from a wholesale manufacturer, were then trimmed for retail sale.

Some fashion merchants, like Mme Barenne in the 1850s, continued to sell garments and Beausang produced ready-made outer garments demonstrating that it was not only *marchands de nouveautés* that saw the business opportunities in selling ready-made clothing. I also found that they stocked materials and trimmings in large quantities, demonstrating control over production. Merchants faced an increasingly competitive market, where other retailers like *magasin de nouveautés* and department stores sold headgear and basic straw hats. This made the reputation of a fashion merchant very important in attracting customers and in setting the price of goods and profits. A higher price could be charged by the most fashionable suppliers and they guarded exclusivity in certain products for an elite group. In the cases of Mme Pilon and Mlle Dezboroff, dependence on court clients was seen to be risky, when regimes changed, but courts also supported commerce and helped enhance the reputation of *marchandes de modes*.<sup>880</sup> Even Louis-Philippe's court, which was criticised for its lack of support for luxury goods, ordered lavish trousseaux for royal weddings.<sup>881</sup> Other clients of the middling kind had their own sites for display in the city of Paris and in Chapter 3, I considered developments in the capital's infrastructure.

In contrast to historians' focus on late nineteenth century developments to Paris, I revealed that, even before Hausmann's plans for the city, the capital was increasingly a site for Parisians and visitors to take part in 'public sociability', including shopping. Many changes were geared to the needs of the middling level pedestrian consumer as well as the wealthy and aristocratic elite.<sup>882</sup> Commercial streets without pavements and former aristocratic mansions with courtyards favoured carriage owners who could step directly from their vehicles into a salon or boutique, maintaining their privacy. Less elite clients used the new undercover shopping passages and galleries that suited the pedestrian consumer.

<sup>880</sup> Mme Pilon, 1830, AP, D11U3/74, File, 6529. Mlle Dezboroff, 1855, AP, D11U3/210, File 12805. Philip Mansel, 'Paris, Court City of the Nineteenth Century', p. 3.

<sup>881</sup> Court records and trousseaux 1832 to 1843 as shown in Appendix 10. AN, O/4/139, O/4/1725, O/4/2134 and O/4/2197.

<sup>882</sup> Michael B. Miller, *The Bon Marché*, p. 19. Anthony Sutcliffe, *The Autumn of Central Paris*, Donald J. Olsen, *The City as a Work of Art* and David Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity*.

Better circulation was made possible by new bridges, enlarged squares and faster travel by horse and carriage along with a developing railway network.

Fashion merchants navigated the city and moved within France and abroad in order to find work, seek out customers and respond to elite clients' demands. Although journey times were shortening I showed that the costs of transport were high and were a factor in the success or failure of businesses. Private or commercial carriages emphasised a life of luxury and comfort as seen in the examples of LeRoy and Barenne. I found that success in business allowed merchants like LeRoy and Corot to separate their public and private lives using their profits to purchase country estates outside Paris, showing continuity with wealthy merchants like Rose Bertin and demonstrating upward social mobility. Within Paris, the idea of a 'good location' for business premises was a factor for success and the survey of 1847/8 showed that the Right Bank was a more important location than the Left bank.

There was a concentration of *marchandes de modes* in the modern *arrondissements* 9, 2 and 8, creating a cluster of luxury trades including carriages and chocolate that was near wealthy customers. These areas were to the north-west and west of the Palais Royal towards Place Vendôme and the Avenue des Champs Elysées. Between 1807 and 1853 some streets retained their reputations for luxury such as Rue du Bac on the Left Bank and Rue de Richelieu on the Right Bank.

Importantly, the reasons for their popularity were no longer connected to their proximity to the court so that fashion merchants were no longer found at the eastern end near the Tuilleries Palace and the Palais Royal but instead at the western end near Place Vendôme. By the 1840s, I showed that this area was increasingly linked to luxury residences and hotels with commerce for wealthy bourgeois clients. *Marchandes de modes* were also located across the city, in ten out of the twelve arrondissements, showing that the demand for their merchandise crossed different social levels. Successful merchants like Barenne, LeRoy and

Corot showed a continuity of location of between 17 and 30 years in streets that had retained their reputations and never moved to pedestrian-only sites, showing that elite carriage clients remained important to their businesses. However, merchants from the bankruptcy cases often showed a lack of longevity and continuity of location which added to their costs.

I found that fashion merchants chose their location for reasons that included being closer to their target level of clients or to upgrade their premises. Mlle Prevost moved three times in seven years and was even planning another move when bankruptcy proceedings started in 1853.<sup>883</sup> Another part of attracting clients was to indicate location and give the premises an external and internal identity and there was some continuity with the eighteenth-century practice of using signs and statues.

As numbering was introduced signs declined but images were used to emphasise the status of the business by using emblems connected to royal clients along with the increasing use of the merchant's name. I demonstrated how facades of shops changed, reflecting fashionable styles of architecture and using technical advances in glass construction to have large plate glass panels that displayed merchandise. Some shops used a marquee to indicate the entrance to their premises although new commercial centres like the Galerie Vivienne controlled a uniform frontage. There were also differences in the approach to external display.

In the early nineteenth century, some goods were hung up on the outside of shops as markers and attractions for customers but by 1855 window displays were replacing this practice. Continuity with the eighteenth century was shown in the importance of fitting and decorating retail premises and, in the 1850s, Meunier felt pressured by competitors to risk spending money on an image of 'luxury'.<sup>884</sup> Mme Dron's example showed that forgoing this expense by working from home was another risk as the receiver commented that it was linked to her lack of good quality

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<sup>883</sup> Mlle Prevost, AP, D11U3/170, File 11278.

<sup>884</sup> Claire Walsh, 'Shop Design and the Display of Goods in the Eighteenth Century' (unpublished master's dissertation), p. 62. M Meunier, AP, D11U3/211, File 12840.

customers.<sup>885</sup> The connection between the target clientele and the standard and range of furniture and fittings was shown in the examples of Mlle Richelandet, Mlle Dezboroff and Mme Pilon.<sup>886</sup> These *marchandes de modes* demonstrated the change that had been observed by Balzac, in 1837, where the production of merchandise in the *atelier* was increasingly hidden from the view of the customer.<sup>887</sup> The interior space designated for selling changed from a functional area with counters, small mirrors and stools for customers to one based on a wealthy domestic interior, particularly for the higher level merchants.

By 1855, I showed that some fashion merchants had salons which were decorated with a unifying colour scheme and furnished with desks rather than counters, full length mirrors, comfortable luxurious seating, pictures on the walls and even a piano. The rooms could have images of high ranking clients such as the Empress Josephine, in LeRoy's case, following the earlier example of Rose Bertin. Business premises could be on the first floor (Corot and Barenne) or at the back of a courtyard offering elite customers a sense of privacy (LeRoy). In contrast, although the business of Julien and Izambard was located on the fashionable Boulevard des Italiens the outlook was unprepossessing and the rooms were described as small and gloomy.<sup>888</sup> The importance of lighting was connected to the use of plate glass in larger panes and gas or oil lighting which had a cost and therefore was a factor in success and the target market. I found that display cases were increasingly used, as merchandise was protected from damage but still on view, and artificial flowers were used as decoration. There was also a range of mannequins, heads and stands for the display of garments and headgear available to fashion merchants. Apart from showing merchandise in the shop, there were other strategies that could be used to promote and advertise businesses that I investigated in the final chapter.

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<sup>885</sup> Mme Dron, AP, D11U3/195 File 12220.

<sup>886</sup> Mlle Richelandet, AP, D11U3/102, 8072, Mlle Dezboroff, AP, D11U3/210, File 12805. Mme Pilon, AP, D11U3/74, File, 6529.

<sup>887</sup> Honoré de Balzac, *Rise and Fall of César Birotteau*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>888</sup> LeRoy's lease for Hôtel Boutin, AN, MC/ET/V/888. Gustave Geoffroy, *Corot*, p. 17. Mme Barenne in Piedada Da Silveira and Françoise Tétart-Vittu, 'La Mode', in *La Place Vendôme*, p. 246. Julien et Izambard, AP, D11U3/179, File 11646.

Chapter 4 found that orders for a royal or imperial trousseau, or *corbeille*, were valuable promotional events that could help build a reputation and attract customers. Fashion journals encouraged expenditure on these marriage gifts and encouraged the display of items to friends and family with artificial flowers; in a similar way that merchandise was displayed in the retail outlets of fashion merchants. For LeRoy, after Napoleon had divorced the Empress Josephine, it was also a public acknowledgement that he had retained his position as the supplier to the new Empress of France. I showed how displays for valuation ‘to determine the amount, quality and price of the objects’ by peers had negative connotations as it was an assessment by those that the merchant did not necessarily respect. Their honesty was also questioned when judging whether items were correctly priced, demonstrating the complex nature of the relationship between regimes and merchants.<sup>889</sup> I then contrasted this fairly private royal event with the more public display of the trousseau of the duchesse de Berry, in 1816.

Importantly, the trousseau and *corbeille* were displayed as examples of French excellence in clothing production and were made available to different levels of society including those that might later purchase goods, such as Lady Morgan. This, along with the other public events leading up to the wedding in Notre Dame, had many promotional benefits for the reputation of a fashion merchant. The press reported on the importance of clothing to French industry, naming the suppliers, and the different ceremonials were recorded in visual images that were later displayed. Similarities can be seen with the way French products were shown, but to a wider audience, in the national and international exhibitions between 1798 and 1855.

Until the 1850s the industry exhibitions concentrated mainly on mass produced items which included the straw hat-making sector but not the smaller more artisanal production of luxury items, such as garments and headgear. I revealed that clothing was present initially as a way of

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<sup>889</sup> Correspondance concerning the marriage *corbeilles* and the evaluations, AN, O/2/30 and O/2/31.

showcasing developments in textiles, lace or embroidery but I found that by 1851 headwear from fashion merchants was included. These were part of a separate category at the Great Exhibition in London, in 1851, and in Paris, in 1855, there were at least eight *marchande de modes* who exhibited headwear.<sup>890</sup> Participation in these events emphasised the acceptance of fashion merchants as making a significant contribution to French industry and beyond the benefits of showing the products themselves these national and international exhibitions involved and educated the domestic and foreign public. They could speak to the fashion merchants at the stands, taking away a trade card, and had the opportunity to learn about the different qualities available in materials plus see Parisian taste in novelty of design. It was an atmosphere that encouraged visitors to examine and judge the products for themselves with no pressure to purchase. This also promoted a sense of excitement in seeing new products and ready-made articles which could be exploited by fashion merchants. Finally, I investigated other traditional and new methods for fashion merchants to publicise their businesses.

Trade cards, bill heads and trade directories were ways of communicating with potential clients and the examples analysed showed that reputation was linked to innovation, taste and good faith. Elite clients or medals gained were used to indicate the merchants' status as a strategy to attract clients. Visual depictions of merchandise moved from dolls to fashion plates that credited suppliers and, between the late eighteenth century and 1855, there were more newspapers and fashion journals available with a wider distribution. Latterly, these had space for small ads as well as the traditional *réclame* in editorials. I showed that fashionable *marchandes de modes* made use of all these methods, particularly from the 1840s onwards, although the costs involved may have disadvantaged merchants with new or less successful businesses. Significantly, in these investigations I found that Parisian fashion merchants had become a cohesive group with a reputation for innovation and taste in headgear that was acknowledged across Europe.

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<sup>890</sup> *Rapport du Jury Mixte International*, (1855), p. 1186.

Summing up my findings, I posit that the *métier* of the *machande de modes* continued to hold a significant position in the production and consumption of women's luxury clothing, in the first half of the nineteenth century. Far from there being a moribund fashion system before 1860, in this examination I have shown that there was a continuing evolution in practice and merchants met the challenges and opportunities of their period, including dealing with political, social and economic change.<sup>891</sup> Some continuity with eighteenth century practice was revealed, but merchants grasped new possibilities for targeting a range of luxury and semi-luxury markets with bespoke and ready-made products and methods of increasing output in production and sales. As the providers of headgear, which became the item in dress that was most associated with fashion and novelty, fashion merchants continued to stimulate consumption which maintained their high status and dynamic position in the fashion system, first noted by Roche for the late eighteenth century.

A post-doctoral project would build on these findings to investigate the factors that shaped the industry from 1855, where this investigation has finished. Historians have focused on the mass production of ready-made clothing and the retail practices of the department stores but little research has been carried out into the segmentation of the clothing trades and their markets. France established a republic in 1870 which saw the end of court consumption. At the same period, there were technical changes such as a growing railway network and the sewing machine was being used for the first time in clothing production, alongside hand stitching. Cameras photographed models in an attempt to protect design copyright and the *Chambre Syndicale des Confectionneurs et des Tailleurs pour Dames* was created in 1868.<sup>892</sup> I would investigate changes to the production and retail of clothing by *machandes de modes, couturières, marchands de nouveautés, grands magasins* and

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<sup>891</sup> Nancy Cox called for this approach rather than looking with hindsight and comparing historical practices against the 'modern'. Nancy Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*, pp. 223-24.

<sup>892</sup> The president was Drefus and the vice-presidents were Worth and Tainturier. The Chambre de la Haute Couture was only established in 1910. Françoise Tétart-Vittu, *Sous L'Empire des Crinolines*, p. 179.

*maisons spéciales* in order to understand the impact on gendered trades, constructions of distinction and notions of luxury. Terms that remain unclear such as *Haute Modes* and *Haute Couture* would be investigated along with words like ‘original’ that Maison Worth applied to garments but that did not guarantee exclusivity.<sup>893</sup> Issues of gender and the impact of these developments on the position of women in the needle trades would also be considered. These are important because of the concentration of published works on the career of one man, Charles Frederick Worth, and changes to the French language shown by the new term for a male designer, *couturier*, that appeared around 1870.

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<sup>893</sup> Amy de la Haye and Valerie Mendes, *The House of Worth: Portrait of an Archive* (V & A publishing, 2014), p. 166.

## **GLOSSARY: TEXTILES, CLOTHING & HEADWEAR.**

*Apprêter* - to finish (technical process for textiles and materials like straw).

*Barbes* - lappets for a headdress worn as court dress under Louis XVIII.

*Basquine* - 1850s, day-wear bodice that fastened at the centre front and had a basque – a flared piece of fabric from the waist seam to the hips.

*Berthe* - c.1839 onwards, bertha collar – a deep fall often of lace, outlining a low, possibly, off the shoulder neckline which was linked to the seventeenth century revival style.

*Blonde* - a lightweight silk lace.

*Bonnet d'apparat* - an ornate fabric bonnet.

*Calotte* - crown of a hat.

*Cannesous/canezous* - often part of lingerie as made of fine cotton or linen as a type of large collar/scarf.

*Capote* - a soft crowned hat.

*Castor* - beaver fur for hats.

*Chanvre* - hemp.

*Coupon* - piece of fabric/remnant.

*Couvre-chefs* - headwear.

*Entre deux* - type of braid.

*Fanné* - faded (today *fané*).

*Guipure* - type of dense lace.

*Hardes* – wearing apparel (clothes, but today this means rags)

*Layette* - usually part of lingerie - a range of items suitable for the birth of a baby which could include loose lightweight garments for the mother as well as clothing and accessories for the baby.

*Lot* - amount /portion.

*Mantelet* - mantle for outerwear, a kind of cape that might have some simple shaping for the arms and armholes.

*Nansouk* - a light cotton fabric often employed in lingerie and embroidery.

*Paille de riz* - wood shavings used to create tresses imitating Italian straw.

*Paille d'Italie* - Italian straw was straw from the Tuscany region of Italy, between Leghorn and Florence, and this fine, long straw was highly prized.

*Passée de mode* - old fashioned.

*Pellerine* - a short cape covering the shoulders often of lightweight cotton fabric, lace-trimmed or embroidered.

*Pierrot* - 1780s to 1790s, a bodice/jacket with short basques similar to the Caraco but more imaginative in cut and trimming.

*Rouennerie* - striped fustian woven in the Rouen area.

*Sparterie* - plant material, plaited and used like straw for hats, often painted white.

*Voilette* - hat veil.

*Tour de tête* - hat block possibly changeable in size.

## **GLOSSARY – LEGAL, BUSINESS AND FINANCE.**

*Achalandage* - clientele.

*Actif social* - corporate asset.

*Aigrefin* - swindler.

*Avance de fonds* - cash advance.

*Banqueroute simple* - bankruptcy resulting from negligence.

*Banqueroute frauduleuse* - bankruptcy resulting from fraudulent actions.

*Bilan* - balance sheet.

*Billet* - promissory note, bill.

*Bon débiteur* - good debts, very likely to be paid.

*Commander or faire faire* - bespoke.

*Commandité* - active partner.

*Commiseur priseur* - official appraiser and auctioneer.

*Comparant/comparante* - person appearing before a notary or in court.

*Contrainte par corps* - imprisonment for debt.

*Contrat d'union* - creditors' union.

*Convention* - agreement.

*Créance* - money owing/debt.

*Créancier chirographaires* - general creditor.

*Créancier privilégié* - preferential creditor.

*Debiteur/debitrice* - debtor.

*Déchéance* - forfeiture.

*Dettes actives* - accounts receivable - money owed to the business after credit sales.

*Dividende* - the amount paid to each interested party in a bankruptcy when the total available is divided amongst the creditors.

*Douteux débiteurs* - doubtful debts, not certain to be paid.

*Dresser* - to draw up (a legal document).

*Droit* - fee (charged in inheritance).

*Écheance* - bill.

*Effets à recevoir* - bills receivable.

*Entreprise de grande envergure* - a large scale business.

*Faillite* - bankruptcy procedure or innocent insolvency.

*Fonds de commerce* - the business, comprising tangible and intangible elements.

*Frais d'exploitation* - running costs.

*Frais généraux* - overheads.

*Homologue* - court approved.

*Huissier* - officer/bailiff.

*Immatriculer* - to register.

*Instance* - proceedings.

*Juridiction consulaire* - Merchant Court (1563-1792).

*Mandataire* - representative/proxy.

*Mandataire judicaire* - creditor's representative.

*Mauvais debtors* - bad debts, unlikely to be paid.

*Mémoire* - bill/account.

*Mise de fonds* - capital outlay.

*Nantissement* - collateral security.

*Occasion, d'* - second hand or *occasion à saisir* as an opportunity not to be missed.

*Pacte commissoire* - security agreement.

*Payable comptant* - for cash.

*Pour acquit* - received with thanks.

*Prévention* - detention/custody.

*Prix de revient* - cost price.

*Procès verbal* - report/statement/minutes of proceedings.

*Rabais* - reduction; *vendre / donner au rabais* - to sell at a reduced price;  
*Être au rabais* - to fall in price.

*Recette* - revenue.

*Remise* - delivery of payment.

*Revenue brut* - gross income.

*Saisies* - seizures (bankruptcy).

*Société* - term for partnership or association.

*Société en commandite* - limited partnership.

*Société en nom collectif* - general partnership.

*Société général* - general partnership.

*Solder* - to settle an account.

*Sous seings privé* - under private seal (business association).

*Syndic* - officer, or receiver in bankruptcy cases.

*Taux* - rate.

*Traite* - bill.

*Vacation* - session.

*Valeurs* - securities.

*Vente à l'amiable* - private sale.



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