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THE ARTS OF PURCHASE: HOW AMERICAN PUBLICITY SUBVERTED THE EUROPEAN POSTER, 1920–1940

On a summer Sunday in 1931, a Fiat Spider 509 scrambled up a donkey path one thousand meters to a village in the Apennine Alps of Emilia. It was the first car ever seen there. Just arrived, the drivers, two debonair youths, hopped out and to the perplexity of the villagers pasted up a symbolist poster advertising Midas Motor Oil. This event equally perplexed the Italian advertising expert who reported on it. In a town so poor and out-of-the-way, there was simply no market for engine oil. The only machines in need of lubrication thereabouts were sewing machines; and gasoline and olive oil aplenty were available for that. If nothing else, our sophisticated urbaner concluded, this episode documented once more the futility of postering.[1]

For students of mass culture, the advertiser's dilemma—namely, whether or not the campaign paid off by boosting markets for car oil—is of slight interest. The episode is telling for other reasons. Not least of all, it presents in neat paradox how capitalist market relations separate exchange from use values. Here, no less, the machine had come to announce its own needs! The story acquires yet more significance when it is put in historical context. Students of market cultures have emphasized that exchange and consumption are embedded in complex cultural and social meanings; commodities come loaded with ways of thinking about human relations; and acts of purchase foster new individual and collective identities.[2] Accordingly, we might ask

whether profit alone motivated this enterprise and whether the young men were not conscious of their own role as interpreters of culture; we might query how the villagers regarded it and what significance should be given to the motor oil's American origin. Indeed, the young men's bravado did not go unremarked at the time, as if, from the centers of consumer culture in the plains, they came as civilizing knights, bringing urbanity and modern ways to a rough rural backwater. Aside from causing a commotion that disrupted Sunday mass, their deed impressed the local priest and community leader that the donkey path could be made transitable. The roadbed was upgraded soon thereafter, and before long, this little Italian village, like many others, emptied out as emigrants made their way down to urban centers to find work and partake in the amenities of modern consumer mores.

This micro-event, interpreted both as a market ploy and for its social-cultural implications, is a fragment of an even more complex story. The variations thereon are practically innumerable and can be conjured up with any of the myriad images in which American cultural and consumer artifacts set jarringly amidst the semi-rural environs of other societies, sometimes to be interpreted as representing modernity, sometimes as degeneracy and corruption. The Coke bottle that plummets from a passing airplane onto the Khoisan, Xi, in *The Gods Must Be Crazy;* the comic-pathetic scene of bleach-blond Hamoua shimmying with a Coke bottle in Youssef Chahine's 1957 film *Central Station;* the Coca-Cola-induced high of desperate 1950s teenagers in the Hungarian Peter Gothar's *Time Stands Still*—these images are all emblematic of a world-changing set of events in this century: namely, the transposition of American models of marketing and consumer culture beyond U.S. borders in the last seventy or eighty years as the United States acquired world economic preeminence.

In this essay, I want to explore some aspects of this global

process of "Americanization" by focusing on how in a particular region of the world, continental Europe, and in a particular period—namely, the interwar years—conceptions of market, merchandising techniques, and advertising design of American provenance forced the development of new patterns of consumer culture and thus came to define what it meant to be modern.[3] By consumer culture, I mean broadly a society-wide structure of meaning and feeling organized primarily around acts of purchase. In the forms we know today, it originated in the United States. Since the turn of the century, as the main circuitry of mass commerce was established, techniques devised to promote national markets for the branded, standardized products of large-scale manufacturers were honed in a huge industry specialized in preparing, placing, and disseminating advertising messages. Increasingly, the contractual relations of market shaped notions of community, pressures for entitlement, and the modalities of political consensus. This change was accompanied by the construction of new social subjects, such as the consumer, and of new social mediators including the salesman, the advertising expert, and the press agent. It also gave rise to new organizations such as the Rotary businessmen's clubs. Not least of all, it gave rise to a new language of goods. Both in the U.S. and abroad, this complex system of representation cast capitalist relations in a new light: the dynamic principal was not so much production as distribution and consumption; the consumer was, if not sovereign, a subject empowered by his or her spending capacity; social collectivities increasingly appeared to be based on choice in the marketplace rather than the vagaries of geography or the bonds of craft or class; finally, social conflicts seemed subject to resolution by widening access to commodities rather than by revolutionizing capitalist society root and branch.[4]

The responses of European societies were in some sense special inasmuch as American consumer culture appeared less abruptly and in less brutal forms than in Third World areas:

there was no colonial heritage and no physical conquest was involved. From the start, American models competed with well-defined market cultures, which themselves had contributed much over the previous century to developments in the U.S., and that continued to produce the finely wrought craft goods held up as models of taste and quality by American elites. Nonetheless, American consumer culture presented a real challenge to local notions of market, craft, and modernity. Reconstructing the process by which certain American values and techniques were assimilated into European commercial culture demonstrates not just the power exercised by the U.S. economy, but also the process by which certain local economic patterns and cultural alternatives were altered, abandoned, or suppressed.

American business methods, with their powerful emphasis on creating productive capacity, took hold after World War I in societies in which markets were still regarded as finite. Most European business firms continued to be guided by a residual economic Malthusianism: markets, like resources, being naturally limited, the best policy was to cleave to traditions and stick to one's tried and true clientele. Commercial culture was organized around old city centers and catered to bourgeois rather than mass tastes.[5] Generally, politicians could not conceive of changes in consumption or cultural habits such as would have caused them to alter their appeals. Indeed, consumer identities being so bound up with class cleavages, it was hard, even for social reformers, to imagine that workers would develop "needs" that were not strictly economic necessities or consonant with their class position. Any ulterior desires reflected "false consciousness" or "embourgeoisement."[6]

In the 1920s, American consumer culture started to challenge these assumptions. This was especially manifest in what is the specific focus of my essay, namely the *grande querelle* among European advertisers and commercial artists over how to represent goods in the marketplace. In its most elementary form, this

debate centered on whether to pursue the editorializing copy style used in the American mass-circulation press or to prefer the design aesthetic associated with European postermaking traditions. Should European promoters stake their future on a textual style that promised profits and new professional dignity? Or should they stay loyal to pictorial representation in the hope of preserving artistic autonomy and defending local traditions? Underlying these positions, broader issues were in dispute. Thus the debate reflected conflicting assumptions about the operations of the market, the extent of "communities of consumption," the logics motivating consumer behaviors, and even the means of constructing human desire. The contending positions also reflected diverse notions within the advertising sector and, more generally, within bourgeois culture about the relationship between art and commerce. In particular, they differed about the aesthetics of representation itself; should goods be represented realistically to highlight what they did for the consumer, as the American practice indicated? Or should they be animated by strong symbolic and pictorial design traditions in order to activate latent desire, as European practitioners held out?

Both the allure and fear of American commercialism fueling this contest reflected a more pervasive ambivalence among the elites in post-World War I Europe about a model of development that, while promising prodigious growth, also threatened uncontrollable cultural and social changes. There was a kind of unanimity in favor of economic modernity: from conservatives and liberals to the far left, the response to Taylorism and Fordism was generally positive.[7] But the implications of Americanizing trends for culture and values were judged unpredictable if not outright pernicious. American society might well have tolerated the continuous turnover in custom generated by mass consumption. After all, its constitutional structures were regarded as being sufficiently sturdy to withstand the fads and wild fluctuations of opinion that European observers had associ-

ated with the "civilization" of the New World ever since Tocqueville's travels to America. Moreover, American capital appeared powerful enough to satisfy the desires unleashed by consumer culture. In any event, American society, it was argued, was already so homogenized or so hybrid—views differed as to which—that the risk that novel mores would disrupt status hierarchies, declassing the bourgeoisie and disquieting the lower orders, seemed minor. In Europe, by contrast, cultural traditionalism and highly stratified consumer habits appeared to stand as a bulwark against social upheaval. Thus, for the cultural conservatives who most anguished about the conquest of European culture by American material civilization, the "democratization of consumption," as conservative commentator André Siegfried wrote, could "only be obtained at a tragic price . . .": namely, workmen becoming automatons, leisure ruled by standardized products, and spiritual values forsaken for mechanistic conduct.[8]

At the same time, American commercial culture seemed to offer much to professionals in quest of social and cultural legitimacy: this was true not just for advertising experts, but also for engineers, architects, journalists, and movie producers, indeed for all of the professions associated with constructing and communicating in mass society. For advertising agents, in particular, American technologies of distribution and publicity offered three opportunities: first, to make big profits, much as they saw were being made in America in the 1920s; second, to bolster their own professional status at a time when interest-group organization was firming up everywhere; and third, to manage what might be described as a crisis of representation of the bourgeois order, consequent on the social upheavals following the Great War and compounded by the double challenge of Americanism and Bolshevism in their wake.[9] Thus modern publicity might help overcome the zero-sum logic of economic nationalism by deepening and broadening markets across national

boundaries. It would eliminate irrational consumer choices by applying behavioral studies and psychological testing to human motivation. Above all, advertising's stripped-down language, its mass appeal, and its display of business tempos bespoke the vigor of new elites and their endeavor to publicize the virtues of technological civilization. These virtues, they argued, were being contested, not least of all because modern industrial society's accomplishments had been furtively concealed by retrograde businessmen. Flashing the name of the French Henry Ford, Citroën, from the Eiffel Tower with two hundred thousand bulbs, or illuminating the Milan Duomo Square with thousands of megawatts of publicity, or faking advertising copy to suggest industrial patronage for innovating architecture—as Le Corbusier did in his journal *L'Esprit* in the mid-1920s—these feats signaled the compatibility of cultural iconoclasm, technology, and a reformed community of workers and capitalists. In advertising, modernists saw a new language, the idiom of youth embattled against the rhetorical conventions of the old, the sacrosanct, and the academic. Advertising promised to become the Esperanto of a dynamic capitalism, "the key to world welfare," to use the slogan of the 1929 Berlin World Advertising Conference, and, as such, the guarantor of a new international order.[10]

Their zeal was all the stronger because the structure of European economies and the nature of consumer habits seemed so unpropitious to promoting American-style techniques. U.S. advertisers had the advantage of serving oligopolistic firms and working with brand-products devised for broad, homogeneous, and affluent markets. However, in the 1920s, most European business firms served local markets, at best regional ones. Marketing consumer commodities across national boundaries was practically unheard of. Domestic markets were generally shallow, even in the most affluent nation, namely late Weimar Germany; the European working classes were still not regarded as

potential consumers in these pre-Keynesian economies.[11] Even among those producers of consumer durables who had gone over to American production systems, there seemed to be a real gap between innovations in production techniques and distribution methods. Meanwhile, the most visible advertisers were not the producers of consumer durables, but an ill-reputed lot of vendors of patent medicines and entertainment.

Above all, the organization of space and publics seemed little suited to the marketing practices developed to sell standardized brands in a relatively homogeneous and incomparably more wealthy market, using the press and other media to reach out to increasingly suburbanized publics. Traditionally, European markets were dominated by major capitals of consumption; the *goût parisien,* we know, set the dress style of all Western society. The department store *étalage,* the open-air market, the exposition pavilion, and the grand boulevard were the typical institutions of a market culture organized around city centers. Retailers publicized their merchandise by elaborate displays and customers were primarily bourgeois. Local markets might appear luxury at the core. But outside of the great metropolitan centers and a few wealthy provincial towns, they were still straitened by poverty, status differences, and regional fragmentation. Under the circumstances, the poster, along with window and shopfloor displays, still offered the major mediums of communication: placarded kiosks, handbills, postcards all signaled, with no special need for detail and little class specificity, the physical proximity of centers of consumption. The mass press absorbed increasing amounts of advertising revenues by the early 1920s. Even so, the political character and class specificity of most leading national news organs, the regional dispersion, and the great jumble of rates and formats made the print medium still an ungainly and costly undertaking for advertisers.[12]

Although beleaguered advertisers banked on U.S. precedents, they were not indifferent to the dangers of American-

style modernity. Some features of U.S. marketing technologies were not readily digestible. One was the exploitativeness of U.S. advertising: it was with awe and trepidation that advertisers remarked on American ruthlessness. Everything could be publicized: from deodorants to furs, babies to burials, the intimate to the afterlife. Not even religion was sacred, as the marketing director of a French pharmaceutical concern observed in *Vendre,* a leading French trade journal. He illustrated his point with ad copy showing a soldier offering to quaff Christ on the Cross' thirst with gall and apologizing that it wasn't Vinegar X.[13] The intense competitiveness caused uneasiness as well. It was one thing to urge Taylorized work rules for sales personnel or to upgrade the profession by purging the unfit; it was quite another to introduce humbling competition into the ranks of the profession itself.

Above all, there was the giant problem of "taste." U.S. advertisers abroad contended that there was "one best way" in advertising. Carefully studied in terms of markets and product qualities, their advertising pitches were deemed universally appealing. Hence they would need only minor tuning to adjust to local conditions. However, in Europe, bourgeois status was identified with conserving cultural traditions, and advertising was still close enough to being considered art to want to uphold aesthetic standards alongside commercial ones. Each nation—and in the case of Germany, each major region as well—had its own identifiable style of publicity. Should these customs be jettisoned in the interest of building up sales? Were advertisers and their clients really ready to foresake the old cultural alliances underlying their class position to pander to the tastes of volatile mass publics? It might be possible to argue that publicity was at bottom just business, opening the way to all stylistic conventions, regardless of national provenance. Yet questions remained. Did American advertising styles promote alien values? Did they subvert national traditions? Was there indeed a national "taste,"

not just among advertisers but among consumers as well, that should be protected and perhaps even promoted against U.S. commercialism?

These issues were most sharply formulated in discussing what in trade journals was commonly referred to as the "crisis of the poster." In its heyday in the Belle Epoque urban centers of prewar Europe, the poster was lamented to have "decayed" and "declined" in the years thereafter. This complaint was especially strong in Italy and in France. In Germany, with its exceptionally strong commercial design traditions, well-organized advertising and commercial art corporations, and much stronger domestic and international markets, the poster held its own, at least until the early 1930s.[14] But there, too, commercial artists fretted about their future and advertisers weighed the merits of new American systems against the familiar German styles of representation.

Was the poster really "in crisis"? Crisis is a strong word: that it was used suggested that the poster had become the focus of a whole set of anxieties. These were perhaps spurred by fears of American competition. But they also reflected little understood and ill-tolerated changes going on in European societies of the period. For sure, the poster had occupied pride of place in prewar advertising. The great expansion of merchandising after the turn of the century had put a premium on inventiveness. To market the special article for the bourgeois trade, the stock posters that lithographic companies kept in hand for all-purpose advertising and that could be adopted indiscriminately for promoting soap, chocolate, sewing machines, or whatever were judged ineffective. Enterprising merchants in search of specialized designs were thus hospitable to the aesthetics of Art Nouveau or Jugendstil, as well as to Arts and Crafts movement styles. Intensely local schools evolved within national boundaries or in reference to regional markets: the leading artists were renowned locally, like the British Hardy, Pryde and Nicolson, or

the French postermasters André Cheret, Raffet, and Gavarni, or the Germans Hohlwein and Lucian Bernhard; a few, like Cappiello, who moved between France and Italy, acquired broader recognition.[15]

For urban residents who idealized the halcyon days of pre-Great War Europe, the poster was a soothing reminder of the past: amidst social turmoil, it recalled the comfortable human dimensions of the Belle Epoque. "The cry of the posters from the concrete walls/ Proclaims a fairyland that we have lost," wrote the Dadaist poet Richard Huelsenbeck. In the bleak, chaotic cities of Weimar, "Man might stand naked among tramway-cars/ And not know a word of human speech/ The colored poster-world would break down the bars/ And his own heart the secret meaning teach."[16]

The tendency to identify the poster with a more humane order heightened perceptions of how uneasily it fit with the tempo of postwar commercial life. The poster's crisis was thus perceived as having a threefold dimension. First, the poster had become politicized, having become identified with left-wing street politics and mass mobilizations after the war. Second, businessmen were increasingly uncertain about what aesthetic or style was more suited to selling goods. Third, the commercial artist was in increasingly precarious circumstances, beset by competition and unemployment. All of these combined to jeopardize the poster's value as *commercial art.* Thus, since the war, and especially in the wake of the "red years," the poster had become a much-debated form of mass culture (hence Huelsenbeck's evocation of the poster's symbolic and social value). In Germany, the revolution of 1918 and the subsequent polarization of national political life had produced an outpouring of wall manifestos. Experimental in form, often inspired by Expressionist motifs, they were designed as propaganda, that is, to rally public opinion rather than to market goods. Second, older conventions very successful in the prewar years, such as Lucian

Bernhard's emphasis on the "thing-ness" of objects *(Sachplakat),* were worn to death by imitators. Although the exhaustion of old formulae led to a greater variety of figurative and pictorial motifs, the conventions about what best sold goods broke down. Commercial culture in the big cities was conducted on too large a scale to permit regular contact between businessmen and the arts. Forced to take up their portfolios to make the rounds in search of clients, artists tended to pitch their sketches more loudly and cast their personal idiosyncrasies in crasser form; and when executed, the designs presented stronger traits of conventionalization than the goal of advertising usually warranted. Finally, young artists everywhere were discouraged by the ease of plagiarism, not to mention the difficulty of plying their trade as commercial artists as commissions declined. This insecurity fed the fear, polemically evoked by Grosz and Herzefelde in *Die Kunst in Gefahr* (1925), of the "dismantling of the artist in his present form." In their radical vision, the artist now had but two choices, namely, "he could merge in industry as a designer or advertising man, or else he might become a propagandist for the revolution."[17]

At the same time, there were growing doubts about whether postering itself was an effective medium of advertising. Marketing was becoming a more complicated process, with new products, new publics, and new uses of urban space. Firms advertising consumer durables, including automobiles and household appliances, as well as personal products such as soap, cosmetics, and cleansers, realized that these new products called for explanation. They also sought new consumers outside of the city centers. At bottom their concerns about the effectiveness of postering reflected its high costs. Paper and color printing were expensive, and postering was encumbered by heavy taxation. More and more, local governments treated street advertising as a luxury or a nuisance: strapped for revenues in the 1920s, town councils assessed taxes of all kinds, and practically no revenues

went to maintain the emplacements. In Italy, local taxes on size, product, and the kind of posting (whether it was on board, metal, or concrete) added 50 percent to the price of production. Even then, it was not uncommon for new rulings to cause entire print runs to be warehoused. Moreover, regulations were so diverse that they discouraged any but the most local marketing endeavors.[18]

But the real issue was cost-effectiveness. In most big urban centers, city life was changing: in the 1920s, renewal projects designed to ease the flow of motor traffic and clean out the sign-cluttered confusion of the old central districts cleared away poster emplacements and speeded up the pace of urban life. Among the major cities, except perhaps for Paris, residential districts were more and more separate from the commercial center. New systems of public transportation speeded up daily life. In any case, the poster was simply too generic in its appeal. It was unable to target specific publics for particular products. Nor did it readily lend itself to provincial distribution networks where prosperous small-town or rural customers might be found. The bourgeois clientele formerly concentrated in city centers had moved to the suburbs. True, advertisers might study the subway routes, as they were invited to do in Berlin, so as to determine which led to proletarian quarters and which led to bourgeois suburbs. They might then specify the goods to be advertised on each route. However, the costs of this more extensive coverage were high. There was also a problem of turnover: it was alleged that the quicker pace of urban life, shorter attention spans, and more rapid turnover of products called for a more frequent postering. As a mid-1920s Berlin advertisers' adage, loosely translated, put it in Warholian terms: "Every effective poster is a celebrity—for twenty-four hours" ("Ein effektvolles Plakat an der Saule macht unsterblich—für 24 Stunden").[19]

Finally, the use of public space was becoming more com-

petitive and conflictual. The garish outsize cinema posters, distributed by the promoters of American films and often produced on giant presses in the U.S., crowded out smaller placards of local production. In Italy, there were complaints that vandals ripped up the hoardings for fuel. New products and leisure pastimes vied for position. During the great German inflation of 1923, the commercial poster was literally buried on the hoardings. The situation was bleak. According to the account of Professor H. E. Frenzel, director of Berlin's refined commercial art magazine *Gebrauchsgraphik*, "The principal space [had been] occupied by the movie poster with its pernicious excrescences and high-sounding titles, calculated to appeal to cooks and kitchenmaids. Next in importance came the numerous announcements of offices for the buying and selling of gold and jewels, advertisements of pleasure resorts, 'beauty dances,' go-go girls, etc." These were interspersed with "red placards topped with fabulous sums in millions of marks for this or that criminal." Between these, "small and modest like the agonized sighs of a man being suffocated, [were] official state announcements for the benefit of people who, in reality were no longer to be regarded as part of the economic life of the nation."[20] In sum, consumption was no longer comfortably contained within the commercial spaces of town centers. Those spaces were increasingly being subverted by urban renewal and shifting networks of distribution, by the poor from below, and by Americanism from abroad.

Ultimately the poster's apparent inability to represent the new world of consumer goods was brought home by the growing use of a potentially more commercially effective alternative. This was the newspaper or periodical insert. Throughout Europe, it is true, the print medium was already increasingly widely used for publicity purposes by the early 1920s. But press advertising was still generally treated as a shabby enterprise: crowded, competing for space, smudgily copied, with heavy black lined designs, they

were often but mere announcements. Insofar as long copy was used, it was devoted to the most heavily advertised goods and services, namely patent medicines, quack remedies, fortune telling, and nostrums of various sorts. For their sale stood or fell on the results of advertising. Nationwide campaigns for new products treated the newspaper as if it were a poster: using heavy black on white, emphatic with a single word, displaying the name of the article advertised in as large a typeface as possible, without any decoration or illustration, publicity inserts seemed intended, according to the characterization of a contemporary observer, to give "a blow between the eyes, as hard as it is possible to deliver it, through the medium of printer's ink."[21]

The real alternative then was an entirely new style of print advertising, identified with the American consumer industry. This was the carefully argued, meticulously designed, sometimes multicolor insert in especially conspicuous display in the mass-circulation magazines of the interwar years, in particular, the *Ladies Home Journal, Saturday Evening Post,* and *Good Housekeeping.* Employed by American companies such as Erwin Wasey and J. Walter Thompson in their European advertising campaigns in the late 1920s, it was also much-cited in European sources as the American national style of advertising. In design, print ads were densely packed, sometimes three columns of several paragraphs, illustrated with titles and decoration. Yet, at its best, as in the so-called "reason why" studies of Helen Resor, it was uncluttered to look at and readable; it combined much information and persuasive reasoning, and it was backed up with ostensibly scientific data or testimonials by social leaders. "Salesmanship in print," as it was sometimes called, the text insert emphasized the attributes of goods and how the consumer could use them. Thus, it "sold the benefit instead of the product: illumination instead of lighting fixtures, prestige instead of automobiles, sex appeal instead of mere soap."[22] Often the advertisement imitated the look and layout of the medium in which it was printed, as if

to play on the indistinctiveness in a highly commodified culture between "real" reading matter and editorializing for consumer products.

This style, sometimes called "stupid realism," or perhaps with more analytical rigor, "capitalist realism,"[23] worked through different psychological mechanisms from those at play in the poster and print copy derived from it. So European contemporaries frequently pointed out when they contrasted the publicity that worked through seduction with that which worked by evocation, or when they contrasted American puritanism, with its purported emphasis on interpreting the text, with European paganism, with its worship of the idol.[24] Indeed, unlike European poster advertising, in which symbolic goods were represented with symbolic forms, as was increasingly common in the 1920s, the American style relied, in Michael Schudson's words, on the "common understanding of its audience."[25] One American advertising layout played on emotions and insecurities; it reassured the consumer that the sponsor was likewise a patron of shared ideals, and the product being endorsed concretely and actively contributed to their perpetuation. Democratic by its claim to represent common social values, this style manipulated their social meanings by implying that they were individual acquisitions, available solely through the marketplace. American advertising may not have depended on the scientific market surveys that firms like J. Walter Thompson swore by, much less on any real respect for public opinion. But it did command a strong if temporary dose of empathy for popular susceptibilities and enough familiarity with the qualities of the product to be able to write persuasive copy.

Just as the poster represented turn-of-the-century European urban commercial culture, this advertising form reflected the state of development of early twentieth-century American marketing. Text advertisements carried, as it were, heavy freight over long distances, reaching out to diverse, nonhomogeneous

publics at a time when markets were increasingly distant and impersonal. They had a strong power of projection when the medium, to recall McLuhan's familiar phrase, was not yet the message and the presentation of new brands still called for considerable explanation. More generally, the adoption of capitalist realism seems to have responded to what Pierre Bourdieu described as the "popular aesthetic," that of people who, dominated by ordinary interests and urgencies, expect the conventions of representation "to allow them to believe 'naively' in the things represented." They reluctantly accept abstraction, "not just from lack of familiarity but from a deep-rooted demand for participation, which formal experiment systematically disappoints . . ." In this sense, they behave differently from "aesthetic elites" who "believe in the representation . . . more than in the things represented" because they experience the world "freed from urgency and through the practice of activities which are an end in themselves."[26]

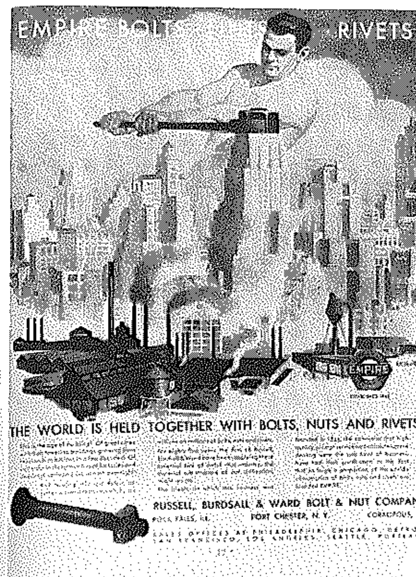
By the 1920s, U.S. advertisers had come around, not without conflict, to sharing the aesthetic of capitalist realism with their audience; indeed they promoted it to legitimate their social leadership. For no aesthetic seemed to represent so well the complex modernity of market relations. This was twofold. On the one hand, advertising promoted an impersonal marketplace of vast scale, stimulating the conviction that "what was new was desirable," indispensable to a modern world outlook. On the other hand, advertising denied its essentially economic nature as the mass communications system of the marketplace by striving after a subjective, personal appeal. Thus, at the same time as publicity promoted economic modernity, it protected against the uncontrollability of market operations. It accommodated the public to new conveniences while it comforted them against the stressful competitiveness and the cultural strictures that went along with them.[27]

Naturally, this conception of how modern goods should be

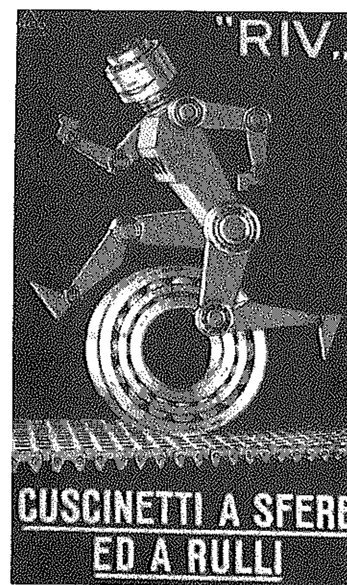
sold was not uncontested in the European advertising milieu. One typical response, shared not just among the more tradition-bound, but even by individuals working in Americanizing firms and trade journals was that American copy style was simply in bad taste. The grossly literal sensibility, the pretentious didacticism, the mix of stylistic conventions were perhaps suited for a "young people"; that mix would not appeal to the complex sensibility of the old world. Europeans would not tolerate such long texts; and for technical reasons, such as the low quality of reproduction and the high costs of premium space, emulation of such methods was inadvisable. Not least of all, there was the fear that the American style, produced by giant bureaucratic juggernauts, would snuff out the expressivity of the advertising staff itself; in the name of efficiency, profits, mass markets, it denied "fantasy, initiative, personality—in sum all that gives pleasure to the existence of our publicity experts *[téchniciens]*."[28]

Indeed, one reaction to this formidable rival was to defend European poster traditions. This defense used two quite different strategies. One might be described as resistance; this was associated with the weaker commercial markets of Southern Europe. The other strategy might be called reformist: this was associated with the powerful position of Germany in European markets, and it sought to commercialize the poster by developing a more varied idiom and wider marketing appeal. Both strategies presumed that commodities needed only relatively simple visual signing and that their uses were familiar enough not to require any complex system of textual signification.

The strategy of resistance was most militantly put forward by the Italian Giuseppe Magagnoli, founder and director of the poster workshop Maga. A former salesman with the leading French poster concern, Vercasson, Magagnoli had established his own atelier just after the Great War. This firm was exclusively devoted to commercial postermaking. With showrooms centrally located in Milan and Paris and business connections as far away



Ball bearings and such are the "material substructure of our civilization." Print advertising from *Fortune*, late 1920s.



Poster advertising ball bearings produced by Fiat's subsidiary Riv, Maga workshop, mid-1920s.

as Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, it was largely responsible for the reputation of Italian poster art for individuality and bold expression. Magagnoli's contemporaries, bothered by his factiousness as they sought to professionalize their métier, charged the firm with being "old school" and overly specialized. The latter charge was true in a way, and perhaps contributed to the firm's bankruptcy in 1932. Magagnoli himself died the next year of heart failure.[29]

In its prime, however, Maga employed the talents of leading French and Italian artists, including Cappiello, the Italians Nizzoli, Sinopico, and Pozzati (Sepo), the French-born, Italianized Lucien-Achille Mauzan, and other lesser known and often unnamed figures working in the house style. In his house organ published through the 1920s under the title *Pugno nell'Occhio,* or *Pans dans l'Oeil* (Punch in the eye), Magagnoli ranted against "all the old, rancid and idiotic systems used up to now,"

and especially against the purported scientificity and academicism of U.S. advertising.[30] Typically, Maga's posters were "materialized ideas": they performed as large trademarks for goods, though they were always unmistakably Maga products. The color effect was forced by giving them a colored, black, or blue background, and the lettering, brief and legible, did not form part of the design. Indeed, the text, far from being integrated into the design, was generally added on afterwards, once the customer had selected the sketch for his product from a roster of proposals.

The work of Lucien-Achille Mauzan was crucial to Maga's reputation. He was not only a virtuoso designer, but also an inventive lithographer. Drawing posters according to a technique of his own, directly upon the stone or zinc, he had so mastered the method that he could turn out daily two press-ready posters 140 by 140 centimeters worked in four colors. Indeed, his output was prodigious. From 1906 when he started through 1929, Mauzan was estimated to have produced 3,200 items. Like other Maga artists, Mauzan played on quick visual wit, the cunning of "la trovata" (the gimmick), the odd juxtaposition, and the ostensibly animate qualities of the object. The poster was a barker; it had to grab your attention; it was the voice of the object calling out, clamoring for attention (and Clamor, fittingly, was the name of the first Italian roadsign company). In Italy, as a British publicity expert commented, "you have to increase the sound of your voice—to be heard."[31] In common, Maga and its entourage eschewed any reference to the social attributes of objects or the potential needs they might serve. It was through their rendering of the object that they preserved a strong sense of human agency; the machine, domesticated and individualized, was vivified through representation.

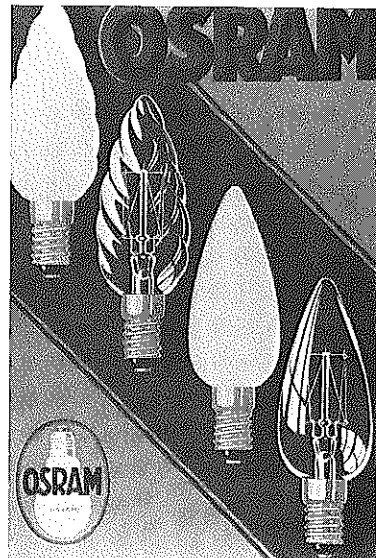
The entry into a society of new distinctions, it has been argued, is fraught with the "anxiety of exposure" and aestheticizing becomes a distancing mechanism to preserve social

position.[32] In Magagnoli's case, but not only his, aestheticizing offered a means to establish control over the modernizing process. This claim to leadership rested on his capacity to caricature goods rather than to communicate to new consumers about their utility. His Americanizing compatriots contested his position as factious, backward, and inefficient. Yet Magagnoli was only being true to what he was—a skilled craftsman plying a trade geared to older market circuits: to have done otherwise would have called for a different professional identity, a different relationship with commodities, and a different rapport with the mass consumer.

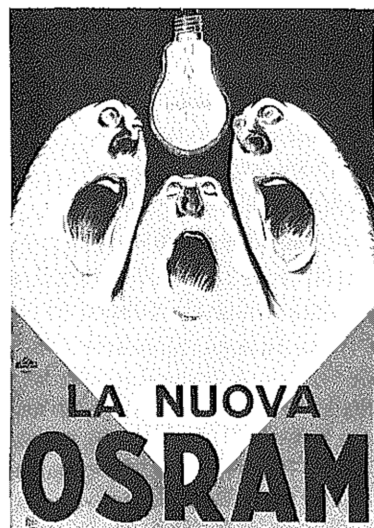
By contrast, the leading German commercial art schools, being better connected both to national marketing networks and to international markets, embarked on what might be called a program of reform. This was sparked by the recognition that as American commercial competition overran specialized markets, it threatened to destroy the specialized design traditions associated with them. The endeavor to keep German commercial art abreast of rapidly changing commercial and aesthetic conventions was led primarily by Professor Frenzel, who founded *Gebrauchsgraphik* in 1924. The Berlin-based monthly, starting out as a journal "to promote artistic publicity" ("zum förderung kunstlerische reklame"), in 1928 changed its subheading to journal of "international advertising art." Covering design innovations from all over the world, but especially focusing on the U.S., it was an awesomely cosmopolitan affair, its mission being to modernize German commercial art by measuring it against the international competition.

The task of relating local styles to Americanizing trends is especially interesting in Germany, because two very different options were available. One was the "object-ness" of the Berlin school of Lucian Bernhard, which, in the postwar years, easily fed into the modernist experimentation of the International school. Basically, Bernhard, and like him, Fritz Rosen and Wal-

What electric lighting can do for the consumer: U.S. print advertising, *Fortune,* late 1920s.

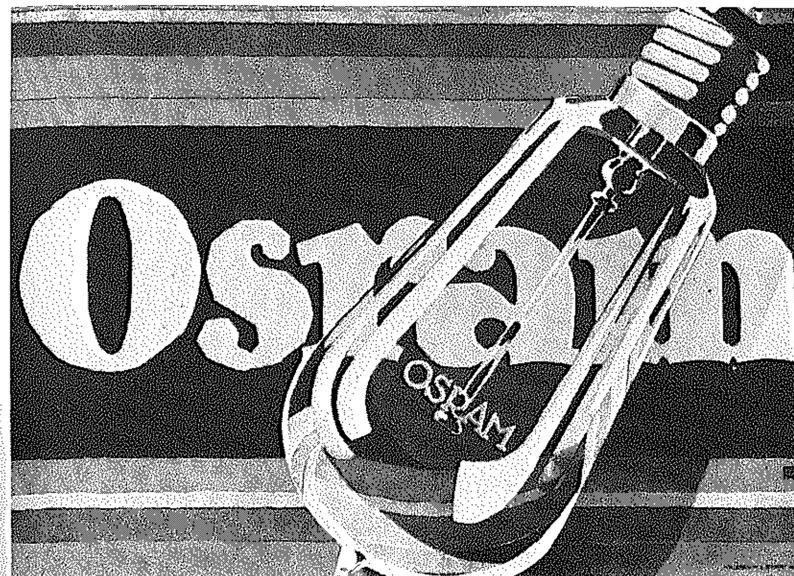


Updated German poster advertising for Osram. Walther Nehmer, 1927.



Updated poster advertising for Osram. Lucien-Achille Mauzan, circa 1928.

Face to face: the bourgeois family reacts to Lucien-Achille Mauzan's poster for Osram in a caricature by Mauzan, displayed at a show of his work, late 1920s.



"Sachplakat," for Osram. Lucian Bernhard, c. 1908.

ther Nehmer, to name but two of the figures more in evidence after Bernhard moved to New York in 1925, held to the notion that there was rationality in the functional form; good advertising, by mustering symbolic representations—early morning, the crowing cock; speed, an arrow; flight, a bird—might construct, with astonishing economy of form, an international language. Progressive, internationalist, experimental, artistically rigorous, it seemed in every way an alternative to America's capitalist realism.[33]

The other style was identified first and foremost with the Bavarian artist Ludwig Hohlwein. Influenced by local traditions of genre painting and growing out of a vigorous local art industry, his "amiable and soliciting" pictorial style found favor elsewhere in Germany; its expressive sentimentality was remarkably close in spirit to American commercial realism. Indeed, prior to and much more than Bernhard, Hohlwein found favor in U.S. advertising circles, though it was argued that his character types were too local and his artistic personality per-

haps too strong to work on competitive accounts—at least not without firm guidance from an agency art director.[34]

What more concretely did *Gebrauchsgraphik*'s promoters urge be done? First, they advocated a willingness to experiment; then, a turnover in styles; finally, a greater responsiveness to commercial pressures. To these ends, the German commercial artists mounted extraordinary regional and national shows, the culminating event being held at Leipzig in 1927, on the occasion of the huge annual commercial fair.[35] Over the long run, these endeavors did not save the German commercial poster. By promoting a critical awareness of the aesthetic conventions underlying local schools, they may even have helped call these conventions into question. Nevertheless, they did draw attention from abroad, and they related local traditions to the syncretic commercial mill of American publicity. One outcome was that German artists were welcomed in the U.S.; though they did not fundamentally alter the nature of the appeal of American publicity in the 1930s, they significantly embellished American design traditions with modernist motifs.

Even while the canons of commercial art were under review, the American-style advertising campaign was going native. At first much discussed, by the mid-1930s, its American origins were no longer always labeled as such. Apparently some elements had become so familiar as to be taken for granted; they had become the "natural" way of promoting goods. However, American business was also becoming less visible. As American firms pulled out of Europe altogether in the wake of the Great Depression or cut back on their European staffs, former employees sought positions elsewhere, sometimes in firms of their own, sometimes in branch subsidiaries of U.S. firms. As less now was to be gained from identifying techniques as American—the Depression having destroyed the myth of America's infallible economic might—the citing of U.S. models diminished. Local advertising might henceforth be in the American style. But it

Examples of "cluttered," "uninformative" German press advertising and more simplified direct style, both from *Die Woche*, early 1920s.

now passed as local production. Finally, the Great Depression, by aggravating worry over sales, counseled paying close attention to any technique or ploy that promised to build up markets. Not everywhere, not usually systematically, the American model was most closely followed for the promotion of goods such as automobiles, foodstuffs, and cosmetics that potentially had a mass market, might benefit by national advertising, and were similar to commodities already marketed successfully by American firms. Just as in the U.S., and as a result of American competitors like General Motors and Ford on European markets, the European automobile industry, together with car products, such as motor oil and tires, were the biggest and most innovative advertisers. If for many other goods, full-fledged campaigns were not the rule, still Americanisms had begun to crop up everywhere: in the heavier reliance on text, the structure of argumentation, the use of photography, the look of capitalist realism, and the styles of typography.

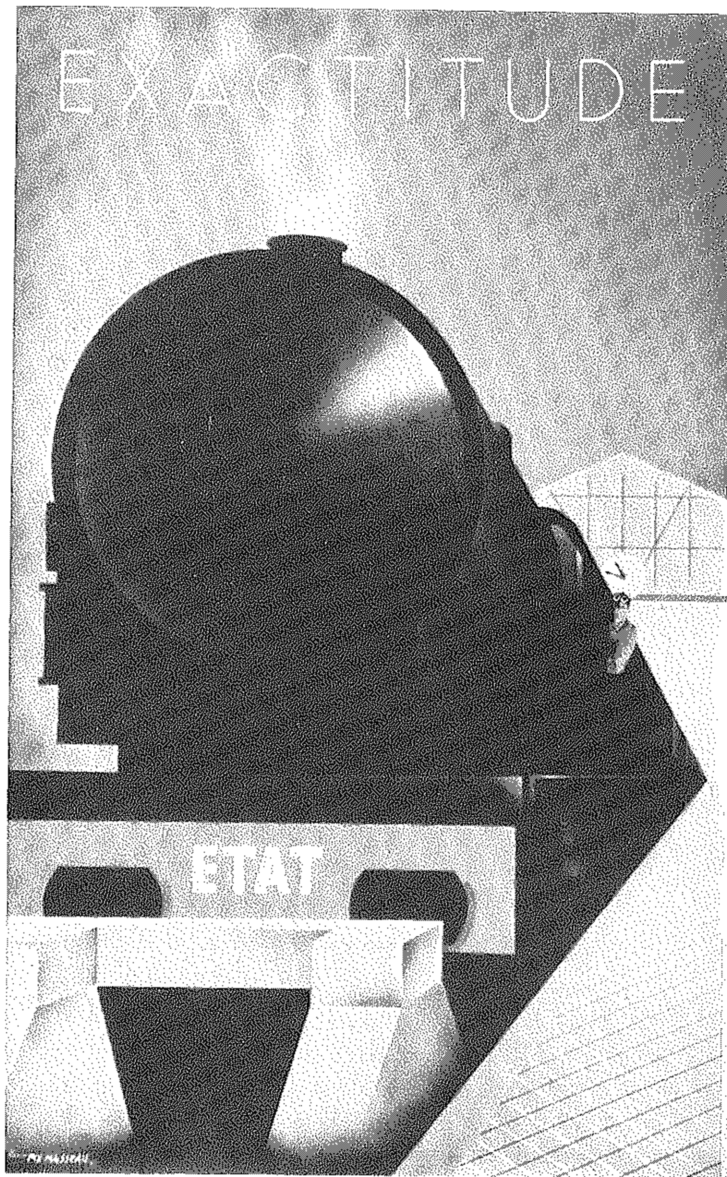
Unquestionably, trends outside of the advertising world reinforced stylistic changes. American movies, so widely distributed all over the continent through the mid-1930s, and so very influential in the popular imagination, established new con-

ventions for female beauty; the Hollywood set, with its rendering of the "thing-ness" of American everyday life, made objects such as the telephone, boudoir sets, automobiles, and home appliances appear quintessentially modern. Meanwhile, the major aesthetic alternative, German modernist experimentation, was destroyed by the triumph of Nazism. It is sufficient here to recall that the ban on non-Gothic typefaces destroyed the international leadership of German typographic arts, to the benefit of the more romanticized and eclectic American styles.[36]

This is not to argue that the poster disappeared from the European scene in the 1930s. Far from it: commercial "high art," as it might then have come to be called, was beautifully represented in the modernist verve of 1930s postermaking. Yet its meaning had changed significantly: sometimes it had become a mere ploy in the gamut of means available to commerce; it justified itself on aesthetic grounds, concealing the hurly-burly of commerce; it was used as a propaganda device, legitimating state intervention in the market. Its major sponsor was no longer private commerce, but the interventionist state of the Great Depression and interest groups sponsoring collective advertising campaigns. In this capacity, the poster advertised social messages; rather than selling, strictly speaking, the poster appealed for sacrifice and social involvement in an effort to transcend market relations. Thus, national governments stepped up their promotional and welfare activities to compensate for the malfunctioning of the marketplace. Thus, by appealing to citizens as consumers of national goods and services, they in effect rejected the claim of American market society that individual desires and collective well-being could be satisfied through mass consumption. Like Magagnoli in the 1920s, theorists of the poster continued to emphasize the importance of focusing on the object rather than the consumer, aestheticizing it with a still powerful design tradition rather than socializing it by publicizing its "usable" qualities. So the new commodities of a society of abun-

"Mommy, Aunt Ilse's hands are as rough as sandpaper . . ." Americanized press advertising from *Die Woche,* late 1930s.

"Tartar, the greatest danger." American-style therapeutic advertising from *Die Woche,* late 1930s.



Pierre Fix-Masseau, *Exactitude-État*, 1932. Poster commissioned by the French State Railways.

dance were recast as the icons of scarcity. In the words of a well-known French advertising entrepreneur, R.-L. Dupuy: "No need to construct a scenario: the object, the object alone, the object-king, just solicit it, it will tell its own story . . ."[37]

The triumph of American methods was not, however, simply a function of changing strategies of merchandising. It was in no small extent propelled by broader changes, some of which were related to American influence elsewhere in the economy, others to deeper processes of capitalist transformation sometimes identified with the United States by virtue of it being the leading capitalist economy. Much more study has to be done to determine whether there was any significant increase in disposable income, such as to create the kind of broad middle-market associated with the growth of the advertising industry in the U.S.; this appears not to have been the case, though allocations within the lower-middle and working-class family budgets may have shifted to accommodate more expenditure on consumer items.[38]

Certainly, an important determinant of change was the appearance in Europe of the conditions that had made print advertising so profitable in the United States. The first of these was the restructuring of the mass press itself. If one recalls, unreliable circulation figures, provincial dispersion, difficulties of placement, poor layout and reproduction, the multiplicity of print formats, uncooperative editors, and partisan audiences had prevented the press from being used effectively as an advertising medium in the early 1920s. However, by the middle of the next decade, there had been remarkable changes: everywhere bureaus of audit had been established to check on circulation figures; rotogravure techniques transformed layout and quality, standardizing formats; the successful penetration of local markets by American distribution and advertising networks prompted more interest in wealthy regional markets and the provincial news-

papers that served them. In turn, the press itself was more hospitable to advertising: not just the politically neutral, the tabloid or centrist mass press, appealed for advertising, but also party organs such as Mussolini's *Popolo d'Italia* and the Nazi *Volkische Beobachter.* By the mid-1930s, too, there was a spate of new illustrated periodicals, the European counterparts of *True Story Magazine, Cosmopolitan,* and *Life,* along with a whole run of fan magazines, all advertising in the American style.[39]

The second condition was the growth of advertising agencies. In the early 1920s, most advertising was placed in the press by jobbers, who made the rounds, picked up copy, and on a commission basis, bought space. By the 1930s, specialized agencies had begun to take care of these tasks, as well as all others involved in promotion. In theory, they were free agents, owing no allegiance to any one form of medium; they had no space in publications to sell, no favorite means of expression, and no interest beyond profits. However, the better to enlist and keep clients, they were inclined to experiment with campaigns with ostensibly proven worth. American business offered myriad examples. The well-studied agency was also better able to manage complex sets of information than the publicity department of any single firm; and they were freer to experiment with a variety of styles. Self-promoting through the trade journals, they set the styles for others. Most of the founders of advertising agencies in the interwar years referred to U.S. models. Locally, they acted as the catalysts of an "international demonstration effect."[40]

A third condition was of course the greater willingness on the part of manufacturers to advertise. It is difficult to speak yet of a marketing revolution such as there would be in Europe in the 1950s, when changes in marketing would go hand in hand with a huge increase in consumer spending. Nevertheless, during the 1930s especially, sales distribution networks became more centralized and retailing systems more standardized. By the

mid-1930s, in Germany as well as in France (if to a lesser degree), national advertising, combined with chain stores and new wholesale distribution networks extending out into the provinces, had established more centralized control over consumer tastes and retailer's supplies.[41]

In the last analysis, merchandisers responded more positively to American styles of representing goods because they had trouble fathoming the changing nature of the market in the wake of the Depression. Advertisers could no longer rely on conventional notions of class and taste to intuit what customers wanted. They needed to find new methods of studying consumer habits, especially the habits of the urban lower classes and of provincial customers with whose tastes they were wholly unfamiliar. They needed to find a new language to communicate with mass publics. American advertising offered such a method: Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet, the French advertising pioneer whose "rage to persuade" was periodically renewed by trips to the United States from the 1920s, once wrote that the major discovery of prewar advertising was that "to sell well, you must reverse the communication process. The route is no longer from product to consumer but from consumer to product."[42] The founder of French radio advertising, he had begun to introduce the market study as well by the 1930s. Even so, as he recalled, "advertising was like aviation in those days: we could fly farther than before, and with greater safety, but flying still relied on sight—we did not have radar, automatic pilots, or all-weather landings. Those would come later." Bleustein-Blanchet, the founder of Le Drugstore and Prénatal, both inspired by American models, would have had no difficulty acknowledging that in the wake of World War II, the U.S. offered not just a blueprint, but a detailed map; in the 1940s, American sociologists and marketing experts joined with their European counterparts to construct modern European consumers in the image of their American forebears.

The fact that the remapping of the marketplace was thus so closely identified with American commodities, techniques, and images was certainly a source of power for the United States. This was perhaps less true in the 1930s, when American-style modernity was still strongly contested and, in any case, divorced from the exercise of political influence in Europe. However, after 1945, as European national sovereignties were overrun by free-trade doctrines, conservative cultural legacies were discredited, and the economic miracles of the 1950s opened the way to mass consumption, American models were rarely contested. Since then, European consumer culture has been tied ever more firmly to American models. With the mass market a fixture for a second, then a third generation of European consumers, the need to translate the American idiom into local vernaculars lessened; a universal language of commodities now connected America's vast empire of goods.

Notes

I wish to thank the Shelby Cullom Davis Center of Princeton University for its generous hospitality while I was drafting an earlier version of this essay in spring, 1987.

1. P. Brunazzi, "Del cartello pubblicitario," *L'Ufficio Moderno,* July 1932, pp. 433-434.

2. More generally on the social and cultural meanings of market culture, see the semiotic and structural approach of the "French School": Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign,* trans. Charles Levin (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981); also Henri Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World,* trans. Sacha Rabinovitch (New York: Harper & Row, 1971). Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), seek to reconcile the approaches of neoclassical economics and cultural anthropology. Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), offers insightful historical and conceptual examples. See also Jean-Christophe Agnew, "The Consuming Vision of Henry James," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980,* ed. T. J. Jackson Lears and Richard W. Fox (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), pp. 65-100, and his

Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

3. This essay develops themes in a book-length study of European responses to American models of mass and consumer culture called *Americanizing Europe, 1920-1945,* themes that have been developed in "Americanism for Export," *wedge,* no. 7-8 (Spring-Winter 1985): 74-81, and "Mass Culture and Sovereignty: The American Challenge to European Cinemas," *Journal of Modern History* 61, no. 2 (March 1989).

4. The peculiar fusion between market and civil cultures in American society has been remarked upon in various ways. See in particular: David M. Potter, *People of Plenty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954); Daniel Boorstin's *The Americans: The Democratic Experience* (New York: Random House, 1973), especially his discussion of "communities of consumption," pp. 89-90; and Lears and Fox, eds., *The Culture of Consumption.* On the development of U.S. commercial culture, especially advertising, see Michael Schudson, *Advertising: The Uneasy Persuasion* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), and Daniel Pope's business history, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic Books, 1983). Roland Marchand studies advertisements as "social tableaux" in *Advertising the American Dream* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). The emancipatory aspects of U.S. consumer culture in the early twentieth century are discussed in William R. Leach, "Transformation in a Culture of Consumption: Women and Department Stores, 1890-1925," *Journal of American History* 71, no. 2 (September 1984): 319-342. Its implications abroad are traced in Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982).

5. On French consumer culture before the war, see Rosalind H. Williams, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), Michael B. Miller, *The Bon Marché* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), and Rachel Bowlby, *Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing, and Zola* (New York: Methuen, 1985).

6. An important statement of this position is contained in Maurice Hawlbachs, *L'Evolution des besoins dans les classes ouvrières* (Paris: Alcan, 1933).

7. For an excellent overview of the response to U.S. production models, see Judith A. Merkle, *Management and Ideology: The Legacy of the International Scientific Management Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), in addition to C. S. Maier, "From Taylorism to Technocracy," *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, no. 2 (1970): 27-61.

8. André Siegfried, *America Comes of Age* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927), p. 348; other examples of this cultural pessimism are documented in David Strauss, *Menace in the West: The Rise of French Anti-Americanism in Modern Times* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978); the role of culture in bourgeois class formation is analyzed in Edmond Goblot, *La Barrière et le niveau* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1927), p. 192, and in reflections by Jürgen

Kocka, "La bourgeoisie dans l'histoire moderne et contemporaine de l'Allemagne: Recherches et débats récents," *Le Mouvement social,* no. 136 (July-September 1986): 5-27. On upper-class hostility to broadening consumer markets, see Albert O. Hirschman, *Shifting Involvements* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), esp. pp. 46-61.

9. Except for a sketchy work by a former adman, Edward A. McCreary, *The Americanization of Europe* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964), there has been no general study of the influence of the U.S. advertising industry on European firms or styles. For an analysis of the pre-World War I situation, see Daniel Pope, "French Advertising Men and the American 'Promised Land.'" *Historical Reflections* 5, no. 1 (Summer 1978): 117-139; national histories such as Gian Paolo Cesarani, *Vetrina del Ventennio* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 1981) and Antonio Valeri, *Pubblicità italiana* (Milan: Edizioni del Sole 24 Ore, 1986). For France, see Pierre Bruneau, *Magiciens de la publicité,* 2d ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1956); also Philippe Schuwer, *Histoire de la publicité,* 2d ed. (Geneva: Edito-Service, 1966), suggests the influence of American methods in the formation of national industries, without giving them systematic study.

10. The expectations for advertising are eloquently stated in the various trade journals as well as in numerous pamphlets and manuals published for the advertising trade. Key examples include for France: *La Publicité, Vendre, Presse-Publicité;* for Italy: *La Pubblicità, L'Ufficio Moderno, La Pubblicità d'Italia, La Campana d'Italia, Pugno nell'Occhio;* for Germany: *Die Reklame, Gebrauchsgraphik.*

11. The major comparative source on market structure is L. Urwick and F. P. Valentine, *Europe—United States of America: Some Trends in the Organization and Methods of Distribution in the Two Areas* (Geneva: International Chamber of Commerce, 1931). Some comparisons are useful here: in the 1920s, the French working-class family spent 60 percent of income on food, and after household expenditures, estimated at 32 percent, disposed of 8 percent for sundries; cf. the U.S. working-class household, spending only 35 percent on food and 45 percent on household items, with 20 percent classified as disposable. Overall, the average per capita income in the U.S. was 3.5 times as great as the European, and from 1913 to 1929 grew an estimated 33 percent compared to 5.5 percent in Europe (pp. 50ff.).

12. J. Murray Allison, "Continental Advertising," *Advertising World,* April 1927, pp. 728-732; May 1927, pp. 16-18; and June 1927, pp. 130-132. In 1927, according to J. Walter Thompson's man in Berlin, Ned Crane, the 135 newspapers in which Thompson placed ads used 127 different column sizes, ranging from six to twelve centimeters wide (J. Walter Thompson Archive *Newsletter,* November 15, 1927). According to Italian sources, coverage for a national campaign involved inserts in 40 newspapers; see *L'Ufficio Moderno,* April 1930, p. 308. (Information on the activities of J. Walter Thompson comes from the firm's archives, formerly in New York City and now located at Duke University. I wish to thank the former director, Cynthia Swank, for her assistance.)

13. A. Le Flobic, "Comment un directeur commerçent a vu l'Amérique," *Vendre,* March 1931, p. 218.

14. For examples, see J. Neuilly, "L'affiche vend-elle?" *Vendre,* February 1928, pp. 153-157; anon., "L'affiche decade," *La Publicité* 1, no. 1 (April 1925); L. P. B. (L. Balzaretti), "La decadenza del manifesto," *Campana d'Italia,* December 1932; L. Cusmano, "Il cartello in crisi?" *L'Ufficio Moderno,* December 1928, pp. 679-680. See also D. Gualtieri, "Street Advertising in General," *International Advertising Conference, 1933* (Milan: A. Lucin, 1933), pp. 163-167.

15. H. K. Frenzel, "25 jahre Deutsches Plakat," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 4 (1925): 4-21; W. S. Crawford, "Das Plakat—The Poster," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 5 (1925): 3-9; Valeri, *Pubblicità italiana,* pp. 1-50.

16. "Das Lied der Plakate," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 1 (1927): 4.

17. Cited in John Willett, *Culture and Society in Weimar Germany* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), p. 114.

18. For an example, C. W. Frerk, "The Publicity Poster in Italy," *Advertising World,* June 1928, pp. 224-225, 230; and complaints as referred to in the accounts above, footnote 14.

19. Julius Steiner, ed., "Einfulle: Gebrauchs-Graphorismen," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 3, no. 5 (May 1927): 15.

20. Frenzel, "25 jahre Deutsches Plakat," p. 13.

21. Allison, "Continental Advertising," p. 18.

22. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream,* p. 10 and passim; see also, Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers* (New York: Morrow, 1984), chapters 2 and 3.

23. Schudson, *Advertising,* pp. 214ff.; The term "stupid realism" is used by T. J. Jackson Lears in "The Artist and the Adman," *Boston Review* (April 1986).

24. See in particular: L. Jones, "Pourquoi l'annonce française est differente de l'annonce américaine," *Vendre,* September 1929, pp. 201-204; also R.-L. Dupuy, "Panorama de la publicité française," *Vendre,* March 1930, p. 191; and various articles in *Die Reklame:* H. W. Brose, "Goût Americain," August 1927, pp. 519-523; G. Haug, "Wirksame verkaufstexte und wie man sie gestaltet," June 1928, pp. 393-395; H. Sakowski, "Amerikanisches-Allzuamerikanisches," October 1930.

25. Schudson, *Advertising,* pp. 218ff.

26. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinctions* (1979), trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), pp. 4-5, 32, 54ff.; William Leiss, "The Icons of the Marketplace," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 1, no. 3 (1983): 10-22, makes the point that for a first generation of consumers, advertising appeals literally had to be spelled out. This was the first step in creating an advertising culture. The problem was not merely to familiarize consumers with brand names, but also to

confer "natural" attributes to goods that until only recently had been produced locally or in the home.

27. Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, pp. 9, 13-14.

28. Paule de Gironde, "Si nous faisions une annonce américaine," *Vendre* 10, no. 64 (March 1929): 175-181.

29. On Magagnoli and Maga, see G. Passavento and A. Palieri, *Chi è in pubblicità* (Milan: L'Ufficio Moderno, 1953), p. 202; Frerk, "The Publicity Poster in Italy," pp. 224-225, 230; Valeri, *Pubblicità italiana*, pp. 51, 55; Hermann Behrmann, "Maga," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 3, no. 7 (July 1927): 41-47.

30. *Pugno nell'Occhio* 1, no. 1 (January 1922): 1.

31. Frerk, "The Publicity Poster in Italy," p. 230; on Mauzan, H. K. Frenzel, "L. A. Mauzan, Ein Erfolgreicher italienischer Plakat-Kunstler—A Successful Italian Poster-Artist," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 6, no. 3 (March 1929): 53-61.

32. Bourdieu, *Distinctions*, p. 57.

33. "Lucian Bernhard a New York, ein Interview von Oskar M. Hahn," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 3, no. 2 (February 1926): 8-12; Fritz Hellwag, "Die Berliner Gebrauchsgraphik," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 3, no. 5 (March 1926); H. K. Frenzel and Frederick Suhr, "Was Weiter? And What Now?" *Gebrauchsgraphik* 5, no. 10 (October 1928): 33-38; also W. S. Crawford, "Das Plakat—The Poster," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 5 (1925): 3-9. The modernist ethos underlying the European representation of commodities is discussed in Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, 2d ed. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1960); Roberto Tessari, *Il mito della macchina* (Milan: Mursia, 1973); and Sigfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948). A comparable idolization of the machine may have occurred in late nineteenth-century America according to Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

34. "Einfuhrung zum Sonderheft münchenen Gebrauchsgraphik," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 3, no. 1 (January 1926): 3-8; Frenzel and Suhr, "Was Weiter? And What Now?," p. 36.

35. Ibid., pp. 33-38; Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, pp. 140-150.

36. *La Publicité* (1936), pp. 87-104.

37. Dupuy, "Panorama de la publicité française," p. 194. The shift toward collective advertising usually under state sponsorship was well illustrated in the reports at the 1933 conference of the Continental Advertising Association held in Milan-Rome. In Germany, state control had paradoxical effects: the Law of September 1933, reorganizing the advertising profession, literally closed the profession, increased fiscal charges on postering, and stipulated one posterer for each town, while other Nazi measures closed down hundreds of newspapers, eliminated "Jewish" advertising, and drove out modernist poster designers. Subsequent measures also banned radio publicity, standardized newspaper formats and rates, and forbade any invidious comparisons in advertising, emphasizing an upbeat Teutonic social realism. The results were twofold: poster art eschewed the modernist style and, although heavily employed for propaganda, almost ceased being used for commercial purposes. In 1937, 87 percent of advertising budgets were spent for newspapers, a higher percentage than in the U.S. See H. Canzler, *Wirtschaftwerbung im neuen Reich* (Stuttgart: Muth, 1935), and Karl-Dietrich Abel, *Pressenlenkung im NS-Staat* (Berlin: Colloquium-Verlag, 1968), in addition to a fascinating report by L. D. H. Weld, director of services of McCann Erikson, in *Presse-Publicité*, June 21, 1938, pp. 20, 30, and August 15, 1938, pp. 20, 30, which argues that the Nazi state had finally achieved the order Americanizing reformers had advocated.

38. See Urwick and Valentine, *Europe–United States of America*, p. 52-55.

39. On changes in the press during the interwar decades, see Claude Bellanger et al., eds., *Histoire générale de la presse française* (Paris: PUP, 1969), vol. 3, passim; Nicola Tranfaglia, *La stampa italiana nell'età fascista* (Rome: Laterza, 1980). On France, see especially *Presse-Publicité*, founded in 1937 and specifically devoted to problems of newspaper advertising.

40. In addition to the histories cited above in note 9, see "De la naissance et de la vie des grandes agencies françaises de publicité," *Presse-Publicité* 23 (May 1937): 3-4, 25-26; on the Italian profession, see Passavento and Palieri, *Chi è in pubblicità*.

41. Gaston Defosse, *Le Commerce intérieur* (Paris: PUP, 1944), pp. 63, 90-103; F. Simmet, *Le Petit commerce de détail* (Paris, 1937), pp. 150-251. On Germany, see H. Laufemburger, "La consommation dirigée en Allemagne," *X Crise* (1937), Wolfgang Greve, *Die Rationalisierung der Werbung und ihre Bedeutung fuer die deutsche und englische Wirtschaft* (Munich: Neumann, 1933), and especially L. R. Coleman, "How to Make the Consumer into a Customer," and other contributions to the *International Chamber of Commerce: Berlin Conference 1937 #5* (Berlin, 1937).

42. *The Rage to Persuade* (New York and London: Chelsea, 1982), p. 53.