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Garçonnes: The French Flapper

Fashion and Fantasies in France's Roaring Twenties

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A multidimensional analysis of the garçonne, a figure at the crossroads of history of society, politics, literature, and gender.

An emblematic figure of France's Jazz Age, the Années folles, the French flapper or garçonne left a lasting impression with their short hair and androgynous lines. A controversial symbol women's liberation, the garçonne embodies the contradictions of a society upended by war, torn between freedom and moral order. In this essay, Christine Bard explores this figure through fashion, literature, lesbian identities, and the novel of Victor Margueritte. A deft analysis of a modern myth, part subversion, part gender studies, and part social history.
