

Des nations, des firmes et des montres: Histoire globale de l'industrie horlogère de 1850 à nos jours. *By Pierre-Yves Donzé.* Neuchâtel: Livreo Alphil, 2020. 248 pp. Tables, figures, appendix, bibliography. Paperback, \$31.00. ISBN: 978-2-88950-044-4.

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Reviewed by Gilles Garel

This book, which is well written and easy to handle thanks to its small format, is the result of fifteen years of research by Pierre-Yves Donzé, professor at the University of Osaka and recognized expert on the Swiss and world watch industry. He proposes a broad view of the historical development of the world watch industry, from the middle of the nineteenth century to 2017. In the introduction, Donzé states his thesis, which deconstructs the idea of a national industry today. There is no longer an integrated watchmaking company with, for example, its headquarters in Switzerland, controlled by Swiss capital, and manufacturing all its components in Switzerland. Watchmaking companies became globalized during the second half of the twentieth century, moving from competition between companies that were firmly rooted in their national territories to international competition among globalized firms. Donzé distinguishes four main phases of this movement.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century until the beginning of World War I, we witness the birth and growth of a watch industry in several European countries and in the United States. The manufacturers concentrate on their domestic market, and some countries and states, like France, protect the development of this industry. American factories experience the most remarkable growth by developing a model of a large integrated company with standardized industrial production thanks to the availability of capital and labor (Waltham and Elgin, in particular). In contrast, Great Britain and Switzerland follow different trajectories. England, which dominated the world market in the eighteenth century, is unable to adopt the new American production techniques; at the same time, numerous cheap products from Switzerland arrive on their market. The English watchmakers do not benefit from the protectionist support of the state within the framework of a free trade economic policy, and they will completely disappear at the beginning of the twentieth century. Switzerland also has a very old tradition of watchmaking—since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the exile of the French Protestants, even if this book does not go back that far in time. Faced with a small domestic market, Switzerland immediately turns to the world market. Production is organized around a few large factories (for example, Longines, Omega, and Tavannes) that adopt a mode of production inspired by the U.S. industrial system. These

companies are linked with other firms upstream of the production process that manufacture components and blanks and with a multitude of assemblers downstream. The workforce is family owned and concentrated in the Jura region. This system allows for massive and flexible production. At that time—contrary to other industries in Switzerland, such as chemicals, textiles, food, and machine tools—there is no direct investment abroad. All resources are concentrated “at home.”

The second phase is the interwar period. Competition between watchmaking countries is reinforced by their national territories, while the development of the wristwatch contributes to an increase in world demand. The increase in mass production capacities for cheap products favors the growth of large companies in Germany and the United States. We also see the rise of a watch industry in Japan (with Seiko and Citizen, in particular). Russia invests massively in the design and industrial manufacture of simple mechanical watches, like the Roskopf watch, for the working classes. With the crisis of the 1930s, watchmaking protectionism develops, including in Switzerland, where the federal government—in a case unique in industrial history—intervenes to promote the development of a watchmaking cartel.

In a third phase, from the 1950s to the end of the 1960s, the world watch industry begins its first stage of globalization. The value chains become globalized; for example, large European companies develop an assembly industry in Hong Kong, a country with low labor costs. The political liberalization of international trade allows U.S., European, and Japanese watchmaking companies to no longer depend solely on the resources of their domestic markets. However, a protectionist model persists in the Soviet Union and India, two countries driven by the growth of their own domestic markets.

In a fourth phase, which we are still experiencing today, a second period of globalization begins in the early 1980s. It is mainly linked to the technological revolution of the quartz watch (easier to master than the “noble” and traditional mechanical art of watch design) and the strengthening of liberalization of international trade. The world demand for watches increases sharply, from 180 million in 1970 to 600 million in 1984 and 1.4 billion in 2017. Integrated multinational companies such as the Swatch Group and large luxury conglomerates like LVMH embody this repositioning on global value chains, with factories in China, coordination centers in Hong Kong, and brand owners in Europe. Marketing strategies for value creation are taking precedence over technical mastery. The emergence in the early 2010s of connected watches, with new players like Apple in 2015, opens a new era of innovations. What we many of us wear on our wrists is no longer a classic watch.

Where numerous works on watchmaking history are devoted to a brand, a country, or a technology, Donzé's book provides a global history. It does not neglect any aspect, whether it be social history (for example, strikes in Switzerland at the beginning of the twentieth century), production systems and technological factors, state policies, or company strategies and their financing. It is simultaneously a history, management, and economics book. The reader will find a lot of data, clearly presented in tables and graphs. As official data on world watch production is almost nonexistent, the author's effort to estimate by cross-referencing numerous sources must be emphasized. The technological, productive, and institutional dynamics presented in this book are not specific to the watch industry. In this respect, the book has a general scope that will appeal to readers who are familiar with the histories of other industries. Even if the symbolic and cultural aspect of the watch is not much discussed, the book presents individual figures and companies that have been making and innovating watches for over two hundred years. Behind even the most beautiful fashion products is not a miracle but organizations, actors, institutions, and technologies.

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Paris to New York: The Transatlantic Fashion Industry in the Twentieth Century. *By Véronique Pouillard.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021. 324 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. ISBN 978-0-6742-3740-7.

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Reviewed by Valeria Pinchera

For a long time, a spotlight has shone on the creativity and prestige of haute couture while the emergence of the fashion industry has been relegated to the sidelines, with most attention focusing on the art side instead of the economic one. However, fashion business history scholars have challenged this perspective over the past decades. In this book