

Swiss colonial business in the Transvaal: The involvement of the DuBois family, watchmakers in Neuchâtel (late nineteenth century)

Fabio Rossinelli

Introduction

In Switzerland, the DuBois family founded the first watchmaking factory in the country – DuBois & Fils (1785) – in the small town of Le Locle, located in the Jura Mountains in the canton of Neuchâtel.¹ In the United States, Cora DuBois – a descendant of this family – was a pioneer in the humanities and the first woman to teach anthropology at Harvard University.² The two stories have been told separately: no one has so far investigated the reasons that pushed Cora's father, Jean DuBois, to emigrate to the United States. This story represents a case study in global and colonial history. In fact, if Jean DuBois travelled to the United States in 1899, it was because he had fled the Transvaal – a country where he had been for eight years. And if he had fled from the Transvaal, it was not because the Second Anglo-Boer War had just broken out, as Cora DuBois's biographer said,³ but because, together with his brother Philippe DuBois, he had criminally enriched himself by defrauding friends and clients. Jean DuBois had completely immersed himself in the dynamics of colonial speculation. He had become, like the rest of his companions and fellow adventurers, a sort of mastermind of financial crimes – and he could not abandon this behaviour. Moreover, he lost all the financial proceeds of his fraud. Under an arrest warrant by the Swiss Confederation, Jean DuBois went on the run⁴: destination United States, where his wife Mattie had family.⁵

The reconstruction of this unknown story, which seems anecdotal, is significant for at least two reasons. The first is historiographical. This case study sheds new light on geographical areas (the Jura Mountains) and economic actors (the watchmaking families of Neuchâtel) of a country outside the European powers (Switzerland). It shows their complete integration into the transimperial spaces, in the wake of what has already been done by authors who have been interested in the relationship between Switzerland and colonial history, such as Patricia Purtschert, Andreas Zangger and others.⁶ It was from these spaces that watchmaking emerged, having to source precious metals such as gold and silver for the production of watches.⁷ However, Swiss

watchmaking has so far rarely been examined in relation to imperial histories. Historian Pierre-Yves Donzé, for example, has demonstrated the mobility and global markets of watchmakers, but without allocating attention to colonial experiences and lands.⁸ His colleague Beatrice Veyrassat, emphasizing the diversification of economic activities of Swiss watchmaking families or enterprises overseas, has mainly spoken of the import/export of watches against colonial products.⁹ Hugues Scheurer, the only one who has written about the DuBoises in this context, did not attach too much importance to this case, believing that they were only interested in 'colonial products between 1765 and 1769 and in a very limited way'.¹⁰ As this essay will show, a more holistic approach is needed to appreciate the different ways in which Neuchâtel watchmakers involved themselves in colonial business: here was not only product exchange, but also capital investment – an aspect that deserves more attention and will be at the heart of this essay.

Secondly, the examination of the DuBois' emigration and business in the Transvaal leads us not only to a new history of the watchmaking areas in Switzerland, but also to a new global micro-history¹¹ of capitalism in the transimperial spaces. The main sources on which we based our investigation are the private letters of Jean DuBois, conserved in the archives of his daughter Cora at the Tozzer Library in Cambridge.¹² By cross-referencing this data with the archives of the DuBois Family in Le Locle and others, we were able to reconstruct – based on private and confidential documents – the strategies of capitalist predation implemented in the colonial context that rarely transpire from 'classical' sources such as missionary archives or state archives. Although at first only the family microcosm in Switzerland was involved, the DuBois family's network of collaborations soon expanded to France, Germany and beyond, involving bankers, scientists, missionaries and politicians, often of high status – all men who met informally in geographic societies to conclude private agreements. In these circles, the cooperative and transnational dimension was as strong as national competitions or rivalries¹³ – a reflection of the imperial tension theorized by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler.¹⁴ It was therefore through these environments that the DuBoises created their business in the Transvaal, based on transnational collaboration. In this context, this might be surprising if we refer to the value system of the global bourgeoisie thematized by Christof Dejung, David Motadel and Jürgen Osterhammel¹⁵; they demonstrated capitalist pragmatism, relegating to the background all those values not directly related to material profit.

For our demonstration, we will adopt the following structure. The first chapter will outline the origins of the DuBois' emigration to the Transvaal, as well as the end of the story: the fraud, the bankruptcy, the escape. This will provide the contextual elements that will allow us to enter the heart of our investigation. The second one will analyse Jean DuBois's individual journey from Europe to Africa, highlighting the multiple networks of collaboration he relied on to create and implement a successful salt exploitation. The third chapter will focus on the vast gold business that the DuBoises entered, analysing the financial strategies and global connections of their operations. A fourth and final chapter, before the conclusions, will analyse the colonial speculative fever that arose in the DuBois family and was motivated by their racist and classist worldview. We can thus ultimately take up the two arguments presented earlier and develop them in the light of the outcomes of our investigation.

Neuchâtel watchmaking, South African gold and the great swindle of Fehr & DuBois

We said it at the beginning: historical contributions that problematize the acquisition of raw materials for Swiss watchmaking are few. The literature on this subject tends to show that, from the eighteenth century, colonial trade helped develop this economic sector. Neuchâtel watchmakers found overseas sources for materials needed for the production of watches (gold, gemstones and other minerals), but they also identified outlets for sales.¹⁶ During the nineteenth century, they penetrated several Latin American and Asian countries, such as Brazil and Japan.¹⁷ How did the colonization of Africa influence the global markets for Neuchâtel watchmaking? Historiography is silent on this point, so it is this aspect that we shall attempt to clarify by discussing the origins of the DuBois' presence in Africa.

A geographical society of Neuchâtel (*Société neuchâteloise de géographie*) was set up in Le Locle at the time of the Berlin Conference of 1884–5, and a focus on the African continent quickly became evident in this circle, located not far from the *Maison DuBois*.¹⁸ In this movement, one person seems to have indirectly initiated the event we are interested in: Paul Perrin. A businessman from Neuchâtel, he emigrated to the Transvaal together with his brother Jules (a photographer and jeweller) in 1872. Returning in 1885, Paul Perrin proposed to several geographical societies – including Neuchâtel – to set up an import/export company in the Transvaal that could conduct gold mining activities: the Swiss African Company (*Compagnie Suisse Africaine*). The project was too big for the newly founded association of Neuchâtel, but the geographical society of St. Gallen (*Ostschweizerische geographisch-commercielle Gesellschaft*) accepted the challenge. The Swiss African Company was thus founded in 1886.¹⁹

This project of Neuchâtel origin, but Swiss in scope, allows us to interrogate the relationship between watchmaking and the colonies. As historian Johann Boillat has shown, watchmakers were the main businessmen dealing in gold and precious metals in this canton. And if Switzerland adopted two items of legislation in 1880 and 1886 to control and guarantee the titles of gold and silver works, it was again thanks to one Federal Councillor from Neuchâtel.²⁰ This legislative process crystallized added value for the Swiss precious metals industry – a former ambition of other watchmaking places, such as Geneva, studied by Nadège Sougy.²¹ It is therefore possible that the new legal framework stimulated watchmakers, increasing their international competitiveness and enabling them to source gold directly (without intermediaries) from producing countries.

Returning to our thread, the trading house Walter & DuBois in Le Locle was one of the first shareholders of the Swiss African Company. This house, active in the gold trade, was founded in 1885 and co-directed by Henri DuBois.²² Walter & DuBois's ambition in buying shares in the Swiss African Company was not to take 10 per cent interest per share (as promised by Paul Perrin), but to acquire South African gold.²³ However, primarily due to insufficient funds, the Swiss African Company was forced to shut down by 1887. But Walter & DuBois's ambition was not forgotten by the

geographical society of St. Gallen. Following the company's dissolution, this society put them in contact with its two correspondents in the Transvaal: Carl Fehr and Franz Sitterding.²⁴ They were two emigrants from Zurich in Pretoria, founders of the import/export house Fehr & Sitterding, previously established in Verona, Italy.²⁵

It is unclear what links existed between Henri DuBois (co-director of the Walter & DuBois house) and the brothers Philippe and Jean DuBois (descendants of the DuBois & Fils watchmaking factory) in Le Locle because archive documentation has not given us any answers. However, we have been able to reconstruct the fact that, between 1886 and 1887, Philippe DuBois emigrated to the Transvaal and founded, together with Carl Fehr, the company Fehr & DuBois, which replaced Fehr & Sitterding (Jean DuBois, Philippe's brother, joined them a few years later in 1891). Before continuing, here are a few details about those involved. Carl Fehr was a mining engineer and was appointed Swiss consul in the Transvaal in 1894.²⁶ Philippe DuBois (born in 1866) and his brother Jean (born in 1869) were the sons of Philippe Henri DuBois (1837–1923), who was a trader in the family watchmaking business and lived between Le Locle and Frankfurt.²⁷

If these actors are totally unknown today, they certainly weren't at the time of the events. In fact, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Swiss press published several reports on Fehr & DuBois and the Transvaal, which were initially encouraging.²⁸ The establishment of their Swiss Mortgage Investment Syndicate (*Caisse hypothécaire de Pretoria*) in 1890 attracted a number of Swiss investors, particularly in Neuchâtel and the Jura mountains. In 1897, for example, the capital raised in Switzerland for this syndicate was SFr. 1.72 million, with an annual interest rate of 8 per cent.²⁹ The banks Berthoud & Cie in Neuchâtel and DuBois & L'Hardy in Le Locle (the latter managed by the uncles of Philippe and Jean DuBois) handled the buying and selling of shares.³⁰

The business of the Swiss Mortgage Investment Syndicate went well until 1898. Then, a year later, an unexpected scandal arrived: as reported in the national press of that time,³¹ Fehr & DuBois announced that all the money they raised in Switzerland (which amounted to SFr. 1.63 million in 1899) 'has been misappropriated by us and used for our own purposes; we have lost or sold everything we owned; we are absolutely without resources.'³² While this admission of fraud, written before they fled the Transvaal, is incredibly transparent, the reasons for the financial collapse were not made explicit. Their explanation was: 'The businesses in which we were involved went wrong one after the other and gradually we lost them.'³³

It was evident that the Swiss Mortgage Investment Syndicate was a screen for Fehr & DuBois to run other (and non-real estate) businesses. Which ones? The gold market, as we realized by recontextualizing the origins of the DuBois's migration to the Transvaal, was central – but it has to be proven. Furthermore, was it only gold for watchmaking that interested our actors? What were their objectives and how did they realize them (with what dynamics, what collaborations)? The letters that Jean DuBois wrote to his parents, who remained in Le Locle in the period 1891–4, which was the period of Fehr & DuBois's rise in the Transvaal, provided us with some research leads. Starting from this basis, from which we have indexed names and facts, we have reconstructed – relying essentially on other primary sources, given the lack of secondary literature on this micro event – the astonishingly complex plot of this affair.

The arrival of Jean DuBois in the Transvaal and the exploitation of the Salt Pan

Jean DuBois left Europe for Africa in November 1891, with the intention of joining his brother Philippe, who had emigrated five years earlier, in the Fehr & DuBois's business.³⁴ Perhaps on the advice of his paternal uncle Louis Ferdinand DuBois, the head of the DuBois & L'Hardy bank (which was managing the shares of the Swiss Mortgage Investment Syndicate) and a member of the geographical society of Neuchâtel in Le Locle, Jean DuBois stopped off in Paris, Brussels and London before embarking on a ship to southern Africa. In these cities, he was introduced – initially through the erudite traveller Fritz DuBois, living in Paris³⁵ – to the local geographical societies. It was an opportunity to forge links with important banking, political and intellectual personalities. These included the bankers Louis Berthoud and Alphonse Oltramare, both emigrants from Switzerland, Prince Roland Bonaparte, the geographer Charles Maunoir, the writer Robert Godet and others, who facilitated his stay in the Transvaal.³⁶ For example, when Jean DuBois landed at the Cape in December 1891, Cecil Rhodes himself received him in his villa, thanks to the recommendation of the British journalist William Thomas Stead, whom Jean had met in London.³⁷ This preparation for the journey allows us to emphasize two points. First, we are clearly confronted with both a family history and a European history – we will explore this entanglement later. Secondly, the importance of geographical societies in the nineteenth century was not in their intellectual production, but in their function of meeting and sociability – an aspect still neglected by historiography.³⁸

From his arrival in southern Africa, Jean DuBois stayed in Durban until March 1892, where he gathered various items of economic information for Fehr & DuBois and tried to launch a sausage production operation – but unsuccessfully.³⁹ When he arrived in Pretoria in April 1892, he became part of a company already operating on several fronts. He commented: 'Philippe [DuBois] is highly regarded in Pretoria and his firm has a very good reputation; it is even believed to be stronger than it actually is. The Fehr & DuBois are engaged in a mass of businesses: gold mines, iron mines, salt, etc.'⁴⁰ The main occupation that was attributed to Jean DuBois within Fehr & DuBois was to implement the production and sale of salt. The central salt agency was in Pietersburg, while the salt extraction and processing sites were located in the Soutpansberg Mountains, where there was also a Swiss mission station called Valdezia.⁴¹

This gives us the opportunity to discuss the cooperation between business and mission. One of these salt sites owned by Fehr & DuBois was in fact managed by a Swiss missionary, Honoré Schlaefli, who also came – like the DuBoises – from the Jura Mountains of Neuchâtel. He was a corresponding member of the geographical society of Neuchâtel in Le Locle.⁴² Jean DuBois ironically explained the ambiguous role of Honoré Schlaefli to his parents in a letter of April 1892 as someone who was 'sent by the Swiss Mission to convert the pagan Blacks and by Fehr & DuBois to keep them in this state by salting them.'⁴³ And again in October 1893, when Schlaefli was called by Fehr & DuBois to vaccinate their workers against the *variola minor*, Jean wrote about him: 'This earned him SFr. 500 for ten days of easy work.'⁴⁴ Just for comparison, the

maximum annual salary for watchmakers in Neuchâtel at this time was SFr. 2,000!⁴⁵ Jean DuBois liked Honoré Schläefli, perhaps because of his taste for money and business; by contrast, he despised the other Swiss missionaries in Valdezia.⁴⁶ This was even more so when the latter, after discovering that Schläefli was working for Fehr & DuBois, forced Schläefli out of the salt business. An official letter of protest from Jean DuBois arrived in Lausanne, at the headquarters of the Swiss mission, in which he accused the missionary founder Paul Berthoud of also being a businessman in Transvaal – and a bad speculator.⁴⁷ Based on our sources, we can see that this cooperation was not free of tensions arising from conflicting interests. Moreover, it was the result of national and linguistic (in this case Swiss and Francophone) networks that, once again through the channel of geographical societies (Neuchâtel), linked the European peripheries to the overseas colonies.

As regards cooperation and tension, the Salt Pan directed by Jean DuBois gives us an insight into the South African actors involved. The workers were Boers and native Blacks called 'Kaffirs'. The former settled there for the dry season, from April to October, because in the Salt Pan they could get paid work and feed their cattle in the mountain pastures. Jean DuBois reported that in 1893, there were more or less '150 Boer people to work, each with a minimum of 4–5 Kaffirs, for a total population of about 700 souls'.⁴⁸ When the Boers and their South African servants left because of the rainy season, Jean had to scramble to recruit new workers from neighbouring indigenous communities. He made agreements with local chiefs, for example Malaboek in Blouberg, to enlist his subjects in exchange for a certain amount of salt sacks; however, many of Jean DuBois's demands were refused by Malaboek.⁴⁹ These collaborations helped the prosperity of Fehr & DuBois's Salt Pan, and it is interesting for us to note the active role of the indigenous people through the local power structures. It was, however, an asymmetrical relationship, if not on a real level, in which Jean DuBois had to compromise with Malaboek, at least on an ideological level. The following example will clarify the concept. When the war broke out between the Boers and the 'rebellious' South African communities in the summer of 1894, leading to a direct confrontation between the general Joubert, commandant of the South African Republic, and the chief Malaboek,⁵⁰ Jean DuBois made arrangements with both sides for the protection of the Salt Pan. From Joubert he obtained the dispatch of a hundred armed men, from Malaboek the assurance of timely information in case the conflict threatened Fehr & DuBois's Salt Pan.⁵¹ Despite an officially neutral role in the conflict and a sense of gratitude to both sides, Jean DuBois nevertheless took part in the war as a volunteer in the Boer army⁵² – where he also found that other Swiss migrants had enlisted⁵³ – just to try to 'do some business'⁵⁴ and to 'have the pleasure of shooting down one of these black worms'.⁵⁵ This shows, as we shall also see later, his deeply racist roots.

We end this chapter with a few facts and figures – both for completeness of information and for a comparative perspective with what will follow in the next one. The Salt Pan's accounting year of 1892 generated a net profit of £1,700 (SFr. 42,500), while in 1893 it was exactly double (£3,400, equivalent to SFr. 85,000).⁵⁶ We don't know the numbers for the following years, but we know that a sale of the Salt Pan was planned by late 1894 to the Boer government.⁵⁷ The latter, in fact, took Fehr & DuBois to court because the exploitation of the Salt Pan did not fulfil the contractual conditions for the

territorial concession: however, Fehr & DuBois won the case because, according to the contract, there were no clauses in the event of non-commitment.⁵⁸

Gold mines: A major transnational business that made Fehr & DuBois into millionaires

Although Jean DuBois was mainly involved with the Salt Pan, he often stayed in Pietersburg, Pretoria, Johannesburg and other locations, where his brother Philippe and Carl Fehr had set up gold mining operations. This economic sector was at the heart of Fehr & DuBois's business. In this part, we will take a closer look at two issues that have been glossed over previously. The first is that of the family and transnational relationships in business management in the Transvaal. The second is that of the financial strategies put in place to compete in the gold market – with the drift of uncontrolled speculation.

In April 1892, Jean DuBois informed his family in Le Locle that he and his associates would research the possibilities of exploiting the alluvial gold of the Klein Letaba (a tributary of the Letaba River in Limpopo).⁵⁹ A month later, he asked his parents to 'find the necessary funds' to set up a 'Central Battery' in Klein Letaba, specifying that he had already contacted 'Uncle Jules [DuBois]'; he also urged his parents to 'keep this in the family'.⁶⁰ Other gold-related businesses were launched at the same time, and some confusion emerged. In July 1892, Jean DuBois had to make it clear to his father that business outside Klein Letaba – such as the gold mines in Johannesburg – was negotiated with 'the houses of Rothschild, Lippert, etc.' and that it did not concern the family in Le Locle, but he reassured him that the 'Central Battery' enterprise, 'although modest, seems destined for a superb future'.⁶¹ We do not know if by 'superb future' Jean was referring to the exploitation of gold, but the market value of the land soon paid off. In fact, in February 1893, Fehr & DuBois owned land in Klein Letaba for a total of '30,000 shares which are quoted today at £1.1' (SFr. 825,000).⁶² The values on the stock exchange, however, did not correspond to the real economy. As specified in a letter of August 1893, Klein Letaba's 'Central Battery' was not yet operational⁶³ – although already listed on the stock exchange and with share benefits. The last news we have about Klein Letaba dates back to January 1894, when Jean DuBois informed his father in Le Locle that bad weather in the Transvaal had slowed down the work even further.⁶⁴

Two months later, however, Jean wrote that 'the financial situation seems to be improving': 'We produced during the 28 days of February [1894], which is generally considered a bad month because of the rains and the rarity of Kaffirs, a quantity of gold representing a sum of about SFr. 13.5 millions' (£540,000).⁶⁵ It is unclear whether this sum, extremely higher than what was produced at the Salt Pan, referred to the gold mined by Klein Letaba. In fact, between late 1893 and early 1894, several new gold activities were started. Their analysis will show us how the family business network did not only originate from Le Locle, but also from Frankfurt in Germany – and how everything was closely connected and coordinated. Hugo Andraea, the maternal uncle of Philippe and Jean DuBois, arrived at this time in the Transvaal for a few weeks. 'He

has often been God in his dealings with some of the Rand's biggest houses', Jean wrote to his father, but then added: 'Regarding your speculations with Uncle Jean [Valentin Andreae], I would suggest you to be very careful', despite the advices of 'Uncle Hugo [Andreae].'⁶⁶ The Andreaes were a powerful banking family in Frankfurt and were linked by marriage strategies with the DuBoises of Le Locle, who had a watchmaking branch – and part of the family – in Frankfurt (Philippe and Jean DuBois's mother was herself an Andreae).⁶⁷ Hugo Andreae, in particular, was the head of the multinational German Gold and Silver Refinery (Deutsche Gold-und Silber-Scheideanstalt, today Degussa) in Frankfurt, which controlled similar companies abroad.⁶⁸ It should be noted, by the way, that this multinational company was headed from 1905 by Georges DuBois, younger brother of Philippe and Jean.⁶⁹

In the Transvaal, this link between business and family was also realized in the gold market, with the participation of members from outside the family. Personalities such as Gustav Arthur Troye (the greatest cartographer of the South African Republic, published by Fehr & DuBois in 1892)⁷⁰ and Wilhelm Knappe (an important politician, ethnologist and collector of the German Empire, but also a director of the National Bank of the South African Republic in 1891–4 and associated with Fehr & DuBois)⁷¹ contributed to the strategies of the family business. But what did these strategies consist of? On the one hand, it was to set up mining companies in the Transvaal, equipped with their own infrastructure and vehicles, to extract minerals and raw materials on South African soil. On the other, holding companies had to be set up to bear the enormous costs and risks of the former. In both cases, these companies speculated on stock market transactions to create profit, even buying each other's shares. We present below a single example of these entanglements that clarifies, on the practical side, how the strategies were implemented. The details given are necessary to understand the connections and figures at play, resituating the previously mentioned actors in the puzzle.

In 1893, Carl Fehr and Philippe DuBois co-founded Molyneux Mines Limited with a share capital of £10,000, which was increased to £50,000 in July 1894. In May 1895, the company was restructured and renamed Molyneux Mines Consolidated, with a share capital of £250,000 (SFr. 6.25 million). It mined gold in Botha's Kraal in the district of Heidelberg (south of Johannesburg) and had its commercial agencies in London and Berlin⁷² – but also in Paris, via the Geneva banker Alphonse Oltramare, whom Jean DuBois had met in 1891 in the geographical society of this city, and from whom he had received addresses of 'influential people'.⁷³ During the period of the Molyneux Mines' expansion, which was in July 1894, Carl Fehr and Philippe DuBois, together with Wilhelm Knappe, co-founded the Gravelotte Gold Mining Company with share capital of £125,000 (SFr. 3.125 million) to mine the Murchison Range in the Soutpansberg district (east of Pietersburg), maintaining the same commercial set-up as in Europe.⁷⁴ Jean DuBois became general manager of the Gravelotte Gold Mining Company one month after its foundation.⁷⁵

From July 1895, these two companies – Molyneux and Gravelotte – were largely supported by the newly founded African Metals Company, which bought their shares. The African Metals Company was a holding company with share capital of £400,000 (SFr. 10 million), chaired by Hugo Andreae, and of which Jean DuBois was himself

a shareholder.⁷⁶ It was in partnership with Troye's Exploration Company, another £400,000 holding company, which was co-founded and chaired by the cartographer of the same name, whom Fehr & DuBois had made famous in 1892.⁷⁷ Each organization had its own interests and independence, but the mutual financial participations created a certain interdependence, which allowed for the creation of 'virtual' market values without a 'real' production value behind it. It was a kind of closed-door circuit that allowed benefits to be created or crises to be cushioned, depending on the circumstances.

In November 1894, Jean DuBois explained very simply, with a brief example, how this speculative strategy – which was commonly used – worked: 'About the New Company founded by Philippe' (of which we don't know the name) 'we have made approximately £2,500–3,000 [equivalent to SFr. 625,000–750,000] net profit in shares since the foundation, that is to say for only two months. I am entitled to say that these profits are due to the information I have gathered from all sides on the state of the mines, their resources and the "schemes" which the directors are planning in order to raise or lower the shares.'⁷⁸

In any case, the highly speculative mechanism within which Jean DuBois and his companions or family members had inserted themselves did not allow these activities to survive for long. The case of Molyneux Mines Consolidated – the only one we have been able to document – is representative. It was liquidated in 1898, despite promising prospects. Why? A report by the judicial liquidator explained that while more than half of the capital was invested in the purchase of the land, the rest and much more was placed on the financial market, keeping the company's resources afloat or increasing them; the problem was that 'the directors spent these sums before they had reached the period of production.'⁷⁹ The income, as long as the wind was blowing in their favour, was therefore linked to speculation – and not to production.

Speculation and speculative fever: A multitude of other projects reflecting an alleged omnipotence of race and class

We were surprised by the number of parallel projects in which the DuBois brothers and their associates and relatives launched themselves, playing more and more with the fire of speculation and setting themselves no limits. A few examples will make it clear that gold was ultimately only one activity among many, even if the main one, and that the initial links with watchmaking were slowly diluted in favour of capitalist predation in the colonial world.

In a letter of November 1894, for example, Jean DuBois wrote that one of his current concerns was to 'obtain that the State create a cyanide monopoly and only grant us the right to establish a factory.'⁸⁰ Jean's feelings about this massive project were positive, because the lobbying by Fehr & DuBois on the Boer government looked to have paid off – although things turned out differently.⁸¹ The ultimate beneficiary of this 'state monopoly that is nothing more than a concession under another name' would be the

German Gold and Silver Refinery (Degussa) of Hugo Andreae in Frankfurt, for which Fehr & DuBois acted as intermediaries.⁸² This Frankfurt-based multinational was also present in an advertising prospectus that circulated in Europe in August 1893, signed by Fehr & DuBois, for the foundation of a forestry company in the Transvaal.⁸³ Similar to the case of the Swiss Mortgage Investment Syndicate mentioned at the beginning of the essay, this prospectus presented a very lucrative project for the realization of which it was necessary to raise substantial funds from European investors. Also, like in the case of the Syndicate, everything seems to indicate that the ultimate aim was solely to increase the capital available to Fehr & DuBois, without, however, embarking on any forestry business. In fact, in October 1893, Jean DuBois advised his father against taking an interest in 'the tree business', so as not to fall victim to 'one of the most risky speculations that can be made'.⁸⁴

The idea that there were no limits in colonial lands is confirmed by numerous other projects, even minor ones, such as the establishment of a brewery in January 1894 – 'My God! In this country you learn to make everything, including beer!'⁸⁵ – of which, moreover, the employees denounced the non-payment of wages by Fehr & DuBois.⁸⁶ In October 1894, Jean DuBois also spoke about other minor projects that he conducted with a confident and amused manner. Although he knew that his brother did not want it, he bought 'a house for Philippe' near Saxonwold – where the well-known gold and dynamite businessman Eduard Lippert,⁸⁷ already in dealings with Fehr & DuBois in 1892,⁸⁸ lived – simply because 'in a year or two the price of this house and the land around it will have doubled', and at worst 'I will easily rent it at £25 a month, which would represent 12.5 per cent interest on the capital'.⁸⁹ In the same paper, Jean DuBois again stated that 'business on the stock exchange has been very good recently' and that he had 'taken advantage of it to manipulate a few shares and reaped a very good benefit', citing £107 (SFr. 2.675) in one transaction.⁹⁰ He concluded his letter of October 1894 in a surprising way: 'I am usually very opposed to speculation in shares, but under such conditions it would be an act of folly to stick to one's principles.'⁹¹ If we must believe this last assertion, it could represent Jean DuBois's turning point (and point of no return) in his speculative fever.

An attitude of this kind, so reckless and self-confident, with a sense of omnipotence in business, would probably never have developed outside the colonial context. This was due not only to the conditions of extreme economic exploitation in the colonies, but also to a worldview – based on race and class – that confirmed on an ideological level the existing domination on a material level.⁹² Jean DuBois's correspondence shows us without filters his racist view, in which non-European races were not only inferior to 'white dignity', but also had a clear hierarchy within them.⁹³ The Boers, 'so narrow-minded', were not exempted from accusations of inferiority: they were also seen as the source of the birth of mixed-race people.⁹⁴ And on mixed-race people, Jean said, 'I almost hate them. There is something false, unnatural about their whole being.'⁹⁵ From a social class point of view, Jean DuBois always emphasized his privileged and innate position, mentioning, for example, the high cost of his travels and the fact that he travelled first class or like a prince.⁹⁶ On the other hand, his attitudes towards those whom he regarded as socially inferior – the sailors and waiters on the ships, the Boers working at Salt Pan, but also the missionaries in Valdezia – were always manifested

through fierce humour.⁹⁷ And again without filters, he wrote in April 1892 that he, his brother Philippe and Carl Fehr always went to eat in the Grand International Hotel in Pretoria without paying: 'We do what we want with the owner, who owes a lot of money to Fehr & DuBois.'⁹⁸ This racist and classist posture constituted the ideological substratum through which Jean DuBois and his comrades conducted their speculative business, probably believing themselves – wrongly – masters of their own destinies.

We don't know 'the rest' of the story, since, in contrast to the period 1891–4, Cora DuBois's archives in the United States don't contain her father Jean's correspondence for the period 1895–9. We only know 'the end' of the story, which was mentioned at the beginning of this essay: in 1899, there was the bankruptcy, the admission of fraud, the arrest warrant and Jean DuBois's escape to the United States. And what about Carl Fehr and Philippe DuBois? Carl Fehr, Swiss consul of the Transvaal from 1894 until the financial crash, mysteriously disappeared: a fact also confirmed by the Swiss federal authorities in their archives.⁹⁹ Concerning Philippe DuBois, the Swiss press reported at the time that he was in fact arrested in Pretoria by the Boer authorities, but then inexplicably released.¹⁰⁰ Cora DuBois's biographer claimed – unfortunately without revealing her sources – that following his life in the Transvaal, Philippe settled permanently in London.¹⁰¹

Conclusions

This essay has detailed a story of entanglements between countries, families, people and organizations. The DuBoises of Switzerland were linked to the Andreaes of Germany, their relatives and partners, and together they developed a colonial business in the Transvaal. With them were also people outside the family, such as the engineer Carl Fehr and the missionary Honoré Schlaefli, who played managerial roles in the land exploitation activities. But there were also other external actors who, in a more pointed way, gave important support, for example the Swiss banker Alphonse Oltramare in Paris and the English politician Cecil Rhodes at the Cape. It was a network of collaborations that transcended language barriers or national affiliations, although the DuBois' first moves in Africa were born from the latter. In this process, different spheres of activity were involved, from finance to mission, embracing a dimension of European unity in the transimperial spaces – even if not without conflicting interests. All these interconnections make it possible to emphasize the important, or even determinant, role of transnational collectivities in the trajectory of the individuals – an aspect often relegated to the background in sources or studies, the focus being placed on the actions of the protagonists that alone determined their success or failure.

A second aspect that this essay has emphasized is that these transnational networks of collaboration did not emerge within the European bourgeoisie by pure chance; they were canalized by institutions such as the geographical societies in Europe. These institutions were often indispensable for creating links between economic actors of colonization, especially if these actors came from countries without colonies, such as Switzerland. The study of these societies as meeting places of powerful people could therefore be fruitfully applied to the peripheral realities of Europe, given that, until

now, only the geographical societies of the great powers have been analysed with wide-ranging attention. This would make it possible to better appreciate the extroversion of colonial history. In fact, as we have seen, the gold or diamond discoveries in the Transvaal and the wars that followed did not only concern the Boers and the British or other colonial actors. There were also European peripheries providing men, capital, ideas and competition. Participation in these 'distant' events was in response to 'nearby' challenges and opportunities: in this sense, our study also invites us to re-evaluate the history of watchmaking in relation to colonial history, and more specifically the colonization of Africa.

A third aspect to be taken note of is the decentralization of the analytical perspective. In our case, the collaborations of Fehr & DuBois revealed by the sources were not only with people of European origin. The case of the recruitment of local labour for the Salt Pan in the Soutpansberg Mountains showed us an active participation by native communities or their chiefs, who exercised a certain territorial power that was defended by negotiation or arms in different areas of the country. Reconsidering the active role of colonized people (often forgotten in the dichotomy of colonial narratives, even though they were at the heart of events) is an important step through which to improve the global understanding of colonial dynamics. In the same way, it is important to reconsider other types of actors that perhaps, at first sight, we would not associate with colonization today. In this sense, the global micro-history of the DuBois family sheds new light on geographical areas (the Jura Mountains of Neuchâtel) and economic and social actors (the watchmaking families), whose role in colonialism has until now been studied too little.

Notes

My investigation is largely based on unpublished archival material kept in several countries between Europe and America. The archives consulted were: Archives Cantonales Vaudoises, Switzerland (Lausanne); Archives Nationales du Monde du Travail, France (Roubaix); Archives of Harvard University's Tozzer Library, United States (Cambridge); Archives of the St Gallen Historisches und Völkerkundemuseum, Switzerland (St Gallen); Maison DuBois Archives, Switzerland (Le Locle); Swiss Federal Archives, Switzerland (Berne); Swiss National Library Archives, Switzerland (Berne). In addition, primary sources published in the following journals and newspapers were used: *Bundesgerichtsentscheide*; *Der Bund*; *Feuille d'Avis de Neuchâtel*; *La Liberté*; *La Sentinelle*; *La Suisse Libérale*; *L'Impartial*; *Schweizerische Handelsamtsblatt*; *African Review*; *The Economist*.

1. Philippe Blanchard, *L'établissement. Etude historique d'un système de production horloger en Suisse (1750–1950)* (Chézard-Saint-Martin: Chatière, 2011), 144–55; Alfred Chapis, *DuBois 1785. Histoire de la plus ancienne fabrique suisse d'horlogerie* (Landau in der Pfalz: Kaussler, 1957); Pierre-Yves Donzé, 'Les industriels horlogers du Locle (1850–1920), un cas représentatif de la diversité du patronat de l'Arc jurassien', in *Les systèmes productifs dans l'Arc jurassien. Acteurs, pratiques et territoires (XIX^e-XX^e siècles)*, ed. Jean-Claude Daumas (Besançon: Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2004), 69–71.

2. Susan C. Seymour, *Cora Du Bois. Anthropologist, Diplomat, Agent* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015).
3. *Ibid.*, 7.
4. Swiss Federal Archives (SFA): telegram (copy) from the Swiss government in Berne to the Boer government in Pretoria dated 5 August 1899, requesting arrest and confiscation of property of Jean DuBois, Philippe DuBois and Carl Fehr, E2001#1000/45#1368.
5. Seymour, *Cora Du Bois*, 11–13.
6. Patricia Purtschert and Harald Fischer-Tiné, eds, *Colonial Switzerland: Rethinking Colonialism from the Margins* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Patricia Purtschert, Barbara Lüthi and Francesca Falk, eds, *Postkoloniale Schweiz. Formen und Folgen eines Kolonialismus ohne Kolonien* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2012); Fabio Rossinelli, *Géographie et impérialisme. De la Suisse au Congo entre exploration géographique et conquête coloniale* (Neuchâtel: Alphil, 2022); Béatrice Veyrassat, *Histoire de la Suisse et des Suisses dans la marche du monde. XVII^e siècle: Première Guerre mondiale* (Neuchâtel: Alphil, 2018); Andreas Zangger, *Koloniale Schweiz. Ein Stück Globalgeschichte zwischen Europa und Südostasien (1860–1930)* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2011).
7. Anthony Turner, James Nye and Jonathan Betts, eds, *A General History of Horology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), chapter 13 in particular.
8. Pierre-Yves Donzé, *Des nations, des firmes et des montres. Histoire globale de l'industrie horlogère de 1850 à nos jours* (Neuchâtel: Alphil, 2020), 17–35; Pierre-Yves Donzé, *Histoire de l'industrie horlogère suisse. De Jacques David à Nicolas Hayek (1850–2000)* (Neuchâtel: Alphil, 2009), 13–38.
9. Béatrice Veyrassat, *Réseaux d'affaires internationaux, émigrations et exportations en Amérique latine au XIX^e siècle. Le commerce suisse aux Amériques* (Genève: Droz, 1993).
10. Hugues Scheurer, 'Tissus relationnels et stratégies entrepreneuriales. Le commerce colonial a-t-il été un apport important pour les industries neuchâteloises de la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle et du début du XIX^e?' *Traverse* 5, no. 2 (1998): 35. 'Produits coloniaux qu'entre 1765 et 1769 et de manière fort réduite.'
11. John-Paul Ghibrial, ed., *Global History and Microhistory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).
12. Archives of Harvard University's Tozzer Library (AHUTL), Cora Alice DuBois Fund: Letters from Jean DuBois to his parents between November 1891 and December 1894, ETHG.D852c, Box 1, Folders 1–6. From here on, I will only give the archival signature and date(s) of the letter(s) in the references. Many thanks to Linda Karlsson Carter for her assistance in scanning Jean DuBois's letters during the Covid pandemic.
13. Rossinelli, *Géographie et impérialisme*, 75–103.
14. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1–56 in particular.
15. Christof Dejung, David Motadel and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds, *The Global Bourgeoisie: The Rise of the Middle Classes in the Age of Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 1–39 in particular.
16. Scheurer, 'Tissus relationnels', 33–8; Veyrassat, *Réseaux d'affaires*, 64–5 and 444.
17. Pierre-Yves Donzé, 'Le Japon et l'industrie horlogère suisse. Un cas de transfert de technologie durant les années 1880–1940', *Histoire, Economie & Société* 25, no. 4

- (2006): 107–11; Béatrice Veyrassat, 'Présence du Jura horloger au Brésil pendant la première moitié du 19^e siècle', *Musée Neuchâtelois* 23 (1986): 92–5.
18. Rossinelli, *Géographie et impérialisme*, 211–19.
 19. *Ibid.*, 151–6.
 20. Johann Boillat, 'L'or des horlogers. L'industrie neuchâteloise des métaux précieux (1846–1998)', *Revue Historique Neuchâteloise* 153 (2016): 28.
 21. Nadège Sougy, 'Liberté, légalité, qualité: le luxe des produits d'or et d'argent à Genève au XIX^e siècle', *Entreprises et Histoire* 46 (2007): 71–84.
 22. On Walter & DuBois's gold activities, see *Schweizerische Handelsamtsblatt* 5, no. 2 (1887): 14. They owned shares in the Swiss African Company worth CHF 2,000 in 1887 – see Archives of the St Gallen Historisches und Völkerkundemuseum (ASGHV), Ostschweizerische geographisch-commercielle Fund (OGCG Fund): List of shareholders drawn up on 16 January 1887 by Bernhard Scherrer-Engler (president of the St Gallen Geographical Society), *Kopierbuch* 1885–7, 214.
 23. ASGHV, OGCG Fund: Walter & DuBois to the St Gallen Geographical Society of 3 March 1887, *Korrespondenz von 1887*, 114.
 24. ASGHV, OGCG Fund: Bernhard Scherrer-Engler (president of the St Gallen Geographical Society) to Walter & DuBois without date, *Kopierbuch* 1885–7, 301.
 25. ASGHV, OGCG Fund: see the letters sent by Carl Fehr, Franz Sitterding and Jakob Korrodi to the St Gallen Geographical Society between 1886 and 1889 ('Korrespondenzen' boxes), as well as the file 'Fehr & Sitterding' ('Berichte und Manuskripte' box).
 26. SFA: see the file 'Pretoria (Transvaal) – Errichtung eines Konsulates 1886/1899', E2#1000/44#1438.
 27. William Wavre and Philippe Wavre, *Notice généalogique de la famille Du Boz dit Du Bois* (Neuchâtel: Attinger, 1910), 84: see item no. 326 and references.
 28. See, e.g., 'Coup d'œil sur le Transvaal', *La Suisse Libérale*, 9 November 1890; 'Une entreprise prospère', *Feuille d'Avis de Neuchâtel*, 8 June 1894, 4; 'La République Sud-Africaine', *L'Impartial*, 18 August 1894, 1.
 29. 'Arrêt du 3 novembre 1900 dans la cause Lorimier contre Mayor'. *Bundesgerichtsentscheide* 26, no. 2 (1900): 724. This document (719–38) summarizes the ruling of the Federal Supreme Court of Switzerland in one of the cases centred on Fehr & DuBois and the Swiss Mortgage Investment Syndicate, with some interesting details.
 30. Wavre and Wavre, *Notice généalogique*, 81: see items nos. 295, 297 and references.
 31. See, e.g., 'Débâcle financière', *La Sentinelle*, 8 August 1899, 1–2; 'Consul prévaricateur', *La Liberté*, 9 August 1899, 2; 'Neuenburg', *Der Bund*, 16–17 August 1899, 2.
 32. SFA: letter (copy) from Fehr & DuBois to Berthoud & Cie, dated 8 July 1899, sent by Jules Calame-Colin, Member of the National Parliament, to the President of the Swiss Confederation, Eduard Müller, on 6 August 1899, 2001#1000/45#1368. 'Tous les fonds appartenant à la Caisse hypothécaire ont été détournés par nous et employés pour notre propre usage; nous avons de notre côté perdu ou vendu tout ce que nous possédions; nous sommes absolument sans ressources.'
 33. *Ibid.* 'Les affaires dans lesquelles nous nous sommes intéressés ont mal tourné l'une après l'autre et petit à petit nous les avons perdues.'
 34. Maison DuBois Archives, Accounting Fund: in the book of 'Current Accounts 1886–1904' ('Comptes courants 1886–1904'), there is a 'deposit payment DuBois & L'Hardy for Pretoria' ('versement à dép[ôt] DuBois & L'Hardy p[ou]r Pretoria') of SFr. 1,266,

- dated 14 August 1886 and made by Philippe DuBois in Le Locle, probably some time before he left Switzerland for the Transvaal, page 30, no signatures.
35. AHUTL: 20 November 1891, ETHG.D852c.
 36. AHUTL: 20, 23 and 28 November 1891, ETHG.D852c.
 37. AHUTL: 17 December 1891, ETHG.D852c.
 38. Rossinelli, *Géographie et impérialisme*, 31–43.
 39. AHUTL: 20 and 25 December 1891, 13 January 1892, ETHG.D852c.
 40. AHUTL: 9 April 1892, ETHG.D852c. 'Philippe est très estimé à Pretoria et sa maison a un très bon renom; on la croit même plus solide qu'elle ne l'est en réalité. Les Fehr & DuBois sont engagés dans une masse d'affaires – mines d'or, mines de fer, sel, etc.'
 41. Patrick Harries, *Butterflies & Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries & Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa* (Oxford: Currey, 2007), 22.
 42. Rossinelli, *Géographie et impérialisme*, 335–6.
 43. AHUTL: 23 April 1892, ETHG.D852c. 'Envoyé par la Mission romande pour convertir les nègres païens et par Fehr & DuBois pour les conserver dans cet état en les salant.'
 44. AHUTL: 14 October 1893, ETHG.D852c. 'Cela lui a rapporté 500 frs. pour 10 jours de facile travail.'
 45. Estimate calculated on a minimum of three hundred working days per year and based on data reported by Stéphanie Lachat, *Les pionnières du temps. Vies professionnelles et familiales des ouvrières de l'industrie horlogère suisse (1870–1970)* (Neuchâtel: Alphil, 2014), 164–5.
 46. AHUTL: 5 December 1892, ETHG.D852c.
 47. Archives Cantonales Vaudoises: Fehr & DuBois (the handwriting is by Jean DuBois) to Paul Leresche, secretary of the Mission in Lausanne, 13 May 1893, PP 1002 B 08.51–08.07.
 48. AHUTL: 13 June 1893, ETHG.D852c. '150 personnes [boères] pour travailler, chacun avec un minimum de 4–5 Cafres, ce qui donne une population d'environ 700 âmes.'
 49. AHUTL: 26 October 1892, ETHG.D852c.
 50. On this war and its repercussions in the future historical developments of the Transvaal, see Tlou John Makhura, 'Another Road to the Raid: The Neglected Role of the Boer-Bagananwa War as a Factor in the Coming of the Jameson Raid, 1894–1895', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 21, no. 2 (1995): 257–67.
 51. AHUTL: 26 May 1894, ETHG.D852c.
 52. AHUTL: 8 July 1894, ETHG.D852c.
 53. AHUTL: 20 June 1894, ETHG.D852c.
 54. Ibid. 'Faire quelques affaires.'
 55. AHUTL: 17 August 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'Avoir le plaisir d'abattre une de ces vermines noires.'
 56. AHUTL: 21 January and 9 December 1893, ETHG.D852c.
 57. AHUTL: 3 December 1894, ETHG.D852c.
 58. AHUTL: 11 February 1893, ETHG.D852c.
 59. AHUTL: 23 April 1892, ETHG.D852c.
 60. AHUTL: 11 May 1892, ETHG.D852c. 'Trouver les fonds nécessaires'; 'Central Battery'; 'oncle Jules'; 'conserver cela dans la famille.'
 61. AHUTL: 31 July 1892, ETHG.D852c. 'Les maisons Rothschild, Lippert, etc.'; 'bien que modeste, n'en paraît pas moins destinée à un superbe avenir.'
 62. AHUTL: 11 February 1893, ETHG.D852c. '30,000 actions qui sont cotées aujourd'hui à £1,1'.

63. AHUTL: 9 August 1893, ETHG.D852c.
64. AHUTL: 27 January 1894, ETHG.D852c.
65. AHUTL: 17 March 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'La situation financière paraît s'améliorer'; 'nous avons produit pendant les 28 jours du mois de février, qui en général est considéré comme un mauvais mois à cause des pluies et de la rareté des Kaffirs, une quantité d'or représentant une somme d'environ frs. 13,500,000'.
66. AHUTL: 24 February 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'Il a été souvent Dieu dans ses transactions avec quelques-unes des plus grandes maisons du Rand'; 'quant à tes spéculations avec oncle Jean, je me permets de te conseiller d'être très prudent'; 'oncle Hugo'.
67. Alexander Dietz, *Geschichte der Familie Andreae. Frankfurter Zweig* (Frankfurt: Osterrieth, 1923), 135–43.
68. Javier Loscertales, *Deutsche Investitionen in Spanien 1870–1920* (Stuttgart: Steinen, 2002), 101.
69. Seymour, *Cora Du Bois*, 10–11.
70. Cornelius Plug, 'Troye, Mr Gustav Arthur', *Biographical Database of Southern African Science*, 1 March 2021, www.s2a3.org.za/bio. To see Troye's map of the Transvaal in high definition (Fehr & DuBois, 1892), <https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-32489>.
71. On this actor, see Steffen Rassloff, *Wilhelm Knappe (1855–1910). Staatsmann und Völkerkundler im Blickpunkt deutscher Weltpolitik* (Jena: Glauk, 2005). On his collaboration with Fehr & DuBois, see AHUTL: 14 April 1894, ETHG.D852c.
72. Charles Sydney Goldmann, *South African Mines: Their Position, Results & Developments: Together with an Account of Diamond, Land, Finance, and Kindred Concerns*, vol. 1 (London: Wilson, 1895–6), 236–7. See also 'The Molyneux Line on Reef: A Talk with Mr. Carl Fehr', *African Review* 7 (20 June 1896): 1238; 'Molyneux Mines Consolidates', *African Review* 8 (11 July 1896): 106.
73. Archives Nationales du Monde du Travail (ANMT): see the four-page prospectus entitled 'Molyneux Mines Consolidated: Compagnie Aurifère', signed by Alphonse Oltramare and dated February 1896, 65 AQ L1622. See also AHUTL: 20 November 1891, ETHG.D852c. 'Personnes influentes'.
74. Goldmann, *South African Mines*, vol. 2, 25–7.
75. AHUTL: 17 August 1894, ETHG.D852c.
76. Goldman, *South African Mines*, vol. 2, 135; 'African Metals Company, Limited', *The Economist*, 5 December 1896, 1615.
77. Goldman, *South African Mines*, vol. 2, 157; 'Rand Southern', *African Review* 8 (11 July 1896), 106.
78. AHUTL: 17 November 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'A propos de la Nouvelle Société fondée par Philippe, nous avons fait environ £2,500 –3 000 de profit net en actions depuis la fondation, soit depuis deux mois à peine. J'ai le droit de dire que ces profits sont dus aux informations que j'ai recueillies de toutes parts sur l'état des mines, leurs ressources et les "schemes" que les directeurs projettent afin de faire monter ou descendre les actions.'
79. ANMT: press clipping from *Le Comptant*, 20 December 1898 (handwritten date), 65 AQ L1622. 'Les administrateurs ont dépensé ces sommes avant d'avoir atteint la période de production'.
80. AHUTL: 17 November 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'Obtenir que l'Etat fasse un monopole du cyanure et qu'il nous donne le seul droit d'établir une fabrique'.
81. James Gray and J. A. McLachlan, 'A History of the Introduction of the MacArthur-Forrest Cyanide Process to the Witwatersrand Goldfields', *Journal of the Chemical, Metallurgical and Mining Society of South Africa* 33 (1933): 385–8.

82. AHUTL: 17 November 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'Monopole d'Etat qui n'est qu'une concession sous un autre nom.'
83. Swiss National Library Archives: Flyer entitled 'Prospekt zur Gründung einer Gesellschaft für Forstanlagen im Transvaal', made in Frankfurt in August 1893 and signed 'Fehr & DuBois [from] Pretoria', V AUS 1503.
84. AHUTL: 14 October 1893, ETHG.D852c. 'L'affaire des arbres'; 'une des plus risquées spéculations que l'on puisse faire.'
85. AHUTL: 27 January 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'Mon Dieu! Dans ce pays on apprend à tout faire, même la bière!'
86. 'Le krach de Prétoria', *Feuille d'Avis de Neuchâtel*, 3 October 1899, 4.
87. On Eduard Lippert's family and business in Southern Africa in the nineteenth century, see Henning Albrecht, *Diamanten, Dynamit und Diplomatie: die Lipperts. Hamburger Kaufleute in imperialer Zeit* (Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2018), 30–50.
88. AHUTL: 31 July 1892, ETHG.D852c.
89. AHUTL: undated, but clearly datable to October 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'Une maison pour Philippe'; 'dans un an ou deux, cette maison et le terrain qui l'entoure auront doublé de prix'; 'je louerai facilement la maison à £25 par mois, ce qui représenterait un intérêt de 12,5% sur le capital.'
90. Ibid. 'Les affaires en bourse sont très bien allées ces derniers temps'; 'j'en ai profité pour manipuler quelques "shares" et en ai retiré un très bon bénéfice.'
91. Ibid. 'Je suis ordinairement très opposé à la spéculation en actions, mais dans de pareilles occasions ce serait acte de folie de monter à cheval sur ses principes.'
92. Francesco Surdich, 'Dal nostro agli altri mondi: immagini e stereotipi dell'alterità', *Archivio Storico Italiano* 151, no. 4 (1993): 912–15.
93. AHUTL: 6 January 1892, 3 February 1892 and 20 June 1894, ETHG.D852c. 'Dignité blanche' (20 June 1894).
94. AHUTL: 17 July 1892 and 4 November 1893, ETHG.D852c. 'Si bornés' (4 November 1893).
95. AHUTL: 17 December 1891, ETHG.D852c. 'Je les hais presque. Ils ont quelque chose de faux, de contre-nature dans tout leur être.'
96. AHUTL: 29 November 1891, 23 April 1892 and 27 January 1894, ETHG.D852c.
97. AHUTL: 1 and 20 December 1891, 17 July 1892 and 5 December 1892, ETHG.D852c.
98. AHUTL: 9 April 1892, ETHG.D852c. 'Nous faisons ce que nous voulons du propriétaire qui doit passablement d'argent à MM. Fehr & DuBois.'
99. SFA: Swiss Federal Councillor Eduard Müller, Head of the Military Department, to the Political Department for information on Carl Fehr, 20 November 1900, and reply confirming Carl Fehr's disappearance, 22 November 1900, E2001#1000/45#1368.
100. 'Débâcle financière', *Feuille d'Avis de Neuchâtel*, 15 August 1899, 4; 'Débâcle financière', *Feuille d'Avis de Neuchâtel*, 24 August 1899, 4.
101. Seymour, *Cora Du Bois*, 7.

Select bibliography

- Boillat, Johann. 'L'or des horlogers. L'industrie neuchâteloise des métaux précieux (1846–1998): acteurs et réseaux'. *Revue Historique Neuchâteloise* 153 (2016): 23–45.

- Chapuis, Alfred. *DuBois 1785. Histoire de la plus ancienne fabrique suisse d'horlogerie*. Landau in der Pfalz: Kaussler, 1957.
- Cooper, Frederick, and Ann Laura Stoler, eds. *Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- Dejung, Christof, David Motadel and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds. *The Global Bourgeoisie: The Rise of the Middle Classes in the Age of Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.
- Dietz, Alexander. *Geschichte der Familie Andreae. Frankfurter Zweig*. Frankfurt: Osterrieth, 1923.
- Donzé, Pierre-Yves. *Histoire de l'industrie horlogère suisse. De Jacques David à Nicolas Hayek (1850–2000)*. Neuchâtel: Alphil, 2009.
- Ghobrial, John-Paul, ed. *Global History and Microhistory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Goldmann, Charles Sydney. *South African Mines: Their Position, Results & Developments: Together with an Account of Diamond, Land, Finance, and Kindred Concerns*. 3 vols. London: Wilson, 1895–6.
- Harries, Patrick. *Butterflies & Barbarians. Swiss Missionaries & Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa*. Oxford: Currey, 2007.
- Purtschert, Patricia, and Harald Fischer-Tiné, eds. *Colonial Switzerland. Rethinking Colonialism from the Margins*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- Rossinelli, Fabio. *Géographie et impérialisme. De la Suisse au Congo entre exploration géographique et conquête coloniale*. Neuchâtel: Alphil, 2022.
- Scheurer, Hugues. 'Tissus relationnels et stratégies entrepreneuriales. Le commerce colonial a-t-il été un apport important pour les industries neuchâteloises de la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle et du début du XIX^e?' *Traverse* 5, no. 2 (1998): 29–40.
- Seymour, Susan C. *Cora Du Bois. Anthropologist, Diplomat, Agent*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015.
- Sougy, Nadège. 'Liberté, légalité, qualité: le luxe des produits d'or et d'argent à Genève au XIX^e siècle.' *Entreprises et Histoire* 46 (2007): 71–84.
- Surdich, Francesco. 'Dal nostro agli altri mondi: immagini e stereotipi dell'alterità.' *Archivio Storico Italiano* 151, no. 4 (1993): 911–86.
- Turner, Anthony, James Nye and Jonathan Betts, eds. *A General History of Horology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022.
- Veyrassat, Béatrice. *Réseaux d'affaires internationaux, émigrations et exportations en Amérique latine au XIX^e siècle. Le commerce suisse aux Amériques*. Genève: Droz, 1993.
- Wavre, William, and Philippe Wavre. *Notice généalogique de la famille Du Boz dit Du Bois*. Neuchâtel: Attinger, 1910.
- Zangger, Andreas. *Koloniale Schweiz. Ein Stück Globalgeschichte zwischen Europa und Südostasien (1860–1930)*. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2011.

Integration and Collaborative Imperialism in Modern Europe

At the Margins of Empire, 1800–1950

Edited by
Bernhard C. Schär and Mikko Toivanen

BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC
LONDON • NEW YORK • OXFORD • NEW DELHI • SYDNEY

BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC
Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
50 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3DP, UK
1385 Broadway, New York, NY 10018, USA
29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland

BLOOMSBURY, BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC and the Diana logo are trademarks of
Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

First published in Great Britain 2025

Copyright © Bernhard C. Schär, Mikko Toivanen and contributors, 2025

Bernhard C. Schär and Mikko Toivanen have asserted their right under the Copyright,
Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as Editors of this work.

Cover image: Façade of Hotel de l'Europe in Koetaradja, Banda Aceh,
Indonesia, 1897. Leiden University Libraries Digital Collections.

This work is published open access subject to a Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International licence (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0,
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>). You may re-use, distribute, and
reproduce this work in any medium for non-commercial purposes, provided you give
attribution to the copyright holder and the publisher and provide a link to the Creative
Commons licence.

Bloomsbury Publishing Plc does not have any control over, or responsibility for, any
third-party websites referred to or in this book. All internet addresses given in this
book were correct at the time of going to press. The author and publisher regret any
inconvenience caused if addresses have changed or sites have ceased to exist, but can
accept no responsibility for any such changes.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN: HB: 978-1-3503-7733-2
ePDF: 978-1-3503-7736-3
eBook: 978-1-3503-7735-6

Typeset by Newgen KnowledgeWorks Pvt. Ltd., Chennai, India

To find out more about our authors and books visit www.bloomsbury.com
and sign up for our newsletters.

Contents

List of illustrations	vii
List of contributors	viii
1 Expansion alongside integration: A new history of imperial Europe <i>Bernhard C. Schär and Mikko Toivanen</i>	1
Part 1 European entanglements in overseas colonial networks across imperial borders	15
2 Preacher, trader, soldier, spy: Studying transimperial individuals through their occupational roles <i>John L. Hennessey</i>	17
3 Small numbers – lasting impact: ‘Marginal’ Europeans in Brazil’s slave- based economy, 1808–88 <i>André Nicacio Lima</i>	37
4 A villa for the world: Prefabricated houses, national romanticism and Norwegian colonial entanglements <i>Tonje Haugland Sørensen</i>	59
5 Swiss colonial business in the Transvaal: The involvement of the DuBois family, watchmakers in Neuchâtel (late nineteenth century) <i>Fabio Rossinelli</i>	77
6 Imperial entanglements: Poles and Serbs in colonial East and Southeast Asia in the long nineteenth century <i>Tomasz Ewertowski</i>	95
Part 2 Constructing and negotiating European identities in a colonial world order	115
7 Three days from civilization: Transnational scientific imagination and nineteenth-century Iceland <i>Kristín Loftsdóttir</i>	117

8	Orientalist knowledge from the margins: The colonial entanglement of nineteenth-century Hungarian research on Inner Asia <i>Szabolcs László</i>	139
9	Collections of a rural empire: Museums, colonial ethnography and the European countryside <i>Corinne Geering</i>	163
10	Travelling the Arctic margins: Promoting and experiencing Petsamo as a colonial frontier <i>Janne Lahti</i>	181
11	Collective colonialism for European integration: The rise of Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-European movement in post-imperial Austria <i>Lucile Dreidemy and Eric Burton</i>	201
12	Afterword <i>Manuela Boatcă</i>	223
	Index	233