

**Fashion Economics: FM 4339**  
**Quiz #1: The Introduction**  
**Dr. Adomaitis**

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**Rosen, E. I. (2002). The Globalization of the U.S. Apparel Industry:  
Making Sweatshops. University of California Press.**

Please answer to the best of your knowledge the following essay question. Use detail where appropriate. Remember grammar, punctuation & spelling count.

- a. How has history played a part in the globalization of textiles? Why is World War II significant in the history of textiles? (5pts)

The introduction of newer trade policies allowed for textile industry business and retailers to expand both their imports and exports of apparel. Most of the textile and apparel industry business were in developing countries which also allowed for lower wages and bigger profits for some businesses. These new policies and agendas were set in place and supported by mostly the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, the mix of low wage apparel production and low wage exports allowed for the expansion into low wage countries that can increase imports into the United States (Rosen, 2002, pg8, pa1).

The way textiles have been globalized reflects how markets and clothing businesses have evolved over time. Globalization has made markets larger but has also made it tougher to take full advantage of cost-saving strategies. While there are both good and bad sides to this, the global spread of the clothing industry has helped the United States become a major global force. It's a complex process with many factors at play, including economic forces and cultural shifts. Ultimately, understanding this history helps us see how interconnected the world has become through the clothing trade. This also helped clothing become a bit more accessible and affordable as according to Rosen "The full-employment economy of the 1990s has been based on a strategy of low wages for American workers that makes lower cost apparel essential if the industry is to maintain and expand consumption. Yet the diminishing cost of clothing is providing little real economic help to American families, even those toward the bottom of the economic ladder "(Rosen, 2002, pg9, pa2).

World War II had a major impact on the textile industry because it sparked a surge in apparel production, thanks to new trading policies and tariffs. These changes boosted the popularity of the United States and fueled further growth in its market. Textiles also played crucial roles in shaping the social, economic, and religious aspects of many countries. After the war, there was a high demand for apparel and textile goods, leading to the creation of numerous jobs in these sectors. Trade changed after World War II as well as tariffs were reduced, new markets were opened and new investments were made introducing a free trade system and trades between regions that were not once possible (Rosen, 2002, pg13, pa 1)

b. Why was trade policy important to the United States and to Japan? (5pts)

Trade policy was a big deal for the United States and Japan because they wanted to prevent communism from spreading in Asia, especially in Japan. The policy aimed to make the United States' economy grow. It was also important for the U.S. to become allies with Japan after World War II in order to increase the trade of textiles and apparel which Japan was a top producer of. On Japan's side, forming an alliance with the U.S. was vital due to their limited agricultural resources, unlike the abundant farmland in the U.S. During this time the U.S. military actively participated in reconstructing Japan's textile industry occupying Japan from 1945 to 1951, in efforts to contain communism in East Asia following the war (Rosen, 2002, pg.10, pa.2).

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c. What is Rosen's definition of a sweatshop? Why were unions created? How did the incident at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City have an impact on unions? On women? (5pts)

Sweatshops are factories where clothing workers are paid poorly, work in environments that don't meet U.S. labor laws and meet no federal mandates, most times these workers were immigrant women who's only skill may have been sewing (Rosen, 2002, pg2 pa3). One infamous sweatshop was the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory which tragically burned down. In this fire one hundred forty-one workers died in a tragic fire. Most of them were women and girls who had come to America from other countries. They couldn't escape because there was only one fire escape, and the elevator didn't work. This terrible event was the first of many fires that made people realize how dangerous sweatshop jobs were for women. It showed that some employers didn't care about their workers' safety and allowed bad working conditions to continue. Tragedies like this one make people want laws to prevent them from happening again (Rosen, 2002, pg1 pa1).

The fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City did bring about some changes, but the big reforms happened later. It wasn't until the 1930s, during the New Deal, and after World War II, that the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) became really powerful. Many women who worked sewing clothes joined this union. They started getting better pay, vacations, and medical benefits. Plus, when work was slow, they could get unemployment money from the government (Rosen, 2002, pg1 pa2).

d. Name the Union established for Garment workers?

## International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU)

### e. How has the media played a part in unionization?

The media has contributed to unionization by shedding light on sweatshops across the nation that have violated labor laws and regulations, as reported in the news. These sweatshops often subject workers to appalling conditions, unfair wages, excessive hours, and minimal to no benefits. Without media coverage, the public would remain unaware of the harsh realities faced by these workers in their workplaces. (Rosen, 2002, pg4 pa3)