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"What's in a Name?" Toponyms and Loanwords in European Textile Cultures

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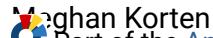*Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan*

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"What's in a Name?"[1] Toponyms and Loanwords in European Textile Cultures

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Keywords: textile terminology, toponyms, textile trade, cultural transfer

Introduction[3]

Textiles as man-made products have been exchanged over distances for millennia. They can and have been produced almost anywhere; they are also, as a product, highly differentiated and quickly adjustable to changing demands. This brings with it naming practices to communicate about the goods in question. Textiles are labeled so that people can form expectations about them and rely on the reputation tied to the product's identity. The terminology of textiles and textile items arises and develops in unison with technical innovations, discoveries, fashions, and trade patterns. Although the occurrence of toponyms *e.g.*, in preindustrial trade (10th to 18th century AD) is widely used to study the development of textile trade, there are no studies that look at textile labeling practices across time and space in Europe's history. This paper explores textile labels from Antiquity up until now, drawing on the expertise of an interdisciplinary group of scholars. Exploring labeling practices is worthwhile, as it allows us to better

understand textiles as a phenomenon that has, across time, always connected regions, markets, and, not least, people. The discussion of naming practices of textiles, and especially the use of geographical indications (toponyms), is by no means only relevant to the study of the past as EU regulations show, namely the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement of 2015, that defines appellation of origin as "any denomination protected in the Contracting Party of Origin consisting of or containing the name of a geographical area, or another denomination known as referring to such area, which serves to designate a good as originating in that geographical area, where the quality or characteristics of the good are due exclusively or essentially to the geographical environment, including natural and human factors, and which has given the good its reputation; as well as any indication protected in the Contracting Party of Origin consisting of or containing the name of a geographical area, or another indication known as referring to such area, which identifies a good as originating in that geographical area, where a given quality, reputation or

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[1] Shakespeare 1597/2004, 2.2.43.

other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin."[4]

Two major naming practices are found over time and space: Toponyms and loanwords. Toponyms, on the one hand, refer to the place of production, purchase, or trade; they connect textile items to places that guarantee a given quality. Toponyms stand for a wide range of characteristics: Measurements, density, design, raw material, general product type, and price — to name the most common ones. Some toponyms became widely known and inspired others to follow in their steps: *Leiden cloth*, *Arras*, *muslin* (Mosul), *damask*, and *denim* are famous examples that were imitated and became models. Loanwords, on the other hand, testify to fashion innovations that were widely adapted. In contrast to toponyms, they also include (or are even particularly used for) clothing. *Kimono* and *pajamas* are two well-known loanwords present in today's language. Loanwords refer to cultural transfer of textile traditions.

Both practices' function is to identify products and facilitate communication about fabrics as commodities. Naming and labeling practices, both in terms of language and by applying marks, are central to a functioning exchange of textiles over larger distances. Toponyms and loanwords have therefore a strong economic function and tie in an ongoing discussion about the commercialization of societies.

This paper broadly reflects on toponyms and loanwords in textile cultures throughout Europe's history, in line with EuroWeb's motto "Europe through textiles." The conference this paper results from highlighted that the labeling of raw materials and dyes deserves attention as well; it also shed light on the fact that toponyms not only carry meaning in exchange related to textile production, but that this production also impacted toponyms. This feedback between textile cultures and societies will therefore also be addressed here, and especially the degree to which we can speak of trademarks or even branding before the modern age.

1. What's in a name? Textile labels in Europe's past and present

It is the main objective of this article to go beyond the study of a given period or region and try to — for the first time — truly explore toponyms and loanwords

in European textile cultures as a universal phenomenon. The authors of this article bring their respective area of expertise to the table. In this section, we will sketch out the coverage of our case studies in terms of time and space.

This paper traces textile labeling practices back until Antiquity. Dimitra Andrianou studies labeling practices in ancient Greece. Here, the idea of branding, based on the geographical area where a particular good was produced, processed, and prepared (what we nowadays call Protected Designation of Origin), appears to have been a marketing tool. Fifth- to third-century BC written sources give us few, but valuable examples, that are worth exploring further. Elena Miramontes focuses on Latin vocabulary, which throughout the years had taken in different types of loanwords from diverse regions within the Roman Empire and beyond. Their study helps us understand the process of the Romanization of provinces and the slow barbarization of Roman elites during the decay of their traditions.

The medieval and early modern period was marked by discernible population growth, urbanization, and commercialization — accompanied by an expanding textile industry. Textile labels are increasingly widespread in the historical and archaeological material from the 12th century AD. This paper covers examples of the labeling practices from the Mediterranean region to central and northern Europe. Joana Sequeira deals with labeling practices of textiles that circulated in medieval Portugal, both of local and international production. Her research has allowed the identification of some toponymical-labeled textiles of Portuguese manufacture.[5] She also attempts to understand to what extent medieval people knew and valued toponym-branded textiles. Angela Huang contributes observations on northern European textile trade and more specifically the Hanse area, stretching from north-western European textile production centers to the eastern Baltic region.[6] The German Hanse, an association formed of merchant organizations and towns, which emerged in the 12th/13th century and faded in the 17th century, is an interesting case to discuss policymaking related to textile toponyms. Meghan Korten contributes insights on Iceland as a country at the periphery of Europe and its markets, where textile toponyms were little known. However, textiles and their manufacture have left their mark

[4] Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications, p. 9. Available online at: https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=3983, accessed 24 March 2023.

[5] Sequeira 2014; 2022.

[6] Huang 2013; 2015a; 2021.

on the landscape, especially wool, with raw materials and textile activities influencing place names. This influence can be seen throughout Iceland's history, from the Medieval sagas to modern online map databases.

The use of textile labels, at times, shows remarkable continuities, as two other cases included in this article show. Jasemin Nazim elaborates the history of the textile label *tzerga/cherga*, denoting specific types of blankets in the languages belonging to the Balkan *Sprachbund*, since the 13th century until the present. The etymology of *cherga* is searched for along the Silk Road, from northern China in the East to Europe in the West, since the Classical Greek period until modern times. Nade Genevska Brachikj has studied the period from the 14th to the 19th century as one of intensive contacts, in all areas of material and spiritual culture, between the interethnic linguistically heterogeneous Balkan population. This contributed to the infiltration of loanwords, their adaptation, and integration into the language. Loanwords from the Turkish language, but also words that entered the languages of the Balkans through Turkish, originating from the Arabic and Persian languages, are known under the term *turkism*.

Regarding modern times, Klara Dankova presents insights into the use of toponyms in fabric names in 18th- and 19th-century French. This research follows the theoretical framework of diachronic terminology studies developed from the 2010s onward in Italy, which investigate the relationship between terminology evolution and technical, scientific, and cultural development.[7] Concerning French fabric terminology in the 18th century, Zanola's study[8] has shown the presence of a technical terminology alongside that used for marketing. At the time, the French fabric market was characterized by a supply of fabrics made either in France or abroad. In France, fabric production was regionally specialized: For example, Picardy was focused on the production of woolen sheets, while the Lyon region was famous for silk fabric production. The import of fabrics from foreign countries, as well as the regional specialization of textile production in France, resulted in the use of toponyms in fabric names.

The 20th century is illustrated by Marie-Alice Rebours and her study of the terminology of the denim sector in France (cuts, treatments, *etc.*). The original toponyms — *denim* and *jean* — appeared in Europe in the Middle Ages. Genoa (Italy) and *jean* are connected: The origin of the fabric was indicated as *Jean(e)* in London port registers. The link with Nimes (France; *serge de Nimes*?) remains uncertain, as Carcassonne (France) produced a similar fabric called *nim*. Later, in the 19th-century United States of America, cotton cultivation led to the local production of these fabrics, and a workwear creator, Levi Strauss, distinguished himself in the 1870s. Jeans really arrived in France after the Second World War. They were popularized by GIs, but also in the cinema. During the second part of the century, the advent of ready-to-wear increased the democratization of jeans, for which French denominations remained in use. Relocations and globalization, among other factors, later contributed to the replacement of French terms by English ones.

2. Data section: Types of sources

The data for the considerations presented here is naturally diverse, given the different researchers and disciplines involved. Archaeologists, historians, linguists, and ethnologists contribute to this interdisciplinary study.

Ancient Greek textual and epigraphical sources provide us with geographical epithets associated with furnishings. These epithets recur between the 5th and the 3rd centuries BC in epigraphical texts, such as the temple accounts from the Sanctuary of the Parthenon in Athens; the confiscated property of Alcibiades and his followers (the so-called *Attic Stelai*); literary texts of tragic and comic poets of the Classical period; accounts in the Egyptian papyri (such as the Zenon papyrus of the 3rd century BC); and later compilations of the texts from ancient authors (such as 2nd-century AD Athenaios and Pollux in particular). Some are city-specific (Milesian, Chian, Orchomenian), others are more descriptive ('barbarian'), yet others refer to wider regions (Cypriot, Persian).

Latin texts do not offer many details on clothes, but we do find certain toponyms as synonyms for specific materials and techniques. These are typically luxurious goods (such as silk, cashmere, or purple dyes), named after their place of production, whereas simpler garments and ornaments most of the times had obscure origins, even if common people used to wear them, and their names were usually loanwords.

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[7] Zanola 2014; 2018; Grimaldi 2017a; 2017b.
[8] Zanola 2018, 18–19.

The analysis of toponyms in Medieval and early modern Europe presented here builds on administrative/economic and policy sources (14th to 16th centuries). These are namely customs accounts, and urban and merchant accounts, which allow us to track trademarks through their toponyms in Hanse/northern and Iberian/southern European trade.[9] Inventories and wills provide an additional perspective on consumption and exchange of textiles in this period. Cloth seal finds and catalogs are growing in number and supplement written sources.[10] The meaning behind the toponyms is revealed by production statutes that standardize production to a varying degree.[11] Sources on discourses on the scope of meaning of toponyms relate to (mostly urban) trade policy, for northern Europe notably Hanse regulations (*Hanserecesse*) that dealt with textile trade institutions on an 'international' level.[12] The German Hanse, and more specifically the meetings of Hanse towns that, between the 14th and 17th centuries, politically influenced a large part of northern Europe between today's Netherlands and Estonia, impacted textile trade and the meaning behind toponyms to no small degree. The sources used are biased, in that they tend to represent more prominent products (and qualities) in textile trade.

The examination of Icelandic textile place names highlights a few examples from the 12th- and 13th-century sagas (*Icelandic Family Sagas* and *Sturlunga saga*)[13] and the historical account of settlement (*Landnámabók*, or *The Book of Settlements*),[14] as well as some selected accounts from the modern Icelandic Place Names Registry (Örnefnasafnið).[15] The first represents stories written by 12th- and 13th-century authors about their 10th–11th-century ancestors and a history of their settlement, stories which sought to provide places with origin stories in the past. The second is a mapped database drawn from documents of ethnographic interviews, a project which sought to preserve place names, and the memories of these places and the activities which took place there.

A wide range of sources was consulted for untangling the long and complicated history of the label *cherga*: Written sources, only a few available in the original version, most of them published in books and scientific articles quoting Greco-Roman writers;[16] Byzantine officials from the 10th–13th centuries;[17] Dubrovnik archives from the 13th–17th centuries,[18] and 19th-century Ottoman judicial records from Bitola/Manastir;[19] the collection of traditional soft furniture from the Museum of North Macedonia in Skopje from the first half of the 20th century; data from contemporary field research; etymological dictionaries and dictionaries of Balkan and other languages; photographs and documentary films from the 20th century.

The main sources for the terminology of the clothes in the Balkans are from the museum collections in the museum in Bitola and other museum collections in Macedonia, as well as from Belgrade, Serbia. The analyses use written sources from travel writers, who were in the Macedonian region in the 19th and 20th centuries. Some focus is put on Turkish documents and new dictionaries intended for clothing terminology.

The study of the use of toponyms in fabric names in 18th- and 19th-century French focuses on terms created using toponyms related to 14 fabrics indicated in the article ÉTOFFE (fabric) in Savary,[20] including, for example, *velours* (velvet), *satin* (satin), and

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[9] *E.g.,* for customs accounts Jenks 2018; Vogtherr 1996 — on the difficulties of working with these materials, see Huang 2019a; 2019b. Urban accounts are only rarely edited, *e.g.* Vogelsang 1976–1983; for merchant accounts, *e.g.* Nirrnheim 1895; Stockhusen 2019.

[10] See, for the growing number of publications on cloth seal finds: Kaiser 2002; Egan 1992; Orduna 1988; van Laere 2019; Mordovin 2014; Sullivan 2012; Połczyński & Przymorska-Sztuczka 2019.

[11] *E.g.,* for the Leiden textile industry, Posthumus 1910–1922 and for Amsterdam, Breen 1902. For Hanse towns mentioned later in the text, Lüdicke 1903 (Dortmund); Wehrmann 1872, 494–499 (Lübeck).

[12] Koppmann *et al.* 1870–1913.

[13] *The Sagas of Icelanders* 1997.

[14] *Landnámabók* 2006.

[15] Örnefnasafn Stofunnar Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum.

[16] Herodotus 4.75 in Arsenić 1976, 277–278; Ptolemy 1.8 in Yule 1915, 187-189; Mela 1.2, 3.7 in Yule 1915, 196; Strabo 15.1 in Yule 1915; Pliny the Elder 6.20, 6.24 in Bostock & Riley 1855.

[17] Pitra 1891 in Petrović 1983, 483; Constantine Porphyrogenites in Mullet 2013, 488.

[18] Petrović 1976; 1983; 1986.

[19] Djambazovski 1953, 17, 45; Djambazovski 1957, 18.

[20] Savary 1741.

serge (serge). The terms were extracted from a corpus of encyclopedic dictionaries[21] and technical manuals.[22]

The French terminology of women's jeans (1952–2019) is based on French mail order catalogs of ready-to-wear clothing,[23] and on interviews with French designers. Visuals are essential to interpret texts, whether they are found on Linear B tablets from the Aegean Bronze Age or in catalogs from the 20th century, making catalogs a relevant source to study terminology.

3. Textile toponyms

The idea of branding with toponyms, based on the geographical area where the good is produced, processed, and prepared (what we nowadays call appellation of origin) is not new; it appeared already in Antiquity to market a brand, thus branding benefits were recognized early on. Marketing theorists typically regard brands as a construct of the Industrial Revolution, mass production, and the consequent mass marketing, only beginning in earnest in the 19th century. In fact, if we step back from the modern brand-intensive marketplace, it is clear that brands preceded by far the growth of mass-production industries, what Karl Moore calls 'proto-brands.'[24] Seals and labels attached to commodities were clearly concerned with what may be called 'brand identity': Origin, specification, and quality. A good example is Thasian or Rhodian wine, traded across the ancient Mediterranean in stamped amphorae (packaging of the brand) that immediately pointed to its place of production and made the product traded distinct. In the ancient world, the origin of a product was what designated quality. This is true for both works of art and manufactured products, as well as certain foodstuffs. Fifth-century BC Hermippus' *Φορμοφόροι* (Basket-carriers) mentions exports from various areas of the Greek world.[25]

Fifth- and fourth-century BC epigraphical sources bear witness to these branded products: We read of Milesian and Chian beds, and Orchomenian blankets; of Barbarian hangings in Euripides' *Ion*; of Cypriot curtains in fragments by Aristophanes; and of Phoenician hangings, Persian carpets, Milesian wool, Sicilian cushions, and Sardinian carpets in Athenaios' *Deipnosophistai* from the 2nd century AD.[26] That these brands were meaningful in Antiquity is perhaps obvious from their reoccurrence in the textual sources, yet the true nature of their meaning is elusive, especially given the lack of excavated textiles from the ancient Mediterranean. With minimal contextual explanation to go on, these epithets have been variably associated with the furnishings' place of manufacture, the origin of their craftsmen, or their particular, yet hard to specify, style. To these options, we need to add consumption, as in the case of the barbarian textiles (*βαρβαρικά*), which were not only produced by foreigners or in a foreign fashion (Persian), but also used in a foreign tradition (tents).

Bringing all the threads together, geographical indications in the ancient sources may denote an array of things, not just the place of production. They may denote the origin of raw materials (Milesian sheep), a specific weaving technique (*βαρβαρικά*, embroidery?), a foreign use of textiles (*i.e.*, hangings in a tent) or, more poetically, something incomprehensible.[27] On the other hand, where local products were used, and these were apparently well known in Antiquity and easily identifiable in terms of their technical characteristics or decoration, no geographical indicators were used in trade, and the adjective *ἐντόπιος* (local) would suffice.[28]

In the Medieval and early modern period, textile trade not only expanded, but also diversified in terms of qualities. Especially the production and trade in textiles of medium fineness, fit for urban consumption, increased. The products that were traded in growing quantities across Europe and beyond were

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[21] *Dictionnaire universel de Commerce* by Savary des Bruslons (1723–1730), *Encyclopédie* by Diderot & D'Alembert (1751–1772), *Descriptions des Arts et Métiers* (1761–1782), a set of dictionaries of the *Encyclopédie méthodique* (1782–1832), *Dictionnaire général des tissus anciens et modernes* by Bezon (1859–1863).

[22] *Le dessinateur pour les fabriques d'étoffes d'or, d'argent et de soie* by De l'Hiberdenie (1765) and *Nouveau manuel complet de la fabrication des tissus de toute espèce* by Toustain (1859).

[23] *La Redoute* mainly.

[24] Moore & Reid 1998.

[25] Hermippus, *Φορμοφόροι* 23–24.

[26] Ath. *Deipn.* II 47f (Sicilian cushions); V 196c (Phoenician hangings); XII 514c (Sardinian carpets); XII 519 b, c (Milesian wool);

[27] *Μηδικά* in Arist. *Frogs* 938.

[28] *Periplous of the Erythraean Sea* ch. 24.

further refined as 'proto-brands,' mainly identified in the source material by urban toponyms. Customs accounts and other administrative sources do not regularly identify textiles beyond their type of fabric and value, but still over 200 toponyms are known for northern European (Hanse) trade in mass-produced textiles alone, first and foremost linens and woolen cloth, but also fustian.[29] Only rarely, like in the case of Arras (*rasch*) did toponyms not refer to a producer, but became a loanword for a type of product. Portugal, which was not one of the biggest European textile producers during the Middle Ages, was nevertheless able to create its own trademarks identified by toponyms: From a list of 24 types of fabrics produced in the kingdom during the Middle Ages, nine were associated with a toponym.[30] One of the most reputable was the *manta do Alentejo* (blanket from Alentejo), a type of wool blanket woven with stripes or geometric motifs inspired by pottery and textile designs from Berber culture.[31] The 'appellation of origin' appears in the written sources from the 14th century onward, and the product played a major role in the African slave trade during the 16th century. This toponymical label is a long lasting one, since such blankets are still being produced in the 21st century, under the same label and with Medieval techniques, in local workshops in the region of Alentejo (southern Portugal).[32]

Toponyms identified standardized products in trade, thus minimizing insecurities in that trade especially over longer distances. In the written sources, they represented the authority that standardized and certified production, *e.g.*, the city of Leiden or Lübeck, which officially set production standards and controlled and enforced them. The toponym was not the only signifier used to identify the piece of cloth as a specific product. In this textile trade, the identity of a trademark was represented by the toponym, the cloth seal with the urban coat of arms, which linked the product to an authoritative body, and often a uniquely designed selvage, as a non-textual identifier of the origin of the textile literally interwoven with the product.[33] It is important to note that the toponym did not refer to the actual place of production, but first and foremost to the place of certification. Trademarks produced on a large scale, like Leiden cloth or Osnabrück and Münster linens, were indeed often produced in the countryside according to urban standards of production.[34] At the urban 'show', or at central places like the Leiden cloth hall, the textiles were then marked with the urban seal if they met the quality standards.[35] This allowed large-scale production of textiles, such as for Leiden cloth, with over 20,000 pieces produced per year in the second half of the 15th century,[36] or Osnabrück linens;[37] both trademarks being traded throughout Europe and beyond for centuries.

Urban production standards were commonly concerned with the use of raw materials, the thread count/density, the measurements and finishing of the product, namely through fulling, napping, and shearing, bleaching, or dyeing. Whereas this scope of meaning can be found for many manufactured textiles, the depth of meaning varied greatly, with more detail the finer a textile was, the further it was traded and the greater the importance and reputation of a fabric was on the market(s). For medium-quality cloth, like those of Lübeck or Göttingen, these regulations were less specific.[38] Amsterdam cloth, a high-quality product made from English wool, was on the other hand highly regulated, with over 60 articles in the statute passed by the urban authorities in 1413.[39] It should also be kept in mind that a toponym could also represent multiple products. One guild could produce a range of cloth, *e.g.*, the guild of Dortmund produced five different woolen cloths,[40] and Amsterdam cloth came in three grades of English wool.[41] Toponyms mentioned in written sources could thus refer to a variety of products standardized and controlled by a given urban authority.

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[29] See for an overview over known toponyms as textile labels namely Ammann 1954, for Hanse specifically Jahnke 2009; Holbach 1993; Huang 2013; Huang 2015a; Huang 2015b.

[30] Sequeira 2014, 185-279; Mouta & Sequeira 2023, 57–71.

[31] Luzia *et al.* 1984.

[32] Sequeira 2014, 245–249; Mouta & Sequeira 2023, 57–71.

[33] Kaiser 1987; Endrei & Egan 1982.

[34] Huang 2015b, 103, 108.

[35] On the 'show' or *legge* of linens, see Kirchhoff 1981; Potthoff 1900.

[36] Kaptein 1998, 92, 99.

[37] Huang 2019, 168–178.

[38] Huang 2019, 164–167.

[39] Breen 1902, 39–48.

[40] Lüdicke 1903.

[41] Breen 1902, 40–41.

Urban trademarks (or the toponyms representing them) were supposed to bring with them a certain reliability, both concerning the product itself and its distinctiveness from other trademarks, as constant discussions about the characteristics of specific trademarks, their uniqueness, and proper certification show. Trademarks, like Comines cloth, would establish themselves in long-distance trade by imitating established 'brands' like Ypres cloth, but as they matured as a commodity, the textile's production would follow certain standards, and could be traded under their own seal (and other identifiers), not least their own name.[42] Potential buyers and policymakers along the trade routes frequently discussed the reliability of toponyms. The German Hanse, as an association of merchants and their hometowns, regularly exerted influence on producers between the 14th and 17th centuries to keep toponyms reliable and distinctive in their quality. When Comines tried to replace English wool with Spanish wool, the Hanse merchants refused to buy these fabrics — this change in raw material was considered equivalent to a reduction in quality, and not deemed acceptable.[43] In the case of Poperinge, where Hanse merchants held the exclusive right to purchase the entire town's production, they systematically influenced the standards of production and limited imitation of other textile labels.[44]

Another interesting example can be found in the minutes of the city council of Funchal (Madeira Islands, Portugal) from 1488. For some unknown reason, for a certain time a law was in place that meant imported fabrics were sent to the Atlantic islands of Madeira and Azores without their seals,[45] which somewhat caused confusion among sellers and consumers. The city council of Funchal registered two complaints involving the trademark of fabrics.[46] That year, a blacksmith bought a piece of cloth that was sold to him as *Menim* (from Menen, in Flanders), but he took the piece to a shearer, who examined it and told him he did not believe it was *Menim*. In consequence, the blacksmith presented a claim to the city council, which immediately ordered an inquiry. Both the seller and a tailor that witnessed the transaction confirmed that the piece was sold as *Menim*. The city council then contacted two merchants from Lisbon and asked them

for the original bolt of cloth from which the piece was cut: They brought this to the town hall along with the seal which confirmed that the fabric was not *Menim* but *Ipres* (from Ypres, Flanders). That same year, a sugar entrepreneur bought a piece of blue cloth to make a pair of pants from a Castilian merchant, who sold it as *Londres* (from London, England). However, both him and his tailor were convinced that it was not *Londres*, and so they too presented a claim to the city council. Since the cloth seal was no longer available, a vast inquiry was started, gathering different experts. The seller assured them that he bought this *Londres* cloth from a Florentine merchant. Two other merchants were consulted, and both asserted that the fabric was from some part of England, but not London. Two more merchants were called upon to supply their expertise, and both declared that the cloth was *Moster Viler* (Montivilliers, Normandy). Finally, another expert from Porto defended the identity of the cloth as *Londres*. This case remained inconclusive, yet it shows us not just how important the origin of the fabric was deemed to be, but also that experts, such as merchants and tailors, could have different opinions, which only the cloth seal could confirm. These cases also show us the levels of trust (and lack of it) that consumers had in those experts, and the reliability associated with certain urban trademarks.

These are examples that give insight into the much-debated scope of meaning of toponyms in late Medieval trade. Toponyms represented not only a product, but a standardized quality and a legal body responsible for compliance and control. Toponyms thus stand for a complex institutional system that allowed a growing commerce in textiles in the late Medieval and Early Modern periods as part of Europe's economic growth during that time.

The role of toponyms in the creation of fabric names in 18th- and 19th-century French provides us with a (modern) case to explore toponym-based textile labels in more detail, with a particular focus on semantic motivation during the process of denomination. Adopting the classification of word-formation processes proposed by Sablayrolles,[47] and drawing inspiration from studies examining the creation of terms with toponyms,[48] allows us to assess the

[42] Russow *et al.* 2022, 136–140.

[43] Russow *et al.* 2022, 141.

[44] Holbach 1995.

[45] Vasconcellos 1901, 11.

[46] Costa (ed.) 1995, 206–207.

[47] Sablayrolles 2019.

[48] Dury 2008.

I. Fabric names (compositions) identifying the referent by toponyms	
- [fabric]N + *de* + [toponym]N	*drap d'Angleterre*
- [fabric]N + [toponym]Adj	*camelot anglais*
II. Fabric names (compositions) containing toponyms and other defining elements, such as	
- the material used	*drap **de soie** Polonaise*
- the manufacturing process	*velours de Hollande **à 3 lisses***
III. Fabric names created from a toponym	
- métonymie [toponym]N	*Silésie*
- conversion [toponym_Adj]N	*Hongroise*
- derivation [(toponym)N + suffix]N	*Florentine*
- composition [(toponym)N + suffix]N + Adj	*Londrins premiers*

Table 1: *Typology of fabric names in 18th- and 19th-century French*

relevance of different communication situations — especially the production of fabrics versus their marketing — on neology. This reveals a typology of fabric names containing toponyms (Table 1).

There are several reasons behind the motivation for incorporating toponyms in fabric names. Some toponyms refer to the place where the fabric was first produced (*e.g.*, *velours de Gênes*, a fabric created in the 16th century in Genoa)[49] or where the fabric was (mainly) produced ("*e.g.*, serges […], known as *serges de Saint-Lo*, because this town is the centre of their manufacture").[50] In other cases, the use of place names has nothing to do with the real geographical origin: Toponyms were used to indicate a specific manufacturing process (*e. g. ratine façon d'Hollande*) or, very often, for marketing purposes (*e.g. velvet d'Oran* [a town in Algeria] designating "French velvet made with two sets of warp containing ends ranging from single to five-ply yarns in numerical and reversed order alternating across the width of the fabric").[51] Another possible motivation was to demonstrate similarity with another fabric: *E.g.*, the term *camelots façon de Bruxelles* contains the name *Bruxelles* because these fabrics imitated in some way fabrics called *Bruxelles*.[52] The analysis shows that in 18th- and 19th-century French, toponyms played a fundamental role, ranging from the identification of the referent (in particular, specifying its geographical origin or the method

of its production), to marketing needs, mainly playing on the public's knowledge (similarity with other fabrics), and the prestige of textile goods from certain geographical areas (Oriental countries).

Though the use and appearance of toponyms certainly changes over time, toponyms are in many cases quite long-lived. This is true for some Medieval proto-brands, like Leiden cloth, which was a popular proto-brand in large parts of Europe between the 14th and 17th centuries, or the already-mentioned *manta do Alentejo*, which is still being produced and consumed today. The comparatively unknown Balkan *cherga* is even more remarkable as a toponym-based textile label, still in existence since ancient times. This remarkable case study highlights both the longevity, but also the mobility and flexibility, of toponyms and their meaning.

The textile label *serica/tzerga/cherga* is derived from the Old Greek loanword from Chinese, acquired through the Altaic silk traders and middlemen in Central Asia,[53] but it is also a toponym, as most etymologists, using the information from Classical writers,[54] claim its origin from Classical Greek *Sērikós*, denoting a region in the east, probably North China, and *Sḗres* its people. *Sērikós* acquired the meaning of "silken" while *sērikón* denoted silk. This meaning was transferred into Latin as *sēricus* and *sēricum*, respectively.[55] In Medieval Balkan Romance it was transformed into

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[49] Hardouin-Fugier *et al.* 2005, 398.

[50] Bertrand 1783 (vol. XIX), 380.

[51] Wingate 1979, 650.

[52] Savary 1741 (vol. II), 52.

[53] Wang 1993, 225.

[54] Strabo 15.1; Ptolemy, Geography 1.8; Mela, De Situ Orbis 1.2, 3.7; Pliny the Elder 6.20.

[55] Hyllested 2017, 27–28.

tzerga/tzergan, denoting a goat hair blanket, and there-after adopted with the same meaning, including also woolen blankets, into Slavic and other Balkan languages as *tzerga/tzraga/tzrga*.[56] In the South Slavic languages, the Medieval *tzerga* became *cherga*, under the influence of its Turkish pronunciation as *cherge*.[57]

Cherga is a typical Wanderwort,[58] traveling over a long period of time from China to Europe, along the Silk Road. Its ultimate source has been difficult to discover, as it was borrowed from one language to another, undergoing numerous semantic and sound changes due to its contact with various languages. The ultimate source of the words denoting silk or textiles, such as *cherga* and *serge*, are Old Chinese *sə* or *siəg* and Middle Chinese *si*, reconstructed as the precursors of Modern Chinese *sī* "silk; thread; string".[59]

The first appearance, known so far, of the textile label *tzerga* is in the 10th-century text of Constantine Porphyrogenites, which describes it as "a Turkish bath, called *tzerga* in Scythian" with a hide cistern of red leather, twelve pitchers, twelve grates for the bath, bricks for the hearth, and folding couches.[60] Scythian baths, with a hemp-smoking set inside a tent constructed of a wooden tripod and covered with a woolen mat, are also described by Herodotus.[61] Such felted circular tent covers, wooden sticks, and hemp-smoking sets have been preserved in the Scythian burial *kurgans* from southern Siberia, dating from the 3rd and 4th centuries BC.[62] The Turkish bath-set was quite different from the Scythian one, and *tzerga* was probably associated with a woolen tent. It is worth mentioning that the label *cherga*, denoting Gypsy tents, has survived until the present in the Balkan languages. In the following centuries, the label *cherga* started to appear in Balkan sources. "A blanket made of goat hair, called *tzerga* (*tzergan*) in barbaric" belonging to Tzola, a Vlach woman

from Ohrid, in present-day North Macedonia, was recorded in the first half of the 13th century.[63] *Cerga*, *tzerga*, *cherega*, etc., probably made in the Balkan hinterlands, are mentioned in the Dubrovnik registers from 1281–1625.[64] In 15th- and 16th-century Ottoman sources, *cherge* appears in the tax registers, as the Ottomans continued with the practice of the Serbian medieval state[65] to collect taxes from the Vlach herders in livestock and woolen *cherges*, or their equivalent in money.[66] The first mentions of *cherge* in the Ottoman documents from the territory of North Macedonia come from the early 19th-century judicial records.[67]

The Balkan *cherga* is a multifunctional textile used as a mat, blanket, tent, horse rug, baby wrap, cape, cloth, and funerary wrap. It is made of wool and/or goat hair, either in the natural hues of the fibers or dyed, but also of hemp, flax, and rag strips. It is usually woven on a treadle loom in tabby weave or 2/2 twill, while some of them are flocked. In the mountain settlements of eastern Bulgaria, Herzegovina, and Epirus, an old type of vertical frame loom was used. The woven piece of cloth is cut in pieces, joined lengthwise with seams, and most of them are felted. *Chergas* are made of two to seven panels, plain or ornamented with stripes, checks, or other geometric motifs.[68] From the northern part of the Silk Road, in the Scythian burial mound at Tuva, comes a fragment of four-colored striped woolen 2/2 twill cloth, dated to the end of the 9th to the beginning of the 8th century BC. It was made of two pieces sewn together, with horizontal stripes that do not join together.[69] It is stunningly similar to the 20th-century multicolored striped woolen twill *chergas* from the central Balkans. Whether this is only a coincidence, or due to contact between the western Scythians and ancient Thracians, can never be determined. Although the label *cherga*

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[56] Petrović 1983, 484.

[57] Skok 1971, *čerga*, 310.

[58] Hyllested 2017, 27.

[59] Hyllested 2017, 27.

[60] Mullet 2013, 488.

[61] Herodotus 4.73, 4.75.

[62] Stepanova 2017, 164. Figs. 92, 93, 94, 95.

[63] Petrović 1983, 483.

[64] Petrović 1983, 485.

[65] Luković 2015, 39.

[66] Petrović 1983, 487–488; Luković 2015, 39, 42.

[67] Djambazovski 1953, 17, 45; Djambazovski 1957, 18.

[68] Wace & Thompson 1914, 81–82; Delinikolova 1964, 23–26; Stankov 1975, 23–24; Krsteva 1983, 225–227; Petrović 1976, 361–364; Petrović 1983, 489, 491, 497, 501, 503; Nazim 2008, 65, 70–71.

[69] Pankova *et al*. 2020, 412, Fig. 8.

was known throughout the Balkans since the Middle Ages, it has been suggested that its origin could be found in the central Balkans mountainous area, encompassing Bulgaria and eastern parts of Serbia and North Macedonia, where it has survived until the 21st century.[70]

Tzerga/tzraga, *tzrga/cherga* is a textile label of the *longue durée*, a typical Balkanism that has been used until the present day by several distinct Balkan ethnic and linguistic groups. *Cherga* most probably originally referred to the woolen and goat-hair textiles of the Vlachs, Romanized Balkan transhumant herders, and was adopted into the lexicons of the other Balkan herder populations with whom they lived in a symbiotic co-existence.[71] Most probably, the label *tzerga/cherga* was also spread through trading networks and exchange. Cultural interchange between different ethnic groups in the Balkans, sharing the same way of life but speaking different languages, has created a phenomenon called Balkan Sprachbund, defined by linguists as a convergent language group in southeastern Europe generated over centuries of integration, while still preserving each group member's linguistic identity.[72] This phenomenon is reflected also in textile labels. *Cherga* is a typical example of this process, but also of the layers of other distant languages which have been accumulating one over the other, changing its phonetic and semantic features across space and time.

4. Raw materials

Toponyms are mostly associated with textiles, but it is important to note that raw materials and especially wool, being central to the general quality and fineness of textiles, were also identified through toponyms. Our best documented example of 'ancient branding' is in fact 'Milesian' wool. The evidence for an export-oriented textile industry in Miletus goes back to the Archaic Greek period. Several accounts name the Ionian city of Miletus as a center of luxurious

textiles, high-quality wool and linen production, and its harbor became famous for textile exports to the entire Mediterranean world. The literary references are abundant: The high quality of Milesian wool inspires, for instance, Polykrates of Samos to take up animal husbandry with the seed-stock sheep he brought from Miletus in the 6th century BC.[73] A close relationship between Miletus and Sybaris is mentioned in Herodotus,[74] and it was developed in the early 6th century through the wool and linen trade between the two cities.

In terms of quality, 4th-century BC Euboulos attests in his *Procris* to the *softness* of Milesian wool.[75] Milesian garments are renowned in Plutarch, who speaks of a fine Milesian robe worn by Aristippus;[76] this is repeated in Plutarch's *Socrates* as an indication of luxury.[77] In the 3rd-century BC Zenon Archive, Apollonios is said to have imported sheep from Miletus, aiming to achieve a high-quality product.[78] The epithet Milesian came to be synonymous with 'smooth' in 2nd-century AD Galenus of Pergamon, who calls a type of $αλκυόνια$ (a sponge) $Μιλήσιον$ (= smooth). Rugs made of Milesian wool are mentioned in the Middle Comedy; the 4th-century BC comic poet Amphis describes pleasure-seeking Odysseus overseeing the preparations for a forthcoming luxurious banquet for a guest: He orders that the walls are decorated with rugs made of high-quality Milesian wool anointed with an expensive unguent.[79]

A specific reference to Milesian mattresses in *Frogs* emphasizes excessive comfort sought, in this instance, by a slave, to the extent that 'it would be hilarious.'[80] Since Milesian mattresses were synonymous with comfort, it may not be far-fetched to assume that a Milesian *kline*, mentioned in epigraphical sources of the 5th century BC, was a *kline* that could accommodate a thick mattress ($στρῶμα Μιλησίοις$) covered by smooth Milesian textiles, such as the *klinai* depicted on funerary banquet reliefs from Odessos, a Milesian colony, dated to the 2nd century BC. The mattresses shown on these funerary reliefs from Odessos stand

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[70] Petrović 1983, 503.

[71] Sobolev 2019, 317–318; Gardani *et al*. 2021, 8–10.

[72] Sobolev 2019, 331.

[73] Strabo VII. 578; Pliny, NH VIII. 190.

[74] Herod. VI. 20 and later Athenaeus 12.17.

[75] Edmonds 1959, 123.

[76] De Alexandri Magni Fortuna 1.8.

[77] And Ath. 1. 51.

[78] P. Cair. Zen. 4. 59696; 3. 59394.

[79] Ath. *Deipn*. XV 42.

[80] Arist. *Frogs*, 541–543 ($στρώμασιν Μιλησίοις$).

out in iconography; they form a small but distinct iconographic group and show heavily pleated textiles that cover the mattress or constitute an indication of early upholstery. These ancient references already highlight the central importance of raw materials and particularly wool in market-oriented textile production. Toponyms accompany this economic importance of wool in Antiquity.

In the Medieval period, the importance of wool in textile production persists. Probably, as in Antiquity, toponyms were only given to the highest quality of wool. English wool, a prerequisite for top-quality woolen cloth from the 12th century, and the 16th-century substitute Spanish (Merino) wool are highlighted by contemporaries in terms of their importance for high-quality cloth production.[81] For woolen cloth of lower fineness, we do not observe similar labeling by country of origin. This indicates that, in contrast to textiles, for which the toponyms identify not only quality but also the producer or authority guaranteeing certain production standards, for wool only sources of the highest quality and reputation are denoted by toponyms.

Iceland is quite the opposite from England, in terms of the status of the respective textiles in trade, but again provides us with an unlikely case study to explore the relationship between toponyms and textile production. In Iceland there is a strong tie between place names and geographical features, the historical use of the land, and specific people and activities. This place-naming tradition was influenced by textiles, including raw materials like wool which holds an enduring, key role in Icelandic history. We can see many place names that demonstrate ties to wool and a strong tradition of sheep farming, both in past and recently inhabited places, as there is a strong continuity in textile production over Iceland's history. This section will focus on two strategies found in these sources that used place names associated with textiles to assert political authority and embed living memory into the landscape.

Wool played a key role in the Medieval economy, and therefore sheep farming played an important and prominent role, as evidenced in the place-naming tradition. The presence of the term "sheep" (ON. *sauð*) in early source materials reflects that prevalence of sheep farming for producing wool, as it was essential as the main currency and export product for Iceland until the end of the Medieval period. There are many examples that include the term "*sauð*" (sheep) as some form of prefix: Sauðá (Sheep-River), the region of Sauðafellslönd (Sheep-Mountain-land), farm names such as Sauðaness (Sheep-Peninsula), Sauðafjörður (Sheep-Fjord), Sauðahús (Sheep-house), Sauðafell (Sheep-Mountain), and more.[82] Some sources offer anecdotal explanations as to how these places received their names, such as Sauðadalur (Sheep-Valley), which got its name after some sheep were lost in the woods of this valley.[83] Another is Geldingagadragi (Wether-trail), where the place name's origin is connected to a past incident when some men had to chase after wethers (gelded sheep) in a winter storm, and a man named Hörður led them down the mountain in a great procession. [84] While place-naming traditions reflect how the land was used and was important to society, these literary sources connect current leading families and powerful figures to the past, by connecting their land and family to a landscape in which they had familial roots and personal knowledge. Place names were therefore used to demonstrate their connection to a place, and therefore their political authority over it.

Modern place names also reflect the important role of wool. After a decline in the early modern period, wool returned to economic importance in the modern period, with the rise of wool mills and the introduction of mechanized spinning and weaving. Sheep farming and wool again left their mark on the landscape, as reflected in place name traditions with the prevalence of the term "wool" (*ull*). The Place Names Registry[85] is an online database map with links to records of the "Örnefnasafnið" ("Place-names Collection") interviews with local people in the interest of preserving the living memory of places. There are over 300 entries which integrate the term "ull" (wool) as part of its place name, including Ullarþvottahvammar (Wool-washing-grassy-hollow), Ullarþvottaklöpp (Wool-washing-flat-rock), and Ullarþvottahylur (Wool-washing-deep-place). Several of these place-name records include personal accounts transcribed by the researchers from the living memory of people who lived and worked

[81] Munro 2003, 186–190; 2005.
[82] Landnámabók 88, 53, 109; Droplaugarsonar saga 366; Fostrbrǽðra saga 346; Laxdæla saga 5, 9, 16, 17; Eyrbyggja saga 218.
[83] Vatnsdæla saga 20.
[84] Harðar saga og Hólmverja 29.
[85] See http://nafnid.arnastofnun.is, accessed 9 January 2023.

in these places. Ullardæla at Oddi is noted as the place where the people of Vindási were washing their wool in the past. Ullarklettur in Þverárhreppur is the place where the working women Dísa and Jóhanna remembered wool being dried after it was washed in a nearby spring. Ullarklettur in Sveinatunga was named so because it was near the place where sheep would be sheared, and the wool would be washed in the nearby river and then dried on this rock on the riverbank. Ullarhóll (Wool-hill) is the place where wool was dried after being washed in the nearby ditch called Ullarsíki (Wool-ditch). A man named Þórðr Pállsson described the place name of a site in Sauðanes, the farm estate that had been owned by generations of his family, as Ullarþúfar (Wool-tufts), which was where they used to dry wool after washing it in the nearby river, and then afterwards spread and twisted it to dry over the hills of Ullarhóll.[86] These examples indicate how activities and raw materials had been the source for place names, which have left their mark in memory and landscape long after the places had been abandoned. They prove that wool held a place in the living memory of the people who had lived and worked in these places; past textile practices have been embedded into the landscape, even when physical evidence of past activity is gone. While there may not be toponyms that connect places in Iceland to specific 'brands' of textiles, the landscape and the memory of places show a lasting relationship between this country, landscape use, and wool textiles.

5. Loanwords

Even if toponyms are more frequently attested across time and space than textual labels, loanwords should also be considered here as a naming practice. Whereas toponyms are, to some extent, neutral,

although they had to be recognized by traders if not customers, the use of words from other languages tells us that there was an external influence on the formation of culture.

In Latin, certain words were taken from the Etruscan culture, mostly those referring to the *tebenna* and its evolutions. In addition, we find many Greek loanwords, regarding all kinds of garments and accessories. It is interesting to note that the Hellenistic world acted also as the intermediary between Eastern terms and the Latin language. This was, for instance, the case for *tiara*,[87] either Persian or Phrygian.[88] Also eastern loanwords appear in the language, mostly from Greek, as mentioned above, but from other languages, as well. The main example is purple dye, generically called *purpura*,[89] another Greek loanword, probably of Phoenician origin,[90] for which we find different terms, probably referring to diverse recipes that produced different shades of this color. Thus, texts mention *Tyrius*,[91] *Phoeniceus*,[92] and *Puniceus*[93] colours.

Western terms also entered the Latin language; some, like *torquis*,[94] a type of bracelet worn by Gallic warriors,[95] quite early. However, most of these are directly related to war and military insignia. Other garments needed more time to be finally accepted by Roman elites, even though some were mentioned before, in depictions of the peoples originally wearing them. The attire Romans only accepted when in real need, when fighting and traveling through northern lands, were trousers.[96] The word for them would become *bracae*,[97] a Gallic loanword, and it was extended even to Eastern types of pants, which were looser, thinner, and well-known to Romans and Greeks due to their contact with Persians and Parthians. From Gaul and the Germanic regions, many materials and garments in common use were adopted, but not accepted by Roman elites, in most cases, until

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[86] Oddi, Rangárþing ytra (Rangárvallahreppur, Rangárvallasýslu); Bjarghús, Húnaþing vestra (Þverárhreppur, Vestur-Húnavatnssýslu); Sveinatunga Gestsstaðir, Borgarbyggð (Norðurárdalshreppur, Mýrasýslu); Flatatunga, Akrahreppur (Akrahreppur, Skagafjarðarsýslu); Sauðanes, Húnavatnshreppur (Torfalækjarhreppur, Austur-Húnavatnssýslu), Örnefnasafn Stofnunar Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum.

[87] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 166.

[88] Tuplin 2007.

[89] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 134.

[90] Marín Aguilera *et al.* 2018.

[91] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 172.

[92] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 128.

[93] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 134.

[94] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 169.

[95] Rowan & Swan 2015.

[96] Sumner 2002.

[97] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 26.

the last years of the Western Empire. Thus, we read about different cloaks (*bigerrica*,[98] *birrus*,[99] *banata*,[100] *bardaicus*,[101] *bardocucullus*,[102] *mantellum*,[103] *caracalla*[104]), about the *camisia*,[105] a new tunic, shorter, tighter, more comfortable for battle, or about the *tsanga* or *zanca*,[106] forbidden by imperial laws inside the city, although probably with little success.[107]

In general, the data suggests that most toponyms were commonly attached to luxurious, exotic goods. On the other hand, loanwords taken from Greek were common during the Archaic and Republican periods and the Early Empire, when Hellenic and Eastern fashion was perceived as elegant. When the empire begins to face many difficulties, the introduction of new Greek terms slows down; Greek and Hellenistic fashion was again used in the eastern half of the empire, whereas the western half faced an increasing number of 'barbaric' garments, loaned from Gauls, Hispanic, and Germanic tribes, or even nomadic peoples from Northern Africa. It appears, therefore, that the process of cultural adoption of '*Romanitas*' in the early years of the empire was inverted by the end, and Roman elites did not follow the rule of wearing traditional garments, but rather introduced elements from beyond their frontiers.

The Ottoman Empire serves as another example of how loanwords can reflect longstanding political relationships between larger regions. The Ottoman influence in the Balkan areas can be seen, especially with the usage of Turkish, Persian, or Arabic lexemes in the Balkans; loanwords in the thematic area of clothing arrived directly and indirectly. Terms for clothing, as part of the lexicon of material culture, belong to that category of vocabulary that is constantly changing due to influences from different cultures and languages.[108] The Turkish language also appears as an intermediary language through which many loanwords from Western European countries came into use. In the past, the names for elements of clothing usually came through Constantinople, as the economic and cultural center of the Balkans, which dictated a certain way of dressing.[109] In the Macedonian language there are many words that were accepted from the Turkish language, but their origin is not only Turkish, but may also be of Arabic — *aba* (*aba*), *anterija* (*tur. anteri, enteri*)[110] — or Persian origin — *kaftan* (*kaftan*), *pamuk* (*cotton*), *chorapi* (*soks*),[111] *shamija* (*skarf*),[112] *pizhami* (*payamas*).[113] In the Macedonian language, as well as in other Balkan languages, there is another form of influence from the Turkish language, with such words considered turkicisms. The Balkan Turkish loanword *elek* became a European word in the tailoring trade through the French *gilet* — *zhiletka*. The term *zhiletka* denoting *kaputche* or *eleche*, and which in some dialects is found as *dziletka*, is today considered an archaism.[114] The Turkish language also acted as an intermediary language through which many loanwords from Western European countries, especially from the Italian language, entered (*e.g.*, *saltamarka*, *fanela*, *kurdela*, *saja*), with the Turkish language taking an active role as a mediator in the transmission of those words. The influence of the Italian language was exerted through the strengthened trade relations of the peoples in this part of the Balkans with Italy, especially with Venice. Most of the loanwords in the Macedonian language were received indirectly through the trade environments of some Balkan centers, while only a few of them were direct loans introduced by Macedonian traders in the country. The Italian language also served as an intermediary through which several Latin words entered these Balkan languages.[115]

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[98] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 24.

[99] Miramontes Seijas 2021.

[100] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 22.

[101] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 23.

[102] Miramontes Seijas 2021.

[103] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 104.

[104] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 36.

[105] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 33.

[106] Miramontes Seijas 2021, 185.

[107] Murga 1973.

[108] Stefanovska Ristevska Fani 2008, 27.

[109] Stefanovska Ristevska Fani 2008, 29.

[110] Jashar Nasteva 2001, 34.

[111] Jashar Nasteva 2001, 36.

[112] Stefanovska Ristevska Fani 2008, 136.

[113] Stefanovska Ristevska Fani 2008, 103.

[114] Stefanovska Ristevska Fani 2008, 80.

[115] Sardzoska 2009, 102.

Most of these words are archaic and not in active use. An extensive analysis is needed for this kind of research, in which all categories of clothing terminology would be covered. In this context, an important contribution would be to determine the origin and genesis of a certain number of linguistic forms, which according to their morphology can be said to have ancient, central Asian, but also Old Slavonic, Ancient Greek, and Latin roots. Analyzing the linguistic modifications and differentiations that appear in the terminology for clothes, we can conclude that they occurred on multiple levels. Examples of the presence of Turkish-Persian or Arabic words can be found in the rich terminology for clothes, which clearly speaks of their acceptance/usage. We can also conclude that certain elements characteristic of the Ottoman culture have remained as permanent influences on the naming of some forms of clothing, decorations, and other types of elements.[116]

The changes in clothing style and appearance of new types of clothes led to the development of new terminology to mark those changes. Specific clothing items appeared under a particular term in one social community, but when they appeared in another, they may have undergone certain changes which, in turn, led to the emergence of a new term to denote them.

Loanwords remain a major part of contemporary labeling practices, here represented by the case of French terminology for women's jeans (1952–2019), and still reflect the economic and cultural influences at play. In this speific terminology, we can observe that first, English (loanwords or hybrids) accounts for more than three-quarters of the terms used in French; second, synecdoche appears common when it comes to fabrics (*e.g.*, *un pantalon en jean > un jean*) or cuts (*un jean bootcut > un bootcut*). Also, English terms tend to replace French ones (*e.g.*, *fuselé > tapered*).

Diachronically, terms follow sociological fashion cycles,[117] especially a cycle based on a "dynamic of distinction and imitation;" a style is first adopted by a minority, before being adopted by a majority,

triggering the search for a new distinctive style.[118] The renewal of collections (bi-annual or more frequently) should also be considered.

Terminologically, these cycles are visible through renewal (replacement of terms by others).[119] Renewal follows variation (the use of terms as synonyms between speakers, regions, or periods).[120] Variation is also associated with terminological proliferation, fostered by the democratization of fashion (lowering of prices), and by an increase in supply and demand (ready-to-wear and fast fashion).[121] Variation and proliferation also translate into an "overabundance" of synonyms and polysemes;[122] these indicate an instability, are potentially confusing, and lead to a selection resulting from a balancing between needs (variety, distinction, novelty, clarity, efficiency of communication) and a natural tendency towards minimal effort.[123]

Renewal implies neology. Neology — borrowing included — is often considered binarily: Denotation (to fill a void, *e.g.*, naming a new product) vs connotation (to respond to a "feeling of neological need,"[124] *i.e.*, a desire for a change of term).

Where does this desire come from? First, from a commercial logic: The industry has to steer customers towards the seasonal renewal of their wardrobe with the feeling of buying something new. In this case, terms are imposed for marketing purposes — or branding, as suggested for ancient Greek soft furnishings. Second, from a need for distinction parallel to the imitation–distinction fashion cycle: Terms must maintain the distinction and discrimination of certain speakers (social classes, communities, or generations). When terms are widely used, a need for novelty arises.[125] Third, from a need for transgression: A dominant group imposes a legitimate language (the norm). Linguistic production results from a struggle in which some try to transgress the norm.[126] Modifying the language, via neologisms, is transgressive.[127] Here, professional experts all mention the linguistic domination of the Levi's

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[116] Ristovska Pilichkova 2006, 217–225.

[117] Gofman 2004.

[118] Godart 2018, 17–18.

[119] Dury & Picton 2009.

[120] Desmet 2006, 242.

[121] Bonadonna 2015; 2016; Zanola 2018, 18.

[122] Sablayrolles 2006.

[123] Bourdieu & Boltanski 1975, 21; Peeters 1983, 109–110; 1994, 60; Møller 1998; Adegboku 2011.

[124] Dury 2013, 5.

[125] Bourdieu & Boltanski 1975, 20–21.

[126] Bourdieu 1982.

[127] Guilbert 1973; Boulanger 2010; Sablayrolles 2011; Zanola 2020.

group, which acts as the sociological group regulating the legitimate language.[128] This position stems from ®Levi's economic position. For neologisms to be adopted, they must be spread; to be spread, they must be used; to be used, they must be known; to be known, their creator must have an audience. Levi's obviously does.[129] A distinction vs imitation dichotomy then comes into play: Some brands copy Levi's terminology to be associated with this industry heavyweight; others use new terms to distinguish themselves. This also shows that marketers — and merchants before them — only respond to a natural tendency of the linguistic community: Its natural taste for novelty.

Why English? Sociologically, a legitimate language also results from a unification process.[130] Contemporary fashion has gone through different phases of unification: First, the organization of the market in Paris at the turn of the 20th century, which led to the emergence of French as the language of fashion abroad. Second, the worldwide spread of the ready-to-wear concept after World War II, followed by globalization, which saw the emergence of English as a replacement language of fashion.

Other elements have contributed to this hegemony of English: First, the symbolic values and connotations attached to English (especially modernity),[131] which may be compared to the enthusiasm for Oriental fabrics (and their associated toponyms), linked to Orientalism in the 19th century. Experts even admitted that English terms had been chosen over French ones for their connotations (*e.g.*, "stonewashing" was invented in France, but named in English). Second, in some cases, English terms are more concise, meeting the needs of economy and efficiency.[132] Third, the transgressive aspect of neology appears more pronounced with loanwords.[133] Fourth, some loanwords may rather be complements than substitutes (bringing nuances and expressiveness).[134] Fifth, commercially, some French equivalents seem unflattering (*e.g.*, *sale* vs *dirty*). Finally, globalization also explains the replacement by English terms. When French brands worked with workshops in the Maghreb, communication was in French. Production was then moved further away, and English became the international — and internal — vehicular language.

Concluding remarks

This article has explored the use of textile labels across time and space through a number of combined case studies, reaching from ancient Greece and Rome to the contemporary global world, from Medieval northern and southern Europe to the Ottoman Empire and textile production and trade in the Balkans. The various case studies are suitable for illuminating the different uses and meanings of toponyms in particular, as well as for showing how loanwords make relationships visible and generate them. Textile labels are more than mere designations; they convey economic and social, sometimes also political, meaning and tradition.

As always, we can conclude both commonalities over time — such as the use of toponyms and their function as 'proto-brands', meaning that they represent origin, specification, and quality. Within this given meaning and function of toponyms as textile labels, the terminology of fabrics in 18th- and 19th-century French demonstrated a general ambiguity attached to toponyms, as one term could designate several concepts (*e.g.*, *satin de la Chine* designating both *satin des Indes* and *satin Liné*).[135] The causes for the use of place names are to be found in the characteristics of these products, which are intrinsically linked to their geographical origin: According to the place of production, the qualities of a fabric — resulting from the use of locally produced natural fibers — differ considerably, which has direct consequences on customs and tax rules. Toponyms are also used for marketing purposes, exploiting geographical areas — especially Eastern countries — considered prestigious for textile production. Attached to toponyms is — as with all successful products — a certain reputation that makes them more reliable, adding value to the product. Examples demonstrated how crucial the identification of and communication about the trademark (based on toponymical reference) was for both sellers and consumers.

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[128] Bourdieu & Boltanski 1975, 13, 21; Bourdieu 1982, 81.

[129] Baquet 1982, 79.

[130] Bourdieu & Boltanski 1975.

[131] Guilbert 1973; Sablayrolles 2002; Krylosova 2013; Soubrier 2016; Saugera 2017.

[132] Møller 1998; Krylosova 2013.

[133] Krylosova 2013.

[134] Krylosova 2013; Saugera 2017.

[135] Savary 1741 (vol. III), 45.

Toponyms not only highlight the value of textiles, but at least in ancient and Medieval times also of wool as a raw material that was used in textile production for a wide variety of products. However, for wool we could observe the use of toponyms, mainly for the highest quality fibers that were a central component for the creation of a high-quality cloth.

Of course, there are also differences: For example, for ancient materials, geographical names designate an array of things, while the Medieval textile trade was constricted to the use of urban toponyms, which stood for legally anchored production specifications. In the modern era, with changes to the trade in finished garments, this use of toponyms has given way to branding, and the associated greater use of loanwords. Toponyms, such as the Balkan *cherga*, may shift their meaning over the many centuries and places where they are in use. This certainly was a slow but lasting process; it took two millennia to transform the original form and meaning of the Greek *Sērikḗ*, referring to North China, into *cherga*, denoting various types of wool, hemp, or rag blankets from the Balkans. Variants of the textile label *cherga* are still present in the lexicons of many languages, though most often as archaisms, spread throughout the territories in which they were either produced or traded. Leiden cloth, on the other hand, may mean different products, but in principle the toponym still represents the same meaning of standardized production under the control of the Leiden authorities. When Leiden cloth ceased to be of economic importance as a commodity, the toponym disappeared together with the product.

Changing meanings over time was another theme explored in the case studies discussed here. Loanwords from the Turkish language (turkisms) were actively used during the reign of the Ottomans in the Balkans, but some have been preserved in modern languages, such as vest. Older types of clothing that are no longer in use have lost their meaning, and today those words are preserved as archaisms. Toponyms can also transform into loanwords with a different meaning. The French terminology of the denim sector derives from two toponyms. While these were originally associated with a guarantee of quality, this symbolic value has disappeared today. Besides, in France, English now clearly dominates the terminology of the sector. However, as shown by the position of Turkish in Macedonia, the dominant language may vary between countries. The neological mechanisms mentioned here can nonetheless be extended to other languages, cultures, and periods. In other words, the definition of 'appellation of origin', as given by

the Geneva Act, is not enough to classify a phenomenon with such deep historical roots and complex dynamics.

It is important to not only explore the meaning that toponyms attach to textiles, but to also appreciate how raw material and textile production affected the communities in which these activities took place. Medieval Iceland has served as an example of the effects of this industry on toponyms, proving that the influence between textiles and geography can be bi-directional.

The authors of this paper brought together only a few case studies to highlight what we might learn from a comparative and long-term study of textile-labeling practices. More sources and etymologies should be studied meticulously by historians, linguists, and other disciplines in order to recognize the nuances in meanings of textile labels derived from toponyms, and to trace their significance to societies across space and time.

Coming back to our first question: What's in a name? We can conclude that a lot goes into it: Origin, quality, materiality, reputation, authority, identity, tradition, culture, expertise, branding, marketing. Textile labels based on toponyms or loanwords, as well as toponyms inspired by textile production, are strong testimonies to the dynamic and interlinking nature of European history and society.

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