

Textiles in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-century Probate Inventories from Styria (Austria): Innovation and Distribution

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the inhabitants of the duchy of Styria, the inhabitants of small towns, market towns, the capital Graz and rural dominions. There is a particular emphasis on local merchants who were distributors of fabrics and final products. Their probate inventories allow us to gain insights into the products that were locally available and are often regarded as best source for research into changes in consumer habits. Cotton and silk are important indicators of such changes.

The article is based on probate inventories covering the period from around 1660 to around 1790, along with several examples from before and after this period. The core of the research database is nearly 1,140 probate inventories from the monastery of Seckau, around 110 from the city of Graz, and another 234 from other Styrian towns, market towns, and dominions. Despite the relatively large number of sources, the study follows a historical-anthropological approach.

Key words

historical anthropology, European ethnology, material culture, probate inventories, textiles

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Textiles cover a wide range of needs and desires, from the basic need for protection from weather and temperature to a luxurious means of representation. In areas and social strata away from the centres of power and luxury, however, the range of available goods and qualities is narrower and therefore the variety and the monetary value of the textiles are limited, new products are often available only with a delay or not at all.

This paper focuses on the inhabitants of the duchy of Styria, the inhabitants of small towns, market towns, the capital Graz and of rural dominions. What kind of textiles were available to them? How limited and poor were their choices? Probate inventories are one of the best sources for answering these questions, as they allow us to gain insights into what products were locally available. Roman Sandgruber (1992: 174–175) regards cotton and silk as important indicators of changes in consumption, alongside pocket watches and mirrors, coffee and chocolate.

This article is based on probate inventories covering the period from around 1660 to around 1790, along with several examples from before and after this period. The core of the research database is nearly 1,140 probate inventories from the monastery of Seckau, covering the period from 1624 to 1787, around 110 from the city of Graz from 1672 to 1787, and 234 from other Styrian towns, market towns, and dominions. These inventories include around 15,000 items referring to textiles.

Thus, within the Styrian context, different social and economic settings can be compared. Seckau was a monastery of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine and, until its secularization in 1782, it was the residence of the bishop of the diocese of the same name. Its dominion property consisted mainly of rural tenants and also of citizens in small market towns (Pöttler 1996; 2002; 2011). In contrast, Graz was one of the residences of Emperor Friedrich III until 1493 and grew in importance again as the residence of Inner Austria from 1564 to 1619. Thereafter, the decline of the city was significant (Brunner 2003: 87, 102, 107–110).

More than lists of movables in general, those of domestic textiles and wearing apparel cause problems for the analysis and interpretation of probate inventories. Different legal frameworks (matrimonial laws and laws of succession) and differences in the practices of inventorying reduce the comparability in time and space. Often regarded as “private” property, apparel is mostly mentioned only summarily or not at all. Therefore, in this article the main emphasis is on new materials and means of distribution.

New materials in Styrian inventories

The cultural exchange connected to the intensified trade and building activity in the 17th and 18th century is also reflected in the emergence of new and prestigious textiles.¹ An example of luxurious living in late seventeenth-century Graz is the inventory of Anton Sollar (1672), a citizen and master builder (“*Maurermeister*”) of Graz and probably of Venetian origin (Reismann – Mittermüller 2003: 452). His estate was valued at 4,252 florins, but on the other hand he left liabilities of 2,281 florins. The domestic textiles in his estate, valued at 140 florins, consisted mainly of damask and fine linen. The bedding, valued at 97 florins and 30 kreuzer, contained a blanket made of cotton with blue taffeta (“*paumb wollene Töckhen mit blaben Taffet*”) valued at six florins, which is a rather early mention of cotton in Styria.² The Turkish blanket (“*türggische Pödt Töckhen*”) at nine florins is nearly double the value of the other blankets and underblankets and 50 % more than the cotton blanket referred to above.³ This seems comparable to a well-equipped 1622 four-poster bed from Nuremberg, which, 50 years earlier, also contained a Turkish blanket (“*türkische Deck*”) (Zander-Seidel 1990: 339, 349–350). In addition, it shows high esteem for “Turkish” textiles as cotton products in mostly bright colours.⁴ Over 100 years later, in 1778, the inventory of Franz Feilmayr, a ribbon maker and shopkeeper (“*Bandlmacher und Krämer*”) in Linz/Upper Austria lists Turkish yarn at 1 florin 45 kreuzer per pound, whereas plain and fine yarn are valued at 34 and 51 kreuzer respectively (Verlassenschaftsabhandlungen 1954: 19). Although, normally, Turkish yarn and other “Turkish” products were not produced in or imported from the Ottoman Empire (Selheim 1994: vol 1, 28; North 2003: 96), the values show the high esteem in which they were held.⁵

In rural areas within the borders of modern-day Austria, the change from home-made textiles to those made of commercially traded fabrics happened rather late in the eighteenth century – at least as far as servants

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- 1 For a general approach to innovation in textile production and distribution, cf., e.g., Styles (2019); Martin and Garrison (1997); Siebenhüner, Jordan and Schopf (2019) with the literature cited there. For hints and helpful remarks, I would like to thank Kim Siebenhüner and John Jordan.
 - 2 For the variety of cotton products, see Hofmann (1926: 553–560).
 - 3 Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv (hereinafter referred to as StLA), Graz, Stadt, K. 92, H. 664.
 - 4 Cf., nearly 100 years later the *Churbaierische Mauth- und Accis-Ordnung* (1765: 35): “**Garn (verschiedenes), und zwar sogenanntes türkisches Garn. s. Baumwoll-Waaren**”. For the middle of the 18th century Turkish yarn is listed for Hamburg as being imported from France. Otruba (1975/76, 3: 262).
 - 5 For Turkish red-dyeing, see Siebenhüner (2019: 154–155).

were concerned. Nevertheless, this change was often viewed quite critically, as by the conservative geographer Franz Sartori. As he noted in his travel diaries, reasonable peasants (“[v]ernünftige Landwirthe”) in Carinthia explained the changes to him thus: 14 years earlier (presumably prior to 1807) the servants had received clothes made of home-grown wool and flax and had been content with them. Thus, the peasants were able to save good money for other expenses. But thereafter, according to a peasants’ saying, a coat (“*Rock*”) had to be made of good [woollen] cloth instead of coarse fulled “*Loden*”, a fine hat and a pair of trousers made of buck skin became necessary, and, for a maid, a skirt (“*Rock*”) made of “*Muselin*” or “*Zitz*” and an apron of fine linen from the merchant’s store. Farmhands could be seen in waistcoats of scarlet (“*Scharlach*”) and with golden laces and braces of silk. Maids wore large silk scarfs (“*Halstücher*”) and aprons of taffeta. This exaggerated purchasing of dress instead of the use of home-made clothing resulted in such price increases that no average citizen or honest citizen woman could afford to do the same (Sartori 1811: 272). Of course, this narration is very tendentious in that it laments the extravagance and excesses of subordinate parts of the population, which was a widespread topos at that time (Brückner 2001: 10). On the other hand, it tells us not only about the ideologies of peasants and citizens, but also about the perception of relatively new fabrics at that time and in a certain area. For the years immediately before 1860, the Styrian physicist Mathias Macher noted an increase in luxury around the towns and larger settlements in southern Styria. As indicator of this, he mentions the fact that most people wore urban dress (Macher 1860: 121).

Cotton as an innovative product was brought to Central Europe from the 15th century onward mainly from the Levant (Beckert 2014: 39). In the Styrian inventories analyzed here, it is first mentioned as component of mixed fabrics. Fustian (“*Parchant*”) made of cotton and linen is already listed in the earliest inventories. The inventory of the “*Hofschneider Vallentin Pötsch*”, the tailor of the Benedictine abbey of Admont from 8 September 1605 contains four items with fustian, but only for the lowest quality is a detailed price given:

*“Drej Drimbl nüglfarb praun vnd rot gemainer Parchant zusammen geschätzt 2 f
Gemainer Parchant 17 Eln iper 27 kr st 7 f
Ain Stüekl weißer gueter Parchant 2 f
Ain Stüekl weiser gueter Parchant 2 f.”*⁶

6 Stiftsarchiv Admont, Xx:47.

Early mentions of cotton in the database start with the cotton stockings of Benedict Mayr, a baker in Knittelfeld in 1666 and an old “*Hüll*” as part of the bed linen in the household of Michael Paumberger, citizen of Knittelfeld 1668.⁷ Apart from stockings, in contrast to fustian, cotton is rarely mentioned in the seventeenth century. When it does appear, it is only in the apparel of wealthier people. For example, the 1688 inventory of a “*Stadtwachtmeister*” (a senior official of the city), Vincenz Hainschitsch, included a red doublet (“*Wames*”) made of linen and cotton.⁸

“*Zi(t)z*”, or chintz, is rarely mentioned and when it does appear, it is only after the middle of the eighteenth century. The database includes five inventories containing ten items made from chintz, all of which belonged to people in (market) towns. Chintz first appears in the 1763 inventory of the rather wealthy Juliana Hueberin, widow and wife of two locally well-known master builders, who had three chintz sleeping gowns.⁹ Two years later, the inventory of a merchant in Aussee lists not only four aprons made from chintz, but also his stock of different kinds of cottons including chintz (“*an ziz, ganz, et halb cattan*”).¹⁰

The value of the chintz goods was moderate. Hueberin’s three gowns were valued at 9.5 florins, the Aussee merchant’s four aprons at seven florins, and his stock of cottons at 194 florins. Two others, Elisabeth Segatillin and a rich merchant from Graz, had chintz clothing with moderate values of one to two florins.¹¹ Unfortunately, there is no hint of how the values of the different qualities related to one another. The 1787 mention of a dress with chaquet (“*Schaggetkleid*”) made of chintz (3 florins) in the inventory of Helena Schinkoin, the wife of the administrator of a dominion, indicates that chintz was a material used mainly by wealthier people, even if the values attributed were not necessarily very high.¹²

The mercantile tendencies of the time were oriented towards producing as much as possible within the country and this also pertained to the new textiles. Regarding local textile production in Graz, the *Skitze von Grätz* published in 1792 gives some hints. The author dates most of the factories to the

7 StLA, Knittelfeld, K. 57, H. 167.

8 The doublet was valued at four florins. StLA, Graz, Stadt, K. 92, H. 665. Cf. Pöttler (2017: 208).

9 StLA, Graz, Stadt, K. 95, H. 668.

10 StLA, Aussee, Markt, K. 379, H. 690.

11 For Segatillin, see StLA, Mag. Graz, F114:316; and for the merchant, see StLA, Graz, Stadt, K. 96, H. 669. The mention of an old “*ziz cottonener*” underskirt in 1780 suggests – as does that of the “*zitz cattonene*” aprons from 1765 – that it was not obvious to the participants involved that chintz was actually a kind of cotton.

12 StLA, Mag. Graz, D82:1787.

period of Joseph II and places particular stress on the large cotton factory (“*Ziz- und Kottunfabrik*”) founded by the Viennese merchant “Amerbacher”.¹³ The silk factory (“*Seidenfabrik*”) produced all kinds of Milanese silk neckerchiefs (“*mayländischen Seidentücheln*”) and silk crepon (“*Seiden-Crepon*”), which was said to meet Swiss quality standards.¹⁴ Furthermore, the author mentions a few half-silk manufacturers (“*Halbseiden-Manufakturen*”), a linen printer, a producer of light fabrics (“*Zeugmacher*”) and several knitters (“*Strumpfwirker*”). The latter exported many goods to the neighbouring countries, whereas the corduroy factory (“*Manchesterfabrik*”) which had been founded a few years earlier was never productive and closed down after its founder’s death (Skitze 1792: 335–336).

The role of merchants

Merchants, from prominent traders to shopkeepers, played an important role not only in the distribution of goods, but also possibly as role models for their customers. Nevertheless, the range of stock and the furnishing of their households could vary enormously. As an example of tradesmen in rural market towns, three inventories from Seckau (from 1720, 1730 and 1757) are analyzed below, which provide a glimpse of the development in the local textile trade and its strong connection to northern Italy during the 18th century. The first of the three tradesmen is Vincenz Dival. The “[b]urgerliche Handlungsman” was buried on 3 December 1720 and his age is reported as 86 years old.¹⁵ Even if we accept that his age is not necessarily correct, the birth registers make it clear that Vincenz Dival was not born in the parish of Seckau.¹⁶ His probate inventory from 18 December 1720 lists two documents (“*Khauffbriefe*”) which confirm that he had bought an inn, called the “*Straucher-Täfehrn*” in Seckau and a meadow in 1702. In the same year, he married his first wife. After her death, he married his second wife, who also died before him.¹⁷ The listing of the documents present in the household of Vincenz Dival very clearly indicates that he came to Seckau

13 According to Reismann and Mittermüller (2003: 16), this is Johann Ludwig Amberbacher, who became an honorary citizen of Graz in 1798.

14 The Swiss cantons were leaders in producing quality silk goods. See Schwarzenbach (2019) and Häusler (2019).

15 Diözesanarchiv Graz-Seckau (hereinafter referred to as DAGS), Seckau, Sterbebuch II 1716–1762, p. 18.

16 The baptism index entries for D/T start only in 1647 and the baptism register does not contain an entry for a Dival in the period in question.

17 StLA, Seckau, Domstift, K. 654, H. 1466.

from “*Sigillet/Sigldorff in Welschlandt*.”¹⁸ A confirmation from 1694 shows that he bought a house in that year and the inn mentioned above became his second possession in Seckau.

The still existing connection of Vincenz Dival to his village of origin is documented in his inventory: four debenture certificates for goods which inhabitants of Sigiletto had bought from him, dating from 1704, 1717 and 1718 and containing the names Dival and Gierin as debtors. Moreover, two were signed by an Italian notary, one of which was sealed by the debtor himself. The last one was signed and sealed by an official of the Abbey of Seckau, the “*Hoff Castner*”, as the debtor could not read and write. This indicates that the Italian merchants came to Seckau to buy goods from their former fellow merchant. Besides the names mentioned in the debenture certificates, the listing of assets contains eight more items with the names of debtors from Italy (“*im Welschlandt wohnhafft*”) or denoted as a “*Welscher*”. Thereof four are named Dival and three Warbalan/Barbolan, a name which will be of interest later.

The final and strongest indication of Vincenz Dival’s commercial activities in Italy before he arrived in Seckau is a note added to the list of assets, saying that he had accounts receivable to the amount of 1,716 florins “*in Welschlandt*”. Due to the fact that neither the debtor’s names nor their places of residence were known, there was no chance of collecting the money. Consequently, the fact was only mentioned here and not included in the assets.

Vincenz Dival’s only child was baptized on 2 February 1695 as “*Vitus Diuual*”. The name of the mother was “*Joanna*”.¹⁹ On 31 August 1717, the young man (“*junger Gesöll*”) “*Veith Diuual*” married “*Ännä Peringerin*”.²⁰ Thus, born in Seckau and married to a local woman Veit was well integrated. But Veit died very young. The inventory in which he was denoted as citizen, tenant and merchant (“*bürger(licher) Vntersasß [...] und Handelsman*”) was dated 2 June 1730.²¹ It lists not only the funeral costs for the priest, the teacher, and the innkeeper in Kapfenberg, but also those for putting up a cross of iron and wood in the cemetery there, thus confirming that Veit Dival had died around 60 kilometres from his home.

Some four months later, his widow Anna (“*Anna Divalin Vidua*”) married Jacob Barbolan on 24 October 1730.²² According to the inventory of his predecessor Veit Dival, he was born in Friuli and, as the list of debtors

18 Today: 33020 Sigiletto, municipality Forni Avoltri, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy.

19 DAGS, Seckau, Taufbuch II, 1688–1765, p. 54.

20 DAGS, Seckau, Trauungsbuch I, 1672–1740, p. 172.

21 StLA, Seckau, Domstift, K. 669, H. 1482.

22 DAGS, Seckau, Trauungsbuch I, 1672–1740, p. 207.

suggests, probably came from the same village as the Divals. However, the Barbolan(i)s were well established in Styria at least from the 17th century onwards (Deissl 2009: 586). Only six years later Anna died, aged 42, and was buried on 26 January 1736.²³ Anna Maria Barbolanin, buried on 10 April 1753, aged 34, seems to have been Jacob's second wife, and his third wife, Maria, survived him. In the inventory, his father-in-law, Benedict Schreyamayr, a peasant of the dominion of Seckau, is mentioned as a creditor who lent 400 florins to his son-in-law, which can be seen as an indicator of economic difficulties.²⁴ Jacob Barbolan was buried on 18 March 1757, aged 60.²⁵ He was survived by his third wife Maria and six children from three wives.

At the age of 25, Jacob's oldest son Sebastian Barbolan became his successor. In 1769, the effects of the import restrictions on local tradesmen can be seen in relation to his shop, where he was suspected of selling illegally imported products. Fourteen pairs of woollen stockings (seven pairs of four-ply Hamburg stockings for men and women and seven pairs of Saxonian ones for men, boys and girls) were found there by a controller ("*Revisor*") of the Poneggen factory.²⁶ This check was based on a "*Circularre*" from 5 September 1768, in which the offering ("*Hinausbringung*") of foreign woollen stockings was punishable by a fine of 50 Reichsthaler per dozen (Meixner 1772: s. v. Fabriquen und Fabricanten). In the end, it took seven years for Barbolan to get his stockings back without paying a fine.²⁷

23 DAGS, Seckau, Sterbebuch II, 1716–1762, p. 85.

24 StLA, Seckau, Domstift, K. 702, H. 1524.

25 DAGS, Seckau, Sterbebuch II, 1716–1762, p. 251.

26 StLA, Seckau, Domstift, K. 845, H. 1884, Specification, 07. 11. 1769. For early mentions of Hamburg stockings in Austria, see Geramb (1931). The success of the Hamburg stockings led to attempts to establish production facilities within the Habsburg monarchy. The label "Hamburg", derived from the city of production, denoting high quality and helping to promote the local products. From 1763 onwards, it was Reichsgraf Christoph Ludwig von Salburg, who attempted to establish a factory for the production of Hamburg stockings in the Mühlviertel in Upper Austria (Grüll 1959: 14). In 1764, a society, the "Hamburger Strumpf-Manufaktur-Sozietät", was founded by von Salburg and two other nobles. They bought the small castle of Poneggen as a suitable site for the production (Grüll 1959: 18–19).

27 StLA, Seckau, Domstift, K. 845, H. 1884.

Table 1: Economic situation as described in three inventories

	Vincenz Dival 1720	Veit Dival 1730	Jacob Barbolan 1757
Private property	226 fl	333 fl	583 fl
Livestock included	53 fl	34 fl	83 fl
Apparel of the deceased	0	23 fl	41 fl
Trading goods	1240 fl	820 fl	1693 fl
In items (stock)	187	293	505
Cloth	49	63	90
Stockings	12	28	32
Items total	289	467	818
Assets & money	2329 fl	1044 fl	1030 fl
Immovables	485	600	600
Total property	4280 fl	2798 fl	3970 fl
Liabilities	1144 fl	459 fl	2836 fl

Regarding the living conditions of the three merchants, a comparison of their inventories shows an overall increase in private property. In addition to trading, another source of income was agriculture. Barbolan had the most differentiated livestock, with a horse and a pair of oxen. The description of immovable goods indicates the development of the property. In 1720, the house was called the “*Straucher-Tafelrhn im Marckht*”. Compared to other inns, the fittings were rather modest and it is possible that this function was not much used. Nevertheless, the meals on the occasions of the funeral and the inventorying were served within the house and not in the inn of the local “*Amtmann*”²⁸ of the dominion, which was normally the case.

Veit Dival seems to have carried out a lot of renovations. In 1730, the house was called “*Straucher Taffern sambt der Handelschafft*” (thus including the trading) and because of the good condition of the buildings the value was adjusted from 450 to 565 florins.

In 1757, the value for the immovables remained the same, but despite the quantitative and qualitative growth in stock, the property is once again only called the “*Straucher-Tafern*”. This time the meals at the funeral and the inventorying were served in the inn of the local “*Amtmann*”.

Regarding the so-called “*Mayrzeug*” (tools and implements for agriculture and home furnishings), the inventories of Vincenz and Veit Dival are rather modest, though they contained pewter vessels and some other items indicating a slightly elevated mode of living. Barbolan brought more luxurious

²⁸ A kind of bailiff for a subdivision of the dominion, mostly a wealthy peasant and innkeeper.

equipment to Seckau, including not only a calash (“*Källesß*”) and a new wagon for transport, but also riding equipment, weapons, books, mirrors, silver, brass and golden picture frames.

Fairs, markets and auctions as places of distribution

The liabilities listed in the probate inventories can give some insights into the locations of the trading activities, although they cannot be supposed to be complete.

Vincenz Dival owed 358 florins, 5 shillings and 2 pfennigs to Johann Ludwig Pürckhl in Regensburg and 12 florins and 2 shillings to Johann Vizdomb in Nuremberg for goods (“*Wahren*”), which, unfortunately, are not specified. When compared to the stock in Dival’s inventory, the first sum suggests that at least a part of the goods consisted of textiles. Two more liabilities were related to merchants in Steyr (Upper Austria). There, Dival owed 36 florins to “*Georg Stamhoffer Zeugmachern in Steyer per Zeug*” (light cloth) and to “*Johann Mayr Zeugmachern Steyer auch per genomnenen Zeug*”. Unlike his father, Veit Dival did not leave any liabilities regarding textiles.

The inventory of Barbolan provides more information that shows his commercial connections within Central Europe. Like his predecessor he had liabilities in Regensburg at “*Johann Ludwig Pürkl und Consort*” for goods he had bought for 151 florins and 12 pfennigs at the “*Bartholomaei Morckt*”, which is a fair in late August 1756. Although a location for the market is not given, we may assume that it was the one in Linz, where Barbolan also bought at least “*3 Stuck Tuech*”, three pieces of cloth, for 87 florins from “*Johann Fridrich Schröck*”. In addition, Barbolan bought goods from merchants from Bavarian imperial towns at the “*Egidij Gräzer Marckt*”, the market in the Styrian capital, which was held in early September 1756. From the Nuremberg-based merchants “*Johann Tobias et Gottfrid Kiesling*”²⁹ he bought unspecified goods (“*Material Waaren*”) for 75 florins, 4 shillings and 28 pfennigs, and he bought unspecified goods from “*Emanuel Pozenhardt von Augspurg*”³⁰ for 110 florins and 4 shillings. Three smaller liabilities relate to merchants in the surroundings, within a radius of 40 kilometres: for a piece of gauze (“*Flor*”) for 5 florins, 6 shillings and 28 pfennigs, and for unspecified goods in the regionally important towns of Judenburg and Leoben for around 67 florins.

29 For the Kiesling trading house, cf., Seibold (2014: vol. 1, 439–459).

30 Emanuel Botzenhardt was also depositor in Vienna and from 1766–1771 founder and owner of a cotton factory in Klosterneuburg (Zorn 1961: 57).

In addition to the account books of merchants, the protocols of auctions are a good means of estimating the relation between the values attributed by the assessors and the prices paid on the market (Stöger 2011). Unfortunately, these protocols or other guides to the prices achieved are rather rare. Furthermore, we do not usually know who purchased the goods and the reason for the purchase. The following table with the auction results for cotton products shows the large differences regarding the increase in value at auctions in Graz and the limited range of goods. The different mentions of cotton stockings document the incalculabilities of auctions, with increases in value between zero and about 168 percent. The cotton blanket is an example of an extreme 500 percent increase.

Table 2: Estimated value and final price of cotton products at auctions in Graz

value	price	rate	amount	description	date
50 xr	50 xr	0.00	5 pairs	cotton underwear stockings a 10 xr (<i>baumwollene Vnterzich-Strümpf</i>)	1778 03
18 xr	25 xr	38.89	1 lb	old cotton (<i>alte Baum Wohl</i>)	1764 05
15 xr	21 xr	40.00	1	cotton sleeping cap (<i>baumwollene Schlaf Hauben</i>)	1778 04
1 f	1 f 30 xr	50.00	1	brown cotton waistcoat (<i>braun catonnes Jöpl</i>)	1778 02
2 xr	3 xr	50.00	2	simple cotton sleeping caps (<i>einfache baumwollene Schlafhauben</i>)	1778 03
10 x	16 x	60.00	1 pair	white cotton stockings (<i>weiß baumwollene Strümpf</i>)	1786 01
20 xr	33 xr	65.00	3	small remainders of cotton (<i>kleine rest Caton</i>)	1778 02
30 xr	44 xr	46.67	2 pairs	white cotton stockings (<i>weiß baumwollene Strümpf</i>)	1778 05
14 xr	29 xr	107.14	2 pairs	mottled cotton stockings (<i>baumwoolene melirte Strümpf</i>)	1778 06
12 xr	27 xr	125.00	1	brown cotton waistcoat (<i>braun kätoneenes Jöpl</i>)	1778 03
1 f	2 f 41 xr	168.33	5 pairs	cotton underwear stockings (<i>baumwollene deto [Unterziech Strümpf]</i>)	1778 04
30 xr	3 f	500.00	1	cotton blanket (<i>kartonene Dekhen</i>)	1778 03

Continuities and changes in stock from 1720 to 1757

The merchants of the Dival/Barbolan family were rather modest in comparison to traders like Franz Anton Spängler from Salzburg, who also owned warehouses in Brünn/Brno, Graz, Krems and Linz (Reith 2015). Unfortunately, we do not have records of comparable accuracy for Seckau. In this article, it is not possible to describe the changes in minute detail. Instead, several significant tendencies will be highlighted.

Regarding linen as the most used textile in rural areas, Vincenz Dival left behind only seven ells of “*ordinari*” printed linen, four of blue “*Ländler*” linen and a small piece (“*Stückhl*”) of “*ordinari Ländler*” linen in his stock. 50 ells of coarse linen (“*rupfen*”) and 11 ells of fine linen (“*reisten*”) are listed under his “*Mayrzeug*”.

Ten years later, Veit Dival bequeathed 11 ells and a half piece of black sealed linen (“*Sigl Leinwath*”), a new type of textile. He left larger quantities of “*Ländler*” and ordinary printed linen than his father. 31 ells of twill (“*Zwilich*”) stood for two-ply linen (Schmeller 1877: vol. 2, 1070). Furthermore, his stock comprised nine ells of blue “*Reisten*” fine linen and 25 ells of “*Rupfen*” coarse linen. The “*Mayrzeug*” included not only 16 ells of the especially robust “*Plachen*”, used, for example, for straw beds, but also 61 ells of “*Reisten*” and 103 ells of “*Rupfen*”. This large amount of linen within the household raises the question of whether it was part of the (former) stock or part of a dowry.

In 1757, the selection of linen had changed considerably: sealed linen was available in white and black (22 ½ ells). There were also several new types of linen: “*Glanzleinwath*” in black, blue, and red, as well as in a printed version in different qualities (altogether 51 ells and a small piece); printed “*Gräzer*” linen (37 ells) and ordinary printed linen in red and black. The fine “*Reisten*” was only in stock in some 28 ells of a coloured version. “*Aparsten*” as linen of medium quality was available only in 24 ells of a coarse but coloured variant (“*gfarbt grobe Aparsten*”). “*Rupfen*” is no longer mentioned in the stock, but in two unspecified items in the “*Mayrzeug*”, where we also find around 125 ells of different types of “*Reisten*” and 11 ½ ells of “*Plachen*”.

Thus, the number of commercially important types of linen had increased, whereas traditional types had almost disappeared from stock and were to be found only within the private household, at least if we assume that the separation between stock and household was treated consistently.

In contrast to linen, woollen cloths as raw material are not recorded in the households of the three merchants, only in stock. As with linen, however, the range of types increased considerably in the period in question. In 1720, 15 items pertained to woollen cloths. The marks of origin point mainly to

Bohemia/Moravia, namely Neuhaus (in German)/Jindřichův Hradec (in Czech), Patzau/Pacov and Neu Bistritz/Nová Bystrice (Watterich von Watterichsburg 1845: vol. 1, 85). Woollen cloths from the latter were called “*Fistrizer*” in the inventories. Broad (“*brait*”) and narrow (“*schmal*”) are attributed to some of them and the colours range from black, brown, green, red and scarlet (“*scharlach*”) to yellow “*tristiminfarb*” and pearl “*perlfarb*”.

Ten years later, 22 items are described in the stock of woollen cloths. In addition to Neuhaus and Patzau as places of origin, Budweis/České Budějovice, Sobieslau/Soběslav and Mährisch Trübau/Moravská Třebová (Demian 1804: vol. 1, 121) are mentioned, and also the Silesia region. Nová Bystrice is no longer present. Blue, grey and dark-brown, “*capucinerfarb*” and mottled (“*meliert*”) are new colours, and capuchin brown “*capucinerfarb*” from Sobieslau and Neuhaus.

In 1757, there were 20 items pertaining to woollen cloth, but the range had changed significantly. Olmütz/Olomouc (4) and Braunau/Broumov (2) were the main new places of origin. Patzau/Pacov, Sobieslau/Soběslav and Neuhaus/Jindřichův Hradec are mentioned only once. An additional colour is also recorded, namely, violet. As for the “*olmizer Tüch*”, there are three qualities and three colours in several combinations: the ordinary variant in black and brown for 1 florin 24 kreuzer per ell,³¹ three remnants of middle-fine quality in brown and green for 1 florin 36 kreuzer per ell, a fine variant in green for 1 florin 45 kreuzer per ell and, finally, a piece in black for 36 florins. The cloth from Braunau is listed, with no reference to the quality, in two colours: brown for 1 florin 42 kreuzer and red for 2 florins 42 kreuzer per ell. “*Wendter*” as a place of origin or type of fabric in 1720, and also “*Wemeter*” in 1730 and “*wemiter passauer*” in 1757, could not be localized (Crusius 1798).

“*Anfengertuech*”, the beginning of a piece of cloth, was seen as inferior to the cheapest “normal” cloth and is mentioned in two items in 1720 and in three in 1757 with values of 30 kreuzer and 33 kreuzer per ell respectively. In the 1784 Spängler inventory in Salzburg, “*12 Ellen braun schmall Anfängs Tüch, die Ellen zu 32 xr*” is recorded (Reith 2015: 94), which seems to be a comparable price, but the cloth is called narrow, which is not the case in Seckau. “*Kherntuech*” in green and red is valued at the same price as the “*Anfengertuech*” in 1720 and at only 24 kreuzer, listed under the narrow cloths, in 1730. This is surprising, as Kerntuch, cloth made from core wool, was at that time normally subsumed under the qualitatively better cloths.³² Bolting cloth (“*Peiltuech*”), a special type of cloth for use in mills

31 It remains unclear which ell was used. According to Baravalle (1929: 74), the possible length was from 81 to 86 cm.

32 Cf., e.g., Georg H. Zincke (1745: vol. 1, 397).

in several types and qualities and with the denominations Linz and French, can be found in all three inventories.

“Zeug” was mostly a mixture of wool and linen and available in many qualities and from different places of origin. Fulled “Zeug” from Linz (“*gewalchter Linzerzeug*”) is mentioned in three pieces in 1720, and there is a reference to blue “*Linzer Zeüg*” in 1730.³³ In 1757, the most valuable Zeug was striped “*Rock-Zeig*”. The list also contains an item with three pieces of black, red and green “*Linzer Zeig*” as well as one with remnants of “*Linzer Zeig*” in different colours. Narrow “*Steyrer Zeigl*” (from Steyr) and brown “*Steyrer Zeig*” also point to Upper Austria as the region of origin. The liabilities of Vincenz Dival to two manufacturers in Steyr show that he also bought textiles there, although none of them are recorded in his inventory. The 32 ells of “*Žwirn Zeig*”, which are listed in two items probably consisted of only partly twine.³⁴

In the inventory of 1720, under the name “*Mässelän*” (which is largely equivalent to “Zeug”, derived from the Italian *mezzalana*), there are 16 pieces in different colours for a total value of 56 florins and two pieces of a striped variant. In 1730, 72 ells of “*Maselän*” from Steyr and 14 ells of a fulled variant were listed. In 1757, there were 30.5 ells of black “*Massälan*” in stock.

An even greater degree of differentiation can be observed with the remaining, partly more specialised fabrics. In 1720, Vincenz Dival’s stock contained three pieces of “*Cärdisß*” in various colours and five pieces of damask in basic quality and several colours (“*gemainen Damasch in Farben*”). Furthermore, he had taffeta, “*Oberwurschet*”, “*Cron Räsß*” and several types and colours of “*Quinet*” (including five pieces in scarlet) in stock, as well as a half piece of “*Crépon*”. Linen with cotton (“*Carthann-Leinwadt*”) was assessed at the same value per ell as ordinary velvet (“*Trübsammet*”), and half-cotton was less expensive.

In 1730, the stock contained around 100 ells of “*Cardis*” for only 13 kreuzer per ell, “*Cäpizoll*”, “*Halb Räsß*”, “*Wurschet*” and “*Quinet*” in several qualities and colours, thus documenting a reduction in range.

The period of Barbolan brought an enormous upturn in the variety of fabrics. Although “*Wurschet*” was no longer in stock, there was “*Halb-Räsß*”

33 Friedrich Nicolai (1785: Beilagen, 70) describes Linzer Zeug in his *Idiotikon*: “*Linzerzeug, heißt in Wien ein halbwoollener, halbleinener Zeug, sonst Meselan genannt, damit sich Bauern und Bürger in Wälschland, Krain, etc. kleiden. In Schwaben und Franken Tirltey.*” For the whole range of products and prices of the wool factory in Linz in their variety and temporal development, cf., Hofmann (1920: 655–685).

34 In a topographical description of Graz by Aquilinus Julius Caesar (1781: vol. 3, 22), “Franz Zeidler” is mentioned as merchant dealing with “*Bändl, Tüchl, ordin. Leinwath, Spitzen, Strümpfen, Linzer- und Žwirn-Zeug*”.

and “*Räsß*” from Silesia and Villach/Carinthia. The list also contained gauze from “*Harass*”, several types of half-crepon and silk-crepon, half-silk “*Traget*”, “*Calmanque*” with a floral pattern, striped “*Conafass*”, and “*Scharschet*” in scarlet. The most expensive of these fabrics was “*Pey*”, mostly from Braunau and valued from 51 kreuzer per ell for the green variant and up to 1 florin 21 kreuzer for the scarlet type. Nevertheless, this value was far below the 2 florins per ell for the red and brown damask, the 2 florins 15 kreuzer for the green velvet and the above-mentioned red woollen cloth from Braunau for 2 florins 42 kreuzer per ell.

Silk of minor quality, called “*Fletseiden*”, is present in all three inventories, whereas Jutta Zander-Seidel mentions “*Floretseide*, *Flidtseide*” as being supplanted by better qualities during the 17th century (Zander-Seidel 1990: 399). As the amounts are rather small (36, 13 and 26 Loth) and the declared values are rather modest (from 5 to 7 kreuzer only, compared to 20 kreuzer for dyed silk or 28 for twisted (“*gedrätte*”) and dyed silk), it was seemingly in little demand. Nevertheless, even Barbolan, whose stock of silk products such as ribbons, cords and laces was considerably more differentiated than his predecessors and who also stocked neckerchiefs (“*Tüchl*”) and braces (“*Hosentrager*”), had this type of poor quality silk still available.³⁵

Regarding the distribution of textiles, the inventory of Anna Hederin, who died in Graz on 7 April 1764, is especially interesting. The register of death lists her as the wife of a medical doctor from the region of Salzburg and because of the distance from her home she was buried “*ohne Gleit*” (without cortège). In her list of liabilities “*H(err) Spängler von Salzburg*” is mentioned, together with two other men from the same city, who are denoted as merchant (“*Kaufmann*”) and hosiery dealer (“*Strimpfhandler*”) respectively. The fact that Spängler is mentioned without any further attribute, suggests that this “*Spängler*” was the well-known trader from Salzburg, who also owned a warehouse in Graz (Reith 2015: 100–101). In addition to this example of commercial connections, the inventory contains a reference for a social transfer of clothes. The maid of Anna Hederin, “*Maria Anna Zweiglin*”, not only received double her earnings for one year, but also two items from the apparel of her deceased employer, “*in na(tur)a*” and without a valuation. One was a “*Rock*” from chintz (“*žiz*”) and taken in (“*abgenähet*”) and the other was from “*Conafass*”.³⁶

35 For the development in Vienna, Bern and western Prussia, see Kafantogias (2019), Jordan (2019), and Fleischmann-Heck (2019).

36 StLA, Graz, Stadt, K. 95, H. 668.

Conclusion

Drawing on probate inventories, this article deals with research into the dissemination of (new) textiles, their names and their origins. Due to the limitations of inventories in regard to textiles, a primarily qualitative approach was chosen.

New materials and special qualities as a means of distinction are present mainly in the inventories of wealthier households. Cotton as a new fibre for textiles is mentioned in the inventories of the sample from 1605 onwards, but only as a component of fustian, which remains the main fabric containing cotton throughout the 17th century. Printed cotton, normally called “*Zitz*”, can be found in wealthier households in Graz and Aussee from 1763 onwards. Rich merchants, such as those in Graz or Salzburg, often owned new fashionable clothes of high quality, but due to various forms of transfer fashionable or high-quality dress could also be found in the inventories of servants.

Designations of origin increasingly became names for specific types of goods or modes of production. One example is the Hamburg stockings that were confiscated in the shop of Sebastian Barbolan, which were sometimes even differentiated in terms of those produced in Hamburg and those produced domestically or elsewhere. This is visible evidence of protectionist measures to promote domestic production.³⁷

The function of merchants as distributors of goods in a rural setting was shown with the example of three inventories from Seckau, which document the changes in stock and give insights into commercial and private connections. Originally from Friuli, the Dival/Barbolan family settled in Seckau around 1700. The vicinity to the abbey and its late-Baroque activities in arts and architecture (Roth 1964: 495–499) may be seen as an important factor in the commercially successful development of their business under Jacob Barbolan. His son, however, was suspected of selling illegally imported stockings. This detail is a good illustration of the impact of mercantile regulations, which led to a reduction in supply at the local level.

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³⁷ For the complex regulations regarding the import of cotton products, see Hofmann (1926: 443–462).

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