



Cotton in Context

Manufacturing, Marketing,
and Consuming Textiles
in the German-speaking World
(1500–1900)

böhlau

Kim Siebenhüner, John Jordan, Gabi Schopf (Ed.)



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Monica Juneja und Kim Siebenhüner

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Inhalt

Preface	7
Introduction: Swiss Cotton – A Fabric and its Research Debates	9
Kim Siebenhüner	
Fibres, Fashion and Marketing: Textile Innovation in early modern Europe	35
John Styles	
Indian Block Printing: Technology, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation Across Time and Place	61
Eiluned Edwards	
PART 1 – The Production of Textiles: Manufacturing and Colouring	
Textile Printing in early modern Augsburg: at the Crossroads of Local and Global Histories of Industry	91
Karl Borromäus Murr and Michaela Breil	
Early Textile Printing in Eastern Switzerland and its Forgotten B(l)oom around 1800	119
Ernest Menolfi	
The Art of Making <i>Indienne</i> : Knowing How to Dye in Eighteenth-Century Switzerland	145
Kim Siebenhüner	
An Apron's Tale: Innovative Colours and Fashionable Dress between India and the Swiss Cantons	171
Claudia Ravazzolo	
Dyeing Woollens in Eighteenth-Century Berlin: The <i>Königliches Lagerhaus</i> and the Globalisation of Prussia through Colouring Materials	195
Jutta Wimpler	

PART 2 – The Business of Textiles: Marketing and Product Innovation

Portuguese Product Development in Bengal: A Case Study from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries 225
 Barbara Karl

Selling through Samples? The Role of Objects in Merchant Communication 245
 Gabi Schopf

Swiss Silks for New York: Diaries and Pattern Books of the Zurich Silk Industry, 1847–1861 267
 Alexis Schwarzenbach

Marketing *avant la lettre*: The Swiss Embroidery Industry 1850–1912 291
 Eric Häusler

PART 3 – The Consumption of Textiles: Clothes and Fabrics

The Global Cotton Trade on the European Fringe: Imports, Consumption and the Influence of Indian Cottons on Denmark 1660–1806 317
 Vibe Maria Martens

The *Duisburger Intelligenz-Zettel* as a Source for Textile Research: Supply and Consumption of Silk and Cotton Textiles in Western Prussia in the second Half of the Eighteenth Century 335
 Isa Fleischmann-Heck

Textiles and Clothes in the Probate Inventories of Vienna’s Middle Classes, 1783–1823 357
 Aris Kafantogias

The Non-Revolutionary Fabric: The Consumption, Chronology, and Use of Cotton in early modern Bern 385
 John Jordan

Notes on Contributors 411

Index of Names 415

Index of Places 419

Preface

There is a saying that cotton changed the world: a fabric that for centuries had been imported predominantly from India first revolutionised the European textile industry, then the erstwhile polycentric world order. The engagement with cotton has also altered historiography, albeit in a slightly less radical way. For some time now, it has positioned the history of textiles at the intersection of global history, the history of material culture and the history of consumption and shopping, thus remapping a field of research which it shares with art historians and museologists.

This volume aims to contribute to the remapping of the field. To do so, it firstly seeks to draw attention to the German-speaking world and, secondly, to engage the German-speaking world in current debates in this field. The volume is based on a conference held at the University of Bern between 14 and 16 April 2016. We wish to take this opportunity to once more thank all the participants for the enriching, interdisciplinary dialogue – alongside the authors in this volume, this includes Birgitt Borkopp-Restle, Karolina Hutkova, Ulrich Pfister, Burkhard Pöttler and Meha Priyadarshini. Our special thanks to the authors for agreeing to revise their contributions to the volume. Their work is joined by a contribution by Claudia Ravazzolo, who was a member of the project team from the outset.

The fact that we were able to hold the conference in the first place is thanks to a number of donors. Here, we must first thank the Swiss National Science Foundation and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation as well as the Burgerbibliothek of Bern. We are very grateful to these institutions for their financial support.

The conference volume is part of the larger research project “Textiles and Material Culture in Transition: Consumption, Innovation and Global Interaction in the Early Modern Period”, which was conducted between 2013 and 2018 at the University of Bern’s Institute of History under the direction of Kim Siebenhüner. We are once again grateful to the Swiss National Fund for financing this project and the accompanying research professorship. It gave us the freedom for an intense period of research, the results of which in part inform this volume.

Bern provided us with the perfect environment for our work. At the Institute of History, we benefited from our affiliation to the division of Early Modern History and the collaboration with Christian Windler and his team. We can look back on stimulating joint lunches and colloquia which proved that even historians interested in diplomatic history and those

suddenly interested in textiles can learn from one another! André Holenstein has been an enthusiastic supporter of our project from the very beginning. He saved us from the pitfalls of Swiss history on several occasions. It goes without saying that any reference in this volume to Switzerland as a single entity, rather than the Swiss cantons, is entirely our fault. Stephan Scheuzger influenced our work to an extent he is perhaps unaware of. We are indebted to him for encouraging us to define the extent to which our project, which is predominantly based on sources and objects held in Swiss archives, can claim to add to a global historical perspective. Thankfully, this claim does not result solely from our adventures in Indian textile workshops! We had wonderful collaboration partners on site, not least in the person of Joachim Eibach and the team from the “Doing house” project. We are very grateful to him as well as to Nadine Amsler, Sarah Baumgarten, Michael Hirt, Meike Knittel, Michael Offermann and Sarah Rindlisbacher for the joint discussions and teaching events, critique and feedback.

Along with the Bern University of the Arts (HKB), the Abegg Foundation in Riggisberg and the Bern Historical Museum, the other advantages of our Bern location included the presence of the professorships in Early Modern Art History and History of the Textile Arts. From the very beginning, we found a co-champion for the history of material culture in Christine Göttler. We are indebted to Birgitt Borkopp-Restle for everything she taught us about textiles and the applied arts in the early modern period, from the simple difference between plain weave and satin weave to an understanding of the materiality of production techniques. We thank her not just for putting us in touch with curators but also for the joint visits to collections, which broadened our horizons.

Since April 2016, the work on our research project, the dissertation projects and the conference volume went hand in hand. John Jordan has taken on the task of copy-editing the contributions by predominantly German native-speakers for an English-language academic audience; Kim Siebenhüner has finalised the manuscript; and in Jena, Hannah Gratz, Anna Bundt and Frances Höllein have thankfully created the index. It is thanks to the ever-empathetic and capable Dorothee Rheker-Wunsch and the team at Böhlau that the manuscript has been transformed into a book. For this, we extend our sincere gratitude.

Jena/Bern, September 2018

Kim Siebenhüner, John Jordan and Gabi Schopf

Introduction: Swiss Cotton – A Fabric and its Research Debates

Kim Siebenhüner

In 1806, Jacob Laurenz Custer – a merchant of Rheineck and, since 1803, Grand Councillor of St. Gallen – penned an astonishing judgment. In his *Contemporary Observations on the Swiss Cotton Trade*, he opined that the Old Swiss Confederacy’s trading and manufacturing industries were on shaky ground. Switzerland, he wrote, possessed neither an advantageous position near the sea, nor a thriving agricultural industry to meet the people’s needs for foodstuffs and raw materials. The cotton trade, he continued, was dependent on the “whims of fashion,” the “arbitrariness of foreign governments,” and the “competition against rivals more richly imbued with inventiveness.”¹ Custer was driving at the trade war between England and France that had been raging since 1805, at protectionist measures introduced by the Old Swiss Confederacy’s neighbouring countries, and at the British inventions of the 1770s and 1780s that had mechanised the cotton-spinning process. He was critical of the shifts in consumer habits that resulted from the excessive expansion of the cotton industry. The “frugal, modest, undemanding character of our people” had suffered, wrote Custer; the clothing of day labourers was now as costly as that of the landed gentry, and “the female sex” tried to outdo one another with their “unseemly finery.”² Custer championed greater economic self-sufficiency. He felt that the economy should no longer be dependent on products that had been made in factories and were intended for the export market, but should instead be based on ostensibly “more reliable forms of commerce” and greater internal trade.³

Custer’s diagnosis of his times is astonishing for several reasons. For one thing, the author (1755–1828) was himself a textile merchant who made his living from the export trade.⁴

1 Jacob Laurenz Custer, *Zeitbeobachtungen über das schweizerische Baumwollgewerb, dessen Folgen und Ausichten* (Switzerland, 1806), 17.

2 “Wahrlich, es ist hohe Zeit, unsre eigne Ehre, unser höchstes Interesse fordern uns dazu auf, einmal auf etwas zu denken, das nicht so ganz von der Laune der Mode, von der Willkühr auswärtiger Regierungen, und von der Konkurrenz reicherer mit einem vorzüglichen Erfindungsgeist und allgemein beliebten Kunstfleiß ausgerüsteter Nebenbuhler abhängt.” Custer, *Zeitbeobachtungen*, 17.

3 “Wer darf leugnen, daß der frugale, bescheidene, genügsame Charakter unsers Volks, durch die übermäßige Ausdehnung dieser Gewerbe einen gewaltigen Stoß erlitten? [...] Nahrung und Kleidung derjenigen, die von der Hand ins Maul lebten, waren kostbarer, als die begüteterter Landleute. [...] Das weibliche Geschlecht wetteiferte in einem übertriebenen, unschicklichen Putz.” Custer, *Zeitbeobachtungen*, 12–13.

4 On Custer, see also Wolfgang Göldi, “Custer, Jacob Laurenz,” *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz (HLS)*, <http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/d/D18262.php>. Accessed 21 August 2018; Peter Schaps, “Jacob Laurenz Custer

Since 1775, he had served as the head of the Heer trading house, which was headquartered in Rheineck and had an office in Verona.⁵ Secondly, the author completely misrepresented the importance that the Swiss cotton industry had achieved during the previous century. Since the end of the seventeenth century, it had been responsible for proto-industrial growth in many cantons and provided numerous men and women with a living. Custer had forgotten that economic activity within Switzerland had been export-oriented for centuries. The late-medieval linen industry of eastern Switzerland had already been geared towards producing cloth for the export market. In demanding a return to a more self-sufficient form of economy and living, Custer was above all drawing on the stereotype of the pious, modest citizen of the Old Swiss Confederacy.⁶ The growing prevalence of voguish goods such as coffee, tobacco, porcelain, and cotton textiles, too, was as little in keeping with this ideal as the fact that “eighteenth-century Switzerland was one of the most heavily industrialised countries on the European continent.”⁷ Custer was also ultimately to be proven wrong by future developments. Despite many bankruptcies along the way, the Swiss cotton, silk, and embroidery industries achieved new heights in the nineteenth century.

In contrast to Custer, historians were quick to recognise the importance of Switzerland’s textile industry. Its history has been studied since the nineteenth and twentieth century; initially from a more traditional, chronological perspective, and later in terms of social, economic, and company-specific foci.⁸ More recently, English-speaking researchers, in

(1755–1828): Politiker, Geschäftsmann und Wohltäter,” *Unser Rheintal* 61 (2004): 217–26; and Jakob Bösch, *Jacob Laurenz Custer 1755–1828* (Berneck: Rheineck, 1928).

5 Rheineck, the former capital of the Old Swiss Confederacy *Landvogtei* of the same name, is located near the mouth of the River Rhine on Lake Constance.

6 André Hohenstein, *Mitten in Europa: Verflechtung und Abgrenzung in der Schweizer Geschichte* (Baden: hier + jetzt, 2014), 173–74.

7 Hohenstein, *Mitten*, 92.

8 See Adolf Jenny-Trümpy, “Handel und Industrie des Kantons Glarus,” *Jahrbuch des Historischen Vereins des Kantons Glarus* 34 (1902); Werner Fetscherin, *Beitrag zur Geschichte der Baumwollindustrie im alten Bern* (Weinfelden: Neuenschwander, 1924); Paul Schwartz, “Les débuts de l’indiennage mulhousine (I),” *Bulletin de la Société industrielle de Mulhouse* 124.3 (1950): 21–44; Paul Schwartz, “Les débuts de l’indiennage mulhousien (II),” *Bulletin de la Société industrielle de Mulhouse* 125.1 (1951): 33–56; Walter Bodmer, *Die Entwicklung der schweizerischen Textilwirtschaft im Rahmen der übrigen Industrien und Wirtschaftszweige* (Zurich: Verlag Berichthaus Zurich, 1960); Anne Jean-Richard, *Kattundrucke der Schweiz im 18. Jahrhundert, ihre Vorläufer, orientalische und europäische Techniken, Zeugdruck-Manufakturen, die Weiterentwicklung* (Basel: Basler Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1968); Pierre Caspard, *La Fabrique-Neuve de Cortailod: entreprise et profit pendant la Révolution industrielle 1752–1854* (Paris: Sorbonne, 1979); Béatrice Veyrasat, *Négociants et fabricants dans l’industrie cotonnière suisse 1760–1840: aux origines financières de l’industrialisation* (Lausanne: Payot, 1982); Ulrich Pfister, *Die Zürcher Fabriken: protoindustrielles Wachstum vom 16. zum 18. Jahrhundert* (Zurich: Chronos, 1992); Brigitte Nicolas, and Jacqueline Jacqué, eds., *Féerie indienne: des rivages de l’Inde au royaume de France* (Paris: Somogy, 2008); and Isabelle Ursch-Bernier, *Négoce et industrie à Mulhouse au XVIIIe siècle (1696–1798)* (Toulouse: CNRS, 2009). For the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Reto Jäger, *Baumwollgarn als Schicksalsfaden: Wirtschaftliche und gesellschaftliche Entwicklungen in einem ländlichen Industriegebiet (Zürcher Oberland) 1750 bis 1920* (Zurich: Chronos,

particular, have linked the history of textiles and cotton with new approaches to global history, consumption, and the history of material culture. The works of Beverly Lemire, Giorgio Riello, John Styles, and many others have shown how the textile trade brought forth new commercial structures, how cotton fabrics influenced clothing and fashion, and how global interconnections were essential to the rise of the European cotton industry.⁹

Despite the rich contributions of recent research, the field suffers from a dual deficit. The findings of Anglo-Saxon research are largely drawn from northwestern Europe. They are above all based on France, England and, occasionally, the Netherlands, Spain, and Italy; yet they largely neglect Switzerland and the German-speaking world. This is a shortcoming not only because the Swiss territories were one of the key European sites for the production of cotton fabrics in the eighteenth century and of silk fabrics and embroidery in the nineteenth century, but also because production, trade, and consumer habits in this region reveal unique characteristics that can alter or add nuance to the European context as a whole. Conversely, German research on the textile industry has not been sufficiently influenced by more recent debates in historiography. The idea of a 'national' industry that seemingly generated its success from within itself is in urgent need of revision.¹⁰ Research within the German-speaking world must also link the history of textiles

1986); Peter Dudzik, *Innovation und Investition: Technische Entwicklung und Unternehmerentscheide in der schweizerischen Baumwollspinnerei 1800 bis 1916* (Zurich: Chronos, 1987); and Klaus Sulzer, *Vom Zeugdruck zur Rotfärberei: Heinrich Sulzer (1800–1876) und die Türkischrot-Färberei Aadorf* (Zurich: Chronos, 1991).

- 9 John Irwin and Paul Schwartz, *Studies in Indo-European Textile History* (Ahmedabad: Calico Museum of Textiles, 1966); Beverly Lemire, *Fashion's Favourite: The Cotton Trade and the Consumer in Britain, 1600–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Beverly Lemire, *Dress, Culture and Commerce: the English Clothing Trade before the Factory, 1660–1800* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997); John Guy, ed., *Woven Caravans: Indian Textiles in the East* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998); Rosemary Crill, *Chintz: Indian Textiles for the West* (London: V&A Publications, 2008); Giorgio Riello and Prasanna Parthasarathi, eds., *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Beverly Lemire, *Cotton* (Oxford: Berg, 2011); Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy, eds., *How India Clothed the World: The World of South Asian Textiles, 1500–1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric That Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Amanda Peck, ed., *Interwoven Globe: The Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500–1800* (New York: Metropolitan Museum, 2014); Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014); Robert DuPlessis, *The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); and Eiluned Edwards, *Block Printed Textiles of India: Imprints of Culture* (New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2016).
- 10 An important contribution to this revision has already been made in the works of Peter Firz, Niklaus Stettler, Peter Haenger, and Robert Labhardt. See Peter Fierz, *Eine Basler Handelsfirma im ausgehenden 18. und zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts: Christoph Burckhardt & Co. und verwandte Firmen* (Zurich: Zentralstelle der Studentenschaft, 1994); and Niklaus Stettler, Peter Haenger, and Robert Labhardt, *Baumwolle, Sklaven und Kredite: die Basler Welthandelsfirma Christoph Burckhardt & Cie. in revolutionärer Zeit (1789–1815)* (Basel: Christoph Merian, 2004). For the nineteenth and twentieth century, see Christof Dejung, *Die Fäden des globalen Marktes: Eine Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte des Welthandels am Beispiel der Handelsfirma Gebrüder Volkart 1851–1999* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2013).

with global history, with questions concerning consumer habits and shopping, and with approaches gleaned from object-based research.

This volume seeks to address this dual deficit. Its geographic focus will be on Switzerland and the German-speaking world. Twelve of the fifteen contributions are dedicated to the production, marketing, and consumption of textiles in Thurgau, St. Gallen, Basel, Bern, Zurich, Augsburg, Vienna, Berlin, and the Lower Rhine region. However, our aim is not to reactivate a nation-centred approach, albeit with some fresh perspectives; instead, we seek to explore the German-speaking world within its European context and global links. This is why the focus not only includes neighbouring countries such as Denmark, but also Portugal, India, and the transatlantic area.

In terms of historic period, the contributions focus on the early modern era, and especially the eighteenth century. At the same time, the eighteenth and nineteenth century are inextricably linked when it comes to the history of the textile industry. Many developments – technical innovations, new advertising, and marketing practices and the shift of the global economic balance in Europe’s favour – can only be understood in the context of the eighteenth and nineteenth century.¹¹ This is why two contributions are dedicated to the silk and embroidery industry in nineteenth-century Switzerland.

In thematic terms, this volume aims to embed the history of printed cotton textiles in the German-speaking world within the broader context of the history of textiles and link it to more recent debates of global, economic, and cultural history.¹² Printed cotton

11 The shift in global balance in around 1800 has been prominently discussed under the key term of the ‘Great Divergence.’ See Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europa, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Prasannan Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia did not: Global Economic Divergence, 1600–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Peer Vries, *Escaping Poverty: The Origins of Modern Economic Growth* (Göttingen: Unipress, 2013); and Matthias Middell und Philipp Robinson Rössner, eds., “The Great Divergence Debate Revisited,” *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 26.3 (2016).

12 The volume shares this aim with a series of current projects re-engaging with the history of Swiss textiles such as the projects directed by Alexis Schwarzenbach on the Swiss silk industry. See Silk History since 1800, <https://www.hslu.ch/de-ch/hochschule-luzern/forschung/projekte/detail/?pid=124>. Accessed 11 September 2018; Silk Memory, <https://www.hslu.ch/de-ch/hochschule-luzern/forschung/projekte/detail/?pid=1098>. Accessed 11 September 2018; and Silk Images, <https://www.hslu.ch/de-ch/hochschule-luzern/forschung/projekte/detail/?pid=2225>. Accessed 11 September 2018. See also Chonja Lee’s project on *indienne*, *The Exotic?*, <http://theexotic.ch/>. Accessed 23 August 2018; and Lisa Laurenti’s doctoral project on the creation, commercialisation, and consumption of *indienne* in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Switzerland. Most recently, an exhibition at the Swiss National Museum in Château de Prangins prominently addressed the topic of *indienne*, see *Indiennes: Bedruckte Baumwollstoffe erobern die Welt*, <https://www.nationalmuseum.ch/d/microsites/2018/Prangins/Indiennes.php>. Accessed 11 September 2018; and the accompanying publication, Helen Bieri-Thomson, Bernard Jacqué, Jacqueline Bacqué, Liliane Mottu, Xavier Petitcol, Margret Ribert, and Patrick Verley, eds., *Indiennes: un tissu révolutionne le monde!* (Prangins: La bibliothèque des arts, 2018). Other projects outside of Switzerland working on similar topics include Anka Steffen’s research on linen weaving and social change in Silesia at Viadrina European University. See *Linen Weaving and Social Change in Silesia – a World Wide Integrated Proto-Industry in Eastern Central*

fabrics – often also referred to as *indiennes* in the Swiss context – form the focus in the majority of the contributions. In addition, we also explore linen, silk fabrics, embroidered goods, and woollen cloth. This is a conscious decision, as it shows that cotton was by no means the ‘revolutionary product’ often claimed in research.¹³ We are interested in what it meant to produce, sell, and consume textiles in the German-speaking world. What skills and knowledge did producers require in order to be successful? Where did the art of manufacturing lie? What did it mean to ‘market’ a product in the early modern period? Who bought and used the fabrics, and how did consumer habits change? Instead of a traditional history of production, we are, therefore, rather focusing on aspects of distribution and knowledge, shifting our attention away from the classic history of trade in favour of communication and consumption. A key objective of many contributions is to explore global interconnections and concentrate on the objects themselves. This volume thereby firstly seeks to make clear that the Central European textile industry was dependent on global processes of exchange. Secondly, it aims to champion a form of research that treats objects as sources.¹⁴ In all three thematic fields addressed in this volume – manufacturing, marketing, and consumption – engagement with the materiality of the fabrics has yielded new insights and provoked thematic shifts.

The volume is primarily dedicated to a historical approach – yet one which transcends the boundaries of the discipline. The contributions have been written by historians as well as art historians, cultural scholars, and museologists. Using the textiles as their starting point, they discuss how the world of goods proliferated from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century; how new sales practices emerged; how craftsmanship and the culture of expertise merged together; and how European industries participated ever more strongly in the global circulation of people, goods, and ideas. Overall, this volume seeks to contribute to a cultural history of commerce which brings together the processes of manufacturing, selling, and consuming with aspects of materiality, aesthetics, and knowledge.¹⁵

Europe, <https://www.kuwi.europa-uni.de/de/lehrstuhl/kg/wisogeschi/forschung/Globalized-Periphery/Teilprojekte/Projekt-A/index.html>. Accessed 11 September 2018.

13 Beverly Lemire and Giorgio Riello, “East and West: Textiles and Fashion in Early Modern Europe,” *Journal of Social History* 41 (2008): 887–916, here 887.

14 See most recently, Thomas Ertl and Barbara Karl, eds., *Inventories of Textiles – Textiles in Inventories. Studies on Late Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture* (Vienna: Vienna University Press, 2017).

15 For a programmatic engagement with the links between economic and cultural history, see Hartmut Berghoff and Jakob Vogel, eds., *Wirtschaftsgeschichte als Kulturgeschichte: Dimensionen eines Perspektivenwechsels* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2004); Susanne Hilger and Achim Landwehr, eds., *Wirtschaft – Kultur – Geschichte: Positionen und Perspektiven* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2013); and Christof Dejung, Monika Dommann, and Daniel Speich Chassé, eds., *Auf der Suche nach der Ökonomie: Historische Annäherungen* (Tübingen: Siebeck, 2014).

The remaining part of this introduction seeks to explain in more detail the focus of this volume. It will briefly reflect on what it means in the context of this volume to pursue an object-oriented approach to the history of textiles (1). Then it illuminates how the ‘case’ of the Swiss *indienne* industry may be interpreted within the European context. In these sections, the intention is not merely to incorporate a supposed ‘hinterland’ within global economic cycles, but also to highlight the particular characteristics in the manufacturing, consumption, and reception of printed cotton fabrics in the Old Swiss Confederacy (2–3). These explanations are ultimately also intended to help correct a narrative that generalises the history of cotton in favour of northwestern European findings. In the subsequent sections, it outlines the contributions to this volume (4–6).

1. Objects as Sources

The examination of objects as sources of historical research is a relatively recent development, at least in the German-speaking world, and one which presents challenges.¹⁶ Historians are trained to analyse texts; they are rarely trained to analyse objects. This is not really surprising, given that working with objects often requires a transdisciplinary approach. Determining the materiality, style, and provenance of an object requires the skills of museologists, art historians, materials experts, and sometimes, even natural scientists. On the other hand, the history of objects can often only be told when there are also visual and written sources to provide us with information about the objects’ circulation, uses, and owners. Textiles are an excellent example in terms of the demands of cross-disciplinary analysis: a trained sense of touch can distinguish between muslin and batiste; a seasoned eye can determine the density of a fabric. Yet only a scientific analysis can determine what chemicals were used to dye a certain material. Historians are often reliant on the expertise

16 Annette Cremer and Martin Mulsow, eds., *Objekte als Quellen der historischen Kulturwissenschaften: Stand und Perspektiven der Forschung* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2017); Stefanie Samida, Manfred Eggert, and Hans Peter Hahn, eds., *Handbuch Materielle Kultur* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2014); Kim Siebenhüner, “Things that Matter: Zur Geschichte der materiellen Kultur in der Frühneuzeitforschung,” *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 42 (2015): 373–409; and Marian Füssel, “Die Materialität der Frühen Neuzeit: Neuere Forschungen zur Geschichte der materiellen Kultur,” *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 42 (2015): 433–63. Object-based research has been established for some time within the Anglo-Saxon context. See Steven Lubar and David Kingery, eds., *History From Things: Essays on Material Culture* (Washington: Smithsonian, 1993); Karen Harvey, ed., *History and Material Culture: a Student’s Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources* (London: Routledge, 2009); Paula Findlen, ed., *Early Modern Things: Objects and Their Histories, 1500–1800* (London: Routledge, 2013); Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, eds., *Writing Material Culture History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015); Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Sarah Anne Carter, Ivan Gaskell, Sara Schechner, and Samantha van Gerbig, *Tangible Things: Making History Through Objects* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); and Catherine Richardson, Tara Hamling, and David Gaimster, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2017).

of their art-historian colleagues when it comes to establishing the date, cut, and design of an item of clothing. For their part, historians can productively use inventories, personal testimonies, company ledgers, dress codes, recipe books, and other written sources for the history of textiles. There is no strict separation of the disciplines; instead, collaboration between them can result in a truly transdisciplinary field of object-based research.

A focus on objects leads to changes in how historians conduct their research. Along with archives and libraries, historians' workplaces now include museums and their collections as well as occasionally workshops. The surplus generated by engaging with objects takes the form of new research questions. Objects provide information about the hierarchy of materials in a world in which social order and differences in status were created through material possessions.¹⁷ An object's condition gives insight into how things were treated. The stitching on an item of clothing provides information about any alteration work and lets us draw conclusions about the early modern economy of re-utilisation.¹⁸ For instance, the collections of the Swiss National Museum contain a *stomacher* – a decorative panel on a lady's dress – that was sewn out of several remnants of printed cotton fabric (fig. 1). Even simple textiles were valuable, and so every last remnant was re-used and re-purposed. Moreover, the materiality of objects necessitates a fresh engagement with the topic of manufacturing. How was it possible to produce a fabric that met the price and quality expectations of manufacturers and customers? How was a popular design created? What skills did an artisan need to possess? A visit to a workshop where traditional craftsmanship is still used, the re-enactment of historic techniques, or the re-creation of historic items of clothing is here just another possible step towards a better understanding of work processes, methods, and materials.¹⁹

17 Kim Siebenhüner, *Die Spur der Juwelen: Materielle Kultur und transkontinentale Verbindungen zwischen Indien und Europa in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2018), 289–360.

18 On the trade in second-hand goods, see Laurence Fontaine, ed., *Alternative Exchanges: Second-hand Circulations from the Sixteenth Century to the Present* (New York: Berghahn, 2008); Georg Stöger, *Sekundäre Märkte? Zum Wiener und Salzburger Gebrauchtwarenhandel im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2011); Bruno Blondé and Natacha Coquery, eds., *Retailers and Consumer Changes in Early Modern Europe: England, France, Italy and the Low Countries* (Tours: Presses universitaires François Rabelais, 2005); and Brundo Blondé, Peter Stabel, Jon Stobart, and Ilja Van Damme, eds., *Buyers and Sellers: Retail Circuits and Practices in Mediaeval and Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).

19 One of the most impressive workshops using historic looms is today located in Venice. See Luigi Bevilacqua, <https://www.luigi-bevilacqua.com>. Accessed 13 September 2018. For the different approaches to reconstruction and re-creation, see Joseph Corn, "Object Lessons/Object Myths? What Historians of Technology Learn from Things," in *Learning from Things: Method and Theory of Material Culture Studies*, ed. David Kingery (Washington: Smithsonian, 1996); Nicole Minder and Helen Bieri-Thomson, eds., *Noblesse oblige! Leben auf dem Schloss im 18. Jahrhundert* (Milan: 5 Continents, 2013) and *The First Book of Fashion*, <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/features/the-first-book-of-fashion>. Accessed 13 September 2018. See also Pernilla Rasmussen, "Recycling a fashionable wardrobe in the long eighteenth century in Sweden," *History of Retailing and Consumption* 2 (2016), 193–222.



Fig. 1: Stomacher, made of different pieces of printed cotton. Swiss National Museum, Inv. LM 1420.

A range of such ‘field studies’ has also influenced this volume. Some of the authors spent many years working in museums, or still do so; others have intensively collaborated with workshops that still produce printed cotton fabrics using traditional craftsmanship; while others have learned to weave in order to decipher sample books. The authors in this volume have engaged with textiles as objects to varying degrees of intensity, using a variety of methods and approaches to do so. Alongside traditional iconographic analysis, scanning electron microscopy has been utilised in order to determine the dye used on a fabric and thus be able to trace its origins (Karl, Ravazzolo). Many authors bring together texts and objects, using a cross-checking process to freshly decode written and textile-based sources (Schwarzenbach, Schopf, Martens, Fleischmann-Heck).

This is particularly fruitful when engaging with samples and sample books, because these objects prove to be enigmatic sources. It is only the accompanying correspondence, treatises, and personal testimonies that render them ‘readable.’ Conversely, an engagement with objects reveals the added value physical sources bring to historical research, as samples in particular make tangible something that is often only inadequately described in letters and other texts.

The work with textiles leads researchers to museums, as this is where the greatest collections of historic textiles are kept today. As far as Switzerland and its printed cotton fabrics are concerned, the most important collections are today housed in the Swiss National Museum and its offshoots, in the St. Gallen Textile Museum, the Musée de l’impression sur étoffes in Mulhouse – the latter an associate town of the Old Swiss Confederacy – and in a series of cantonal history museums in Basel, Bern, Geneva, Glarus, and Neuchatel.²⁰

²⁰ Jean-Richard, *Kattundrucke*; Jacqué and Nicolas, *Féerie indienne*; Marie-Louise Nabholz-Kartaschoff, ed., *Golden Sprays and Scarlet Flowers: Traditional Indian Textiles from the Museum of Ethnography Basel, Switzerland* (Kyoto: Shikosha, 1986); Magret Ribbert, *Stoffdruck in Basel um 1800: Das Stoffmusterbuch der Handelsfirma Christoph Burckhardt und Comp.* (Basel: Historisches Museum, 1997); and Bieri-Thomson et al., *Indiennes*.

What, then, characterises the *indiennes* found there, their manufacture and consumption, within the European context?

2. The Swiss *Indienne* Industry in the European Context

In the Middle Ages, the Old Swiss Confederacy was already incorporated into a fustian- and linen-producing textile industry stretching from east Swabia via Lake Constance into Switzerland. In some instances, pure cotton cloth had been produced as early as the fifteenth century.²¹ Yet it was only around the mid-seventeenth century that the cotton trade began to increasingly expand. Cotton was spun and woven in the canton of Zurich from the middle of this century; cotton-spinning was introduced in Lucerne in 1677; and in the canton of Bern and other regions, the production of cotton thread and cotton cloth increased rapidly from the 1690s onward (map 1).²² Over the course of the eighteenth century, the cotton-processing industry grew to be the biggest textile-exporting business. In the 1780s and 1790s, as Albert Tanner noted, the Swiss cotton industry was second only to Lancashire in Britain as Europe's biggest cotton-processing region.²³

Along with spinning and weaving, Swiss *indienne* production grew to be one of Europe's leading industries. The production figures alone make this clear: in 1981, Stanley Chapman and Serge Chassagne calculated that in 1785, French firms produced around 800,000 pieces of *indienne*; British firms manufactured only around 385,000 pieces in 1784.²⁴ During the same period in Barcelona, Spain's most important *indienne* production site, around 3 million metres of printed cotton fabric was manufactured, equivalent to approximately

21 Bodmer, *Schweizerische Textilwirtschaft*.

22 Bodmer, *Schweizerische Textilwirtschaft*, 151–52, 161–63, 181–85.

23 See Albert Tanner, "Baumwolle," *HLS*, <http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/d/D13961.php>. Accessed 13 September 2018; Veyrassat, *Négociants et fabricants*, 17; and Albert Tanner, "Die Baumwollindustrie in der Ostschweiz 1750–1914: Von der Protoindustrie zur Fabrik- und Hausindustrie," in *Von der Heimarbeit in die Fabrik: Industrialisierung und Arbeiterschaft in Leinen- und Baumwollregionen Westeuropas während des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Karl Ditt and Sidney Pollard (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1992), 162–91.

24 See Stanley Chapman and Serge Chassagne, *European Textile Printers in the Eighteenth Century: A Study of Peel and Oberkampf* (London: Heinemann Educational, 1981), 8, 58. Chapman and Chassagne define the relationship between yard and piece: "The English piece measured twenty-eight yards long in the lower price brackets and thirty yards in the higher price ranges; averages 28.8 yards. The continental piece averaged 20 *aunes* = 24 m = 26.3 yards." (*Ibid.*, 213). This information gives rise to the figure of 385,000 pieces. However, the consumption of calico in England was considerably higher than the production figures might suggest. According to the authors, 910,000 pieces were bought in 1797, see *European Textile Printers*, 90–91. For the 1720s, see Alfred Wadsworth and Julia de Lacy Mann, *The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire, 1600–1780*, 2nd ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965), 136–39.

117,000 pieces according to the English unit of measurement.²⁵ The production figures for the Swiss cantons were certainly comparable to these quantities. In the principality of Neuchâtel alone, around 160,000 pieces were printed in 1797.²⁶ In the city and republic of Bern, which also encompassed Aargau, 130,000 pieces of *indienne* were produced annually between 1781 and 1785.²⁷ In the associate town of Mulhouse, 200,000 pieces were manufactured in 1786.²⁸ If we add to this the production figures for Geneva, Basel, Zurich, Glarus, and eastern Switzerland, which cannot be more closely quantified, *indienne* production in the Old Swiss Confederacy clearly exceeded half a million pieces per annum.²⁹

In quantitative terms alone, the Old Swiss Confederacy was therefore an important European site for the manufacturing of *indienne* in the eighteenth century. Yet in qualitative terms, too, the Swiss *indienne* industry is an interesting case, because its history differs in key aspects from that of the English and French calico-printing industry.

It is well established that the import, manufacture, and consumption of printed cotton fabrics was banned in France and England in 1686, 1692, and 1721 (Prussia did the same in 1722).³⁰ The arguments were similar everywhere: critics feared that the printed cotton fabrics imported from India and their domestic imitations would ruin the traditional silk, wool, and linen industries, and that the fashion for the new fabrics would blur social hierarchies. Although conditions were similar in the Old Swiss Confederacy – an existing textile trade came under pressure from the new cotton industry – developments took a different course. Aside from some initial resistance in a few places, the *indienne* manufactories developed largely unimpeded.³¹ Following the foundation of the first workshop in Geneva in 1691, by the mid-eighteenth century, *indienne*-printing manufactories had

25 James Thomson, *A Distinctive Industrialization: Cotton in Barcelona, 1728–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Thomson indicates the production figures for 1784 in metres. He states that one piece was 10 canas (1 canas = 1.55 metres) long – considerably longer than the English pieces. Overall, all the figures indicated should be viewed as approximations. Owing to the different units of measurement, an exact comparison of European production remains difficult.

26 Pierre Caspard, “Manufacture and Trade in Calico Printing at Neuchâtel: the Example of Cortaillod (1752–1854),” *Textile History* 8 (1977), 150.

27 Erika Flückiger and Anne Radeff, “Globale Ökonomie im alten Staate Bern am Ende des Ancien Régime: eine aussergewöhnliche Quelle,” *Berner Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Heimatkunde* 62 (2000), 21–22.

28 Ursch-Bernier, *Négoce et industrie*, 364.

29 According to the estimations by Adolf Jenny-Trümpy, who in the early twentieth century authored a description of the calico-printing industry in Switzerland that remains relevant to this day, annual production of *indiennes* in the Old Swiss Confederacy during the final quarter of the eighteenth century reached as high as 1 million pieces at approx. 15 *aunes*. The length of the French ell (*aune*) varied in Switzerland but was most commonly between around 1 and 1.2 metres. See Jenny-Trümpy, “Handel und Industrie,” 134. This figure can also be regarded only as a quantitative approximation.

30 Lemire, *Fashion's Favourite*, 12–42; Philippe Haudrière, “La Compagnie des Indes et le commerce des toiles indiennes,” in *Féerie indienne*, 13–22; and Riello, *Cotton*, 121–23.

31 There were individual resistance movements in St. Gallen, for example; see Albert Tanner, *Spulen-Weben-Sticken: Die Industrialisierung in Appenzell Ausserrhoden* (Zurich: Eigenverlag, 1982), 15.

been established in Zurich (1701), Bern (1706), Neuchatel (1715), Basel (1716), Hauptwil (1720), Herisau (1735), Glarus (1740), and Mulhouse (1746).³² Overall, the cotton industry was perceived not as a threat but rather as an economic opportunity at a time of substantial population growth. It created new fields of activity for craftsmen and merchants and, with the expansion of the putting out system, secured the daily existence of thousands of landless or land-poor men and women.³³

The cantons all pursued their own economic policy; yet in many places, the authorities put measures in place to support the new industry. Bern, for instance, banned the import of foreign printed cloth into its territories in order to boost the local manufactories. Lucerne protected its cotton spinners against attacks by linen weavers, and in many places the authorities facilitated the foundation of *indienne* workshops by granting them privileges and cheap credit.³⁴ Unlike in France and England, the state authorities were, on the whole, well-disposed to the new industry.

In contrast to England, where – especially in the lead-up to the ban of 1721 – the spread of printed cotton fabrics had generated heated debate, the rise of the cotton industry was also accepted by the Swiss public without any great excitement.³⁵ There were no political campaigns against the new fabrics, nor was there any moralising over their consumption. Although there was certainly a critical discourse surrounding fashion and luxury, it was not ignited by cotton fabrics.³⁶ In the context of Enlightenment-era debates, Swiss intellectuals concerned themselves with state, trade, and luxurious consumption.³⁷ Pastors

32 See Jenny-Trümpy, “Handel und Industrie,” 85–144; Jean-Richard, *Kattundrucke*, 40–47; Caspard, *La Fabrique-Neuve*, 29; Fetscherin, *Beitrag*, 27–36; Peter Witschi, “Die textile Welt,” in *Herisau: Geschichte der Gemeinde Herisau*, ed. Thomas Fuchs (Herisau: Appenzeller Verlag, 1999), 124–31; Ursch-Bernier, *Négoce et industrie*, 101–49; Ernest Menolfi, *Hauptwil-Gottshaus* (Frauenfeld: Verlag Huber, 2011), 71–79, 110–17, 123–24; and Rolf von Arx, Jürg Davatz, and August Rohr, *Industriekultur im Kanton Glarus: Streifzüge durch 250 Jahre Geschichte und Architektur* (Zurich: Südostschweiz, 2005), 13–15, 363.

33 See Bodmer, *Schweizerische Textilwirtschaft*, 185, 187; Pfister, *Die Zürcher Fabriques*, 82–87; Rudolf Braun, *Industrialisierung und Volksleben: Veränderungen der Lebensformen unter Einwirkung der verlagsindustriellen Heimarbeit in einem ländlichen Industriegebiet (Zürcher Oberland) vor 1800* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1979), 35; and Kim Siebenhüner, “Zwischen Imitation und Innovation: Die schweizerische Indienne-Industrie im 18. Jahrhundert,” *Werkstatt Geschichte* 25 (2017): 7–27.

34 See Bodmer, *Schweizerische Textilwirtschaft*, 181–82.

35 Kim Siebenhüner, “*Calico Craze?* Zum geschlechtsspezifischen Konsum bedruckter Baumwollstoffe im 18. Jahrhundert: Ein Blick von England zur Alten Eidgenossenschaft,” *L’homme: Zeitschrift für feministische Geschichtswissenschaft* 27 (2016): 33–52.

36 On this debate, see Simon Wernly, “‘Im Stroh der Weichlichkeit und der Pracht’: Luxusdebatte und Konsummoral in den Basler, Berner und Zürcher Unterhaltungsschriften des 18. Jahrhunderts” (lic., University of Bern, 2005); Daniel Tröhler, *Republikanismus und Pädagogik: Pestalozzi im historischen Kontext* (Bad Heilbrunn: Julius Klinkhardt, 2006), 335–74; and Braun, *Industrialisierung*, 95, 100–105.

37 Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, “Abhandlung über die Frage in wie weit ist es schicklich in einem kleinen Staat dessen Wohlstand auf der Handelschaft beruhet, dem Aufwand des Bürgers Schranken zu setzen?” in *Pestalozzi: Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Artur Buchenau, Eduard Spranger, and Hans Stettbacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1927), 1:303–28.

and publishers of moralising weekly periodicals lamented the dissolution of social ranks, apparent extravagance and women's obsession with fashion, in particular. Jacob Laurenz Custer's *Contemporary Observations* quoted in the opening paragraph were a later echo of these laments. However, there was no great cause on the part of the authorities to limit or even ban the consumption of cotton fabrics. Dress codes did make occasional mention of cotton fabrics. Yet in comparison to many other regulations on embroidery, furs, silk textiles, and all manner of precious accessories, cotton fabrics played only a marginal role in sumptuary laws. They were not offensive in and of themselves, but only when they came from foreign territories, cost above a certain amount or were of particularly good quality, and should therefore not be worn by common folk.³⁸

In terms of the materiality of the fabrics, too, the *indiennes* have their own history. The name was a powerful allusion to the first origins of the cotton fabrics.³⁹ Yet over the course of the eighteenth century, this geographical link became ever more diluted. *Indiennes* were no longer exclusively the painted or printed cotton fabrics with floral designs imported from India, but also included Swiss imitations. In order to manufacture these, Swiss calico printers used white cloths, some of which were woven in India and some in Switzerland. All kinds of hybrid products were therefore being produced.

The imitations differed from the originals in many ways. *Indiennes* were neither always made of cotton, nor did they always feature a floral pattern. Occasionally, mixed fabrics of cotton and linen or silk are described as *indienne*.⁴⁰ Over time, a vast diversity of patterns developed. Along with floral patterns that imitated the 'exotic' flowers, leaves, and vines of the Indian fabrics, the Swiss calico printers produced a huge number of chequered, dotted, and scattered-flower patterns (fig. 2). If we take into account the manufactories founded by Swiss migrants in Jouy, Nantes, or Rouen, the diversity of patterns is further expanded with a wealth of motifs taken from European mythology, politics, and daily life.⁴¹

38 See Kim Siebenhüner, "Calico Craze?"; as well as Jordan's contribution in this volume.

39 Regarding terminology, see John Jordan and Gabi Schopf, "Fictive Descriptions? Words, Textiles, and Inventories in Early Modern Switzerland," in *Inventories of Textiles*, 219–38; and John Jordan and Gabi Schopf, "Global Goods in Local Languages: Naming Indian Cottons in the Swiss Cantons," in *Names and Naming in Early Modern Germany*, ed. Joel Harrington and Beth Plummer (New York: Berghahn, forthcoming).

40 Jordan and Gabi Schopf, "Fictive Descriptions?," 228.

41 Bieri-Thomson et al., *Indiennes*. See also Beverly Lemire, "Domesticating the Exotic: Floral Culture and the East India Calico Trade with England, c. 1600–1800," *Textile* 1 (2003): 64–85; and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, "Surprising Oddness and Beauty: Textile Design and Natural History between London and Philadelphia in the eighteenth century," in *Knowing Nature: Art and Science in Philadelphia, 1740–1840*, ed. Amy Meyers and Lisa Ford (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 160–79.



Fig. 2: Order book of the company Wagner & Cie, 1803–1807. Swiss Economic Archive Basel, H 239, G.



Fig. 3: Printed cotton, manufactured in Switzerland. Mid-eighteenth century. Plain weave, 11 threads/cm, reserve print with printing blocks, indigo bath. Textile Museum St. Gallen, Inv. 25644.

In the Old Swiss Confederacy, the term ‘*indienne*’ therefore came to cover a broad spectrum of fabrics of varying quality and designs over the course of the eighteenth century.⁴² Whereas the white cloth imported from India was generally of a fine weft, the cloth woven in the Swiss cantons tended to be coarser and cheaper. For example, the Laué & Co. manufactory – a medium-sized calico-printing business in the canton of Bern – purchased cloth from Toggenburg in eastern Switzerland.⁴³ In the 1760s, the renowned Fabrique Neuve in Cortaillod sourced around two-thirds of its fabrics from St. Gallen, Herisau, Glarus, Toggenburg, Winterthur, and Zurich. It imported another third from India via Amsterdam, London, and Lorient.⁴⁴ The Augsburg-based Schüle company took a similar approach. Alongside *Salemporis*, it also printed ‘ordinary’ and ‘finer’ domestic calico.⁴⁵ When examined closely, the difference in the density, fineness, and regularity of the fabrics can be seen with the naked eye (fig. 3). The different quality of the cloths was also reflected for consumers in the price. In 1760, for instance, the manufactories of Mulhouse sold the fine printed fabrics described as *Calancas* for forty livres per sixteen ells,

42 Siebenhüner, “Zwischen Imitation und Innovation.”

43 Gabi Schopf, “From Local Production to Global Trade: the Distribution of Swiss Printed Cottons in the early modern World,” *Textile History* (forthcoming). Johann Ryhiner’s manufactory in Basel also sourced cloth from Toggenburg. See Johann Ryhiner, “Traité de la fabrication et le commerce des toiles peintes (1766),” in *Materiaux pour la coloration des étoffes*, ed. Daniel Dollfus-Ausset (Paris: F. Savy, 1865), 18–19. Bern-based *indienneurs* sourced much of their plain cloth from Lucerne. See Fetscherin, *Beitrag*, 59–63; and Jenny-Trümpy, “Handel und Industrie,” 101.

44 Caspard, *La Fabrique-Neuve*, 46.

45 Claus-Peter Clasen, *Textilherstellung in Augsburg in der frühen Neuzeit*, 2 vols. (Augsburg: Wißner, 1995), 2:444–48; and Jenny-Trümpy, “Handel und Industrie,” 67.

whereas the *Indiennes ordinaire*, which were printed on coarser cloth using fewer colours, cost between twenty and twenty-four livres.⁴⁶

Overall, Switzerland also deviates from established patterns in terms of its history of consumption. Beverly Lemire argues that the popularity of Indian fabrics had been growing in Europe since the sixteenth century. However, it is disputed whether Asian products truly flooded European markets and whether Oriental textiles did indeed corrupt the female populace.⁴⁷ In Paris, it took until the end of the eighteenth century for just under forty percent of servants, wage-earners, and tradesmen to own cotton textiles.⁴⁸ In the case of London, John Styles has demonstrated that cotton clothing only gradually grew in popularity over the course of the eighteenth century.⁴⁹ In this volume, too, he argues that printed cotton fabrics were by no means ‘revolutionary’ goods. The trend towards lighter, cheaper materials had already begun in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. The spread of printed cotton fabrics was therefore embedded within a long-lasting change that was above all characterised by diversification within the world of textiles. When late eighteenth-century consumers were choosing between a wealth of different materials and designs, they were benefiting from developments that had already started in the late Middle Ages.⁵⁰

The notion that consumers were inundated with Asian goods or that a ‘hype’ arose around cotton is certainly not applicable to the Old Swiss Confederacy. Swiss merchants did not have direct access to the great ports of Europe, where Asian goods were unloaded, auctioned, and sold on. Although they did, as previously mentioned, import white cloth from India, printed cotton fabrics never reached the Old Swiss Confederacy in any great quantities. Swiss consumers became familiar with printed cotton fabrics predominantly as domestic products, and even then, only to a moderate extent, as the majority of *indiennes* were produced for export. Throughout the eighteenth century, France was the key export market, followed by Italy and Germany. A small proportion of the *indiennes* entered the transatlantic trade via Amsterdam, Copenhagen, or France’s Atlantic ports.⁵¹ Only the

46 Ursch-Bernier, *Négoce et industrie*, 119.

47 See Beverly Lemire, “Fashioning Cottons: Asian Trade, Domestic Industry, and Consumer Demand, 1660–1780,” in *The Cambridge History of Western Textiles*, ed. David Jenkins, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2:493–512. Accordingly to Lemire, “Asian products flooded European markets in the late seventeenth century” (493), and “fashion for these fabrics swept Europe,” “corrupting in particular the female populace” (502).

48 Daniel Roche, *La culture des apparences: Une histoire du vêtement (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle)* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 137.

49 Styles, *Dress*, 109–32.

50 Negley Harte, ed., *The New Draperies in the Low Countries and England, 1300–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

51 Michael Kwass, *Contraband: Louis Mandrin and the Making of a Global Underground* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 65–69. On the exports of the Fabrique neuve, see Caspard, *La Fabrique-Neuve*, 69; and on the Burckardt company, see Stettler et al., *Baumwolle*, 46–47.

remnants were distributed at fairs, markets, shops, and other channels in the Old Swiss Confederacy.⁵²

For this reason, cotton remained just one of many fabrics to be found in numerous Swiss households, as John Jordan demonstrates in this volume. The example of the city of Bern shows that the presence of cotton fabrics did gradually grow in the Old Swiss Confederacy over the course of the eighteenth century. In the 1680s, possession of cotton textiles was still extremely rare. Forty years later, cotton fabrics were already present either as interior decorations or clothing in forty percent of inventoried households; by the 1740s, that figure had risen to above fifty percent.⁵³ Yet cotton did not become the dominant textile. Linen, wool, and silk fabrics continued to be used for clothing and domestic furnishings. Cotton fabrics neither broke down social distinctions, nor did they fundamentally change how men and women dressed or decorated their living spaces.

3. Global Cotton Cycles

The research in this field has emphasised the transformational impact that Asian goods had on European society in the eighteenth century.⁵⁴ In the Old Swiss Confederacy, too, the rise of the *indienne* industry was contingent on global networks. Yet the Swiss example makes clear how the effects of global links differed at the local level.

Even without colonial territories and direct access to maritime trading centres, Swiss calico printers, manufacturers, and merchants benefited from the global cotton cycles. Their involvement in global trade encompassed not only the fundamental process of knowledge and technology transfer, but also the procurement of raw materials from overseas, the purchase of white cloth and the sale of cotton fabrics in the Atlantic area, and later also in southern and eastern Asia.

52 See also Gabi Schopf's dissertation project at the University of Bern, "Kaufend und Verkaufend – Zirkulation und lokale Aneignung von globalen Gütern in der Frühen Neuzeit am Beispiel der Indiennes in der alten Schweiz."

53 See the contribution by John Jordan in this volume.

54 Maxine Berg, "From Imitation to Invention: Creating Commodities in eighteenth-century Britain," *Economic History Review* 55 (2002): 1–30; Maxine Berg, "In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 182 (2004): 85–142; and Maxine Berg, ed., *Goods from the East, 1600–1800: Trading Eurasia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

The raw cotton spun and woven in the Old Swiss Confederacy predominantly came from Smyrna, Thessaloniki, and the Near and Middle East, and was imported via Vienna, Venice, Trieste, Livorno, and Marseilles.⁵⁵ Many of the raw materials needed for the dyeing process, such as indigo, cochineal, and gum Arabic, were imported, often via France's Atlantic ports but also via Amsterdam, Hamburg, and other Central European trading centres. Reconstructing these supply chains has only been possible in some individual cases. Yet even these examples show just how varied was the reach of global networks. The Schaffhausen-based trading firm Amman, for instance, sourced its dyes from a direct importer of colonial goods in Nantes and entered into a shareholders' agreement with a similar company in Bordeaux, but did not itself participate in the overseas indigo trade.⁵⁶ Amman acted as a traditional supplier to the cotton industry: around a fifth of the purchased raw materials and dyes were sold to the cotton-processing centres of Mulhouse, Zurich, St. Gallen, Glarus, Lenzburg, Hauptwil, and Augsburg.

Another point of contact with global trade was the aforementioned purchase of Indian white cloth. Here, too, Swiss producers were engaged at various points along the supply chains. The company Laué & Co. sent its commercial agents to Amsterdam and Copenhagen, where the imports of the Dutch and Danish East India companies were sold and auctioned.⁵⁷ Fabrique Neuve in Cortaillod received its white cloth from the Pourtalès & Co. trading company, for whom they manufactured the *indiennes*. Pourtalès & Co. purchased the cloth in London from another trading company in which they owned shares. From the mid-1770s onwards, the company even endeavoured to participate directly in transcontinental trading. A supercargo was dispatched to India in order to supervise the loading of Indian fabrics in Bengal and on the Coromandel Coast.⁵⁸

The varying extents of global engagement ultimately become clear in the export of *indiennes*. In the eighteenth century, smaller companies were generally not directly involved in transatlantic trade. Instead, they sold their products in the European hubs of global trade. From there, the fabrics were shipped on via other trading companies to Africa and America. When smaller companies did dare to export directly to America, their endeavours often failed owing to a lack of contacts and established networks.⁵⁹ In contrast, larger trading companies, such as Burckhardt & Cie. in Basel, were successfully engaged in global trading.

55 In the latter part of the eighteenth century, there was also cotton from South America. See Flückiger and Radeff, "Globale Ökonomie," 21; and Markus Denzel, "Die Geschäftsbeziehungen des Schaffhauser Handels- und Bankhauses Amman 1748–1779: Ein mikroökonomisches Fallbeispiel," *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 89 (2002), 26.

56 Denzel, "Die Geschäftsbeziehungen," 13–20.

57 Schopf, "From Local Production."

58 Louis Bergeron, "'Portalès & Cie' (1753–1801): Apogée et déclin d'un capitalisme," *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 25 (1970), 505.

59 Schopf, "From Local Production."

Niklaus Stettler and others have shown that this went hand in hand with an involvement in the transatlantic slave trade.⁶⁰ From the 1770s onward, the company recorded shares in ships that sailed from France's Mediterranean and Atlantic ports to China, East India, West Africa, and the Caribbean. The shares entitled the company to provide the respective shipowner with textiles from the company's warehouses to carry on board and to purchase return cargo, including raw cotton, at advantageous rates.⁶¹ The company had a dual interest in the departing ships. Firstly, Burckhardt & Cie. exported large quantities of printed cotton fabrics for the West African market. It thereby benefited from the dramatic reconfiguration of the global cotton networks in around 1800.⁶² Secondly, barter trading was conducted on the West African coast: a large proportion of the *indiennes* were exchanged for slaves, who in America harvested the very cotton that was spun, woven, and printed in Europe. Even an apparently peripheral region such as the Old Swiss Confederacy was therefore involved in global cotton networks. Various stakeholders in the Swiss *indienne* industry were beneficiaries and co-creators of a transformation that turned polycentric cotton networks into a cycle dominated by Europe.

The contributions in this volume contextualise the global involvement of Swiss calico printers by illuminating various forms of, and moments within, the global network. They use the example of textiles to demonstrate how transcontinental links at various times during the early modern period and the nineteenth century were shaped by trade, knowledge transfer, and communication regarding aesthetics and tastes. The contributions focus on those nations that research has hitherto tended to ignore – in addition to Germany and Switzerland, these also include Portugal and Denmark. For instance, Barbara Karl shows that the cotton fabrics produced and embroidered in Bengal for export to Europe had been adapted to European tastes in the sixteenth century. Vibe Maria Martens makes clear the impact that Indian cotton fabrics had on Danish society in the eighteenth century. When measured against the Danish population, the *Asiatisk Kompagni* was one of Europe's largest importers. Jutta Wimmler analyses how the Royal Prussian Storehouse (*Königlich-preußisches Lagerhaus*) – which was effectively a manufactory for the dyeing of woollen fabrics – was involved in global trading streams through its purchasing of dyes. Procuring dyes from overseas did not in any way necessitate the operators of the storehouse to forge their own global links. The connection to global trade enjoyed by continental European regions had grown so close by the eighteenth century that global goods had become available even from local individual merchants in Berlin, Frankfurt (Oder), and in the smaller harbour towns of Colberg and Szczecin.

60 Stettler et al., *Baumwolle*, 37.

61 Stettler et al., *Baumwolle*, 39.

62 Riello, *Cotton*, 34.