

<https://doi.org/10.29162/pv.43.1.1189>

UDC 398.9(497.4):391=111

Original scientific paper

Received on 31 January 2026

Accepted for publication on 10 April 2026

KATARINA ŠRIMPF VENDRAMIN

REPRESENTATIONS OF TEXTILE CULTURE IN SLOVENIAN PROVERBS

Abstract: Textiles are not merely economic goods but also carriers of social, cultural, and symbolic meanings. Focusing on the Slovenian cultural context, this article examines how textile production and related practices are reflected in proverbs and other short folklore forms. Drawing on a semantic analysis of Slovenian paremiological material, the analysis identifies elements of the traditional textile economy that are expressed in language and explores the figurative meanings they acquire within folklore discourse. It shows that thread, yarn, flax, wool, and textile-related crafts and professions serve as vehicles for transmitting knowledge, values, and experience, as well as for articulating concepts of work, community, and social order. The article thus demonstrates how the material aspects of textile production are intertwined with social and symbolic dimensions in folklore genres, revealing their role in shaping and communicating shared meanings and values within the Slovenian tradition.

Keywords: Slovenian folklore, textile production, proverbs, phrasemes, textile crafts, material culture

1. Introduction

Textile and clothing production have been inseparably intertwined with everyday life and economic activity, particularly in past societies. In pre-industrial periods, textile production constituted one of the key economic activities and a fundamental component of daily life. The textile trade played a central role

in the economy over long periods and in many cultures. Textiles were among the most valuable commodities traded along ancient trade routes such as the Silk Road and the demand for luxury textiles, such as silk, but also cotton, wool, and linen, drove commerce and cultural exchange between distant regions, facilitating economic growth and cultural diffusion (Beckert 2014, Bogansky 2013). Prior to the industrial innovations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the production of fibers, yarn, and cloth was embedded in local communities, where knowledge, skills, and tools were transmitted from generation to generation. Textile making was thus quite literally woven into communal life—into work, knowledge, and everyday practices—traces of which can still be recognized today in proverbs and phrasemes. Precisely because of this deep entanglement with economic structures and everyday experience, textiles also became a powerful medium for the communication of meanings, values, and collective knowledge.

Words and textiles are inextricably linked; in English this connection is even clearer, as the word *text* actually derives from the Latin *texere*, which means to weave (Harper 2026). Words and symbols have been written on or in textiles for centuries. Silk was chosen as a medium for written documents in China in antique times; in medieval Europe people learned Bible stories from huge tapestries hung in churches and other public and private spaces; and from at least the 17th century women stitched verses about morality, virtue and family piety on their needlework samplers (Gordon 2013: 216–217). Over a period of about 150 years, from the French Revolution to 1930, an original form of folk art was created and developed in the countries of Central Europe: the production of various types of wall or table embroidered napkins that decorated domestic spaces. The images on these works of art were complemented by proverbs that expressed the moral values of the family and society of that time (Villani 2016).

However, the communicative capacity of textiles extends far beyond their use as literal writing surfaces. Through materials, techniques, patterns, and modes of use, textiles have long functioned as carriers of social meanings, values, and norms, rendering them readable as a system of signs within specific cultural

contexts. As such, textiles reflect the cultural, economic, and technological conditions of a given period and community (cf. Gordon 2013, Miller 2016: 29), while simultaneously conveying information about individuals by expressing taste, personality, social status, religious affiliation, occupation, age, and gender (Barnard 2005). It is clear that textiles are not merely essential materials for clothing and household use; their production and use can also be read as a form of language through which societies articulate social organization, value systems and also economic interdependence (Šrimpf Vendramin 2025).

While research on textiles has largely focused on their material and cultural dimensions, considerably less attention has been devoted to their symbolic aspects and to the ways in which these are manifested in immaterial forms. Yet an understanding of textile culture in all its layers—not only its material, but also its symbolic dimensions, as reflected, for instance, in language—offers deeper insights into social structures, including modes of social organization, shared values, and responses to economic and environmental change.

As both a material and a meaningful, symbolic dimension of human experience, textiles—and clothing in particular—possess pronounced economic as well as cultural significance. Their role is reflected not only in material culture but also in a rich linguistic and narrative tradition, including fairy tales, narratives, proverbs, and phrasemes, in which elements of textile culture have been preserved. These genres do not merely mirror aspects of the material world and textile production; rather, they employ textile imagery to articulate social norms, collective wisdom, gender relations, and conceptions of work, time, and fate (Mieder 2004: 4).

Slovenian phrasemes such as *presti niti človekove usode* [spinning the threads of man's destiny] (SSKJ² 2014) or *držáti (vsé) niti v (svôjih) rôkah* [to hold the threads in one's hands] (Keber 2025), as well as proverbs like “*Vsaka preja pride v statve* [Every yarn comes to the loom]”,¹ are not merely linguistic figures, but reflections of concrete experiences and aspects of

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all proverbs cited in this article are drawn from the Collection of Slovenian Proverbs 1.1, kept at the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, which is presented in more detail later in the article.

past everyday life. Through them, one can discern how textile work and production were embedded in daily practices, along with the knowledge, experiences, values, and symbolic meanings associated with the making of textiles and clothing and with other facets of textile culture (Mieder 2004: 4).

This article examines the presence and functions of textile culture within Slovenian proverbial and phraseological material with the aim of identifying which elements of traditional textile production have found expression in language. The analysis primarily focuses on phrasemes and proverbs, while riddles, as a genre closely related to proverbs, are included as supplementary illustrative material. In a semantic context the analysis is concentrated on textile-related materials such as thread, yarn, flax, wool, and silk, as well as on tools (e.g. spinning wheel, loom, needle) and occupations (e.g. seamstress, tailor, weaver), and considers how these elements are represented and employed in proverbs, phrasemes, and other short folklore forms. Special attention is given to the ways in which expressions connected to textile production reflect the everyday experiences of past generations, their technological practices, and social organization, as well as shared symbolic and collective representations. The article further explores how originally stereotyped meanings associated with textile imagery persist or are reinterpreted in the context of broader social changes. By means of a semantic and symbolic analysis of textile and clothing related proverbs, the study demonstrates that textile symbolism in Slovenian folklore expressions functions not merely as a linguistic or aesthetic motif, but also as a reflection of concrete economic and social realities, particularly in relation to work, skills, and everyday economic life.

While the present study focuses on proverbs and phrasemes, textile elements can also be traced in other folkloric genres and everyday practices such as the gesture of lifting a hat as a form of greeting or in different rituals where textile were used as part of wedding or death rituals and even as part of the healing ritual with incantations (e.g. Kuret 1989; Dolenc 1999). These examples suggest that textile culture is embedded more broadly in cultural practice, although the following analysis concentrates on its expression in short folkloric forms.

2. Proverbs and phrasemes as a reflection of textile culture

The embeddedness of textiles in everyday life has been extensive both in the past and in the present—not only as a physical practice of production, but also as a cultural code reflected in language and in symbolic imagery, particularly in proverbs. Ethnolinguistic research has shown that proverbs can be understood as reflections of collective memory which, despite their apparent simplicity, often encode complex forms of knowledge, social structures, and shared representations. At the same time, by reducing the unfamiliar to the familiar, they provide interpretative frameworks through which complex situations can be made comprehensible. The meanings conveyed by proverbs may remain stable and recognizable over long periods, or they may gradually blur, transform, and be reinterpreted in response to changing social conditions (cf. Babič 2020: 125-127; Jakop 2022: 130).

As such, proverbs and phraseological units function as important carriers of cultural content and connotation. As forms of everyday speech that draw their content from lived experience, folklore genres, such as proverbs, not only preserve echoes of the material world, but also convey beliefs, values, and broader worldviews of the communities in which they are created, transmitted, and used (Kropej 1995; Bobkina 2004; Babič 2015). Among short folklore genres, sayings and proverbs are particularly prominent in this regard, as they encapsulate and transmit socially shared values and beliefs. They may express cultural meanings explicitly or implicitly, and these meanings can shift over time. Within paremiology and phraseology, such units are therefore often regarded as forms of cultural heritage, serving as repositories of social memory and indicators of a society's conceptual world. Through them, it is possible to trace changing social circumstances, norms, and values, as well as broader processes that shape and transform society (Jakop 2022: 130; Babič 2020: 125-127).

Although textiles and clothing constituted a central part of everyday life in the past and appear frequently across a wide range of folklore genres, systematic research on textile culture as reflected specifically in proverbs and phraseological material remains relatively limited. Existing studies from the broader field

of folklore studies tend to address individual aspects of textile symbolism or focus on particular cultural contexts rather than offering broader paremiological analyses. Researchers have been examining, for example, clothing and proverbs within specific religious or cultural communities, such as Russian Old Believers (Bobkina 2024), as well as the symbolic meanings of thread and spinning in European folklore (Mencej 2010) and the functions of textile and sartorial artefacts in Russian folktales (Ivleva 2009). Other contributions approach textile symbolism through literary, ethnographic, or historical perspectives, including studies on color symbolism in the folk literature of the Caucasus (Hunt and Chenciner 2006), the role of clothing as a symbolic and magical object in Slavic ritual contexts (Sedakova 2016), or comparative analyses of women's work and household roles as reflected in Biblical proverbs (Lang 2004). While these studies demonstrate the cultural and symbolic importance of textiles, clothing, and textile practices, they rarely focus on proverbs as a primary source for analyzing textile-related knowledge, values, and everyday practices.

Against this background, the study of clothing and textile culture-and its echoes in language, particularly in folklore and phrasemes-offers insights not only into the economic, social, political, and cultural conditions of specific historical periods, but also into the symbolic meanings and beliefs associated with them. Building on previous research into everyday life and its linguistic reflections in proverbs (Smith 2012; Babič and Voolaid 2023; Babič 2018; Šrampf Vendramin 2024a, 2025), this article examines the textile elements that appear in Slovenian proverbs, considering them both as components of past everyday practices and as echoes of craft-based and manufacturing activities that once formed an integral part of daily life.

The particular value of proverbs reflecting textile culture lies in their capacity to combine references to concrete work practices, materials, tools, and occupations. In doing so, they reveal not only aspects of the material world associated with textile production, but also non-material dimensions such as the gendered division of labor, the seasonality of tasks, and the collective memory of handicraft skills, processes, and knowledge. At the same time, proverbs preserve metaphorical and symbolic meanings

that have become conventionalized over time, granting certain expressions broader figurative significance (e.g. dress – man, thread – life). In this way, proverbs constitute a space in which the material and the symbolic intersect, offering insight into the interplay between the physical and the immaterial dimensions that shaped proverbial expression in the past and continue to resonate in the present.

3. Methodology

Methodologically, the article draws on an ethnolinguistic and semantic analysis of Slovenian proverbs and related short folklore forms. It brings together linguistic material with ethnological and historical data on textile production, use, and everyday practices, reading proverbial expressions in relation to the material, social, and economic contexts from which they emerged. By linking metaphorical language and conceptual structures to concrete forms of textile work, the study approaches proverbs as sites where practical knowledge, symbolic meanings, and collective experience intersect within textile culture.

The article is based on a collection of Slovenian proverbs 1.1 kept at the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology (ISN), ZRC SAZU, which was digitized in 2023. The collection comprises 37,390 units and is fully accessible through the CLARIN.SI repository.² To date, approximately 800 units have been identified in the collection that relate in various ways to textile and clothing culture. An initial analysis of the collection was conducted with the aim of determining the extent to which Slovenian proverbs reflect textile culture and the forms this reflection takes—ranging from textile production and the use of materials to clothing practices and their symbolic meanings. The first phase of the analysis

² The collection began to take shape through the work of folklorist Milko Matičev at the founding of the institute in 1951. Systematic organization and digitization, however, started later, with projects led by Marija Stanonik from 1997 onwards. The collection of proverbs and paremiological units was compiled through the transcription of proverbs from printed sources such as books, journals, and calendars, through collecting initiatives in various magazines, fieldwork, personal notes, and by reviewing older materials preserved in the ISN archive. As a result, the dating of the material—especially for older items—is not always reliable; nevertheless, it can be stated that the recorded units were documented or in use between 1578 and 2010.

involved keyword-based searches for terms related to clothing, such as *obleka* [clothing], *čevlji* [shoe], and *srajca* [shirt], which occur in well-known Slovenian proverbs also included in the paremiological optimum by Meterc (cf. Meterc 2016, 2017). In the second phase, a more systematic and semantically focused examination was carried out, targeting terms associated with production processes and tools (e.g. sewing, spinning, spinning wheel, distaff), occupations (e.g. tailor, seamstress, weaver), raw materials and textiles (e.g. flax, wool, silk, velvet), as well as garments and parts of clothing (e.g. coat, skirt, gloves, stockings, pocket). This semantic analysis and the resulting selection of paremiological units form the empirical basis of the present article.

In most of the proverbs identified in the collection, the lexical material consists primarily of general terms related to textile culture, clothing, and textile production. The semantic analysis reveals a notable absence of highly specific terminology referring to particular garments, fabrics, or materials (e.g. *bombaž* [cotton], *irh* [chamois leather]), although such terms are confirmed in other ethnographic and historical research on the subject. This may indicate that these expressions were either not in widespread use, were regionally or temporally limited, or were referred to by alternative naming conventions. A similar pattern can be observed with regard to certain items of clothing (e.g. *bluza* [blouse], *ruta* [(head)scarf], *avba* [type of traditional bonnet]), which are likewise absent from the collection, possibly due to their later emergence, dialectal variation, or limited integration into proverbial discourse.

Although many proverbs are recorded in standardized language, dialectal elements are also present, particularly in older and regionally marked variants, reflecting the oral origins and local embeddedness of the paremiological material.

- (1) *Mojškra (šivilja) Klara ponoči šiva, podnevi para.* [Klara the seamstress sews at night and unpicks by day.]
- (2) *Če se lepe ženske ne drži za firtuh (predpasnik) mož, primejo pa drugi zanj.* [If a beautiful woman's husband does not hold on to her apron, others will.]

- (3) *Žida (svila) in žamet pogasita ogenj na ognišu.* [Silk and velvet put out the fire on the fireplace.]

4. Textile production in proverbs and short folklore forms

Proverbs do not express only general truths about life and moral teachings, as noted in the definition of the proverb by the renowned paremiologist Wolfgang Mieder (2004: 4); they also constitute a valuable linguistic archive of knowledge about everyday work, handicraft and craft practices, and the economic logic of past communities (Jakop and Babič 2025). This is particularly true of textile production, which for centuries represented one of the fundamental domains of the subsistence economy. Many forms of textile practice—from the processing of flax and wool to spinning, weaving, and sewing—have found their reflection in proverbs, which preserve knowledge about materials, tools, skills, social roles, and values.

For centuries, textiles constituted one of the key fields of handicraft, craft, and later industrial activity. Tailors, seamstresses, weavers, dyers, and other textile artisans shaped the everyday life of communities through their work, as they provided essential goods in the form of fabrics and clothing. Their knowledge and the memory of their labor were transmitted from generation to generation and preserved not only in material culture and the objects they produced, but also in language—in proverbs, phrasemes, and other linguistic forms—which testify to how deeply textile work was interwoven with the everyday life of past communities.

This section presents a semantic analysis of Slovenian proverbs and other short folklore forms that refer to textile production. The analysis reveals several recurrent semantic clusters that structure the proverbial material and reflect different aspects of textile culture. These include references to textile artisans and occupations, materials and fibers, tools and production processes, as well as garments and clothing practices. Together, these semantic groupings provide a framework for examining how textile-related knowledge, practices, and symbolic meanings are encoded in proverbs.

4.1 Textile artisans

The economic importance of clothing production in the past is indicated by the fact that tailoring guilds were among the earliest professional associations in the territory of present-day Slovenia and are mentioned as an occupational group as early as 1281 (Bogataj 2004: 258). It is therefore not surprising that references to this economic activity also appear in short folklore genres.

Insights into the social function of tailors in the past are suggested by riddles such as

- (a) Kdo naredi gospoda? – Krojač. [Who makes a gentleman? - The tailor] (Babič 2021: 73).

But as well as by proverbs such as:

- (4) *Krojač naredi gospoda.* [The tailor makes a gentleman.]
 (5) *Krojač naredi človeka.* [The tailor makes the man.]
 (6) *Krojači so naredili že precej velikih gospodov.* [Tailors have already made quite a few great gentlemen.]

These proverbs testify not only to the importance of tailoring as a craft, but also to the significance of outward appearance shaped by clothing, and to the role of the tailor as the figure who materializes social status.³ In this sense, tailoring is presented as a practice through which social distinctions are made visible and recognizable. In several parts of Europe, especially during the period of guild organization, tailors accordingly enjoyed a relatively high social standing (Crowston 2008). However, historical sources relating to the territory of present-day Slovenia suggest a more ambivalent social position. At least in the nineteenth century, tailoring appears to have been a physically demanding occupation that did not necessarily guarantee economic security or elevated social status (Baš 1987: 75-81). On the contrary, evidence from other studies shows that tailors were often

³ This idea is also reflected in newer and still widely used variants such as *Obleka naredi človeka* ('Clothes make the man') (found also in Meterc 2023), which shift the focus from the artisan to the garment itself while preserving the same underlying meaning.

targets of ridicule, stereotyped as clumsy, physically weak, timid, chronically late, or associated with the perceived “feminine” nature of their work, which did not conform to dominant ideals of masculinity (Baš 1987: 81, Globočnik 2005: 351-352). In the nineteenth century, when some textile artisans operated outside the framework of peasant households as independent craftsmen, they were often perceived as marginal figures and, at times, as socially inferior. Such attitudes found expression in both linguistic and visual satire, most notably in painted beehive panels (*panjske končnice*), where tailors frequently appear as objects of caricature (Globočnik 2005).

This ambivalent social position, situated between economic necessity and social devaluation, is also articulated in proverbial discourse. Although the services of textile artisans were indispensable, their own appearance often remained modest, especially among those who worked in the countryside. The collection thus contains proverbs that can be interpreted figuratively as well as literally.

- (7) *Krojač nosi strgano obleko* (‘The tailor wears torn clothes’)

This proverb conveys the idea that those who produce essential goods for others do not necessarily benefit from their own work. A similar pattern is also found in the more widely used contemporary proverb *Kovačeva kobila je zmeraj bosa* (‘The blacksmith’s mare is always barefoot’) (also found in Meterc 2023), which conveys a comparable meaning through a different artisanal motif.

References to seamstresses also appear in the proverb collection, for example:

- (8) *Pri šivilji ni svile kupovati*. [One should not buy silk from a seamstress.]
(9) *Od mojškre židanje draga*. [Silk from a seamstress is expensive.]

Seamstresses and female tailors were generally held in even lower esteem than their male counterparts. Their craft was also

subject to much stricter regulation (Crowston 2008). In the nineteenth century within the Habsburg Monarchy, where the Slovenian area also belonged in the past, women were permitted to sew, yet they were not allowed to operate independent workshops. The only form of independent activity available to them was millinery, that is, the production of women's headwear and ornamental accessories (Baš 1987: 76). Over time, attitudes towards seamstresses did change, and some achieved considerable recognition and esteem especially in cities such as Ljubljana (Tomažič 1983: 25–29). Nevertheless, it appears that they were also able to charge relatively high prices for their services, a fact alluded to with a mildly ironic or critical tone in the proverbs cited above.

Proverbs reveal not only the attitude towards certain textile artisans, but also the practical aspects of their work. Textile work followed natural cycles and was closely tied to the availability of raw materials (such as wool, flax, and hemp), weather conditions, and the rhythm of agricultural labor. A proverb referring to weavers illustrates this seasonal organization of work particularly clearly.

- (10) *Ko kukavica zapoje, je tkavec ob delo svoje* ('When the cuckoo sings, the weaver is out of work')

Weaving and spinning were primarily winter activities. With the arrival of spring—symbolically marked by the cuckoo's song—textile production came to a halt, as spring and summer were devoted to sowing, harvesting, and preparing raw materials. The proverb thus encodes the seasonal rhythm of textile labor and its dependence on agricultural cycles.

Clothing production likewise followed seasonal patterns, shaped both by the availability of materials and by the needs of the community. At least from the nineteenth century until the Second World War, the tailoring year unfolded in cycles determined by seasonal demand. Rural tailors and seamstresses followed a comparable work rhythm, with most of their activity concentrated in the autumn and winter months. During this period, they worked either in their own homes or travelled to the households of peasant clients to work, staying for several days

or even weeks to repair or produce garments. In return, they received board, lodging, and payment for their labor. In summer, when agricultural work took precedence, they were often left without work (Baš 1987: 75–78; Makarovič 2007: 43–44). This seasonal logic of clothing making is therefore reflected in the proverb:

- (11) *Ko na gradu ustreli, žnidar s stola pade!* ('When a shot is fired at the castle, the tailor falls from his chair')
(Tomažič 1983: 19)

In this case, the proverb refers to actual ceremonial gunshots fired from Ljubljana Castle, which traditionally took place ten days after Pentecost, on the Feast of the Holy Spirit, as part of a cathedral procession. These shots marked the arrival of summer and signaled a period of reduced demand for tailoring work, symbolically indicating the temporary pause in the tailor's activity (Tomažič 1983: 19).⁴ Beyond the temporal organization of work, proverbs also provide insight into the economic relationships that structured textile labor.

- (12) *Čigar prejo prela, tega kruh jela* [She eats the bread of the one whose yarn she spins]

These proverbs may be interpreted in two ways: either as reflections of mutual assistance within village communities, where women helped one another and were compensated with food and drink, or as references to the putting-out system, which persisted in rural Slovenia until the first half of the nineteenth century. In this system, a contractor supplied the raw material—yarn or thread—while the artisan processed it at home, either by spinning or weaving, and received payment or a share of the produce in return (Šorn 1978). In both cases, the proverb emphasizes the connection between work and subsistence, revealing how textile

⁴ During the winter months, the work was limited and done by the master craftsman alone or with an assistant. Orders increased in March and April, especially before Easter, and then gradually decreased until Pentecost. Summer orders for heavier, winter garments were rare and only increased again at the end of August and September, when tailors began to prepare the winter wardrobe. (Tomažič 1983:19–20).

labor was embedded in broader systems of exchange and economic relations.

4.2 *Raw materials: flax and wool*

Among the most frequent motifs in proverbs related to textile production are the raw materials from which yarns and fabrics were made. Wool and flax are mentioned particularly often, reflecting their status as the fundamental textile materials in the territory of present-day Slovenia. Archaeological and ethnographic research confirms their long-standing importance (cf. Makarovič 2007, Gleba and Mannering 2012, Grömer 2016). In proverbs, these materials point not only to the raw-material basis of textile production, but also to the seasonal rhythms of work and the knowledge required for their processing.

Flax occupies a particularly prominent place in Slovenian proverbs related to textile production, where it appears not only as a raw material but also as a marker of time, labor, and economic value.⁵ The proverb

- (13) *Lan je lan, z njim je posla leto in dan.* (Flax is flax—working with it takes a year and a day.)

encapsulates the defining feature of flax production: its long, continuous, and demanding processing cycle. This concise formulation refers to the entire sequence of tasks, from sowing in spring to the finished textile a year later, and conveys experiential knowledge of flax as a material that requires patience, persistence, and sustained effort. At the same time, the proverb functions metaphorically, expressing a broader life principle—that good results depend on time, care, and long-term commitment.

⁵ The prominence of flax in proverbial material corresponds to its long-standing economic and cultural importance. Archaeological remains from the prehistoric pile-dwelling settlement at Ljubljansko barje, dated to around 3400 BCE, attest to the very early presence of flax as a cultivated plant in the region (Tolar and Velušček 2009). In later periods, flax remained a crucial raw material, particularly in areas where domestic textile production formed part of a subsistence economy. In certain regions of Slovenian ethnic territory, such as the Škofja Loka area or between the Gail Valley and Villach in present-day Austria, it even constituted a key economic resource from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century (Kobe Erzenšek 1986).

Flax cultivation and processing were strictly subordinated to seasonal rhythms. Sowing, pulling, drying, and breaking had to follow a precise sequence dictated by weather and natural conditions, and knowledge of this annual cycle was essential for producing high-quality fiber. Calendar proverbs and agricultural sayings therefore functioned as practical guides that helped communities coordinate their work in time:

- (14) *O sv. Jerneju lan sejat, o sv. Jakobu ajda, o sv. Ani repa, potem mora biti nedelja.* [On St. Bartholomew's Day sow flax, on St. James's buckwheat, on St. Anne's turnips—then it must be Sunday.]

Weather-related proverbs further emphasize the dependence of flax quality on environmental conditions:

- (15) *Jasen in sončen svečnice dan ženam obeta dobro za lan.* [A clear and sunny Candlemas Day promises women good flax.]
 (16) *Suho vreme, lan še pri tleh, če ga ne plevaš, ti bo le v zasmeh.* [Dry weather, when the flax is still low to the ground—if you do not weed it, it will only bring you mockery.]

Other sayings stress the importance of timely harvesting and processing:

- (17) *Lan raste še devet dni, ko odcvete.* [Flax continues to grow for nine days after it has finished flowering.]

Such proverbs are not primarily metaphorical; rather, they function as temporal planners—a form of agricultural calendar through which past communities organized everyday life. By observing recurring natural patterns, people interpreted signs that helped them anticipate weather conditions and the success of the harvest, both of which directly affected communal well-being. This reflects an understanding of time as cyclical and repetitive, structured by annually recurring rhythms and signs (Babič 2015: 63–70, 2016).

Beyond its role in production, flax also appears in proverbs as a marker of economic security and wealth. This is clearly expressed in the saying:

- (18) *Najlepši zakladi so za gospodinjo, če ima s platnom napolnjeno skrinjo.* [A housewife's finest treasures are a chest filled with linen.]

Here, linen cloth is presented as a form of stored value. A full chest of linen symbolized security and played an important role in life-cycle rituals: it constituted part of a bride's dowry, served as burial cloth, and frequently appeared in inheritance inventories (Destovnik 1996, Smrdel 1998: 93, Makarovič 2007: 391). In this sense, flax emerges not only as an agricultural and textile resource, but also as a symbol of perseverance, order, cyclical time, and prosperity, linking natural rhythms with labour that generates both material and symbolic wealth.

Although flax was present very early, wool became established as a material for clothing somewhat later.⁶ Nevertheless, the prominence of wool in the proverbial material indicates how deeply this raw material was embedded in rural everyday life. Wool was a key by-product of animal husbandry and in some Slovenian regions sheep farming remained the most important economic activity until the Second World War. Wool thus shaped many aspects of daily life, including the production of socks, gloves, rugs, and bags (Balkovec 1986: 104-105, Matkovič 2012: 9).

Proverbs frequently prioritize wool over other goods, emphasizing its durability and long-term value:

- (19) *Dobra ovca da malo mleka, pa veliko volne.* [A good sheep gives little milk but much wool.]

⁶ Archaeological evidence from neighbouring Alpine regions suggests that wool production developed around 2000 BCE, during the Bronze Age, alongside the intentional breeding of sheep. Sheep farming and wool subsequently played a central role in the Alpine economy, part of which is also mayor part of Slovenian territory, providing one of the most important sources of textile fibres. The basic techniques of wool processing developed at that time have remained essentially unchanged to the present day (Šrumpf Vendramin 2024b: 33-35).

- (20) *Bolje dati volno, nego živo ovco.* [It is better to give wool than a living sheep.]
 (21) *Kdor dobi ovco, naj dobi tudi volno z njo.* [Whoever receives a sheep should also receive its wool.]

These sayings present wool as a renewable resource and a symbol of prudence and sustainable benefit, contrasting enduring value with short-term gain.

Beyond its material significance, wool often acquires metaphorical meanings. In many proverbs it stands for the expected result of effort, but also for disappointment when expectations are not fulfilled:

- (22) *Veliko krika, pa malo volne.* [Much noise, but little wool.]
 (23) *Kockar pride, da bi dobil volno, a odhaja ostrižen.* [The gambler comes hoping to get wool, but leaves shorn.]
 (24) *Kdor za tujo volno hodi, sam ostrižen domov pride.* [Whoever goes after another's wool returns home shorn.]

Across the proverbial material, wool appears not only as a tangible raw material but also as a measure of value, effort, and outcome. Whether considered in terms of abundance, loss, or moral judgement, wool consistently functions as an index of quality and result. In this sense, proverbs referring to wool form a bridge to a broader proverbial principle: that the quality of the final product—material or social—depends fundamentally on the quality of its origin.

The importance of good-quality raw material is repeatedly emphasized. Proverbs carry the idea that a good final product depends on a good starting point - an insight rooted in the everyday experience of textile workers, yet generalized into broader life wisdom.

- (25) *Kakršna preja, tako bo platno.* [As the yarn is, so will the cloth be.]
 (26) *Kakovo runo, takova ovca.* [As the fleece is, so is the sheep.]

Such expressions reflect the lived reality of craft communities, where the connection between nature and production was directly experienced. Good wool implied a healthy animal and high-quality yarn, both of which signaled security and survival. These proverbs therefore articulate both technical knowledge and a broader social understanding that the quality of the whole depends on care for its origin, both materially and symbolically.

Taken together, proverbs referring to flax and wool reveal how deeply textile raw materials were embedded in everyday experience and economic reasoning, articulating practical knowledge about production, seasonality, and material quality.

4.3 Textile processes and tools

The cultivation of flax or the shearing of sheep alone did not result in a finished textile product; what was essential was the long and multi-stage processing of raw materials. From a flax stalk or a sheep's fleece to woven cloth, textile production involved an entire chain of operations that required knowledge, time, and specialized tools. The demanding and often arduous nature of this work is captured in the riddle:

- (b) *Mali lepo narejeni, pa se žena pri njem muči - Kolovrat.*
 [Small and beautifully made, yet a woman struggling at it. - Spinning wheel.] (Babič 2021: 69)

This riddle contains an implicit commentary on women's textile work. Although the spinning wheel is presented as a finely crafted object, it is also associated with prolonged physical effort and bodily exhaustion. Such riddles draw attention to the often-overlooked yet crucial role of women in household economies and textile production. Tools such as the spinning wheel were therefore not merely technical implements but also carried cultural and symbolic meanings related to gendered divisions of labor and power relations within the community—meanings that are otherwise documented in historical and ethnographic sources. The gendered nature of textile labor is also expressed in the proverb:

- (27) *Kakor mati prede, tako hči tke.* [As the mother spins, so the daughter weaves.]

This saying symbolically links textile work with the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, family values, and women's social roles. For women, textile work functioned not only as economic activity but also as a form of socialization and preparation for adulthood. Through spinning, weaving, and embroidery, girls learned gendered roles and actively participated in shaping their future life paths, particularly through the preparation of their dowry (Auslander 2015, Gordon 2013, Parker 1984, Novak 1964).

Tools such as looms, spinning wheels, distaffs, and spindles thus formed an indispensable part of women's textile culture, especially during the winter months. In many regions, winter spinning gatherings served not only productive but also important social functions (cf. Novak 1964, Gordon 2013: 123). At the same time, spinning was subject to regulation. In certain periods of the calendar and life cycle, spinning was strictly prohibited, as it was considered an activity of strong symbolic potency. In many European traditions, spinning was understood as a bridge between the world of the living and the otherworld. Consequently, during liminal periods-particularly the Christmas - New Year season and Carnival, when contact with supernatural beings was believed to be possible-spinning was avoided. In the Slovenian cultural context, the observance of these prohibitions was overseen by female supernatural beings such as Pehtra Baba, Zlata Baba, Torka, or Kvatrnica, who fulfilled both protective and punitive functions. Violations of these prohibitions were believed to have serious consequences, including deformities in humans and animals, illness, misfortune in household and agricultural work, adverse weather conditions, or even unwanted contact with the dead (Kropej 2008; Mencej 2013: 63–90). Although such prohibitions are not directly reflected in proverbs, proverbial material related to spinning nevertheless emphasizes the seasonal nature of this activity:

- (28) *Kadar se začne post, vrzi preslico v gozd.* [When Lent begins, throw the distaff into the forest.]

- (29) *Ko se dan podaljšuje, se kodelja po malem zmanjšuje.*
[As the days grow longer, the flax tow gradually diminishes.]

These sayings associate spinning with the winter period, when other agricultural tasks were suspended and time was available for processing yarn and preparing textile fibers.

Between raw material and finished textile, thread occupies a central position. It is the immediate product of fibre processing and, at the same time, one of the oldest and most productive metaphors in proverbial language. On a symbolic level, thread represents a fundamental element of textile production while also functioning as a widely shared metaphor associated with work, life, and human existence. Its symbolism is deeply embedded not only in proverbs but also in other folklore genres, where thread frequently serves as a carrier of meaning, order, connection, and continuity. This connection can already be observed in ancient mythology, where the three goddesses known as the Moirai presided over human fate: Clotho spun the thread of life, Lachesis measured it, and Atropos cut it. A similar function is performed in Slovenian mythological tradition by the beings called *sojenice*, who determine an individual's fate at birth (Mencej 2010; Krojež 2008). In Slovenian folklore, thread often appears as a symbol of transience, particularly as a link between birth and death and between the worlds of the living and the dead.

While this explicit “thread of life” symbolism is not present in the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology proverb collection, several proverbs connect thread with health and recovery:

- (30) *Bolezen gre v človeka z vozom, iz človeka po niti.* [Illness enters a person by the cart, but leaves by the thread.]
 (31) *Bolezen po vrvi, zdravje po niti.* [Illness comes by rope, health by thread.]
 (32) *Zdravje curkom doli, po niti gori.* [Health flows downward in a stream, but rises upward by a thread.]

In these expressions, illness is associated with rope—strength, force, suddenness—while recovery is linked to thread, symbolizing slowness, fragility, and gradual healing. Thread thus be-

comes a metaphor for the delicate and patient process of restoring balance, highlighting the vulnerability of the human body and the value of perseverance.

Proverbs mentioning thread also articulate principles of household economy and everyday management, expressing the experiential logic that accumulation is slow and demanding, whereas loss can be sudden:

- (33) *Premoženje gre curkom dol, po niti pa gor.* [Wealth goes down in a stream, but rises by a thread.]
- (34) *Imetje se po niti nabira, po vrvi zapravi.* [Property is accumulated by a thread, but squandered by a rope.]
- (35) *Dolg pride po vrvi, odhaja po niti.* [Debt comes by rope and goes away by thread.]

The next riddle highlights the paradoxical nature of thread and yarn: physically light and fragile, yet symbolically powerful and effective, far exceeding their material properties.

- (c) *Jaz vem za tako stvar, ki je sto konjev ne odvleče na breg, jaz sam pa jo odnesem - Klobka.* [I know of something that a hundred horses cannot pull uphill, yet I can carry it myself - A ball of yarn.] (Babič 2021: 69)

Today, thread retains its symbolic value primarily in language, where it appears in common phraseological expressions. Among the most frequently used are *imeti vse niti v rokah* [to have all the threads in one's hands] and the red thread. The former denotes control and influence, often exercised behind the scenes, while the latter refers to a central theme or guiding idea that runs through a whole—such as a text or an argument (Keber 2025).

If thread represents the individual life course, weaving is the act that transforms these threads into a whole—a life story or even a cosmic order. In many mythological traditions, weaving functions as a cosmic act: through weaving, the world is created, the order of nature is structured, and the rhythm of time is determined (Scheid, Svenbro and Volk 2001, McLeod, Molly 2022). In some cultures, weaving symbolizes the very fabric of the universe. For example, in Hindu mythology, the god Vishnu

is regarded as the weaver of creation, who weaves cosmic order from threads (Pattanaik 2012). Similarly, in Greek philosophical thought, the symbolism of weaving is expressed through the concept of *logos*, understood as the binding thread of reality, the meaning that “spins” order out of chaos (Scheid, Svenbro and Volk 2001). This idea is also expressed in the proverb:

(36) *Križ so statve, na katerih se tke človek.* [The cross is the loom on which a person is woven.]

Here, weaving is not merely manual labor, but a symbolic process through which the human being is formed.

Taken together, proverbs and riddles referring to textile processes and tools show that spinning and weaving were perceived not only as demanding forms of manual labour, but also as activities endowed with strong symbolic significance. Through tools, seasonal rhythms, and metaphors of thread and weaving, these expressions articulate ideas about gender roles, the organization of work, the fragility of life, and the gradual formation of human destiny, thus linking everyday textile practices with broader cultural and cosmological frameworks.

4.4. *Clothing*

Slovenian proverbs do not refer only to various aspects of textile production, but also to clothing as its final product. Garments that appear in proverbs often carry metaphorical meanings, articulating a broader field of connotations related to appearance, status, values, and interpersonal relations is articulated. The topic of clothing in Slovenian proverbs has been discussed in greater detail elsewhere (Šrampf Vendramin 2024a); the present section, therefore, provides only a brief summary of key findings relevant to the broader analysis of textile culture.

In everyday life, clothing plays an important social role: it shapes interpersonal relations, social situations, and professional environments. It creates first impressions, evokes respect, and contributes to perceptions of personal orderliness, self-image, and sometimes even moral worth (cf. Hutson and Rodriguez 2016, Simmel 2000, Barnard 2005). This dimension is encapsulated in the well-known proverb:

- (37) *Obleka (ne) naredi človeka* [Clothes (do not) make the man].⁷

The Latin formulation *vestis virum facit* ('clothes make the man') was already recorded by the Dutch humanist and philosopher Erasmus of Rotterdam in his *Adagia* in 1520, pointing to the long-standing association between clothing and social identity (Atkins 2017). It is not surprising that among clothing-related terms, *obleka* (clothing, garment, dress) is by far the most frequently mentioned item in Slovenian proverbs, functioning as a general designation for clothing or attire, including formal dress (Meterc 2023). This tension between outward appearance and inner moral qualities is articulated particularly clearly in a number of proverbs:

- (38) *Kdor nima v srcu lepote, ga tudi lepa obleka ne polepša.*
[He who has no beauty in his heart is not made beautiful even by fine clothing.]
- (39) *En madež pokvari tudi najlepšo obleko.* [One stain spoils even the finest garment.]

Rather than reflecting isolated personal observations, such proverbs articulate broader social expectations and systems of value. They operate through moral contrasts, juxtaposing the social importance of outward appearance with the primacy of inner qualities and personal integrity.

At the same time, proverbial discourse makes clear that outward appearance itself was subject to strong normative regulation. The value placed on cleanliness and propriety of dress was traditionally high in Western culture, as reflected in proverbs such as:

⁷ The coexistence of the partially antonymous proverbs *Obleka naredi človeka* and *Obleka ne naredi človeka* further illustrates the flexibility of proverbial discourse, where contrasting evaluations can coexist and be activated depending on context. As has been noted in studies of antonymous Slovenian proverbs, such pairs may differ not only in meaning but also in their degree of recognition and usage among speakers (Meterc 2013).

- (40) *Obrabljena obleka ima malo ugleda.* [Worn-out dress has little prestige.]
 (41) *Lepe obleke ne more vsak nositi, čeden pa mora vsak biti.* [Not everyone can wear a nice suit, but everyone should be neat.]

These sayings express a social norm according to which individuals were expected to present themselves in an orderly and respectable manner. Neglect, dirtiness, or inappropriateness were regarded as socially undesirable and as deviations from accepted standards of respectability. Clean clothing has formed an integral part of personal hygiene at least since the Renaissance, when changing clothes was considered equivalent to washing the body (Remec 2015: 245-248).

Alongside these normative expectations, proverbs also reflect the practical realities of clothing use in everyday life. Proverbs further indicate that garments were commonly altered, repurposed, and worn until they were completely worn out.

- (42) *Še iz vsake praznične obleke je nastala vsakdanja.* [Yet every festive dress has become a casual one.]
 (43) *Lepa obleka kratko traja.* [A beautiful dress is short-lived.]

These two proverbs recall the widespread practice whereby better, festive garments were eventually downgraded for everyday or work use. At the same time, they point to the limited lifespan of clothing—whether due to physical wear or changes in fashion—and to the necessity of continual maintenance, repair, and renewal of one's wardrobe.

In proverbs, clothing is not merely a material object; it also reflects gender stereotypes and social roles, as noted by paremiological research (cf. Babič 2018). Trousers (*hlače*), for example, frequently appear as a symbol of male authority or control within family relations:

- (44) *Kjer žena hlače nosi, si mož kruha prosi.* [Where the wife wears trousers, the husband asks for bread.]

- (45) *Gorje možu, ki mu je žena slekla hlače.* [Woe to the man whose wife has taken off his trousers.]

By contrast, items such as the skirt or apron function as symbols of femininity and maternal roles:

- (46) *Mati mora imeti velik predpasnik, da pokrije vse napake svojega otroka.* [A mother must have a large apron to cover all her child's faults.]

Taken together, these expressions show that clothing in proverbs reflects not only the material world, but also social and family structures, value systems, and power relations, as well as a broader economy of appearance. At the same time, they point to the diachronic variability of proverbial material, in which motifs, formulations, and degrees of usage change over time, while underlying patterns of meaning remain relatively stable.

5. Conclusion

This study examines Slovenian proverbs and other short folklore forms as a source for understanding textile culture not only as a material and economic practice, but also as a symbolic and conceptual system embedded in everyday language. The focus on paremiological material has shown that proverbs form a particularly rich linguistic archive of knowledge about textile production, the organization of labor, and the social meanings attached to materials, tools, and clothing—insights that in many respects align with findings from ethnographic research.

Proverbs do not simply record textile practices as technical or historical facts. Rather, they condense concrete experiences of textile work into shared statements of knowledge, value, and moral judgement. Seasonal rhythms of labor, assessments of material quality, gendered divisions of work, and economic relations between producers and clients are all articulated in proverbial form, where practical instruction, social commentary, and symbolic meaning overlap.

In the proverbial material, references to raw materials, tools, work processes, artisans, and clothing recur with notable con-

sistency. Through these motifs, proverbs express broader understandings of time, work, and social order, in which material resources are closely linked to ideas of responsibility, stability, and social position.

Particularly telling is the way in which textile elements move from concrete reference to metaphorical use. Thread, yarn, and weaving illustrate this shift most clearly. While firmly grounded in production processes, they acquire symbolic meanings connected with life, health, fate, patience, and continuity.

Proverbs referring to clothing similarly show how garments function both as material objects and as markers of identity, morality, and power relations. The ambivalence expressed in sayings about clothing—between outward appearance and inner worth, respectability and deception—points to the normative role of proverbs in social evaluation. In this sense, textile-related proverbs do not merely reflect past realities, but actively participated in shaping social expectations and behavior.

By combining ethnolinguistic and semantic analysis with ethnological and historical knowledge of textile production and use, the study demonstrates the analytical potential of paremiological material for the study of material culture. Proverbs and related short folklore forms prove to be a productive meeting point between language and lived experience, where concrete practices of work are transformed into metaphorical expressions and conceptual patterns. This approach makes it possible to trace how everyday textile activities were not only performed, but also interpreted, evaluated, and remembered within the linguistic tradition.

Overall, the analysis confirms that textiles appear not only as products of labor, but as a conceptual domain through which communities articulated their understanding of work, gender relations, economic practices, and moral order. Proverbs thus function as a linguistic fabric in which material practices, symbolic meanings, and collective experience are interwoven. Approaching textile culture through paremiological material therefore offers valuable insight into the ways in which everyday work was transformed into shared knowledge and enduring cultural meaning.

Acknowledgement

The research for this paper was supported by the Slovenian Research Agency through project Language, culture and values: economic images of everyday life in folklore forms (J6-50197) and Ethnological, Anthropological and Folklore Studies Research on Everyday Life (research core funding, ARRS P6-0088).

References

- Atkins, Alexander. "What Is the Origin of 'Clothes Make the Man?'" *Medium*, 22 Aug. 2017. alex65670.medium.com/what-is-the-origin-of-clothes-make-the-man-7f75e070bf45, retrieved on 16 May 2025.
- Auslander, Leora. "Deploying Material Culture to Write the History of Gender and Sexuality: The Example of Clothing and Textiles." *Clio*, vol. 40, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.4000/cliowgh.716>, retrieved on 16 May 2025.
- Babič, Saša. *Beseda ni konj: Estetska struktura slovenskih folklornih obrazcev* [Word is Not a Horse: Aesthetic structure of Slovenian short folklore forms]. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789612547660>, retrieved on 16 May 2025.
- Babič, Saša. "Prostor in čas v slovenskih kmetijskih napotilih" [Space and Time in Slovenian Agricultural Guidelines]. *Prostor in čas v frazeologiji* [Space and Time in Phraseology], Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete, 2016, pp. 345–355.
- Babič, Saša. "Waste and Dirt in Short Folklore Forms." *Traditiones*, vol. 49, no. 1, 2020, pp. 125–139. <https://doi.org/10.3986/Traditio2020490107>, retrieved on 16 April 2025.
- Babič, Saša. *Uganke na Slovenskem* [Riddles in Slovenia]. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610505310>, retrieved on 16 April 2025.
- Babič, Saša, and Piret Voolaid. "A Sociocultural View of Estonian and Slovenian Proverbs on Alcohol and Drinking." *Folklore*, vol. 134, no. 3, 2023, pp. 370–394. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0015587X.2023.2175972>, retrieved on 16 April 2025.
- Balkovec, Marjetka. "O zadrugi v Beli krajini" [About the cooperative in Bela Krajina]. *Etnološka tribina*, vol. 9, 1986, pp. 103–109. <https://hrcaak.srce.hr/80299>, retrieved on 14 May 2025.
- Barnard, Malcolm. *Moda kot sporazumevanje* [Fashion as Communication]. Ljubljana: Sophia, 2005.

- Baš, Angelos. *Oblačilna kultura na Slovenskem v Prešernovem času: 1. polovica 19. stoletja* [Clothing Culture in Slovenia During Prešeren's Time: The First Half of the 19th Century]. Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1987.
- Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*. New York: Vintage Books, 2014.
- Bobkina, Jelena. "Clothing, Sayings and Proverbs Taken through the Prism of the Russian Old-Believers." *Academia.edu*, 2024. www.academia.edu/10018485, retrieved on 14 Dec. 2023.
- Bogansky, Amy. *Interwoven Globe: The Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500–1800*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013.
- Bogataj, Janez. "Krojaštvo" [Tailoring]. *Slovenski etnološki leksikon* [Slovenian Ethnological Lexicon], edited by Angelos Baš, Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2004, p. 258.
- Crowston, Clare. "Women, Gender, and Guilds in Early Modern Europe: An Overview of Recent Research." *International Review of Social History*, vol. 53, 2008, pp. 19–44. www.jstor.org/stable/26405466, retrieved on 10 April 2025
- Destovnik, Irena. *Ko bo cvetel lan: etnološka razstava o lanu in ovci* [When the Flax Blooms: An Ethnographic Exhibition on Flax and Sheep]. Celovec/Klagenfurt: Slovenska prosvetna zveza, 1996.
- Dolenc, Milan. *Zagovori v slovenski ljudski medicini ter zarotitve in apokrifne molitve* [Charms in Slovenian folk medicine, as well as incantations and apocryphal prayers]. Ljubljana: Inštitut za zgodovino medicine Medicinske fakultete, Znanstveno društvo za zgodovino zdravstvene kulture Slovenije, 1999.
- Gleba, Margarita, and Ulla Mannering, editors. *Textiles and Textile Production in Europe from Prehistory to AD 400*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2012.
- Globočnik, Damir. "Satirični motivi na panjskih končnicah" [Satirical motifs on beehive panels]. *Etnolog*, vol. 15 (66), 2005, pp. 345–365.
- Gordon, Beverly. *Textiles: The Whole Story: Uses, Meanings, Significance*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2013.
- Grömer, Karina. *The Art of Prehistoric Textile Making: The Development of Craft Traditions and Clothing in Central Europe*. Vienna: Naturhistorisches Museum, 2016. <http://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/32825>, retrieved on 12 April 2025.
- Harper, Douglas. "Etymology of 'Text.'" *Online Etymology Dictionary*. www.etymonline.com/word/text, retrieved on 30 January 2026.

- Harris, Jennifer, editor. *A Companion to Textile Culture*. Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 2020.
- Hunt, David, and Robert Chenciner. "Colour Symbolism in the Folk Literature and Textile Tradition of the Caucasus." *Optics and Laser Technology*, vol. 38, nos. 4–6, 2006, pp. 458–465. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.optlas-tec.2005.06.009>, retrieved on 30 September 2025.
- Hutson, Matthew, and Tori Rodriguez. "Dress for Success: How Clothes Influence Our Performance." *Scientific American Mind*, vol. 27, no. 1, 2016, p. 13. <https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamericanmind0116-13a>, retrieved on 27 May 2025.
- Ivleva, Victoria. "Functions of Textile and Sartorial Artifacts in Russian Folktales." *Marvels and Tales*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2009, pp. 268–299. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/mat.2009.a369109>, retrieved on 27 May 2025.
- Jakop, Nataša. "Govor in prostor skozi frazeološka očala" [Speech and Space Through the Lens of Phraseology]. *Govor in prostor* [Speech and Space], edited by Katarina Podbevšek and Nina Žavbi, Ljubljana: Založba UL, 2022, pp. 127–137. <https://doi.org/10.4312/9789617128826>, retrieved on 27 May 2025.
- Jakop, Nataša, and Saša Babič. "Gospodarske podobe vsakdanjika v luči folklornih obrazcev [Economic Aspects of Everyday Life in the Light of Folkloric Forms]". *Slavistična revija* [Journal of Slavic Studies], vol. 73, no. 2, 2025, pp. 295–308. <https://doi.org/10.57589/srl.v73i2.4240>, retrieved on 4 May 2025.
- Keber, Janez. *Slovar slovenskih frazemov* [Dictionary of Slovenian Idioms]. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2015, www.fran.si, retrieved on 4 May 2025.
- Krojej, Monika. *Pravljica in stvarnost : odsev stvarnosti v slovenskih ljudskih pravljicah in povedkah ob primerih iz Štrekljeve zapuščine* [Fairy Tales and Reality: A Reflection of Reality in Slovenian Folk Tales and Legends, with Examples from Štrekelj's Legacy]. Ljubljana: Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU, 1995. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9619012577>, retrieved on 4 May 2025.
- Krojej, Monika. "Slovene Midwinter Deities and Personifications of Days." *Space and Time in Europe*, edited by Mirjam Mencej, Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta, 2008, pp. 181–197.
- Kuret, Niko. *Praznično leto Slovencev : starosvetne šege in navade od pomladi do zime* [The Slovenian Festive Year: Old-World Customs and Traditions from Spring to Winter]. Ljubljana: Družina, 1989.
- Lang, Bernhard. "Women's Work, Household and Property in Two Mediterranean Societies: A Comparative Essay on Proverbs XXXI 10–31."

- Vetus Testamentum*, vol. 54, no. 2, 2004, pp. 188–207. www.jstor.org/stable/1518692, retrieved on 27 March 2025.
- Makarovič, Marija. *Obleka predela človeka* [Clothes make the man]. Maribor: Litera, 2007.
- Matkovič, Anita. *Ljudska noša uskoškega prebivalstva Bele krajine* [Traditional Costumes of the Uskok People of the Bela Krajina Region]. Dragatuš: Folklorna skupina, 2012, www.academia.edu/15343899, retrieved on 14 May 2025.
- McLeod, Molly. “Weaving in Mythology: Women’s Agency and Portrayed Character.” 2022. <https://files01.core.ac.uk/download/539342205.pdf>, retrieved on 27 March 2025.
- Mencej, Mirjam. “Simbolika niti in predenja v evropski folklori [The Symbolism of Threads and Spinning in European Folklore].” *Studia mythologica Slavica*, vol. 13, 2010, pp. 151–170.
- Mencej, Mirjam. *Sem vso noč lotal v krogu: simbolika krožnega gibanja* [I wandered in circles all night: the symbolism of circular motion]. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789612546441>, retrieved on 27 March 2025.
- Meterc, Matej. “Antonimija enako motiviranih paremioloških enot : (primeri iz slovenščine in slovaščine) [Antonymy of Equally Motivated Paremiological Units: (Examples from Slovenian and Slovak)]”. *Slavistična revija : časopis za jezikoslovje in literarne vede* [Slavistic Review: A Journal of Linguistics and Literary Studies], vol. 61, no. 2, 2013, pp. 361–376. https://srl.si/sql_pdf/SRL_2013_2_02.pdf, retrieved on 27 March 2026.
- Meterc, Matej. “The Slovene paremiological optimum: new empirical research tools and the augmentation of the field of minimum-oriented research”. *Proverbium - Yearbook*, vol. 33, no. 1, Aug. 2016, pp. 319–338. <https://naklada.ffos.hr/casopisi/index.php/proverbium/article/view/751>, retrieved on 16 March 2026. .
- Meterc, Matej. *Paremiološki optimum: Najbolj poznani in pogosti pregovori ter sorodne paremije v slovenščini* [Paremiological Optimum: The Most Well-Known and Common Proverbs and Related Sayings in Slovenian]. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610504153>, retrieved on 27 March 2025.
- Meterc, Matej. *Slovar pregovorov in sorodnih paremioloških izrazov* [Dictionary of Proverbs and Similar Paremiological Expressions 2023]. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610508533>, retrieved on 14 May 2025.

- Mieder, Wolfgang. *Proverbs: A Handbook*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004.
- Miller, Daniel. *Materialna kultura* [Material culture]. Ljubljana: Studia humanitatis, 2016.
- Novak, Anka. "Domače tkalstvo v Gornjesavski dolini [Domestic Weaving in the Gornjesavska Valley]". *Slovenski etnograf* [Slovenian ethnographer], vols. 16–17, 1964, pp. 245–256.
- Parker, Rozsika. *The Subversive Stitch*. London: Women's Press, 1984.
- Pattanaik, Devdutt. "Cloth and Culture." 2012. devdutt.com/cloth-and-culture, retrieved on 16 May 2025.
- Remec, Meta. *Podrgni, očedi, živali otrebi: higiena in snaga v dobi meščanstva* [Rub, Tidy, Tend to Animals: Hygiene and Sanitation in the Bourgeois Period]. Ljubljana: Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2015.
- Sedakova, Irina. "Clothes as Symbolic and Magic Objects in Slavic Childbirth Customs." *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore*, vol. 66, 2016, pp. 165–174. <https://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol66/sedakova.pdf>, retrieved on 8 April 2025.
- Simmel, Georg. *Izbrani spisi o kulturi* [Selected Essays on Culture]. Ljubljana: Studia humanitatis, 2000.
- SSKJ². *Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika* [Dictionary of the Slovenian Standard Language]. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 2014. <https://fran.si>, retrieved on 14 May 2025.
- Smith, John B. "Traditional sayings as reflexes of household, barn, and byre". *Proverbium - Yearbook*, vol. 29, no. 1, Aug. 2012, pp. 331–340. <https://naklada.ffos.hr/casopisi/index.php/proverbium/article/view/664>, retrieved on 31 March 2026.
- Smrdel, Inja. "Dediščina lanu in platnarstva na Slovenskem [The Heritage of Flax and Linen Weaving in Slovenia]". *Linen on Net*, edited by Paolo Moro, Fagagna: Arti Grafiche Friulane, 1998, pp. 73–96.
- Šorn, Jože. "Kmečka in obrtniška proizvodnja ter založništvo v drugi polovici 18. stoletja [Agricultural and artisanal production and publishing in the second half of the 18th century]". *Zgodovinski časopis* [Historical Journal], vol. 32, nos. 1–2, 1978, pp. 61–99. www.sistory.si/publication/13019, retrieved on 8 May 2025.
- Šrmpf Vendramin, Katarina, editor. *Alpine Textile Heritage: An Overview*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2024. doi:10.3986/9789610509042, retrieved on 8 April 2025.
- Šrmpf Vendramin, Katarina. "Clothing in Proverbs: Between Symbol and Meaning = Oblačila v pregovorih." *Paremiologija med tradicijo in*

- sodobnostjo = Paremiology between Tradition and Innovation*, edited by Saša Babič et al., Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 2024a, pp. 137–150. doi:10.3986/9789610508861_09, retrieved on 20 May 2025.
- Šrampf Vendramin, Katarina. “Tekstilna kultura v ogledalu frazemov, pregovorov in kratkih folklornih obrazcev [Textile Culture Reflected in Idioms, Proverbs, and Short Folkloric Forms]”. *Glasnik Slovenskega etnološkega društva* [Bulletin of the Slovenian Ethnological Society] vol. 65, no. 2, 2025, pp. 108–114.
- Tolar, Tjaša, and Anton Velušček. “Discovery of Flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) at Ljubljansko Barje, Slovenia.” *Histria Antiqua*, vol. 18, 2009, pp. 187–194.
- Tomažič, Tanja. *Ljubljana po predzadnji modi: O krojačih, šiviljah, modistkah in njihovem delu* [Ljubljana in the Latest Fashion: Tailors, Seamstresses, Milliners, and Their Work]. Ljubljana: Slovenski etnografski muzej, 1983. www.etno-muzej.si/files/ljubljana_po_predzadnji_modi_1983.pdf, retrieved on 8 May 2025
- Villani, Stelio. “Geschickte Hände und ein frohes Herz – Gestickte Sprüche für ein ‘gemütliches Heim’ [Skillful hands and a joyful heart – Embroidered sayings for a ‘cozy home’]” *Arbeitskreis Bild Druck Papier, Tagungsband Graz 2015*, edited by Konrad Vanja et al., Münster: Waxmann, 2016, pp. 122–130.

Katarina Šrampf Vendramin
 Institute of Slovenian Ethnology
 ZRC SAZU, Novi trg 2,
 SI-1000 Ljubljana
 E-Mail: katarina.srampf@zrc-sazu.si

Copyright (c) 2026 Author(s)

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

