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Gender-biased Commemorative Streets names: a comparison between Padua and York

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Introduction

This thesis intends to determine the extent to which the city-texts of the city of Padua, in northern Italy, and the City of York, in the county of Yorkshire, UK, have gender bias features in favour of male commemorative names of streets, compared to the number of female commemorative names of streets. The objects of this study are two corpora of names of streets, collected, organised, and analysed according to specific categories of classification, by employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analysis.

This dissertation carries out an analysis on linguistic corpora; these corpora are not typical units of text, but rather units of names chosen by local administrative authorities and assigned to the streets of these two cities. Street names analysed together indicate precise features of a city and reflect socio-cultural values deemed important and significant by citizens and above all administrative authorities; just like sentences of a text, the names of the streets of a city can be read as one single unit to examine and understand their socio-cultural context. Therefore, street names are a corpus of single units of text that together form a whole (city-)text, which can be examined by employing methodologies of toponymy analysis. Street names are called hodonyms in toponymy, which is the study of place names. The current dissertation carries out a toponymy analysis of the hodonyms of these two cities, and compares the results, in order to find patterns of gender imbalance in Padua and York, and to answer a set of inquiries about whether the city-texts of the two cities have a great number of similarities, or one city-text can be considered more biased than the other.

A vast corpus of research analyses focusing on historical-culturalist aspects of place names was obtained in toponymy analyses before the phenomenon, which affected toponymy and this field of research on hodonyms, known as the Critical Turn. Before this change, researchers carrying out pre-critical turn toponymy analyses employed systems of examination of toponyms in order to obtain answers to linguistic, etymological, historical, and geographical inquiries. The use of these fields of research, that is to say, linguistics, etymology, history, and geography, provided interesting but incomplete analyses of the toponymy, or more specifically hodonyms, of a city, completely discarding the double role assumed by toponymy, or hodonyms, after the Age of Reason, the Enlightenment, an intellectual and philosophical movement born in Europe in the 18th century that aimed to spread new ideologies that valued reason, science, and specific

ideals such as liberty, equality, and fraternity over ignorance and superstitious ways of thinking preached by the Church. The Enlightenment also resulted in new understandings of human behaviour in relation to society and governance and promoted notions at the base of the concept of democracy. Indeed, one of the two functions of toponyms is geographical and practical, that is to say that the main function of hodonyms, or street names, is to help citizens find their way around the city; however, since the Age of Reason, toponyms, and hodonyms, took on specific ideological connotations, as a result of new ties between political philosophy and governance, which resulted in a bi-connotated urban space. In this new urban space mono-connotated hodonyms changed and took on a second function as symbols of specific ideologies.

During the last three decades researchers carrying out toponymy analyses started adopting this Critical approach to analysis, in order to understand the meanings behind mere names or city-texts and add to basic etymological-historical analyses of toponyms new perspective of analysis, which could highlight dominion of current political powers and ideologies over a specific urban area. By employing a Critical Toponymy analysis approach and related methodologies, the purpose of this research analysis is to understand the level of discrimination against women represented by the hodonyms of Padua and York and to provide with this analysis proof of truthfulness of the existence of connections between toponymy and ruling ideologies supported by governmental authorities, who have the authority to choose streets names, and of the effectiveness of Critical Toponymy and its methodologies in toponymy research.

The analysis of the female commemorative streets names of Padua and York was carried out on the basis of three theoretical concepts used to critically analyse toponyms, identified by Rose-Redwood et al. (2010): political semiotics, governmentality studies, and normative theories of social justice and symbolic resistance. The application of these theoretical frameworks in the study of gender biased corpora of hodonyms can effectively produce solid foundations for this analysis and support the theory of gender discrimination in toponymy as a direct consequence of specific ideological dominion, which, since the Age of Reason, can be found in the symbolic sphere of ordinary life, that is to say, in bi-connotative means of communication, hodonyms, that allow specific societal views and ideals to influence its citizens.

The instruments through which specific ideals spread over an urban area and influence citizens' perception of position of precise social groups in the games of power are, as mentioned above, toponyms. This case-study focuses on hodonyms, a type of toponyms, which are commemorative in nature. Hodonyms commemorating people, and to a lesser degree events as well, become a direct representation of political/cultural ideologies, in relation to the social role played by the commemorated figures. Commemorative streets names are helpful to this research project to identify patterns of gender imbalance in the hodonyms of a city depending on the characteristics of these commemorated people; among these features there are: a) above all others, gender, and b) the category of classification of the commemorated women according to specific ratios.

Hodonyms can be commemorative, and therefore, they can directly refer to well-known people who according to the priorities of the administrative authorities that select these names are deserving of being celebrated; furthermore, hodonyms can also be non-commemorative. Non-commemorative hodonyms do not celebrate people, or events; nevertheless, they are bi-connotated too and possess a double orienting-symbolic function. Non-commemorative hodonyms are not directly linked to past or present ideologies but they still embody the specific cultural values of society.

The current research aims to carry out a main inquiry into gender bias in relation to the proportion of female names in the whole corpus of commemorative names, but it also wants to carry out a second parallel analysis about non-commemorative names, so as to not only confirm the thesis of gender bias in the city-texts of Padua and York, but also to contextualise these names in a bigger cultural context and understand whether the gender issue can be linked to specific cultural values or enhanced by them.

Gender is not a cultural value, but it is a complex social constructed notion that creates a binary division of people into two groups, male and female, according to another binary separation of biological female sex and male sex. Society has always relied upon these dichotomies to work, and people have been categorised according to presumed male or female attitudes on the basis of their biological sexes. Gender studies focus on the implications of this dichotomy. The issue of bias in favour of the male gender is a consequence of this dichotomy that relegates the female gender to a position of submission to men, on the basis of presumed weaknesses of women in all fields, which resulted in the discrimination of the female gender, from the academic field, in linguistics

and toponymy, to the boundaries of their domestic lives. Toponyms as linguistic elements reflect societal orders, and a toponymy analysis indicates which categories wield power over the rest.

This study was exploratory and interpretative in nature; it employs a quantitative approach to investigate the number of female commemorative hodonyms that make up the city-texts of the two cities and contribute to their toponymy. A quantitative analysis of data, i.e., hodonyms, can be useful to examine the volume of the share of female commemorative hodonyms in relation to the whole corpus of names. The first category applied to the corpus of commemorative hodonyms aims to distinguish commemorations of women in a city-text from commemorations of men in the same city-text, following the leading dichotomy that separates male gender from female gender. Therefore, as gender studies revealed a situation of asymmetry between male and female representation in society, it can be assumed that a quantitative hodonyms analysis like the one carried out for this dissertation will show a similar asymmetry.

The study was conducted in the form of a corpus analysis, with data being gathered via official online databanks of hodonyms. The methodological approach taken in the first part of this study was, as mentioned before, quantitative. Furthermore, in the second part of the analysis a qualitative approach was added to the quantitative analysis; finally, a mixed methodology based on numerical quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis of the categories of classification of these names was necessary to carry out a Critical Toponymy analysis, which could conform to the critical turn of this discipline and contribute to the corpus of previous Critical Toponymy analyses of city-texts of European and non-European cities. This study aims to contribute to this growing area of research by exploring the positive effects of the use of a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis and offer important insights into the referential value of not only commemorative hodonyms, but also non-commemorative hodonyms. Studies of toponymy and gender biased hodonyms show the importance of a mixed, quantitative/qualitative, approach to analysis; the purpose of this thesis is to follow what has already been established as an efficient system of collection and analysis of hodonyms, so as to contribute to the corpus of research on gender biased city-texts with new insights into the Italian and British contexts.

Concerning analyses of honyms of the city-texts of Italian cities, it has previously been observed by the Italian association *Toponomastica Femminile* that there are instances of gender biased city-texts; the city-text of Padua is included among them. The research work carried out by this association provides a clear understating of the gender bias issue in Italy. During the phase of topic research, I read a large number of studies on the problem of gender bias in toponyms; however, I became interested in honyms after reading what was found and analysed by *Toponomastica Femminile* about the city where I live, Padua. The research carried out by *Toponomastica Femminile* became the perfect starting point of my thesis; furthermore, the combination of well-conducted research and a clear illustration of the results into tables divided according to categories of classification of honyms, prompted me to adopt the results produced by the analysis of Padua and try to add new information by enlarging the scope of analysis. For this reason, I will compare the city-text of Padua with the city-text of the City of York. The purpose of this comparison is to offer important insights into both these two city-texts, and to explore their inherent features, which can be effectively shown through an explication of the ways one city-text differentiates from the other.

This study aims to contribute to this growing area of research by exploring the city-text of the City of York. Concerning analyses of honyms of the city-texts of British cities, the city-texts of London and of Great Britain as a whole have previously been studied. This thesis aims to analyse the honyms of York, in order to discover evidence of gender biased streets names. The results of the analysis of this city-text will be compared with the results of Padua, since, as mentioned above, a comparison can highlight some of the most important features of these city-texts, which, on one hand, can distinguish them from the other city-texts, and on the other, group them together because of similar patterns.

Due to practical constraints, this paper cannot provide a comprehensive review of the honyms included in the city-texts, that is to say also of the group of male commemorative streets names. The reader should bear in mind that the study is based on female gender discrimination characterizing toponymy; therefore, within the constraints imposed by time and the number of pages of this dissertation, this thesis will focus on the analysis of the group of female commemorative names and a partial, sub-analysis of

general non-commemorative names, in order to corroborate the thesis of gender biased city-texts in Padua and York and examine the general cultural context of these toponyms.

My thesis is made up of four themed chapters. Chapter One begins by laying out the theoretical dimensions of the research. This chapter first gives a brief literature overview of toponymy, the scientific field at the basis of this research project. I will explain the theoretical frameworks of toponymy studies by explaining the functions fulfilled by toponymy throughout the years. Consequently, in order to contextualise this discipline of study, I will discuss the phenomenon known as the ‘Critical Turn of Toponymy’, which transformed the way toponymy practices have been applied to analyse all types of toponyms since the last decades of the 20th century. By employing the theoretical concepts of the use of toponymy in practical analyses of data, provided by Vuolteenaho and Berg (2009), I will be able to demonstrate that toponymy analysis and, in general, toponymy is a field of science linked to present social-political contexts, and it is not a simple conglomerate of theories and concepts to use to study place names only from an historical-cultural point of view.

The second section of the first chapter will focus on commemorative hodonyms. The idea that this type of toponyms is bi-connotated can be used as a foundational theory for this current thesis, which aims to look into commemorative hodonyms to search for evidence of dominion of cultural stereotypes and specific social groups over other groups. In order to write this literature review on commemorative hodonyms, I will use the theories of Azaryahu (1996) and Rose-Redwood et al. (2010), which establish the idea that an urban space can be understood as an ever-changing ‘cultural arena’, where names are used as signs of specific ideologies. Furthermore, in this section, I will introduce the term ‘city-text’ that has been used in previous toponymy research to indicate a corpus of hodonyms that represent a mixture of past and present discourses with symbolic relevance and material representation in the form of street signs. After the third section, which will focus on the explanation of gender, both as a key concept of current sociological studies and a theme of current toponymy analyses, I will conclude this first chapter with an overview of previous studies on the issue of gender bias in the toponyms of other European cities.

The second chapter is concerned with the methodology used for this study. The methodological approach taken in this study is a mixed methodology based on

quantitative and qualitative analyses. The second section also deals with the official and unofficial data sources used in this thesis and the process of gathering data. Furthermore, I will carry out a detailed analysis to explain the current administrative regulations observed by designated authorities with the power to choose the names of the streets of these two cities, so as to understand the extent of their similarities and differences of the cities and to satisfy the theoretical assumptions on the appropriacy of toponyms as cultural indicators.

In this chapter, I will explain in greater details the process of analysis of the data that I will use to obtain the results, which will be illustrated in the third chapter. As mentioned above, I will use a mixed methodology of quantitative analysis of numerical data and qualitative analysis of these data, i.e., hodonyms, which is based on the classification of the names according to specific categories, related to the job, or societal role played by the commemorated women. Furthermore, I will include in this chapter specially made online maps to indicate the exact collocation of these streets and produce a more detailed analysis. The same mixed methodology will be used to analyse the group of non-commemorative hodonyms, in order to obtain two main results: a) the quantity of non-commemorative streets names in relation to the total number of hodonyms of these cities, and b) evidence of similar cultural patterns in the use of categories of classification of these names. Therefore, it can be said that for both commemorative and non-commemorative hodonyms I will carry out a preliminary quantitative analysis, in order to show the numerical volume of the city-texts and, above all, of the group of female commemorative names, and a second parallel qualitative analysis, in order to analyse and contextualise these names in relation to a cultural-societal background.

A full discussion of the whole corpus of commemorative hodonyms, i.e., male and female commemorative hodonyms, lies beyond the scope of this study. This analysis focuses on gender studies applied to Critical Toponymy analysis, in order to answer to a specific inquiry about the existence of gender bias hodonyms, so as to demonstrate the relevance of the issue of gender discrimination in our current society, which affects women's symbolic and pragmatic worth in all spheres, urban sphere included. This paper aims to demonstrate this thesis; therefore, primarily, it is necessary to examine the size of these group of names in relation to the total, and secondly, carry out an in-depth analysis

of these names to understand the value of commemorated women in the symbolic sphere, represented by the city-text, and reflecting past and present ideologies.

This study is unable to encompass the same type of analysis for the group of hodonyms commemorating male figures, both because of the limitation of space of this thesis, and also because this thesis aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of female gender discrimination in the toponyms of two apparently different cities, which should not be understood as a consequence of an estimated higher number of hodonyms commemorating male figures, neither of the supremacy of men in specific modern category of classification, or modern elites, that linked the referential worth of men to powerful roles in society. Gender biased toponyms to the disadvantages of referential worth of women to meaningless roles in society is neither caused by nor consequence of the dominion of men in a city-texts, if anything the possibility of dominion of commemorative male hodonyms over a city-texts is caused by inherent sexist societal features assigned to women that tie them to negative qualities, to incapability and lower efficiency, in relation to a more worthy male counterpart. Therefore, by carrying out a Critical Toponymy analysis this thesis aims to explore the gender bias issue and highlight the necessity to a more just toponymy not only because of asymmetry between the number of male and female streets, but especially because of the current women's condition of submission to unjust societal values reflected in urban symbolism.

The third chapter presents the findings of the research, focusing on the two key themes that characterise this dissertation: 1) the degree of gender biased commemorative toponymy, and 2) qualitative analysis of commemorative and non-commemorative hodonyms. This chapter will be divided into two sections, one for each city-text analysed in this thesis. The first section will be dedicated to the results obtained from the Critical Toponymy analysis of the city-text of Padua; whereas the second section will be dedicated to the results obtained from the Critical Toponymy analysis of the city-text of the City of York. The two processes of analysis will be carried out employing symmetrical stages, consisting of a main analysis of the quantitative and qualitative features of the female share of commemorative hodonyms, and a second level analysis of the quantitative and qualitative features of the non-commemorative share of hodonyms. In this chapter of my thesis, I will include tables with the female commemorative hodonyms, written in alphabetical order and I will include in the text the numerical data about the quantity of

names included in both corpora, that is to say the number of commemorative and non-commemorative names, the share of female commemorative names and the share of non-commemorative ones; furthermore, I will include percentages of the ratio of commemorative and non-commemorative names to the total of names, and the ratio of female commemorative honyms to the total of names. These percentages will be represented in apposite pie charts, in order to increase the comprehensibility of these values.

Concerning the qualitative part of the analysis, I will adopt a single criterion of analysis of these names, that is to say a system of categorization of these names according to a number of categories, which indicate specific roles or jobs done by the commemorated women. I will group these celebrated figures according to the field, e.g., religious, academic, scientific, political, or athletic, to which they made an outstanding contribution during their life; the results will be represented in an appropriate bar chart, that will clearly represent the categories with a higher number of names and those with a lower number of names.

The system of classification of honyms according to categories will be applied also to the group of non-commemorative names. However, in this case, I will use two different criteria of classification of names: 1) religious, and 2) geographical. I will discuss the data expressed in numbers and percentages and represented in appropriate table and charts. Furthermore, the second criteria of classification will include different categories of geographical names for both city-texts, and I will search for and analyse peculiar features that characterise the toponymy of these two cities. An additional element of in-depth analysis of these names will be the discussion of specifically made online maps that will show the location of the names of the streets.

The final fourth chapter will compare and discuss the results presented in the third chapter and obtained with the methodologies indicated in the second chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to answer the main inquiries of this thesis, so as to understand if the two city-texts are gender biased, and if these city-texts are similar or different from each other. Furthermore, a section of this chapter will focus on the city text of Padua; the results of the analysis of Padua will be compared with the results obtained by similar quantitative and qualitative Critical Toponymy analyses of other European cities, in order to have a

clearer understanding of the position of Padua in relation to the issue of gendered toponymy.

Chapter 1

Toponymy and the double role of hodonyms

The purpose of the first chapter of my dissertation is to explain toponymy, or toponomastics, which is the science that studies place names, its development and which research approaches scholars use according to the purpose of their research. In the first part of this chapter, I will explain what toponymy is and give an insight into its sub-discipline, hodonymy, which is the study of street and road names. I will proceed by explaining the concept of *city-text*, and I will illustrate how using a quantitative case study approach, it is possible to investigate the degree of inclusion of female names in the names of streets in city centres.

1.1 Critical Toponymy and hodonyms: Literature review

Toponyms are the objects of study of toponymy, or toponomastics, a “scientific discipline that studies place names, their origin, development, current state, semantic meaning, spelling, and pronunciation”. “It is a collection of geographical names, and it arose as a junction of several sciences: linguistics, history, and geography” (Khakimova, 2020:158). An hodonym is a type of geographical toponym. As a geographical toponym, an hodonym is a proper name used to refer to geographical features on Earth, specifically to streets and roads.

Geographical names are significantly important to geography, as they mark existing places in a map, and to toponymy, as they constitute the primary instrument to conduct an analysis that encompasses not only the field of linguistics, but also three other fields of research, which characterize the pre-critical turn of toponymy. According to Vuolteenaho and Berg (2009: 2-7), pre-critical turn toponymy falls into three conventional research orientations: *philosophical*, *technical-authoritative*, and *historical-culturalist*. These three orientations characterize toponymy as a type of science devoid of any explicit link to the implications in the politics (and power relations) of place naming. Thus, these orientations fail to look beyond toponyms as markers of society and of specific sociological orders. This system of classification includes: the *philosophical* orientation, which is characterised by an abstract interest in naming in general; the *technical-authoritative* orientation, which involves the development of understanding around the standardisation and systemisation of toponyms to achieve geopolitical

organisation and rationalised spatial nomenclatures; and the *historical-culturalist* orientation, which focuses on the etymology of place names and how this accords with a broader sociohistorical context (Medway and Warnaby, 2014: 154). In this pre-critical context, “empirical studies in toponymy have been dominated by *historical-culturalist* approaches” (Vuolteenaho and Berg, 2009: 5). These studies have been carried out by academics and researchers working in different fields of science: not merely linguistics, but also history, anthropology, and geography. Place names, which encompass a variety of types of names, from street names (the object of study of this research analysis) to the names of countries, regions, and districts, have been primarily studied from an etymological/historical point of view. As stated above, toponymy is the conjunction of different sciences and knowledges of different types of scholars. However, Tichelaar (2002) points out that to study place naming practice “a basic understanding of the linguistic and historic context of the geographical names within the area of study is certainly indispensable” (Tichelaar, 2002:2). Therefore, we can argue that post-critical turn toponymy is not totally distinct and independent from pre-critical toponymy, which analyse place names taking into consideration the link existing between names and language, and names and history, although it is not able to go beyond these connections and investigate another deeper connections that exist between place names and society and sociological order.

The practice of place, specifically street, naming goes back in time and underwent some important changes as time progressed and society modernized. Considering toponymy studies before the “critical turn”, the practice of place naming was intensively studied using etymological/historical approaches. Therefore, these studies aimed to collect and subsequently analyse rich corpora of toponyms which could record and illustrate these etymological and historical changes. Hence, we can pinpoint the original meanings of street names, how they changed and what caused these changes, and through this, albeit superficial, approach, we can get an idea of how the process of street naming changed its role and significance throughout history. To date, several studies have investigated the systems used in the past to name streets and roads (for example, Fabiszak et al. 2021). Fabiszak et al. (2021) suggest a chronological explanation of the practice of street naming in Europe from Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. During the Middle Ages, street naming “was mostly motivated by topography and function”, and therefore,

names were chosen from a set of nomenclature that referred to specific geographical features, landmarks, or resident business of the area, but also personal names, for instance of saints or kings (Fabiszak et al. 2021: 406). During this historical period, the sole function of street names was to help citizens navigate through the city and give them simple and appropriate instruments to understand their location or the one they wanted to reach. During that period, street names only had a topographic connotation, while now, street names can be interpreted as bi-connotated as a result of street names taking on ideological meanings.

It was after “the Age of Reason”, the Enlightenment, that “the value of street names as a measure of control over the cityscape became gradually more important than mere pointers helping inhabitants and visitors orient themselves in the city space” (Fabiszak et al. 2021: 406). As pointed out by Vuolteenaho and Berg (2016: 4), in the 19th century onwards, all element connected to toponomastics, such as cartography, gathering and collection of national toponymies became ‘the business of the state’. The subject and object of this ‘semiotic reality’ changed: if in the beginning the subject was street names, which could help citizens orient themselves in the city space, from the 19th century onwards, street names were subjected to the will of the government and political power that could freely decide who or which collective memory had the right to be commemorated and represented in street names. However, at least not until the mid-1990s, research studies on toponymy failed to recognize this change or did not take it into consideration as a research question to be further explored.

The critical turn of toponymy dates back to the last decades of the 20th century, when the study of place names moved away “from its traditional focus on etymological and taxonomic concerns and toward a critical interrogation of the politics of place naming” (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010: 455). In their analysis of critical place-name studies, Rose-Redwood et al. (2010) identified “three distinct theoretical frameworks that can be employed to critically analyze toponymic practices: political semiotics, governmentality studies, and normative theories of social justice and symbolic resistance”. All the frameworks mentioned above can be useful for researchers, like myself, who set out to carry out analyses of collected data, of a corpus of street names of a specific city to examine and learn, following this new contemporary ‘critical wave’ taken by toponymy, the extent to which on the one hand, authorities in charge of place naming and, on the

other, male dominance in street names corpora undermine the role of women in our society and prevent them to shift this discriminatory trend to their favour, to accomplish gender equality and see their demands for recognition in the sphere of commemorative street naming satisfied.

Concerning political semiotics, it can be defined as a specific type of semiotics, the study of signs, that “focuses on the use of toponyms for commemorative purposes and the meaning ascribed to place names by individuals” (Medway and Warnaby, 2014: 155). It is relevant to the present research, since this research analysis does not simply aim to analyse all toponyms, as in all the geographical names given to streets and roads of the cities (Padua and York) object of this study, but sets out to illustrate gender bias, and its causes and consequences, of commemorative street names of these cities. The term commemorative indicates a sign, in this case a name, which is used to convey to the public the memory of an important event or personality in the past, and at the same time is used to forge in the minds of the public the implication that the event or the personality must merit their respect, since they symbolise ‘the good side’ and are well-connoted by society and by those who are in power.

As suggested by Azaryahu (1996), political semiotics of commemorative street names “involves the interplay between primary, utilitarian functions that are ‘denoted’ and a complex set of secondary, symbolic functions, which are ‘connoted’”. Symbolic functions involve “cultural values, social norms, and political ideologies that are associated with the symbolic message of the sign” (Eco, 1986). Therefore, political semiotics might be interpreted as a branch of semiotics that also concerns the study of gender bias and gender roles in Western society and culture. Secondly, governmentality studies “concerns the way toponyms are used to classify, manage, and control space”, and thirdly, social justice and symbolic resistance “focuses on the power relations of toponymic practice, and how some social groups have the authority to name, whilst others, who do not, may as a consequence resist hegemonic naming practices” (Medway and Warnaby, 2014: 155). In these two theoretical frameworks, government and political authorities are the owners and managers of place (streets) naming. The range of the decisions taken by these authorities, that is to say the writers, of streets names goes from the technical aspects of street naming (e.g., choosing to use commemorative names, topographical names, or alpha-numerical systems to construct and organize the city

space) to decide which commemorative personalities or events are worth to be representative of their city.

1.2 Commemorative Street names as a city-text

To date, previous studies have indicated that “this commemorative dimension invests place names with ideological meaning and political significance” (Palonen, 1993; Azaryahu, 1996) and through this dimension, *decision-making power* of administrative authorities in charge is preserved, as chosen commemorative names “represent urban contingencies but also the ideological commitments and political concerns of local elites in charge of the semiotic make-up of the city” (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010:460). Therefore, those in charge of naming the city space follow their own political/administrative agenda, imposing their ideology and individuality on a wider social context, which they fail to take into consideration. Furthermore, it can be argued that commemorative place naming is as steadily linked to the political/administrative situation in which it takes place as the administration and government in charge keeps on being the dominant leader on different and opposing ideologies. However, it must be taken into consideration the fact that in the practice of place naming closely linked to political semiotics, one dominant hegemony is never safe. Redwood et al. (2010: 462) introduced the metaphor of ‘cultural arena’ to illustrate a more complex reality of the practice of place (re-)naming, that sees dominant ideologies changing throughout time and being threaten by “counter-hegemonic ideologies of subordinate groups”. Renaming commemorative places or streets names in favour of people or events that represent the history and importance of subordinate social groups is a way to bring these groups to the front-row of the ‘cultural arena’, so to achieve sociological equality. Despite this, it has been argued that “places named for marginalized groups could actually work to alienate and further segregate these groups” (Alderman, 2002).

Within the theoretical framework of ‘governmentality studies’ identified by Rose-Redwood et al. (2010: 461), it has been reported that the “naming of places is not an isolated semiotic activity” but rather “one among many ‘apparatuses of identification’”, useful to order and classify geographical spaces, “such as street and house numbering, the establishment of signage systems, ...the creation of postal codes etc.”. Street nomenclature is another effective device to achieve political agendas and geographical

order, but as stated by Azaryahu (1996: 312) “the utilization of street names for official commemorative purposes is not an obligatory norm”. For instance, the city of Philadelphia, in the United States was the first city to have numbered streets (Mencken, 1948: 81), followed by other American cities, such as New York and Washington. A number alone is a sign but cannot be of a commemorative nature. Numbered street names completely fulfil the primary, utilitarian function of street names, which is to help citizens orient themselves in the city by providing them an efficient and logical system that they can learn and use to navigate the city. In this case, the biconnotation of street names ceases to exist as numbers do not figure among the toponym types that might take ideological meanings. Numbers, when used to name streets, are denotative signs: they indicate just one meaning, that is the position of a street or an avenue in an ordered list of streets or avenues that together create the *cartographic landscape* of the city.

According to Tent (2015: 71), there are different types of toponyms and commemorative toponyms are called *eponymous*, which are toponyms “commemorating or honouring a person or other named entity by using a proper name as a toponym”. *Eponymous* are toponyms that commemorate different kinds of historical events or personalities, and their association with specific political/cultural ideology is almost inevitable as the “use of streets names for commemorative purposes is instrumental in transforming the urban environment into a virtual political setting” (Azaryahu 1996: 311), and “to control the meanings of this setting is an expression of power” (Entrikin, 1991: 52).

Street names, when commemorative, are clearly bi-connotated: their function goes beyond mere orientation, and they can devise a type of perspective of history and sociological values into the minds of citizens. Within this context, Critical Toponymy studies try to analyse these connotated meanings.

As stated by Rose-Redwood et al. (2010: 459), another significant aspect of commemorative street naming is that “when commemoration is prioritized over orientation, the commemorative function can interfere with and even undermine the utilitarian function of a toponym”. Commenting on the dominion of commemoration over functional orientation of street names, Rose-Redwood et al. (2010) observed how this occurrence usually develops in the case of very long thoroughfares, which are divided into smaller segments/sections and to each of these segments is given a different name,

so to involve in the commemorating practice more than one historical event or recognizable/famous person. This shift of domain between commemoration and function can also be observed in the practice of renaming streets in favour of marginalized social groups. The present dissertation does not carry out a research analysis on the practice of renaming streets names in favour of female historical figures, whose memory was completely marginalized and obscured by male historical figures; however, it is important to observe how this practice, which took place in the streets of many important cities all around the world, although fair, contributes to this shift in domain between commemoration/orientation, and because of these changes of the city-text, citizens will have difficulties to orient themselves in the city without stable geographical references. In the following sections I will also provide readers with a minimum analysis of the practice of renaming streets with male toponyms with female ones, in order to introduce a theoretical basis for the main topic of my dissertation, which is a quantitative analysis of female streets names of the cities of Padua, Italy, and York, UK, so as to understand if precedent studies and occurrences of (female) street renaming are deemed to be positive for a more equal street naming practice.

Throughout this dissertation, the term 'city-text' will be used to refer to the corpus of streets names of a specific geographical place, in this case of the cities of Padua and York. The designation 'city-text' is not meant as an analogy or a metaphor nor does it imply a reduction of the city in its entirety to a mere text, but rather it emphasizes a manifest and specific semiotic feature of the city (Butor, 1993). In his study about commemorative street names, Azaryahu (1996: 324) identifies a 'city-text' as an instrument that "provides the toponymical grid that makes the city geographically intelligible". Therefore, looking at street names as a 'text', without perceiving them as a mere mixture of written words in a particular order, but more as a manifest of historical narratives of the city and of the cultural values of its inhabitants, allows us to carry out an in-depth analysis of these historical and cultural narratives. This type of research approach is innovative and essential for researchers who want to conduct a critical analysis of toponyms. With the critical turn of toponymy and the introduction of new and more useful uses of toponyms for studying society at a cultural level, researchers require big quantity of data that they can use as signs of the validity of developed theories. Commemorative street names are interpreted as signs of affirmation of a narrative and refusal of opposing

narratives. Furthermore, their presence in citizens' everyday life as functional instruments for orientation purposes ensure the reading of a city-text, and the narratives it includes, to be embedded into everyday activities (Azaryahu, 1996: 324).

This statement alone confirms the relevance of the city-text because street names obliquely and unintentionally preserve specific, majorly negative, narratives and transmit them to an unaware public. Moreover, the term 'city-text' is also defined as "a spatialized configuration of commemorated historical figures and events which is the result of a political selection process" (Azaryahu, 1996: 328). Most Critical Toponymy studies understand the city-text through the historical features, namely the historical narratives, heroes, and events (national wars, day of independence etc.) it commemorates.

There is, however, a corpus of research that focuses on certain aspects of a city-text that go beyond political features and focus on cultural features. The present dissertation aims to use a similar approach and focuses on gender issues inside the city-texts of Padua and York.

Oto-Peralías (2018: 2) proposes: "the use of the "city-text" (i.e., city toponyms interpreted as a text) as a source of information to create socio-cultural indicators at the local level". In this study, term 'indicators' is introduced to describe the numerical values that, within the scope of quantitative Critical Toponymy analyses, indicate a social phenomenon reoccurring in a specific city-text (e.g., indicators of religiosity, national identity, gender issues). This paper aims to analyse the city-texts of Padua and York and to use it as major resource to create socio-cultural indicators of the predominance of male figures over female ones.

The use of street names for commemorative purposes is a core feature of modern political culture, and they can be considered markers of political identity (Azaryahu, 1996). Although gender issues are not inherently 'political', in the last decades they have been at high positions of the political agenda because of their relevance from a socio-cultural level.

The connotative, ideological dimension of commemorative street name has consequences on citizens' perception of the established sociological order, even though, "the semiotic operation of street names is based upon semantic displacements that disconnect the meaning of the name from its original historical referent without, however, denying the existence of such a referent (Azaryahu, 1996: 322). The last part of this

statement suggests that the name remains linked to its referent. Therefore, even if the orienting function of street name distances the original meaning (e.g., the commemorative name refers to an important politic, painter, scholar, or revolutionary figure of a specific period) from the actual meaning the street name refers to (e.g., the main street of the city to the city hall or to a hospital), citizens and habitual users of the street will assimilate the original meaning as culturally authoritative.

As mentioned in the paragraphs above, street names are “spatial markers that besides providing a sense of orientation inscribe onto the landscape the ideological ethos and political symbols of hegemonic discourses” (Mihai, 2020). In this sense, to carry out an analysis of street names allows researchers to go beyond the mere utilitarian function of street names as city signs and produce results that previous non-critical research, which focused on other aspects of toponyms, for instance, their etymological origin, did not achieve.

In summary, it has been shown from this review of several academic papers about street naming that the “city-text” is the object of study of Critical toponymy studies. It can be argued that Critical toponymy is a type of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is challenging to define because the term ‘discourse’ has no precise definition. As Kamalu et al. (2015: 170) note, the term ‘discourse analysis (DA)’ is generally understood to mean the analysis of discourse, or rather, “the analysis of language in use”. By ‘language in use’, they mean “the set of norms, preferences and expectations which relate language to context” (Kamalu et al., 2015: 170). The term ‘text’ can substitute the term ‘discourse’ and its analysis is not an ordinary etymological or linguistic study of its properties. The purpose of this analysis is to observe which connection that discourse has with the society where it develops. Critical toponymy aims to illustrate this connection as well; however, the object of study of this discipline is a so-called text (‘discourse’): the city-text.

The term ‘text’ designates different forms of language written, spoken – conversation, institutionalized forms of talk; simply “what matters is that the text is felt to be coherent” to its receivers (Kamalu et al. 2015: 170). Therefore, a text can be different in nature, and in toponymy studies the ‘geographical grid’ of a city (street) nomenclature has been defined as a text, a city-text. Considering the statement of Kamalu et al. written above, it can be said that the city-text is one form of language, so one type of text.

In the city-text, the actors of discourse/text are street names, or toponyms. Together street names of a specific city form an organized and coherent text, that can be understood as a type of ‘discourse’. In the discipline of Discourse Analysis (DA) studies, the city-text interpreted as ‘discourse’ reiterates the idea established by Critical Toponymy that there is a connection between language and society and that this connection can be analysed to clarify how language influences society and vice versa. To date, the studies provide evidence that there is a correlation between language and social practice.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that: “there can never be a complete analysis of texts, for there will always be new interpretations that can be developed” (Berg and Kearns, 1996: 101). This statement suggests that discourse analysis researchers provide us with their own perspective of the discourse/text; in to this light, it could be argued that analyses of city-texts might give biased results.

This definition of Discourse Analysis contrasts with that of Critical Street naming analysis: discourse, that is to say ‘text’, may take up different forms, so discourse as a linguistics concept is characterized by a certain level of complexity that cannot be attributed to a city-text. A city-text is one type of discourse/text that, as stated in the previous sections, “represents urban contingencies but also the ideological commitments and political concerns of local elites in charge of the semiotic make-up of the city” (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010: 460). Therefore, since a city-text represents a situation of hegemony, where a dominant ideology or socio-cultural description of society dominates over subordinated ideologies and descriptions, its analysis cannot be biased.

Researchers carrying out place naming analyses cannot put a biased interpretation on the city-text, seeing as a city-text is a type of text resulting from the collection of street names of a city into an intelligible corpus, which offers a look into a biased organization of the city place. A city-text is already biased, and Critical analysis offers methodologies to obtain ‘indicators’ of that biased and hegemonic discourse.

Thus far, the thesis has shown that in Critical Toponymy, toponomastics, studies differ from basic toponymy research focusing on the etymology, meaning and origin of toponyms. The former aims to examines patterns of place (street) names and street naming to reveal, if there is, a hegemonic discourse.

One of the purposes of this first theoretical chapter of this dissertation is to describe the methodologies used in the investigation of the city-text. Before explaining these methodologies, it is necessary to give an insight on the differences between ‘research paradigms’ used to analyse different topics.

According to Tent (2015: 65), “in the research paradigm, the contrast is most commonly expressed in the generic terms qualitative and quantitative research”. The qualitative approach is a less exhaustive methodology to analyse a research topic. This approach “aims to gather an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon or case” and “investigates the why, what, where, when, and how of a single case or small focused sample” (Tent, 2015: 65). The findings discovered using this approach are not exhaustive, mainly propositions that aim to explain specific research questions. For this reason, qualitative approach is usually followed up by a quantitative study (Tent, 2015: 65). The quantitative approach “empirically investigates data in a numerical form via statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques, and asks specific, narrow questions (...)” (Tent, 2015: 65).

These two research methodologies can also be used to study toponyms and the city-text. Following the system of classification of research paradigms proposed by the Australian National Placenames Survey (ANPS), in his study, Tent (2015) indicates two synonyms that can be used to indicate the dichotomy qualitative/quantitative: *intensive* and *extensive*. The meanings of these two terms are synonymous with the meanings of the former and more general terms; however, *intensive* and *extensive* are specifically used in toponomastics studies.

As explained in the Introduction, this thesis aims to carry out an in-depth analysis of the city-texts of the cities of Padua and York. I will use a quantitative, or according to the ANPS definition, an *extensive* approach of analysis, in order to analyse city-text corpora of the mentioned cities and see patterns of relationship between toponyms and socio-cultural orders or hegemonies.

This case study aims to confirm the importance of quantitative analysis over qualitative analysis, as in the importance of Critical toponymy research over empirical research on toponyms. It could be said that the use of the qualitative, *intensive*, approach in toponomastics studies imply only a first, superficial glance at the role of the toponyms object of the study. A possible explanation is that the technical expression *intensive*

approach might be interpreted as the synonymous expression to indicate the modus operandi of academics doing research work during the pre-Critical turn of toponomastics.

Studies investigating the *who*, *when*, *why*, *what*, and *where* of the origins of a street name fail to understand toponymys as “not only signs *to* the city”, but also as “signs *of* the city” (Ferguson, 1988: 386). A ‘sign of the city’ is not a simple orientation instrument, it carries meaning and symbology, which at first can be obscured by its orientation function but its connotative meaning can be revealed thanks to its analysis. In this context, qualitative approach is synonymous with the etymological study of the toponyms; hence, the results will not give an overall insight of the implications and significance of the data. Furthermore, “in many cases, answers to some or all of the questions may not be found because too long a time has passed since the naming, and/or the necessary documentation (if it ever existed) has disappeared” (Tent, 2015: 70). This statement supports the suggestion that because of the use of numerical data, percentages and statistical information, the *extensive* approach is not only exhaustive as compared to the *intensive* one, but also more valid.

In summary, it has been shown from these previous studies that an extensive approach is necessary to carry out research into the city-text.

In order to effectively find and examine the existing connection and its implications researching into a city-text is possible only if “the city-text reflects the commemorative priorities of the local community” (Rose-Redwood et al., 2010). When the discourse reflects the ideologies implied in certain types of commemoration, it is possible to create socio-cultural indicators from street names. In his interesting analysis of street names as socio-cultural data, Oto-Peralías (2018: 7) identifies three major assumptions that must be satisfied in order to create these socio-cultural indicators. The general precondition is that “streets are labeled with words”: the nomenclature system cannot be alphanumeric, like the instances of Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, and these words must be proper names. Oto-Peralías (2018: 7) argues that there are three major assumptions: (1) “Street names are the result of commemorative decisions made by those with the authority to name”; (2) “Authorities’ decisions reflect the commemorative priorities of the local community”; and (3) “Commemorative priorities reflect social and cultural values”.

The first assumption is tautological, and hence it is always met, since street names are decided by local authorities and not by the community; moreover, even in the case of street (re-)naming according to the will of the community, the final decision will always be taken by community leaders. Concerning the second and the third assumptions, it can be argued that most of the local authorities are democratically elected, hence they reflect the priorities and ideologies/values of their voters.

Analysing city-texts as socio-cultural data and searching for socio-cultural indicators of several instances of cultural hegemony in a society might give an insight into these hegemonic issues and give voice to that part of the local community whose ideologies, values, and role inside the society are ignored.

In the section that follows, I present the principal theories about Critical toponymy and city-text analysis regarding gender issues, specifically male dominance in the practice of street naming.

1.3 Quantifying gender in analysing a city-text: Literature review

This section of my dissertation aims to cast light onto the meanings of ‘gender’, focusing on gender roles assigned to men and women and gender biases and differences existing within our society. In order to answer to the question ‘What is gender and how are gender issues related to city-text analysis?’, it is essential to lay the theoretical foundations for carrying out an *extensive* research study of city-texts in order to create socio-cultural indicators of gender related problems.

“Gender is one of the social constructs and properties that determine humans” and “people identify and perceive the world through the gender types framed by their cultural and linguistic features” (Gałkowski, 2020: 2). Furthermore, “gender divides humans into two categories: male and female” (Cranny-Francis et al., 2003: 1). Male gender and female gender exist according to different genetic characteristics of the human body, which “in modern societies is assigned a place in a binary structure of gender” (Cranny-Francis et al., 2003: 1). Gender is a genetic notion established by the counting of human chromosomes: humans have 22 pairs of autosomes, non sex chromosomes, and a single final pair of sex chromosomes, which determines, from a genetic point of view, the sex of an individual. The male gender is indicated with ‘XY’, while the female gender with ‘XX’. This notion of human genetics is the first element that distinguishes men from

women even before they are born. However, this genetic distinction has enormous implications and consequences on the life of the individual yet to be born. The notion of 'sex', a binary concept, that establishes the existences of two sexes, the female and the male sex, is independent from the notion of 'gender', since the former is given at birth as a biological assumption, while the latter is "the effect of social and cultural processes" (Cranny-Francis et al., 2003: 5). The concept of gender is more complex, for instance in the case of non-binary identities, i.e., people who are outside the gender binary (gender free, agender, or genderfluid people), and transgender people. The concept of gender binary aims to categorise people into two groups, male gender and female gender, according to the sex given at birth, male sex and female sex. These two groups are given specific features related to physical appearance, clothes, hobbies, characters, and attitudes. The non-binary identities, mentioned above, want to evade this dichotomy, in which they do not recognize themselves.

The concept of gender creates dichotomies also in the field of language. Language depicts the asymmetrical gender relations and stereotypes of our society. There are five examples of language used in a sexist way, representing a situation of asymmetry between male and female gender stereotypes: 1) insult terms, 2) symmetry/asymmetry, 3) titles, 4) marked/unmarked; and 5) semantic derogation (Mooney and Evans, 2019: 93-98). Concerning insults, depending on the language object of the analysis, the asymmetry is represented by a higher number of derogatory terms for women than men. For instance, in Italian, the majority of derogatory terms for men are unmarked, therefore they can be used for both the male and the female simply by changing the term according to the appropriate grammatical gender (e.g., 'stupido' and 'stupida' etc.), while a good number of derogatory terms for women are marked, both in the connotative meaning and in the form, since corresponding derogatory male terms do not exist or do not carry the same meaning. The symmetry/asymmetry concept plays a key role in language. For instance, in English, the term 'man' can be used as a generic noun for 'people', including women, but not the other way around. Therefore, in an asymmetrical androcentric view of language "the male is seen as the norm and the female is marked" (Mooney and Evans, 2019: 95). In English, the male term is unmarked, and it is the generic form used to refer to both the male and the female, while female terms are marked and they are created by adding suffixes to the male term; therefore, again in a situation of asymmetry, the marked

(female) form is used when speakers want to differentiate gender and include specific connotative meanings (Mooney and Evans, 2019: 96).

Sexism characterises titles too; for instance, in the Anglophone countries, where ‘Mr.’ is a generic title for men, while the titles for women vary in the case of the status, married or unmarried, of the woman. Furthermore, some words have specific derogatory connotations when referring to women, which aim to demean and belittle women’s status in the public life; for example, ‘spinster’ as female for ‘bachelor’ has a negative connotation that is not carried by the male counterpart) (Mooney and Evans, 2019: 98).

Gender issues are a wide topic of study that goes from gender stereotypes and gender ‘deviances’ (a term used to indicate everything that diverts from heteronormativity, heterosexuality etc.) to gender asymmetries and biases, that is to say the discrepancies between men and women in every aspect of society, in the academic as well as working sectors. The same discrepancies and asymmetries, which characterise the linguistic sphere of our society, characterise the working space and determine the position of power of men over women, still ongoing, since the modern situation of equality between employed men and women keeps on being counterbalanced by a large salary disparity, where women are paid less than men. These discrepancies began with the start of the Industrial Revolution and the birth of the industrial society. The Industrial Revolution characterizes the 18th and 19th century, a period when the division of labour and mass production were born. In this context, space was divided into public and private. On the one hand men were destined to the public sphere: men were the paid labour force that was used to keep alive production and the industrial drive; on the other hand, women were destined to the private sphere: they had to look after the house and the children, without receiving any salary (Cavalo, 2019).

From the start of the late modern period, public space was interpreted as a space of and for men; contrariwise, women were segregated to the privacy of their house, and they were economic dependent on their fathers, brothers, or husbands. This dichotomy of men/public and women/private “has had many diachronic consequences both on the physical and symbolic dimensions of cities” (Cavalo, 2019). Cities are created, developed, and thought by and for men and men only, who identifies as a specific prototype of men, that being white and heterosexual. In the public space there is not and there never was space for women, or for men who did not embody that prototype of

‘dominant man’. Women, the subordinate group which this research study focuses on, were precluded not only from those physical spaces that constitute a city but from the symbolic spaces too.

In view of the fact that “the symbolic representation of the nation contributes to shaping and replicating privileged and marginalized positions, making some people feel more included than others” (Lombardo and Meier, 2018: 328), the exclusion of women from symbolic representation, for instance commemorative street names, helps to iterate gender inequalities and the status of women as the *second sex*. Symbolic representations are of different kinds (e.g., street names, statues, buildings etc.) and together they form an ‘arena’ where hegemonic power relations take place. Regarding the term ‘arena’, in previous toponymy studies academics have used the metaphor of ‘cultural arena’ as a way of focusing “on the capacity of place names to serve as sites of contest, debate, and negotiation as social groups compete for the right to name” (Rose-Redwood et al., 2010: 462). Women have no power of negotiation inside this arena: “women’s exclusion from urban street nomenclature is thus underpinned by this gendered patterning of space into a masculine public sphere and a feminine private realm” (McDowell, 1999). Place naming is an act of power possessed by those who stand in the front rows of the cultural arena and yearned by subordinate groups standing in the back. Regarding place re-naming, Lombardo and Meier (2018: 327) suggest that “the choice of public symbols can purposely reproduce or counteract existing power relations”. Hence, imbalanced power relations can be balanced by authorities with deciding power. Consequently, if this does not happen is because the chosen symbols and those who were in charge of choosing them deliberately fail to be more inclusive.

Inclusion in symbolic representations is the only criterion to follow to purposely change the situation inside the cultural arena. Furthermore, inclusion must be well thought, or otherwise it will just iterate stereotypical views of already marginalized social actors: “for example, the prevalence of women in public statues as symbolizing the nation’s care and of men symbolizing its defense affects the position and authority of women representatives” (Lombardo and Meier, 2018: 328). This can also be valid to the practice of place naming: naming streets to commemorate female figures that represent only important figures related to specific social groups, e.g., nuns, saints, or the Virgin Mary, without represent also other historical female figures from different areas, e.g.,

literature, art, politics, science, psychology etc., undermine the authority of women, both in the past and, especially, in the present. Therefore, the practice of street naming depicts only a quarter of valid women that contribute to the construction and development of society. Furthermore, 21st century women may face two consequences from this exclusion: firstly, they will not be accepted as equals by male counterparts; secondly, they will not see themselves represented as much as men do and subconsciously accept the false notion of male superiority. “The use of symbolic agents suggests what roles and positions different groups (should) occupy and who is entitled to be a publicly celebrated group” (Lombardo and Meier, 2018: 328); therefore, biased symbolic representation confirms to the whole society hegemonic power relations.

In a recent study which set out to analyse street names from a sociological point of view, Rusu (2020) adopted four major sociology theories to analyse toponyms: functionalism, conflictualism, constructionism, and utilitarianism. The practice of street commemoration and street naming as a bi-connotated practice with both a pragmatic and symbolic function can be studied using the functional theory. According to this sociological theory, street names with a symbolic function are “powerful toponymic means of legitimizing the status quo, political communication, and the construction of collective identities” (Rusu, 2020). Gender, together with ethnicity, religion, are ‘collective identities’ that can receive legitimacy through street naming practice by authorities in charge.

As stated in the previous section, in order to carry out a valid analysis of a city-text is essential to use a quantitative, *extensive*, approach, or at least combining both *intensive* (qualitative) and *extensive* approaches to conduct an efficient study on, in this case, gender discourse in the city-text.

In order to carry out an *extensive* analysis researchers need to collect data on street names of the city, or cities, object of the study. This type of data is relatively easy to find: some countries have created data sets available online for researchers and citizens to consult; cities’ municipalities have dedicated areas on their web sites where street nomenclature is collected and organized; in other cases, researchers have to use data sets collected by real estate organizations or other sources. Then, researchers proceed using computational or statistical procedures to organize the data and find out percentages about the number of commemorative street names of men and the one of women. These

percentages can be further analysed indicating: the specific area where the street is located; the type of street in question (for instance, a wide thoroughfare, highways, lanes, pedestrians or living streets etc.); and, if the street name honours a woman, which was her profession, role, and its degree of importance in society.

Furthermore, indicators of socio-cultural issues, like gender problems, can be highlighted by other indicators or data, such as the rate of employment, the level of church attendance and other cultural factors that could give an insight into the habits and values of the city.

In the next section, I will present the principal previous studies on quantifying gender in city-texts. I will present previous research works regarding the situation of female presence in street nomenclatures mainly in cities in the western region of Europe (Spain, Paris, London) but also in the eastern region (Romania, Poland).

1.4 Quantifying gender in analysing a city-text: Previous studies

This dissertation systematically collects and reviews the data for the number of street names of the cities of Padua and York, named after female and male central historical figures, aiming to provide through an *extensive* research approach evidence of possible gender imbalance in the activity of street naming performed by local administrative authorities.

In the previous section, I have provided an explanation of the term ‘gender’, concerning its classification in biology; moreover, the concepts of ‘gender stereotypes’ and ‘gender biases’ have been explained through an overview of historical-sociological roles of women during the late modern period. In summary, it has been shown from this previous section how female exclusion from symbolic representation coincides with female exclusion from physical spaces of society, from the utter masculine public life.

This section attempts to provide a summary of the literature relating to *extensive* analyses of street named after men and women in a number of European cities. This summary can best be treated under two headings: research studies carried out on street names of cities in western Europe and research studies carried out on street names of cities in eastern Europe.

The first group of related literature include a number of *extensive* (and *intensive* too) analyses of the urban anthroponomy of the whole country of Spain, of the Spanish

city of Santiago de Compostela, of the city of Paris, of Great Britain, and its capital city, London. In their detailed study of street names of Spain, Gutiérrez-Mora, D., & Oto-Peralías, D. (2022) showed a strong gender imbalance. In this study it was calculated “for each Spanish municipality and each year from 2001 to 2020 a variable measuring the percentage of streets with female names over the total number of streets with male and female names” (Gutiérrez-Mora and Oto-Peralías, 2022: 1). They collected the data from the *Electoral Census Street Map*, which contains “the list of Spanish streets and roads, indicating their name, type (avenue, street, square, etc.), and municipality code” (Gutiérrez-Mora and Oto-Peralías, 2022: 5). The central section of this study is dedicated to the ‘street-name indicator’. The indicator is a complex mathematical expression, which aims to detect the female share of street names in each Spanish municipality throughout two decades (2001-2020). The use of a mathematical expression, named as ‘indicator’, is an example of instruments researchers can use to carry out *extensive* analyses. As stated in the previous section, the quantitative or *extensive* approach “empirically investigates data in a numerical form via statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques, and asks specific, narrow questions” (Tent, 2015:65).

This study on Spanish street names differs from the present dissertation both in the empirical approach used to collect and analyse the data and in the questions it aims to respond. Collected data used in the present dissertation were not provided by a national street names Census; data were collected, arranged, and analysed using different empirical methods, about which I will discuss in the next chapter. Furthermore, this dissertation differs from the above-mentioned study since it does not carry out a diachronic qualitative, *intensive*, analysis to search for empirical changes in the amount of female street names (expressed in percentage) during a period that covers two decades (2001-2020). Consequently, it can be said that since the results of this study on Spanish street names show in detail the gender imbalance of Spanish toponyms for each region (*Comunidades Autonomas* in Spanish) and throughout a period of time of two decades, a gender indicator is the best solution when carrying out a street names analysis of a large area, for instance an entire country, which aims to not only show current gender imbalance in street nomenclature but also to understand if there are evidence that this imbalance increased or decreased in time.

Another relevant study on Spanish street names was developed by María Novas Ferradás, who carried out an *extensive* analysis of the urban anthroponym of Santiago de Compostela, the capital of Galicia, in the northwest of Spain. Novas collected data from official sources provided by Santiago de Compostela City Council and used “secondary data sources of information from other cities cases to establish comparisons” (Novas, 2018:120). Furthermore, collected data were analysed by social categories in order to reveal how male street names and female street names (when present) differed from each other, not only from a numerical, quantitative, point of view. Novas grouped data into six social categories: civil figures, military figures, religious figures, aristocrats, generic professions, and others (Novas, 2018:121). The study revealed that, although female commemorated figures occupy all the categories aside the ‘military figures’ one, “whilst men are mainly intellectuals, professionals, and economic and political power representatives (civil figures, 61.3%), women are principally saints and virgins (religious figures, 51.5%)” (Novas, 2018:121). Furthermore, Novas (2018) classified streets according to the typology of public thoroughfares: avenue, square/park/garden, street/road/crossing, and others. Avenues are considered the most important public thoroughfares, and the study revealed that “avenues are named after men three times more than after women (12.9% against 4.1%)” (Novas, 2018:123).

These classifications of collected data can be useful instruments to carry out an *intensive* approach to data analysis. This approach allows researchers on gender bias and gender imbalance in street nomenclature to better understand power relations in a specific area of study and give additional insight into actual female presence in toponyms. Gender imbalance is not just a matter of numerical dominance of male street names over female ones, but also of the typologies of professional categories of commemorated figures and of the typology of thoroughfares these figures are assigned to. Thus far, it can be said that an effective quantitative research study requires a minimum of qualitative analysis of numerical data (for instance a classification of numerical data according to profession), in order to completely understand sociological power relations. The present dissertation also aims to analyse collected data according to a list of professional/social categories in order to further search for and show gender imbalance in the toponyms of Padua and York.

Another efficient study focusing on city-text analysis was carried out by Pricilla Parkhurst Ferguson (1988) to analyse the city-text of the city of Paris. This study dates

back to the 1980s and it is considered one amongst the most relevant pragmatic literature about Critical Toponymy rules applied to analyse toponyms of a specific area (here, Paris). Ferguson (1988) carried out both an *intensive* and *extensive* approach to street name analysis, in order to provide a diachronic image of street naming in Paris from the era of the Ancient Regime to the period of the French Revolution and to the 20th century. This study aims to explain the French system used to name streets and the changes this system underwent throughout history. Ferguson (1988) used an *extensive* approach in order to find numerical data that could classify Parisian street names and divide commemorating street names (or “people names”) from streets names named with dates, event, places, and groups (Ferguson, 1988: 387). In this study, it is suggested a classification of people streets according to a number of categories: owners, traditional elites (political, military, aristocracy, religious), modern elites (writers, artists, architects, scientists, inventors, Parisian heroes, doctors, academics, composers, theater figures). According to Ferguson (1988: 392) “over 1100 commemorative plaques in Paris, some 20% honor men (and a very few women) of letters, ranking writers second only to heroes of the Resistance (30%)”. Therefore, this study does not provide numerical data for gender imbalance in Parisian city-text, Ferguson only slightly suggest it. Nevertheless, this study is relevant because it provides researchers with an example of quantitative/qualitative, *extensive/intensive* approach that makes use of collected data to carry out research that aims to create an historical encyclopedia of a city-text changes. The present dissertation will not focus on which historical changes the city-texts of Padua and York underwent; efficiently, the dissertation aims to cast light on the current situation of gender imbalance in odonyms.

Regarding possible city-text analyses of Great Britain and the city of London, there are two major research works that can be discussed. The first one was carried out by Daniel Oto-Peralías (2017), who already worked on another similar research work about Spanish city-text. The main aim of his study is to investigate Great Britain’s street names as socio-cultural markers by providing a universal methodology that can also be applied to analyse city-texts of other countries. Oto-Peralías in his study analyses data collected from the “source OS Open Names (Ordnance Survey), which is a comprehensive database of place names for Great Britain” (Oto-Peralías, 2017: 2). In his study, the author has created two lists that include the 100 most common street names in

Great Britain and the 30 most common in England, Scotland, and Wales, and by using the above-mentioned ‘street name indicator’ to analyse these names, he has captured significant socio-cultural elements, such as: characteristics of national identity or relevance of Christianity in different British districts.

Another research study carried out to quantify culture using street names, analysed a corpus of street names of four cities: Paris, Vienna, London, and New York. The city-text of London is analysed together with the city-text of other capital cities of Europe and North America in order to answer four main research questions: 1) “Are streets names in Paris, Vienna, London, and New York gender-biased?; 2) Are the historical times in which the honorees lived close or distant from present times?; 3) What are the most celebrated professions?; and, 4) Are foreigners celebrated?” (Bancilhon et al., 2021). They gathered street name information from open data sources and carried out qualitative research about each street name (for instance, the district that the street belongs to, the renaming date of the street, the honoree’s name, gender, and occupation that the street was named after etc.) and through complex mathematical formulae they processed these data. This research work uses both qualitative and quantitative approach to analysis in order to compare city-texts of capital cities and answer four major research question. The aim of the present dissertation is not to compare city-text of capital cities, but the city-text of two smaller cities’ city (historical) centers, in order to quantifying gender (imbalance, if there is) in the collected data.

The second group of previous research studies on city-texts in order to quantifying socio-cultural values, such as gender, includes research carried out on eastern Europe countries, cities, and capital cities. This relatively small body of eastern Europe literature is especially concerned with the aim to quantify gender in city-text. Felecan (2021) in his study investigated the presence of feminine names in current Romanian onomymy. This research study analysed the city-texts of 15 localities across Romania: after collecting all toponyms of these places, so including common words and proper (commemorative) names, commemorative names were singled out. In this study, the number of occurrences of ononyms are not specified and are indicated using percentages only since “large cities have the most diverse range of names, while small towns barely have a name of anthroponymic origin” (Felecan, 2021: 273). Furthermore, as previous researchers did before him, Felecan (2021) carried out a specific analysis to classify data according to 8

different categories: 1) historical characters, member of noble families; 2) common ambiguous names; 3) heroines of wars or revolutions; 4) religious characters, all related to Christianity; 5) female writers; 6) Actresses who performed both in Romania and abroad; 7) characters from Romanian or universal mythology; and 8) names that have no more than 3 occurrences. This *extensive* analysis of Romania toponymy uses a methodology that can be considered universal to know the exact number of feminine names in specific cities, to justify gender imbalance in street toponymy, and to “demonstrate that the number of famous women (in Romania) is sufficient to name streets” (Felecan, 2021: 284), therefore it is reasonable to ask local authorities that these names should be used more when naming streets.

Another relevant study on quantifying gender of city-text is “a descriptive statistical analysis of power distribution among genders and professional categories in the current configuration of street names” (Niculescu-Mizil) of the Romanian capital city, Bucharest. This specific case study does not stop analysing the current city-text of Bucharest, but it also includes a second level analysis of the re-naming of Ion Câmpineanu Street. This study casts light onto the theoretical and sociological meanings of street naming and re-naming, through an historical qualitative, *intensive*, analysis of the name changes Ion Câmpineanu Street underwent. Therefore, although this present dissertation does not focus on re-naming occurrences in the city-texts analysed, Niculescu-Mizil’s research work demonstrate how qualitative, *intensive*, approach to analyse street re-naming occurrences has to be supported by a previous quantitative, *extensive*, approach to data analysis.

A recent study by Gałkowski (2020) “involved an onomastic analysis of feminine urbanonymy of selected polish and Italian towns and cities”. This study is relevant to this dissertation because Gałkowski collected data on Italian street names from the exact same source that this dissertation will use to obtain data to analyse in the second chapter. The source for the Italian street names corpus is work published by the Italian *Toponomastica femminile* Association, whilst the Polish corpus is collected using the TERYT database of the Polish Central Statistical Office website. Furthermore, the form for the census card (*Modello per la scheda di censimento*), adapted by researchers of the Italian *Toponomastica femminile* Association has been used to classify these names in the second

part of the analysis, the qualitative one (Gałkowski, 2020:7). This form will be used in the present dissertation as a system of fixed categories to classify the two city-texts.

Chapter 2

Methodologies used to analyse Padua and York's city-text

The second chapter of this dissertation describes the procedures and methods used in this investigation to carry out an *extensive*, quantitative, analysis on collected numerical data on two city-texts: the city-text of Padua, in the Veneto region, in northern Italy, and the city of York, in the county of North Yorkshire, UK. One of the most well-known tools for assessing the extent of gender imbalance in modern city-texts is a census record of street names of a specific administrative unit (state, region) or subunit (province, municipality). For the purpose of this analysis two corpora of data on street names were used: for the city of Padua, a finished corpus provided by the Italian association *Toponomastica femminile*; for the city of York, data were gathered from an online source, which provided a list of street names by postcode districts. In the following sections of this chapter, I will illustrate: a) the characteristics of the sources where data were found; b) the stages and methodologies used during the process of data collection; c) the methodologies of Critical Toponymy Analysis used to analyse the data; and d) which problems arose in the current investigation.

2.1 Data sources

This investigation takes the form of a case-study of the city-texts of two cities, Padua and York, to reveal the existence of instances of gender imbalance in the modern urban setup chosen by administrative authorities designated to name the streets of an urban area, whether it be small, such as the municipalities of a small city, or large, such as capitals or metropolises. The issue of gender bias in the practise of street naming affects all modern, small, or large, urban areas; however, this current dissertation focuses on the cities of Padua and York, because of their prominent role in my field of research. On the one hand, Padua is the city where I was born and where in 1222 the university, where I am studying, was established. Padua is without doubt the city I know best, so I chose to analyse its city-text. On the other hand, for the research purpose of my dissertation, I wanted to examine the features that might differentiate Italian and English culture by analysing the city-text of a British city, York. York is a city that resembles Padua in many ways: both are Medieval cities and both cities host important universities.

As described in the previous chapter, over the last decades many investigations have been carried out on city-texts of areas all around the world, especially western and eastern Europe. In spite of the fact that these case-studies produced an in-depth analysis of the city-texts of large urban areas, for example the entire area of the country of Spain or the metropolitan city of London, these analyses produced results at low municipal level too; therefore, (Critical) Toponymy analyses of an entire country cannot be carried out without analysing one by one the situation of each of its regions, for example the *Comunidades Autonomas* of Spain, and consequently, of their cities and towns. Therefore, city-texts analyses are not negatively affected by the volume of the data, but however, the suitability of street names as reliable data to be used to analyse socio-cultural factors (here: gender imbalance) and, most importantly, to compare the situations in city-texts of two different cities, which may be characterised by different, if not opposing, cultural elements (here: language, religion, culture, history) depends on whether the cities of the study have at least some similarities, such as: a) total population; b) total area (km²); and, c) density of the population.

Concerning the census data, which create the two city-texts used in this present study, these requirements are satisfied. From the data in Table 1, it is apparent that the collected data meet the requirements, as the population of the two cities is almost the same. There is, however, a small discrepancy between the total area of Padua and the one of York: the urban area of York is three times bigger than that of Padua. Interestingly, there are also differences in the ratios of density of the populations, as there are almost four times as many *Padovani* (people who live in Padua) as *Yorkers* (people who live in York).

However, the discrepancies between the two urban areas are not as great as to negatively affect the investigation and could be attributed to geographical patterns of Italy being a well-known high-density country. It could be said that because York is geographically larger than Padua, it has a larger number of streets and commemorative streets, but as we will see further in this investigation, this is not the case. Therefore, there are similarities between the two cities, both cities being inhabited by the same number of people and both being cities which host renowned university campuses. Nevertheless, a comparison between the two cities, as it will be seen further in in this chapter, will not be used to reveal and underline more of these similarities, but to show first of all the

existence, in this case-study too, of gender imbalance in the nomenclature of streets, and secondly to investigate if and how culture (language, religion, history) is influenced the city-text and if it is, how different may be an Italian-speaking predominantly-Catholic city-text from an English-speaking predominantly-Anglican one.

	Padua municipality	York municipality
Total population	214,125	210,618
Total area (km ²)	92.85 km ²	271.94 km ²
Density	2,300/km ²	687/km ²

Table 1 Geographical and demographic features of Padua and York municipalities (Censuses, 2011 and 2019)

Data were collected using two different online sources and organised in an Excel file using different methods of analysis. Concerning the data for the city of Padua, data were collected from the website provided by the Italian association *Toponomastica femminile*¹. This association was born on Facebook in January 2011 and acquired legal validity two years later. As stated in its website “the purpose of this association is to give voice and visibility back to women who contributed to the improvement of society, in all fields”. The group has 10.000 followers on Facebook who support the project and over 300 members, who work to persuade the public administrations all over the national territory to dedicate streets, but also squares, gardens and public spaces, to women. In order to support their request for more female names they carried out a toponomastic national census in order to show to the public the current gender imbalance in Italian toponymy. They published this census on their website, which is open to the public, and try to push towards a change of this situation creating many initiatives (conferences, exhibitions, contests etc.) addressed to Italian citizens.

This project is a useful and well-done resource in order to carry out an *extensive*, quantitative analysis of toponyms of Italy and Italian cities, since Italian national administrations and Italian municipalities do not provide a direct, accessible source for streets data, such as the Electoral Census Street Map provided by the Spanish Statistics Office (INE, 2016a), and used by Daniel Oto-Peralías in his work about city-text as socio-

¹ <https://www.toponomasticafemminile.com/sito/index.php>

cultural data (2018). *Toponomastica femminile* gathered in an accessible online format all the instances of female street names existing in each municipality, province, and region of Italy. Furthermore, they included for each of these administrative units the total number of streets and the number of streets named after men. This information allows researchers who use this census to know every detail of the current situation in a specific area in Italy, except for the number of non-commemorative street names, which are for obvious reasons left out from the census. This research group also carried out specific research into female street names in order to organize them by category. In the section titled *Criteri di classificazione delle strade intitolate a donne*, or ‘Classification criteria of female street names’, street names are divided according to the profession of the woman the street is commemorating. These criteria are: the Madonna, saints, beatified people and martyrs, nuns, religious benefactors, founders of religion orders and/or philanthropic organisations, non-religious benefactors and founders of laic philanthropic organisations, academics and humanists (writers, poets, critics, journalists, teachers, pedagogues, archaeologists, researchers of papyrology), scientists (mathematicians, physicists, astronomers, geographers, naturalists, biologists, doctors, botanists, zoologists...), show-women (actresses, singers, musicians, dancers, directors, set designers...), artists (painters, sculptors, miniaturists, photographers, cartoonists...), historical and political figures (Roman matrons, noblewomen, princesses, queens, patriots, Italian resistance fighters, victims of political conflicts / wars / Nazism, politicians, trade unionists, feminists...), workers, entrepreneurs, craftswomen, mythological or legendary figures, literary characters, athletes and sportswomen, and other (unidentified female names; toponyms linked to local traditions; mothers of illustrious people...).

Data on the street names of York were more difficult to find: the city of York does not own an online census of its street names and neither does the county of North Yorkshire. Nevertheless, the online research produced the desired result, and thus a collection of York street names. This was possible thanks to the website *proviser.com*², which provides users with information about real estate properties in the United Kingdom, e.g., house prices, but also information about parking tickets fees, the postcodes of each town in the United Kingdom, and the street names of each postcode

² <https://www.proviser.com>

area. Each postcode is indicated with the abbreviation of the name of the town, and YO is the postcode abbreviation of ‘York’.

The City of York is a cathedral city, the historic county town of North Yorkshire. The City of York is a unitary authority, that is to say its local administration is responsible for all local government functions, without complete dependence on the national government. Its area is quite extended and also comprises a set of villages, civil parishes, and suburbs outside its Roman walls. Villages, civil parishes, and suburbs within a unitary authority may be compared to European communes, e.g. Italian ‘*comuni*’, or municipalities. Both these administrative entities are part of the lowest tier of local government; however, unlike the European communes, in the United Kingdom these local entities do not have any type of real authority in local administrative decisions. A unitary authority is run by a single council, which forms a single tier of local government, and it is responsible for all government functions within its area. Therefore, as a unitary authority, the city of York with its Council expands and exerts its decisional power over all its communes (that is to say villages, civil parishes, and suburbs). The unitary authority of York provides its citizens with a range of services that goes from education to environment plans, including all services concerning transport planning, streets, highways, and, therefore, their naming³.

This is the most significant difference between Padua and York from an administrative point of view. Padua is not a unitary authority, but an Italian province, one of the seven provinces of Veneto region. Italian provinces are “the second-level administrative divisions of the Italian Republic, on an intermediate level between a municipality (*comune*) and a region (*regione*)”⁴. Padua as an Italian province has many municipalities, which are responsible for essential public services. Padua, the ‘*capoluogo*’, or capital, of the province of Padua, gives the name to the municipality ‘*comune di Padova*’ and is numbered among the municipalities of the province of Padua.

To summarize, the purpose of this investigation is to compare the city-texts of Padua and the city of York focusing on the urban area where local government decisions are taken by one single low tier of local government. For Padua this role is taken on the

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/York>; <https://www.york.gov.uk/StreetNaming>

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces_of_Italy

municipality, so the *Comune di Padova*, its mayor and communal committee; for York, this role is assumed by the Council of the City of York Unitary Authority.

According to the Italian law on commemorative street and monuments toponymy, *Legge 23/06/1927, n. 1188*, names can be chosen by authorities of municipalities, however, they have to be approved by the representative of the State in the province territory, called prefect. In England, street names are decided by city, borough, and district councils. Therefore, in order to carry out a toponymy analysis of two comparable city texts, one must analyse the administrative authority responsible to an equal extent for street naming: on the one hand the *Comune di Padova*, on the other the City of York Unitary Authority. Postal codes are the elements that are used to identify and distinguish these areas from each other: postal codes of Padua municipalities go from 35100 to 35143; postal codes of the city of York under the government of the City of York Council are YO1, YO10, YO19, YO23, YO24, YO26, YO30, YO31, and YO32.

As mentioned above, thanks to the completed work provided by the Italian association *Toponomastica femminile*, the postcode area of the municipality of Padua has already been analysed and a corpus of its street names has already been created. To analyse the postcode area of York, I searched for the YO postcode in the search bar in the section 'Postcode Areas' of the website *proviser.com*, I clicked on the link to YO paired with one of the numbers of York postcodes, then Postcode Area and then on Street Map, which provided me with a list of all street names of the area.

2.2 Data collection and set-up

The data, which were found thanks to two different online sources, were manually organised in an Excel file format in order to analyse them efficiently. The purpose of this process was to obtain two distinct tables which included exclusively the commemorative female street names of Padua and of York.

Concerning the data of Padua, the work had already been done by the researchers of the association *Toponomastica femminile*, who not only created a census, or a corpus, of Italian female street names, but also organised them according to their area, or region/town, and to the job those women did or to the role those women had in society and for which they are commemorated. Therefore, for this present dissertation, I had only to copy and paste the list of the 74 female street names of the city of Padua in an Excel

file, which I named *Padua female names*. This list comprises all the street names of the city of Padua, excluding its Province, which commemorate female key figures of Italian history and culture. Researchers of *Toponomastica femminile*, as stated above, produced a comprehensive list of every existing female name (updated up until September 2019) sorted according to the *Criteri di classificazione delle strade intitolate a donne*, or ‘Classification criteria of female street names’, and written in alphabetical order.

The York city-text was more difficult to obtain and organise, as the names of the streets of the city of York were not already organised into a completed corpus or into a census by the local administration. The process of creation of a corpus of street names of York was divided into three stages: 1) research; 2) collection; and 3) organisation of the names.

Following the first stage of research of the source for these data, the data were collected and organised into a list. The purpose of the collection stage, the second step in this process, was to find and copy the street names into a Word file. I searched into the section ‘UK Postcode Areas’ of the website *proviser.com*, and I wrote the postcode designation of York, which is the abbreviation ‘YO’. The results showed a list of all postcodes of York. This webpage provided me with a complete list of street names for each postcode area I decided to analyse (from postcode YO1 to YO32).

The street names were copied and pasted into a Word File, in order to have a simple list of written names. The result was a list of names, arranged in alphabetical order, which I copied and pasted in an Excel file named *YO street names*. This list included all street names of York, or of the urban area of York that I decided to analyse, including non-commemorative ones, that is to say, streets, which are not named after people but landmarks, buildings (e.g., churches), or ruins of a national heritage site present in close vicinity of the street. The methodology used to distinguish between commemorative and non-commemorative will be explained in the next section of this chapter, dedicated to the methodologies of Critical Toponymy Analysis applied to analyse and understand the city-texts of York as well as the one of Padua. The final stage of the process of organisation of the *hodonyms* of York included the exclusion of male commemorative names in order to obtain a final list of exclusively female names. In the third chapter of this dissertation, I will present the final list of female commemorative street names of the city of York, the one of Padua, and a comparison between these two lists will be made in order to

demonstrate the role of street names as socio-cultural indicators of attitudes and norms from a societal and cultural point of view.

2.3 Critical Toponymy Analysis of the data

Returning to the subject of Critical Toponymy, mentioned in the previous chapter of this dissertation, these data were analysed using the methodologies introduced in the field of Critical Toponomastics studies. With the critical turn of toponomastics, or toponymy, as in the study of toponyms, which took place during the last decades of the 21st century, the subjects of these studies, toponyms, were analysed from a different point of view: the analyses of their etymology and historical-cultivist meanings were abandoned in favour of a different type of analysis, one that took into consideration political involvement on street naming practice and how this involvement led to a set of sociological issues, for instance gender imbalance, which are reflected in the statistical numbers of censuses of street names of a given city.

The present dissertation avoids a type of approach to analysis that aims to examine and explain a toponym focusing on set of facts concerning its past. As a matter of fact, etymological and historical-cultivist information of a toponym focuses on its past, that is, on the toponym during a stage of its life cycle that precedes the present day. This information may be useful to analyse the life cycle of a toponym, understand how or when the name was born, how it changed according to political hegemonies and to conflicts, and in the specific case of a street toponym, to examine the history of a specific, usually relevant, street of a city.

This dissertation focuses on the present stage of the life cycle of a toponym: this dissertation focuses on power relations, which are reflected in street toponyms, of the present cultural arena of a city, that is to say, on the political semiotics of toponyms of a city. As described in the previous chapter, political semiotics is a specific type of semiotics, the study of signs. The political semiotics of commemorative street names “involves the interplay between primary, utilitarian functions that are ‘denoted’ and a complex set of secondary, symbolic functions, which are ‘connoted’” (Azaryahu, 1996). According to Eco (1986) these symbolic functions involve “cultural values, social norms, and political ideologies that are associated with the symbolic message of the sign”. The denoted function of street names, both non-commemorative and commemorative, is to

help citizens navigate through the streets and have knowledge of spatial features of the city. The connoted function is related to the meanings the sign bears from a sociocultural or political point of view. A critical analysis of connoted street names aims to understand these power relations and demonstrate, if there are, social issues, for instance gender inequality, in society, which are reflected in commemorative street names.

Among all toponyms, odonyms, or street names, commemorative by nature, are more prone to have and show connotative meanings than non-commemorative toponyms. Cultural values and hegemonic (also political) ideologies are reflected on commemorative street names, which show a clear sight of the cultural arena in the semiotics of a city.

Furthermore, to carry out a Critical Toponymy analysis of street names as indicators of sociocultural issues pervading a society, these street names must confirm three specific assumptions. According to Oto-Peralías (2018:7) there are three major assumptions: (1) “Street names are the result of commemorative decisions made by those with the authority to name”; (2) “Authorities’ decisions reflect the commemorative priorities of the local community”; and (3) “Commemorative priorities reflect social and cultural values”. In this current study, the data gathered for the analysis confirm, as it will be shown in detail in the following sections of this study, these three assumptions.

As mentioned above, the practice of street naming is carried out by local administrations. Street naming is one of the tasks performed by members of government at a local level and it is one of the services offered to citizens (for instance, house numbering, postal codes, cadastral census), which constitute the results of local authority to formally establish order and organize society.

As previously stated, according to the Italian law, *Legge 23/06/1927, n. 1188*, on who has the legal authority to choose the nomenclature of the urban elements of a city (streets, squares etc) and the disposition of the names of the streets according to the spatial reference, names are decided by municipal authorities; however, their choice must be approved by the representative of the State in the province territory, the prefect. Therefore, the first assumption is confirmed by the data: in their website, where the data for this study were collected, the Italian association *Toponomastica femminile* provided to researchers who collaborated to this project a *Modello di richiesta degli stradari*, which is a prototype of an official letter researchers can send to Italian municipal offices to request for official street maps to use to create cadastral censuses. This document proves

that the data collected by the association are the results of decisions taken by official authorities; in support of this assumption is the fact that the document is addressed to the Director or Public Administrator in charge of the office processing street names.

Regarding the first assumption, it could be stated that it is also confirmed by the data collected and which constitute the city-text of the city of York. Although these data were not provided by an official source, as an Association or a local administration, in the form, for instance, of a cadastral census, the section 17 of the Public Health Act 1925 imposes a requirement to ensure that a notice of a proposed names is sent to the urban authority by the person proposing to name the street; moreover, the urban authority, within one month after the receipt of such notice, may object to the proposed name. Therefore, the street names provided by the website *proviser.com*, which can be manually found in two official street maps provided by the website of the Council of York, are official names, which are the result of commemorative decisions made by urban authority.

Turning now to the second and third assumptions necessary to carry out a Critical Toponymy Analysis, it can be stated that concerning the city-texts of Padua and York, these assumptions are satisfied. As mentioned above the whole process of street naming, both in Italy and England, is ruled by government regulations, two official Acts: the Public Health Act 1925; and, *Legge 23/06/1927, n. 1188*. As explained by Oto-Peralías (2018:7), “Assumption (2) refers to how democratic and open the naming process is”. This means that commemorative choices in street naming practice should reflect the priorities of the community, and in this case, they do actually reflect these priorities, since the process of street naming is governed at local level, that is to say, by city councils in England, and it happens under the rule of law (*Legge n. 1188*) in Italy. Therefore, it is true that in these countries the naming process is democratic and open, supposedly in agreement with the needs, ideas, and values of the local community who actively voted for the council members and for those politicians who make up the (Italian) Parliament and have power on law matters. However, it is legitimate to ask what about those citizens, whose features or values are not in agreement with the ones of the majority, especially when this dissonance leads to their silence and erasure from the symbolic features of society. It is reasonable to wonder whether it can be called democratic a society that does not represent equally its citizens, who belong to different social categories; these differences go from gender to religion, and ethnicity. The present dissertation aims to

contribute to all these studies on toponymy, which show instances of erasure of minorities and representatives of discordant values form the symbolic elements of urban areas, and to contribute to the group of voices who demands equality.

The final third assumption that should be satisfied to carry out a Critical Toponymy Analysis means that “toponyms reflect the contemporary local culture” (Oto-Peralías, 2018:8). Toponyms can be studied and used to measure cultural values of a society or compare cultural values of different societies; for instance, street names can be sociocultural indicators of religiosity at local, or national, level. In this dissertation it will be analysed the city-text of Padua, a city of northern Italy, a country among the top 5 countries with the greatest number of Catholics. Since the majority (more than 80%) of the Italian population is Catholic, whether practising or not, Catholic values are reflected in commemorative decisions in street naming. Therefore, a city-text analysis is able to show to what extent priorities of Catholics are reflected in street names by analysing statistical data that include all street names, in this case, commemorating Christ, saints, beatified people, the Virgin Mary, etc.

The following part of this section moves on to describe in greater detail the methodologies applied to analyse the two city-texts so as to highlight the similarities and differences of the toponymy features of the city of Padua and York.

The first step in the process of data analysis and development of data as indicators of sociocultural factors includes data collection and a preliminary text analysis of the lists of names. Regarding the street names of the city of Padua, as stated above, the Italian association *Toponomastica femminile* provided a detailed census of the street names of the city center, along with its provinces, and an in-depth analysis of these names. The urban area of the city of Padua, without counting its provinces, is not vast as compared to the Italian capital city of Rome or other bigger metropolitan cities of the country. This characteristic is important because it means that the collection of street names, both non-commemorative and commemorative, will be relatively small, so subjected to less alterations, such as the elimination of repeated street names. Therefore, fewer alterations on collected data result in less risks when analysing them: the analysis of the data will be carried out manually, so a smaller collection of data is better. After obtaining a corpus of the street names of a specific urban area, it is necessary to carry out a preliminary, in-depth analysis of these data.

The current paper focuses on analysing commemorative street names in order to demonstrate cases of gender bias; nevertheless, before the analysis of the commemorative names, it will be carried out a general analysis of the whole corpus, as to clearly illustrate the numbers of: a) total street names; b) total commemorative street names; c) male commemorative street names; and lastly, d) female commemorative street names. Furthermore, from these data will be obtained an indicator of gender bias in street names. Socio-cultural indicators, as Oto-Peralías (2018) examined in his work, can be created through specific statistical formulas; however, “an indicator of male predominance can be defined as the percentage of streets with male names over the total number of streets with male and female names” (Oto-Peralías, 2018:16). The socio-cultural indicator for gender bias in street names of Padua and York will be a percentage, which will indicate the extent of predominance of male street names on female street names. The preliminary analysis of the total street names allows to better understand the relevance of this gender domain, if there is, in relation to the overall toponymy of the city: gender bias will have cause more problems at socio-cultural level if the number of commemorative street names will exceed the number of non-commemorative ones, or it is considerably high.

Regarding the data of the city of York, as previously mentioned, they were collected after extensive research online, which resulted in a manual collection of names of the streets of York, or better, of the postal code areas governed by the City of York Council. I copied and pasted these names into an Excel File, so to have a list of names in alphabetical order.

After obtaining the corpus of the street names of York, I carried out a preliminary, in-depth analysis of these data. Before analysing the commemorative names of York, so to understand the extent of gender inequality in the toponymy of this city, it was carried out a general analysis of the whole corpus, as to clearly illustrate the numbers of: a) total street names; b) total commemorative street names; c) male commemorative street names; and, d) female commemorative street names. The results are organised into a table, together with the results of Padua. As for Padua, from these data it was obtained a percentage, which is the socio-cultural indicator of domain of male street names over female street names.

Therefore, the preliminary analyses of the cities of Padua and York undergo the same process and their results are numerical data about the quantity of total streets and

the share of commemorative streets of the total, indicated with numbers, percentages, and charts.

The second step in the process of data analysis and development of data as indicators of sociocultural factors is to carry out an individual analysis of female commemorative street names. These names will be illustrated into a table and classified according to specific social categories. The term ‘social category’ here is used to indicate subcategories, or those categories within a larger classification, that being female commemorative street names, in order to examine, in a situation of gender biased toponymy, which are the preconditions for a commemorative name to be female. A city-text, which is a proof of gender bias in favour of male commemorated figures, can show through its analysis, which categories of women are deemed worthy and appropriate enough to be included, even if in smaller amount compared to its male counterpart, into it.

This second-level analysis had already been carried out by *Toponomastica femminile*, who created a list of criteria to categorise female names, which I already examined in the previous section. For sake of comparison, I will use the same criteria to categorise the female names of the streets of York. This information will be included in its own table and chart. Furthermore, female street names will be appositely indicated on online maps of the two cities to show, from a geographical point of view, the distribution of these streets in two areas: 1) the historical/central area and 2) the peripheral area. In order to create these personalised maps, I used the application provided by Google, called Google My Maps, which allows creators to directly work on a *online* carbon copy of the map of world, provided by Google Maps, and add specific features, such as the Google Maps pin to indicate a street of a precise area.

This second-level analysis will also be useful to categorise non-commemorative street names of the two cities. As mentioned in the previous chapter, toponymy is the study of all toponyms. This dissertation focuses on hodonyms, which are proper names of streets and roads; these hodonyms are called urbanonyms, which are names given to urban elements. Street and roads can be named using many different types of names: non-commemorative or commemorative. Non-commemorative street names have many different features that are worth looking into and can be categorised and organised into a

table, for instance: names referring to natural elements (e.g. rivers, hills) or urban elements (e.g. ruins, ancient Castles, nearby churches, relevant houses etc.).

2.4. Methodological problems

However, this method of analysis has a number of limitations. The methodological problems arise not at the very beginning of the process, but particularly during the stage of preliminary data analysis. The purpose of the first stage is to find and organise data on street names. There are no types of issues if the source material is legitimate and easily available. In this study, it was used, for the city of Padua, was a major reliable online source, the online census of *Toponomastica femminile (Tf)*, for the city of York, the web site *proviser.com*, which provides with specific information on streets of the UK. Despite not being an official source, its information is collected from other government websites and organised for the purpose of this website, which is different from a simple analysis of toponyms and concern house properties' sales. If the sources are reliable and exhaustive, there will not be any problems and the results will be complete corpora, or censuses, ready to be analysed.

Problems may arise in the stage of the preliminary analysis, which, in this dissertation, will be conducted completely manually for the York data collection. There are two major problems: firstly, there are more risks to make mistakes when analysing this collection, which consists of more than 3,300 non-commemorative and commemorative names; secondly, as an Italian student of English, despite having acquired the skills necessary to write a dissertation about an English topic using the English Language, there is a degree of understanding English toponyms that a second-language speaker cannot reach. Especially that lack either the proper name or the family name in toponyms, often makes the commemoration rather enigmatic (Walkowiak, 2018:339).

These problems did not arise in the Italian data collection, for two reasons: firstly, the preliminary analysis of total commemorative names to identify the female ones was already done by the researchers of *Tf*, so it can be said that the corpus consists of exact and final data; secondly, the corpus of total street names of Padua, not analysed by *Tf* and made available by the website of the *Comune di Padova*, consists, obviously, of Italian

names, which are easily to analyse for the purpose of this work, since Italian is my first language.

Chapter 3

Results

The purpose of the third chapter of the present thesis is to illustrate the results emerging from the analysis of the data, which are commemorative street names of the city of Padua and the city of York. The following chapter will be divided into two sections according to the data analysed: the first section (3.1) will examine the results of the city of Padua; and the second section (3.2) will examine the results of the city of York. Each one of these two sections will be developed following a specific layout that will comprise: a) a commentary section that will illustrate the procedures followed to obtain the current results and to systematically collect them; and, b) schematic representation of the data into tables and pie charts.

Furthermore, this research paper will provide a complete analysis of the general toponymic situation in both cities by analysing non-commemorative honyms of both cities; the results of this second, or sub-, analysis are included in this chapter along with the others.

3.1 Results of Padua

The first set of questions aimed to examine the quantity and the arrangements of streets commemorating female leading figures in the city-text of Padua. Concerning gender bias studies of this city's city-text, as formerly mentioned in the previous chapters, the answers to these questions have already been given by the Italian association *Toponomastica Femminile*. This association carried out research at a national level, and partially international level too, to show to the general and academic public the full extent of gender imbalance in the practice of street naming in Italy. Street names were collected, transcribed, and organised into an online record, available at the official website of the association, which presents all street names divided and organised according to country, region, province, and municipality.

Through an analysis of the official source for the city-text of Padua, which is a census of all streets provided and edited by the Cultural activities section of the office processing street names called 'Registro delle Strade di Padova', the researchers of this association found a total of 74 streets named after women. The results of this first analysis

are shown in Table 2: this table provides all streets names of the city of Padua commemorating women, organised in alphabetical order.

Aganoor Vittoria (via)	Madonna del Rosario (via)	Santa Giustina (corte)
Agnesi Maria Gaetana (via)	Madonna della Salute (via)	Santa Lucia (galleria)
Alpi Ilaria (via)	Madonnetta (via)	Santa Lucia (via)
Andreini Isabella (via)	Madonnina (via)	Santa Margherita (via)
Beata Enselmini (via)	Mafalda di Savoia d'Assia (via)	Santa Maria Assunta(via)
Beata Eustochio (via)	Malibran Maria (via)	Santa Maria Assunta(vicolo)
Beccari Gualberta Alaide (via)	Marchionni Carlotta (via)	Santa Maria in Conio (via)
Bellisario Marisa (via)	Masanello Antonia (via)	Santa Maria in Conio (vicolo)
Benato Elisa (via)	Montessori Maria	Santa Maria in Vanzo
Bianchi Livia (via)	Mozzoni Anna Maria (via)	Santa Maura (via)
Bianchini D'Alberigo Giulia (passeggiata)	Negri Ada (corte)	Santa Rita (via)
Bigolina Giulia (via)	Nogarola Isotta (via)	Santa Rosa (via)
Carriera Rosalba (via)	Norma Cossetto	Santa Sofia (via)
Cornaro Piscopia Elena Lucrezia (passaggio)	Omboni Stefania (via ⁹)	Santa Teresa di Lisieux (passeggiata)
De Cetto Sibilla (via)	Ostiaia Gallenia	Serao Matilde (via)
Deledda Grazia (via)	Pasta Giuditta (via)	Solera Mantegazza Laura (via)
Dimesse (passaggio)	Ravignana Isabella (via)	Stampa Gaspara (via)
Dimesse (via)	Ristori Adelaide (via)	Sulpicia (via)
Fornasari Filomena (via)	Robusti Marietta	Toreuma Claudia (via)
Franco Veronica (via)	Sant'Agnese (via)	Usuelli-Ruzza Enrichetta (vicolo)
Gasparotto Cesira (piazzetta)	Sant'Eufemia (via)	Valentini Terrani Lucia (piazzetta)
Grigolon Dolores (via)	Sant'Orsola Vecchia (via)	Valmarana Elena (via)
Ipazia (via)	Santa Cabrini Francesca Saverio (via)	Vendramini Elisabetta (suor) (via)
Lazzari Maria (passeggiata)	Santa Caterina (via)	Vivanti Annie (via)
Liduina Meneguzzi (suor) (piazzetta)	Santa Chiara (via)	

Table 2: Female Commemorative Street names (Padua)

It can be seen from the table above (Table 2) that there is a significant number of names (29) commemorating religious figures; in this table, there are two main types of religious names: 1) the epithet used by Italian Catholics to name the Virgin Mary, Madonna; and 2) the names of saints. These two types of names are a prime example of the power of cultural values of a place and their symbolic resonance in their corresponding physical space.

In this context, Catholic values are to be expected since Italy can be considered the homeland of the Catholic Church, of its institutions, the Vatican City and Saint Peter's Basilica, and of its leaders and workers, the Pope and the clergy. Despite the fact that the Vatican City-state is independent and separated from the Republic of Italy, which is a lay and nonreligious republic, the Italian country was and still is very much influenced by Catholic values and ideals. This is a consequence of historical events and power plays that resulted with the creation of a religious city-state inside a laical modern republic. Italy as a country does not have an official religion; however, its inhabitants are for the majority Catholics.

This indicator of religiosity is not accidental and in a quantitative analysis it serves to examine the group of female names and understand which types of people are more likely to take their place in a street name sign. It is fundamental to organise the names according to some criteria. The Italian association *Toponomastica Femminile* created a specific system to organise these names: names were divided according to thirteen units. These units or categories classify the commemorated women according to their work both in the religious/mythical and laical/historical/scientific/literary spheres; the categories, listed following the order used by *Toponomastica Femminile* are: the Madonna, saints, beatified people and martyrs, nuns, religious benefactors, founders of religion orders and/or philanthropic organisations, non-religious benefactors and founders of laic philanthropic organisations, academics and humanists (writers, poets, critics, journalists, teachers, pedagogues, archaeologists, researchers of papyrology etc.), scientists (mathematicians, physicists, astronomers, geographers, naturalists, biologists, doctors, botanists, zoologists etc.), women in entertainment (actresses, singers, musicians, dancers, directors, set designers etc.), artists (painters, sculptors, miniaturists, photographers, cartoonists etc.), historical and political figures (Roman matrons,

noblewomen, princesses, queens, patriots, Italian resistance fighters, victims of political conflicts/war/Nazism, politicians, trade unionists, feminists etc.), workers, entrepreneurs, craftswomen, mythological or legendary figures, literary characters, athletes and sportswomen, and other (unidentified female names; toponyms linked to local traditions; mothers of illustrious people etc.). This system of classification not only allows researchers to systematically examine the corpus of names they have, but also helps them realise the extent of influence culture has on a specific society and which are its keystones. One example may be the case-study of the city-text of Padua, where the criterion chosen by *Toponomastica Femminile* helps researchers understand the characters that made the corpus up and the cultural values that occupy the majority of space in the symbolic urban sphere.

The bar chart (Figure 1) below shows the main classification of the Paduan corpus of streets commemorating women. As can be seen from the chart, the Catholic sections of the system of classification reports significantly more names than the other lay groups, not linked to the religious sphere. These results provide further support for the hypothesis that cultural values and societal attitudes are reflected in the symbolic sphere represented by urban elements, including city-texts. Concerning the findings of the analysis of the

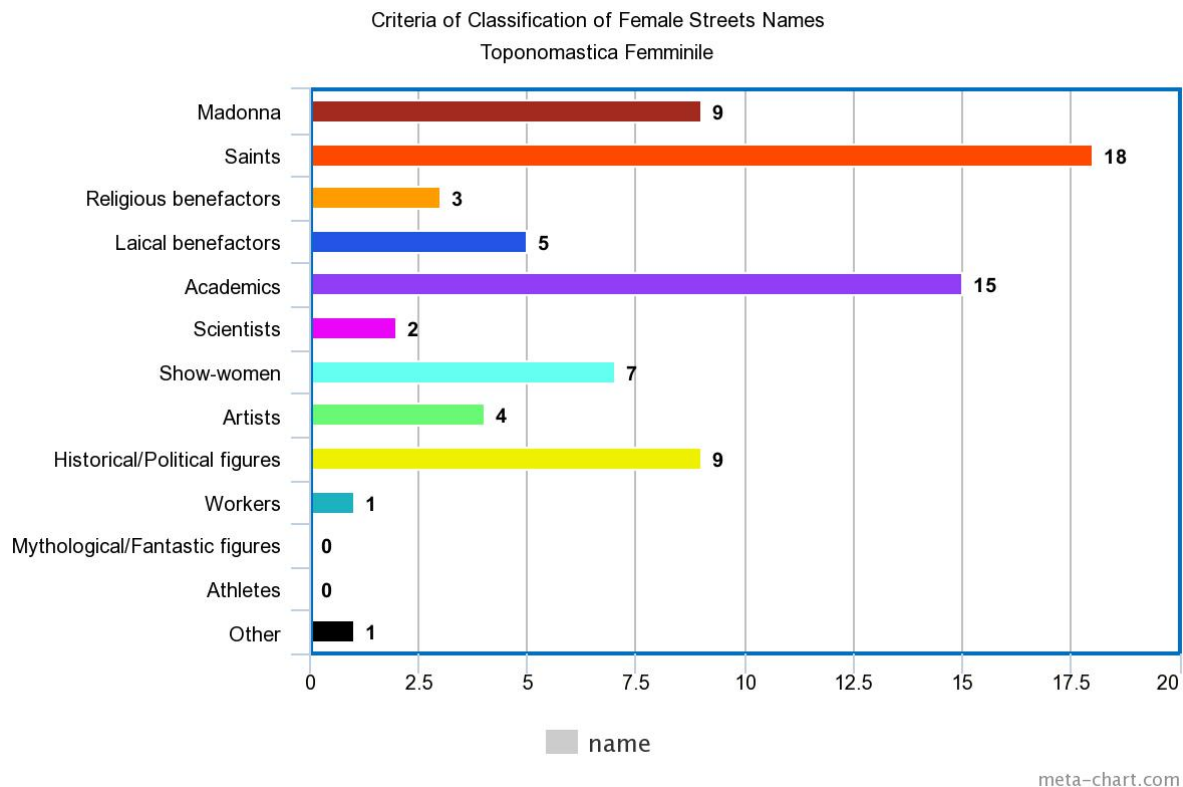


Figure 1: Criteria of Classification of Female Street Names (Padua)

city-text of Padua and the classification of commemorated women, the most striking aspect of the data are the highest values of the chart.

As shown in Figure 1, the first, second, and third values recorded in the chart are very high if compared to the other values. These three values represent the names of female figures linked to the Catholic Church: the Madonna, i.e. the Virgin Mary, saints and beatified people, and religious benefactors or founders of religious associations. In the corpus there are nine instances of streets named after the Virgin Mary, called Madonna in Italian. The name Madonna is used twice: '*Madonna del Rosario*' and '*Madonna della Salute*'; in these two examples, the name Madonna is followed by two phrases that specify: 1) the Virgin Mary depicted in many paintings with the Rosary in her hands, and 2) the Virgin Mary of Good Health, who is celebrated on the anniversary of the end of the great bubonic plague, which affected north Italy during the 17th century. Furthermore, streets are named using Italian derivations of Madonna, such as '*Madonnina*' and '*Madonnetta*', typical of northern dialects of Italy. A group of 18 streets are named after saints, and therefore, streets are named with the formulae '*Santa + name*', or '*Beata + name*', and '*Suor + name*' ('Saint, and nun' in English); furthermore, three streets are named after religious benefactors. Statistical data show that the sum of these names collected from the three values linked to Catholicism corresponds to 40.5% of the total.

Figure 1 presents the results obtained from the analysis of a large corpus of data and shows thirteen measures of feminine presence in it. On the one hand, the top three values highlight the influence of religion in the urban-symbolic sphere. On the other hand, the remaining 10 values, including 44 names, correspond to 59.4% of the total (74 names). The most interesting aspect of this graph is that, although the bottom part is more copious than the top part, both in number of values (10) and names (44), the top one strike our attention with a high number of names (30), despite the small number of values (only 3).

The values included in the bottom part of the bar chart (Figure 1) are linked to the scientific, academic, and above all laical spheres. The highest number of names is counted in the category dedicated to academics and humanists, i.e. writers, poets, critics, journalists, teachers, pedagogues, archaeologists, and researchers of papyrology. The city-text of Padua has 15 streets named after a female writer, intellectual, or a poetess (academics figures). This is the second highest number in the bar graph (Figure 1) for a

specific category after the category of saints, beatified people, and nuns, which has 18 names. This is a significant result, but a rather surprising one.

It is possible to hypothesize that these conditions are most likely to occur in a society and cultural context where religious values had, and still have, a long history and religious institutions wielded a position of power. As discussed above, Catholic ideologies are deeply rooted in the Italian setting; however, thanks to the analyses of street names, one among the most direct forms of symbolic means, this hypothesis can be confirmed.

The third highest number of names belongs to two categories, which have an equal number of names (9): 1) the first category includes names commemorating the 'Madonna'; and 2) the second category included name of Historical/Political figures. Nevertheless, in a situation of parity between two categories of a single group, it is important to go beyond the simple numerical data and analyse the components of these parts, i.e. the names. The first category is completely dedicated to the Virgin Mary, named '*Madonna*' in Italian: there are nine instances of streets named after the Virgin Mary using different versions of her name, such as *Madonna*, *Madonnina*, *Santa Maria* etc.; therefore, in this category there is no place for other characters to be commemorated. On the other hand, the second category includes the names of nine different female historical and political figures. Therefore, it can be argued that, despite both categories having the same number of names, since the first category repeatedly commemorates only one character, the Virgin Mary, it has a bigger impact on the city-text and the symbolic sphere than the second one. Through an attentive analysis of these nine names, I was able to examine the role of these women in the historical-political context. After extensive research on the Internet, I collected and arranged the data in a table (Table 3) according to three values: 1) name, 2) occupation, i.e. the reason why they merit to be commemorated; and 3) the place of birth. The results suggest that six out of nine commemorated women were protagonists of political and social movements throughout the last part of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. These women were civil right activists and patriots during the final years of the 19th century, supporting women's and workers' rights, and the political enterprises of Garibaldi and Mazzini, or, in the 20th century, partisans during the Italian fascism. Two women, the student Norma Cossetto and Princess Mafalda di Savoia, known for supporting Fascism, were among the

victims of the Second World War. The former was killed during the Foibe massacres, the latter was interned by Nazis in the Buchenwald concentration camp, where she died in 1944. Furthermore, the majority of these women were born in Padua and in the Veneto region. One example of strong Paduan origins is the figure of Ostiala Gallenia, whose name appears in the list. This name refers to the first known Venetian woman represented in a Paduan sepulchral stele dated 100 BCE, which shows the cultural union of old Venetian customs, with the figure of Ostiala Gallenia dressed in a typical Venetian dress, and new Roman customs, with the figure of a Roman man dressed in Roman clothes; These two figures are represented together in a Roman chariot.

Name	Occupation	Place of birth
Beccari Gualberta Alaide	Activist, writer	Padua
Bianchi Livia	Partisan	Melara (RO)
Cossetto Norma	Istrian student	Visinada (Italy, now Croatia)
Gallenia Ostiala	Unknown	Unknown
Lazzari Maria	Partisan	Padova
Mafalda di Savoia	Princess of Savoy	Roma
Mantegazza Laura Solera	Philanthropist, patriot	Milano
Masanello Antonia	Patriot	Cervarese Santa Croce (PD)
Mozzoni Anna Maria	Civil rights activist, journalist	Milano

Table 3: Names of historical/political female figures (Padua)

As displayed in the figure above (Figure 1), the remaining categories arranged in a descending order are: women in entertainment (7 names), lay benefactors (5 names), artists (4 names), scientists (2 names), and workers/other (1 name each).

Furthermore, in an attempt to provide a complete analysis of the geographical features of the cities of Padua and York, I illustrated the results of the analysis on two maps. In order to create these maps, I used the free online service provided by Google, called Google My Maps, which allows users to create personalised maps to use on the go. I used this service to create two personalised maps, one for the city of Padua and one for the city of York. Google My Maps allows users to visualise the locations of specific

buildings (restaurants, shops etc.), or, in this case, streets on a map by adding multiple addresses, each one of which corresponds to an icon in the map. This feature of Google can be useful to provide a pragmatic representation of gender presence in an urban area. In the figure below (Figure 2), each street named after one of the 74 women listed in the corpus, or city-text of the city of Padua (Table 2), is represented with a small red dot.

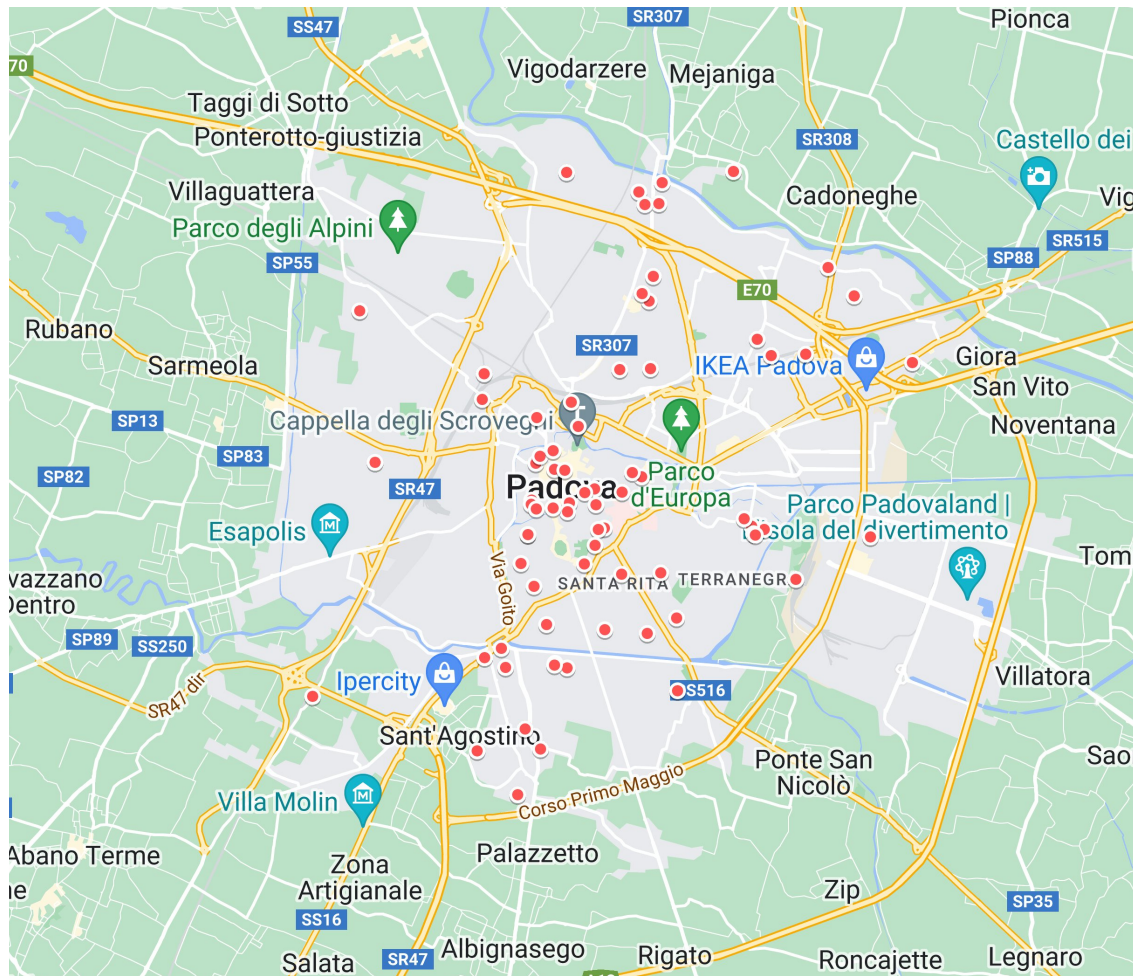


Figure 2: Representation in a map of Female Street names (Padua)

The current representation of data on the map is interesting as it is possible to see that commemorative streets named after female figures are quite well arranged in the urban landscape of Padua. Despite the small number of streets named after women in relation to the total number of commemorative streets, in each district of the city there is a red dot. Furthermore, the nearer the historical centre of the city, the higher the number of dots.

In order to carry out a complete and detailed analysis of the city-text of Padua and the issue of gender bias, which characterise the city-text itself, it is important to go beyond the study of streets named after women and its characteristics, such as their number and categories of classification. A second set of questions can be useful to carry out a second-level or sub-analysis of the entire corpus of street names collected for the city of Padua. The initial objective of this project was to identify gender imbalance in the city-text of Padua and York. However, despite the fact that the first set of questions produced interesting answers and highlighted the presence of gender bias in the cities-texts, a second set of questions was able to enlarge the field of research and provide extra answers and useful explanations of gender bias.

The second set of questions focuses on the part of the corpora of street names of both cities made up of non-commemorative street names. Non-commemorative street names are those names that name every type of street in an urban area and are not forenames. Toponomastics is the study of toponyms, which can be divided into different categories, for example, hodonyms, which, as explained in the first chapter of the present dissertation, is the term used to indicate names of streets and roads. As suggested by data explained below (Figure 3), the symbolic sphere of the urban space of Padua is more

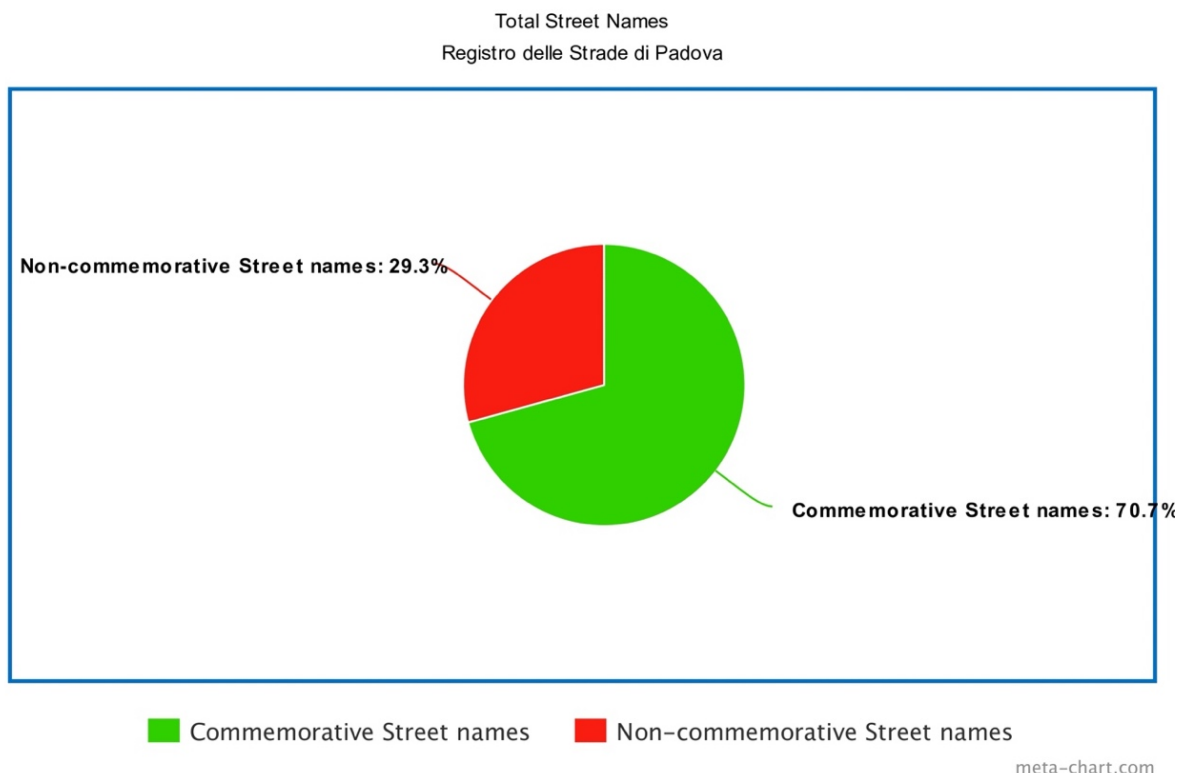


Figure 3: Commemorative and non-Commemorative Street Names (Padua)

likely than not to be composed by commemorative street names (70.7%), while a smaller number (29.3%) of the total is made up of streets named with common nouns, but also proper nouns, which do not refer to real people, dead or alive.

The source of these data was, as already mentioned in the previous section, the '*Registro delle Strade di Padova*', a corpus and census of all street names of the city, updated in 2019 and freely available on the official website of the municipality of Padua. This is a corpus of names organised in alphabetical order, including all types of hodonyms used to name the streets of the city. According to researchers of the Italian association *Toponomastica Femminile*, who have used this '*registro*' ('record', in English) as source for their project, the total number of streets in Padua, i.e. the municipality of Padua, is 2,189. Furthermore, 1,515 out of 2,189 names are commemorative names, 74 of which are names of women (4.8%). The following paragraphs will focus on non-commemorative names; therefore, it can be said that 674 out of 2.189 names are non-commemorative names.

In order to answer to both sets of questions aimed to demonstrate and discuss the issue of gender imbalance in the city-text of Padua, it was necessary to analyse also these data according to specific systems of classification. In the first part of the analysis, which focused on female commemorative names, this system corresponded to a classification of names and bearers of these names according to their society-role. In the current second part of the analysis, which focuses on non-commemorative names, names were categorised according to two values: 1) religion, and 2) geographical names. The second category includes a specific group of names that refer to the '*Colli Euganei*', i.e. Euganean Hills in English.

The analysis of the degree of religious presence in a corpus of names like the one created for the purposes of this dissertation can provide interesting results regardless of the type of names in the corpus, i.e. commemorative or non-commemorative. The analysis of names indicated in Table 2 shows 30 out of 74 names to be names of religious and Catholic women. This number is very high considering that corresponds to 40.5% of the total, which is a very small amount, only 74 (female) names, in comparison to the 1,441 male names which are commemorative in nature. The analysis of the group of non-commemorative name percentages or indicators of the religious presence can be useful to fully comprehend the implications of 40.5% of religious female figures. The analysis of

religious presence in the group of commemorative names already established a situation of gender imbalance, given that because of the small number of female names (74 out of 1,515 names), regardless of the quantity, the ratio of religious female figures would always be too great in comparison to the ratio of male religious figures. The analysis of the number of religious names in the group of non-commemorative ones can give an insight into the real relevance of religion in the cultural values of Paduan society. Therefore, the smaller percentage of religious names in the group of non-commemorative names in proportion to the percentage of religious names in the group of female commemorative names can be considered a sign of gender bias. This would suggest Catholicism as a weaker element of urban symbolism, when names referring to Catholic institutions are discarded in favor of other types of names, e.g., names referring to the Euganean Hills. Above all, this is a sign of gender bias and the propensity for authorities to consider the name ‘Madonna’ more than a name of a female scientist or artist (two among the categories with fewer names).

Abbazia (via)	Don (via)
Agnusdei (via)	Duomo (galleria)
Capitello (via)	Filippesi (via)
Cappuccini (via)	Granze (Delle) (via)
Cardinale (via)	Granze Sud (Delle) (via)
Carmine (via)	Grazie (via)
Certosa (via)	Nazareth (via)
Cimitero (via)	Ognissanti (galleria)
Degli Agnusdei (via)	Ognissanti (vicolo)
Diacono (via)	Ognissanti (via)
Domenichino (via)	

Table 4: Religious non-Commemorative Street Names (Padua)

The table above (Table 4) shows the results obtained from this sub-analysis: the table shows the 21 names and the type of urban area (street, galleria, alley), which are named after religious institutions. Statistical data show that the 21 names linked to Catholicism correspond to 3.34% of the total, i.e., 627 non-commemorative street names

in Padua. This result suggests that the available space for religious names in the corpus of non-commemorative names is not as considerable as it was expected to be. If the religious sphere held real significance in the entirety of the symbolic sphere of the city, this would result in a bigger percentage of non-commemorative names named after religious institutions. Therefore, the bigger the corpus of name, the higher the presence of religious non-commemorative names. The number of non-commemorative names is quite large (627) compared with the number of female commemorative names (74), but nevertheless, the latter has a higher presence of religious names. This results indirectly demonstrate a situation of gender bias in the city-text of Padua and a tendency to employ specific types of names, in this case religious, e.g. ‘*Madonna*’, ‘*Beata*’, to try and fill the gender gap rather than opting for proper names of modern female figures renowned for their roles in other sphere, such as the academic or political sphere.

The purpose of the analysis of the corpus of non-commemorative names of the city of Padua was to search for patterns, for a considerable number of repetitions of the same type of name, e.g., a religious or geographical name. According to the criterion of repetition the second category of classification of the names of this corpus was geography and geographical elements. The results of the correlational analysis indicate a total of 319

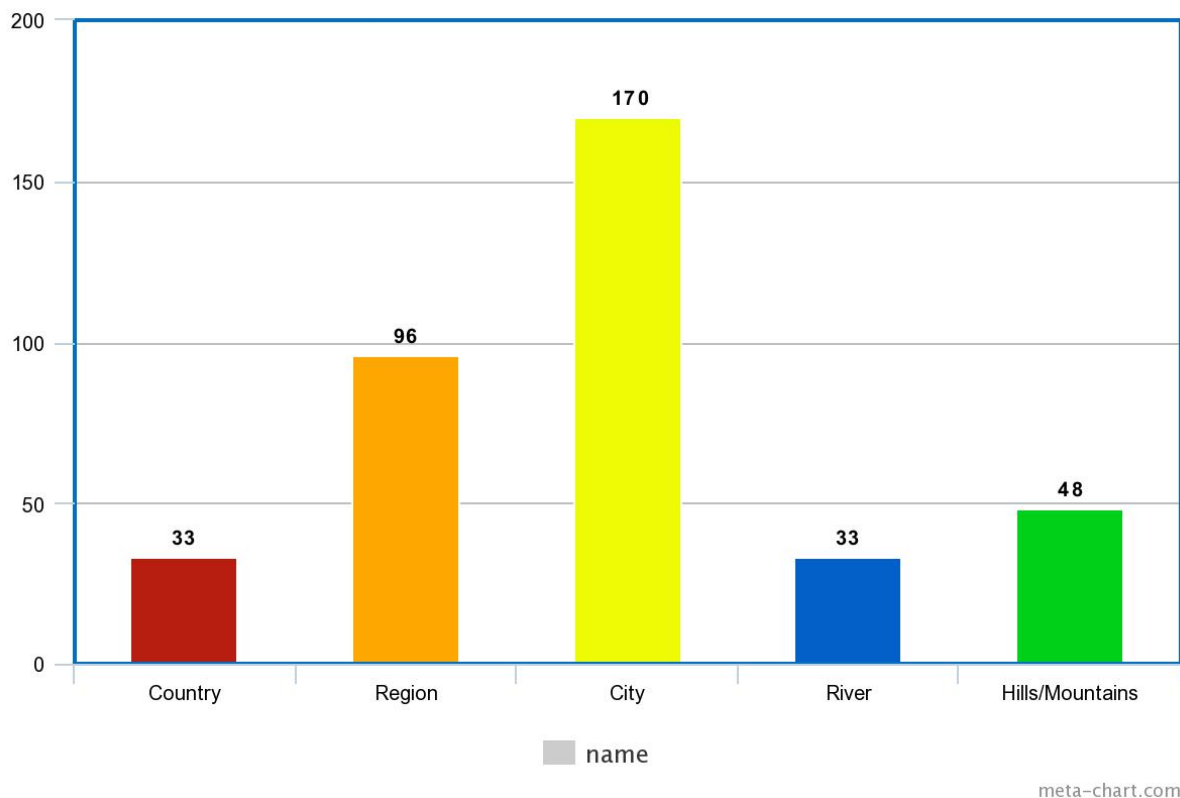


Figure 3: Geographical non-Commemorative Names (Padua)

names referring to geographical elements; therefore, geographical names are more than the half (51%) of the total. Furthermore, these geographical names can be analysed and further organised into five groups: 1) names of countries, 2) names of regions (political and geographical), 3) names of cities, 4) names of rivers, and 5) names referring to hills or mountains.

As can be seen from the figure above (Figure 4), the ‘City’ group reported significantly more names than the other three groups. There are 170 streets in Padua named after Italian and non-Italian cities. The second highest sub-group of names is the Region group, with 96 names, followed by Country and River group, both counting 33 names.

If we now turn to the fifth category of classification of non-commemorative names of the city-text of Padua, the results of the analysis show a total of 48 streets named after Italian and non-Italian hills and mountains. This group of 48 names correspond to 7.6% of the total of non-commemorative names of the city, which is still a higher value than the percentage of female names (74 names) in relation to the 1.515 commemorative names (4.8%). The results show that among the 48 streets named after hills or mountains, 17 streets are named after the Euganean Hills, which are the group of hills of the Paduan-Venetian plain. These names, represented in the Table below (Table 5), were included in the classification of non-commemorative names of the streets of Padua, because the Euganean Hills are a quite significant and distinctive geographical feature of the city. The purpose of this classification was to analyse this group of non-commemorative names, in order to identify existing patterns, and to fully understand the naming process of the city and show Padua’s real standing in the gender issue.

Colli (via)	Monte Grande (via)
Monte Alto (via)	Monte Lonzina (via)
Monte Cero (via)	Monte Lozzo (via)
Monte Ceva (via)	Monte Murale (via)
Monte Cinto (via)	Monte Rua (via)
Monte Della Madonna (via)	Monte Ventolone (via)
Monte Fasolo (via)	Monte Versa (via)
Monte Frassenelle (via)	Vendevolo (via)
Monte Gallo (via)	

Table 5: Non-Commemorative streets named after the Euganean Hills (Padua)

The analysis of the group of non-commemorative streets named after hills or mountains resulted in a list of names that include the noun ‘*Monte*’, except for one case where the noun is implicit, and only the actual name of the hill (Vendevolo) is mentioned. The majority (30) of these hills are not on the Paduan-Venetian plain but they are named after hills or mountains of other Italian regions and geographical regions outside Italy, e.g., Monte Asolone and Col Beretta are two hills of the Asiago plateau (in Vicenza, Veneto), and the Hermada, or Mount Ermada, a hill in the Italy-Slovenia border. Furthermore, these hills are named after important historical events, such as world conflicts and battles; the hills of the Asiago plateau was one of the scenes of the First World War, while the Eleventh Battle of the Isonzo took place in the Hermada during the First World War.

3.2 Results of York

The second section of this chapter aims to examine the quantity and the position of streets commemorating female leading figures in the city-text of York. In contrast to the analysis of Padua, where the corpus of female street names had been provided by *Toponomastica Femminile*, the study of York’s city-text demanded a long process of research and organisation of names and a full-scale analysis to identify female streets names. As mentioned in the previous chapter dedicated to the methodologies applied to carry out this analysis, the source for this corpus of names was the website *proviser.com*. Names were collected and arranged in alphabetical order into an Excel file, and female names were manually identified and collected, copied, and pasted into a separated Excel file.

The corpus of streets names of York includes a total of 3,397 names. A specific unit of analysis can be applied to examine this corpus of names, that is the classification of commemorative names according to the gender of the people these names commemorate. The difference between male and female groups of names was significant: the number of male commemorative streets names is of 379 names, while the number of female commemorative streets names is of 72 names. Therefore, the female share of commemorative streets names corresponds to 15,9% of the total commemorative names, in contrast to 84% of streets named after men. The results of this analysis are shown in the Table 6 below: this table provides all streets names commemorating women, organised in alphabetical order, of the city of York.

Adelaide Street	Kathryn Avenue	St. Anns Court
Alexa Court	Lady Anne Court, Skeldergate	St. Catherines Close
Alexandra Court, James Street	Lady Hamilton Gardens	St. Catherines Place
Alexandra Road	Lady Mill Garth	St. Helens Rise
Amberley Street	Lady Pecketts Yard	St. Helens Road
Amy Johnson Way	Lady Road	St. Helens Square
Anne Street	Lady Wortley Place	St. Helens View
Anthea Drive	Lesley Avenue	St. Hildas Mews
Ashley Park Crescent	Lindley Street	St. Hildas Terrace
Ashley Park Roa	Maida Grove	St. Marys Close, Strensall
Barbara Grove	Margaret Philipson Court	St. Marys Close, Wigginton
Caroline Close	Margaret Street	St. Marys Court
Catherine Court	Marygate Lane	St. Marys Grove
Cecilia Place	Marygate	St. Marys Lane
Charlotte Street	Princess Drive	St. Marys Mews, Greenshaw Drive
Courtneys	Princess Road	St. Marys Square
Duchess Mews	Queen Annes Road	St. Marys Terrace
Elma Grove	Queen Street	St. Marys
Emily Mews	Queen Victoria Street	Susan Court
Etty Avenue	Queens Staith Mews	Theresa Close
Eva Avenue	Rosemary Court	Victoria Court
Evelyn Crescent	Rosemary Place	Victoria Farm Close
Hillary Garth	Shelley Grove	Victoria Street
Julia Avenue	Shirley Avenue	Victoria Way

Table 6: Female Commemorative Street names (York)

It can be seen from the table above (Table 6) that there is a significant presence of names commemorating religious figures; in this table, there is just one type of religious figure: saints. However, it can be argued that this system of classification of this religious sub-group of names includes two categories: 1) Saints, and 2) Mary, mother of Jesus. Christianity employs a number of variants of names to refer to Mary: the Virgin Mary, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Mary, the Mother of God, and Our Lady. The use of these titles varies among the six groups that divide Christianity: Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Oriental Orthodoxy, Eastern Orthodoxy, the Church of the East, and Restorationism. For instance, the Roman Catholic Church makes great use of the name ‘*Madonna*’, from the Medieval Italian (‘*mia donna*’), as demonstrated in the previous section of this chapter, which translates into English as ‘Our Lady’. Therefore, looking at the names in the table above, the name ‘St. Mary’ has its own category and can be separated from the names commemorating saints, who are not the Virgin Mary. There are 18 streets commemorating saints, i.e., Christian religious figures, 9 of which are named after the Virgin Mary. Statistical data show that the sum of these names collected from the two categories of names linked to Catholicism correspond to 25% of the total (72 names).

As mentioned in the previous section, dedicated to the analysis of the city-text of Padua, it is fundamental to organise the names according to some criteria, in order to find existing biases or patterns. The entire analysis of York’s city-text was done manually and personally, without consulting prior analyses of this corpus of names. Therefore, in order to carry out similar analyses of the two city-texts, or corpora, the group of female street names was analysed and arranged according to a set of criteria. The system of classification adopted for the city-text of York arranged the corpus of female commemorative names according to 5 categories: 1) the Virgin Mary, 2) saints, 3) aristocratic women, 4) royals, and 5) general female forenames.

The figure below (Figure 5) illustrates the results obtained from the analysis of this group of 72 female street names, organised according to the mentioned criteria. As shown in Figure 5, the group of general female forenames reported significantly more names than the other two groups. This category includes 37 names, which correspond to more than half (51%) of the entire corpus of female names. This category is a

distinguishing characteristic of the British commemorative context. In the next chapter of the current dissertation, appropriate argumentation will be provided as well as a comparison of the British system of naming streets with the Italian one, using data illustrated in the current ‘Results’ chapter as evidence.

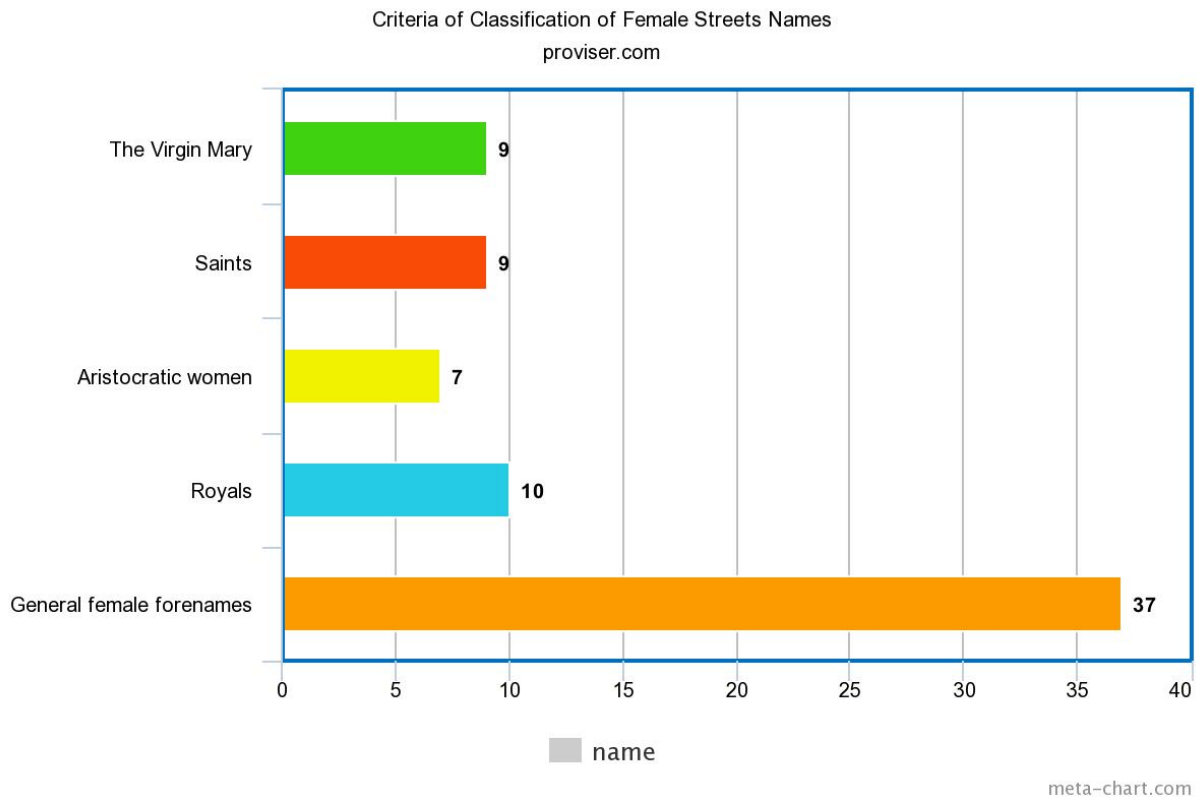


Figure 5: Criteria of Classification of Female Street Names (York)

The second largest group of names corresponds to the category of royals, with 10 names. The group of ‘royals’ includes names referring to past, and present, members of the British royal family. From the figure, it can be seen that the third and fourth category by number of names are: ‘the Virgin Mary’, and ‘saints’, with 9 names each. The group with less names is the group of ‘aristocratic women’, i.e., women addressed with hereditary titles ‘lady’ or ‘duchess’, with 7 names.

The data illustrated in the graph chart above (Figure 5) clearly show a great disparity between the category at the bottom and the categories at the top of the graph: the number of names (37) included in the category of ‘generic female forenames’ is higher than the sum of names of the other four categories (35). Furthermore, what stands out in the table is the possibility to divide the categories at the top of the graph according to two

groups: one group comprising ‘the Virgin Mary’ and ‘saints’ categories, the other group comprising ‘royals’ and ‘aristocratic women’ categories. On the one hand the Virgin Mary is considered the holiest and greatest saint in Christianity; therefore, it can be said that the ‘saints’ category is a hypernym of the ‘Virgin Mary’ category. On the other hand, the category of ‘royals’ includes the figure of the queen, which is the ruler of a country, i.e., a monarchy, and the chief of a form of government, the aristocracy, where power is in the hands of a small ruling class, the aristocrats, which are people who inherit land, money, and power. Aristocratic titles are hereditary and often coincide with nobility, which is a social class ranked immediately below royalty; therefore, the ‘royals’ category is a hypernym of the ‘aristocratic women’ category.

The table below (Table 7), illustrates the ‘royal’ and ‘aristocratic’ groups reported together in alphabetical order and provides an insight into this category of names. Furthermore, the name ‘Victoria’ was not included in the wide ‘female forenames’ category, but rather in this category, since this English name has a specific connotation and it refers mainly to the figure of Queen Victoria, known all around the world as one of the most important and the second longest reigning British monarchs, after Queen Elizabeth II.

Duchess Mews	Queen Annes Road
Lady Anne Court, Skeldergat	Queen Street
Lady Hamilton Gardens	Queen Victoria Street
Lady Mill Garth	Queens Staith Mews
Lady Pecketts Yard	Victoria Court
Lady Road	Victoria Farm Close
Lady Wortley Place	Victoria Street
Princess Drive	Victoria Way

Table 7: Female commemorative high-ranking Street names

Furthermore, as it was done for the city of Padua, the results of this analysis were illustrated on a map, created with free online service provided by Google, called Google My Maps, which allows users to create personalised maps. I used this service to create a

personalised map to visualise the locations of the streets by adding the addresses of the 72 streets, each one corresponding to a red dot in the map.

The map (Figure 6) shows a rather unsurprising outcome: the red dots spread over the municipality of York, partially going beyond the urban area of the city of York. As explained in the first chapter of the current dissertation, the city of York is a unitary authority, and therefore, its local administration, run by a single council, is independent from the national government for all local government functions. Villages, civil parishes, and suburbs within a unitary authority may be compared to European communes, or municipalities; however, in the United Kingdom these local entities do not have any type of real authority in local administrative decisions. The city of York with its Council expands and exerts its decisional power over all its communes (villages, civil parishes, and suburbs); on account of this, in this small scale map the red dots appear also in the villages and suburbs of York.

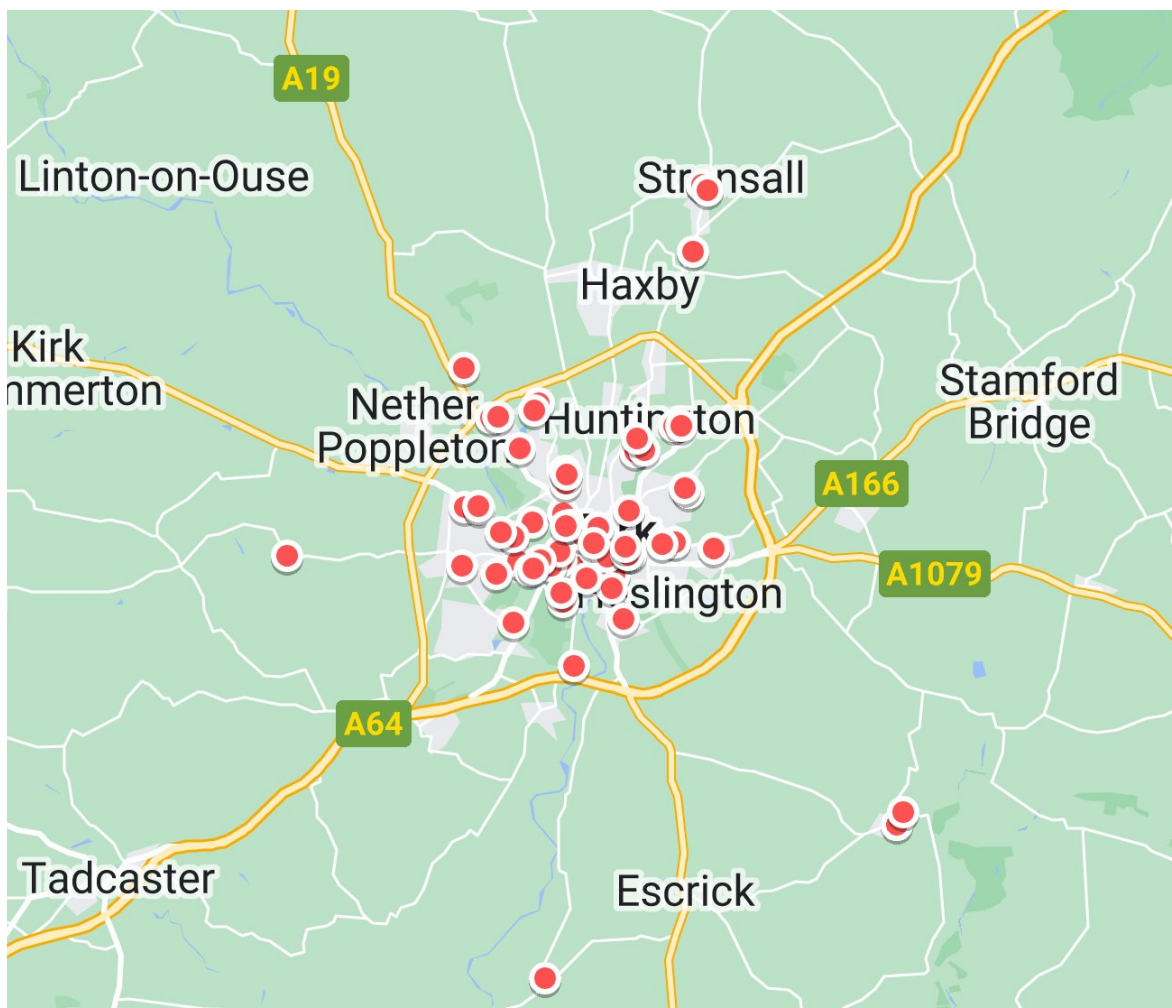


Figure 6: Representation on a map of Female Street names (York)

As previously stated, the second set of questions focuses on the group of non-commemorative street names of the corpus, which are not forenames. The analysis of this part of the corpus of names shows a large disparity between non-commemorative and commemorative street names: the first group includes almost 3,000 names, 2,936 names to be exact, the second group includes 451 names. As shown in the pie chart below (Figure 6), 86.7% are non-commemorative streets names, while only 13% are commemorative streets names, i.e., streets named with proper and common nouns.

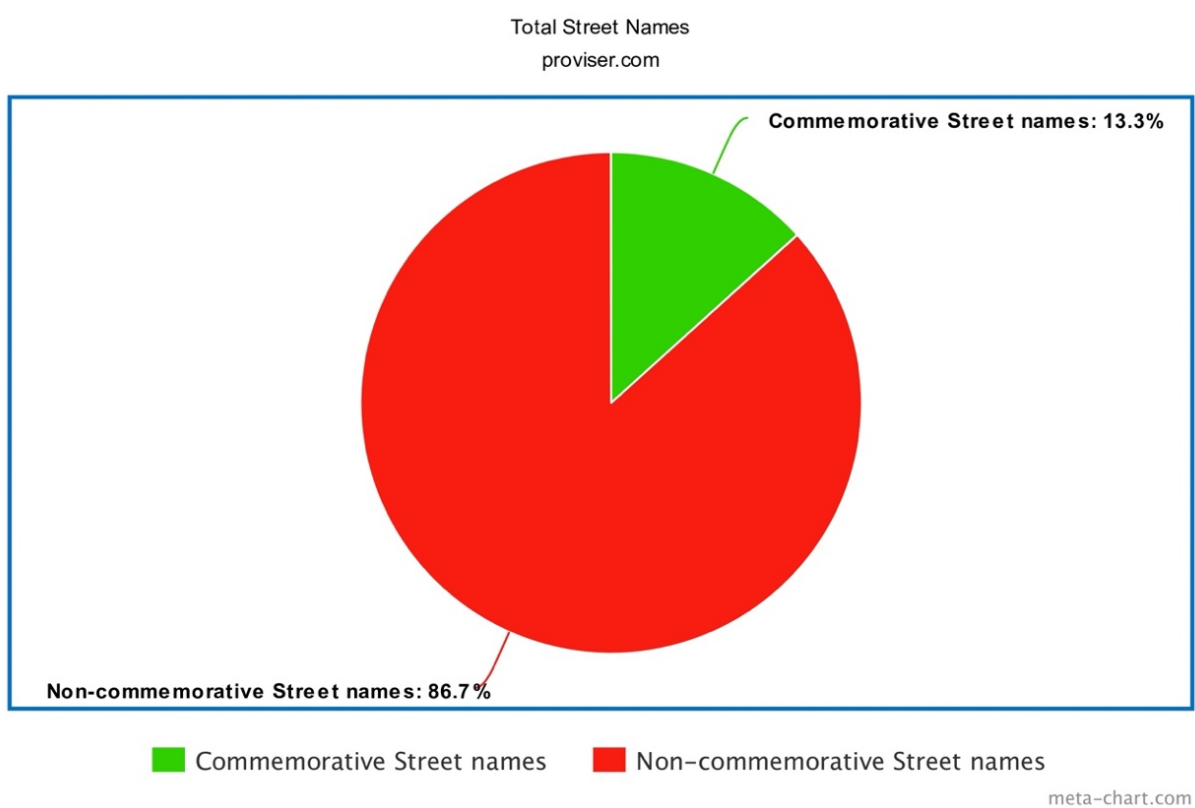


Figure 7: Commemorative and non-Commemorative Street Names (York)

The official source of these data was, as mentioned before, the free online website *proviser.com*, which provides all street names of the city, organised in alphabetical order. The process of collection and organisation of these names into an Excel table was done manually. Furthermore, the analysis of each one of these names resulted into a second Excel table filled with examples of non-commemorative street names. In order to analyse the data and use the analysis to answer to some original and theoretical enquiries about

gender imbalance in the city-text of York, as well as of Padua, these data must be arranged and classified according to some criteria or systems of classification. Concerning female commemorative names, they were organised according to the society-role played by the commemorated people. In this second, sub-level analysis, which focused on non-commemorative names, names were organised according to two categories: 1) religion, and 2) geographical names.

The analysis of this corpus of non-commemorative names according to the first criterion of classification, i.e., religious/Christian proper names, indicates that 76 out of 2.936 non-commemorative names refer to religious elements; the total number of religious non-commemorative names used to name streets in the city of York corresponds to 2.5% of the total. This group of names is very small (2.5%) compared to the number of religious names among female commemorative street names (25%). To further analyse and understand these data, a third-level analysis was carried out, classifying these names in groups, according to the number of times each name was repeated in the table. The repetitions resulted in 8 different groups, or types of name, indicating a specific element of Christianity, either a building or an official representative of the church. These eight

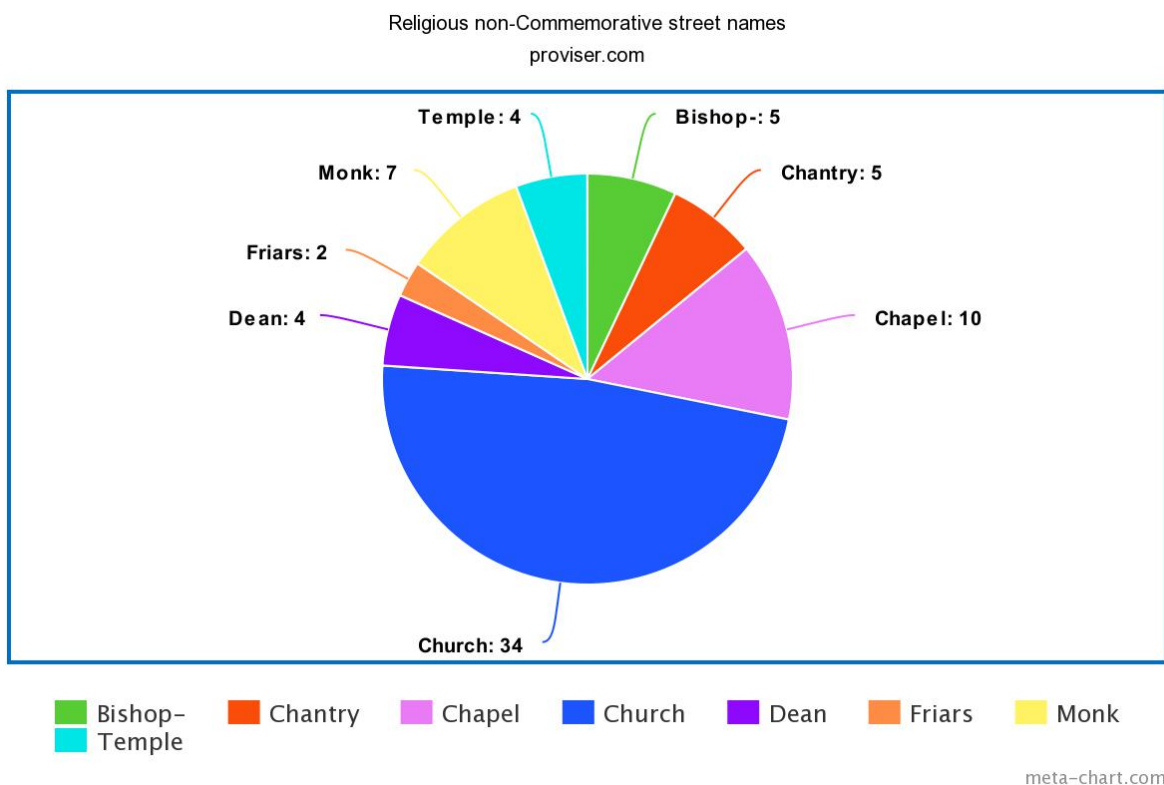


Figure 8: Religious non-Commemorative street names (York)

categories are: compound words (bishop + noun, e.g., bishopfields), chantry (synonymous of chapel), chapel, church, dean, friars, monk, and temple.

As shown in Figure 8 above, the ‘church’ group reported significantly more names than the other groups. The corpus of religious non-commemorative names of the city of York includes 34 streets named with the noun ‘church’, the highest number of the corpus (47.9%). All the other categories refer to elements of the Christian Church, except for one name, ‘monk’, which is a noun used to refer to members of different types of religious orders, who live in a monastery separated from society; these members are characteristic of Christianity, but also of Buddhism. These result match those observed in a previous study, the academic journal written and published by Oto-Perelías (2017) on the ‘city-text’ as socio-cultural data, who carried out a toponymic analysis of the city-text of Great Britain. Oto-Perelías (2017) carried out an analysis of a very large corpus of over 788,340 roads and categories it into a list of the 100 most common street names in Great Britain.

Rank	Name	Frequency
1	HIGH STREET	2,472
2	STATION ROAD	2,030
3	CHURCH LANE	1,868
4	CHURCH STREET	1,530
5	MILL LANE	1,318
6	CHURCH ROAD	1,224
7	MAIN STREET	1,188
8	GREEN LANE	982
9	SCHOOL LANE	930
10	NEW ROAD	923

Figure 9: The 100 most common street names in Great Britain (first 10 names)

Analysing the highest ranks of this list (Figure 9), the religious noun ‘church’, combined with a common noun, such as road, street, or a synonym, occupied the third, fourth, and sixth positions on the list. In Great Britain there are 1,868 streets named

‘Church Lane’, followed by ‘Church Street’ (1,530), and ‘Church Road’ (1,224). The highest number of streets named with religious nouns being the group of ‘church lane/street/road’ corroborate the results represented in the figure above (Figure 9), which indicate a larger number of ‘church streets’ than streets named after other religious elements in the city of York. What is surprising is the high rank of religious names in the complete final list of the most common street names in Great Britain. Despite this, the non-commemorative group of names of York includes more geographical names, i.e., names referring to geographical feature of the territory, than religious names.

The purpose of the analysis of the corpus of non-commemorative names of the city of York was, as was the analysis of the corpus of Padua, to search for patterns, for a considerable number of repetitions of the same type of name, e.g., a religious or geographical name. According to the criterion of repetition the second category of classification of the names of this corpus was geography, i.e., geographical elements. The results of this second-level analysis indicate a total of 148 streets named after geographical elements.

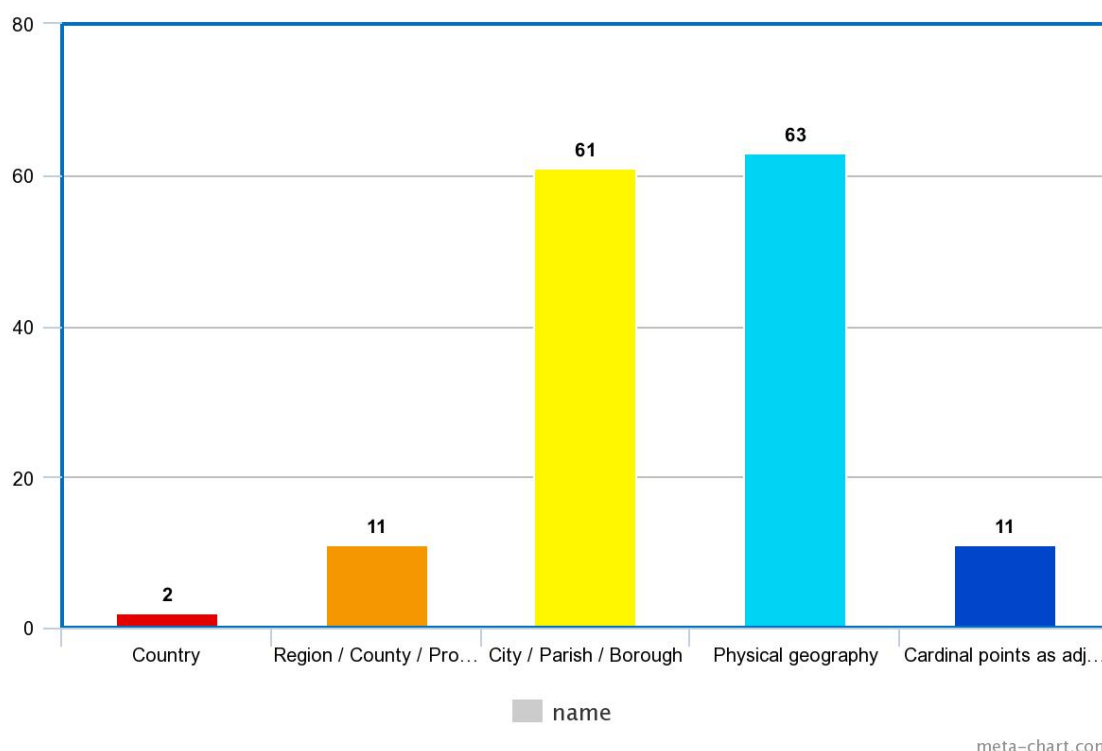


Figure 10: Geographical non-Commemorative names (York)

In order to carry out a further analysis of this group of names, the names were organised according to specific categories, coinciding with the most repeated type of name; these names were classified according to five different categories: 1) country, 2) region/county/province, 3) city/parish/borough, 4) physical geography, and 5) cardinal points used as adjectives (e.g., East Lane). As shown in the figure above (Figure 10), the 'Physical geography' group reported significantly more names (63) than the other four groups. Most non-commemorative streets of York are named using specific types of names that refer to naturalistic elements, such as 'Field', 'Forest', 'Glen', and derived compound names, such as 'Northfield', 'Southlands'. The second group with the highest number of names (61) is the 'City / Parish / Borough' one; this group includes all names referring to urban settlements (cities and parishes) and the area inside them (boroughs). Successively, there are the groups 'region/county/province' and 'general geographical names', both with 11 names, and the 'country' group with only 2 names. What is interesting about the data in these charts is that the number of non-commemorative names (2,986) is higher than the number of commemorative names (451), and considerably higher than group of female commemorative names (72); therefore, percentage values will be always biased in favour of non-commemorative names.

The final third level of analysis and classification of the corpus of street names of York aims to show and explain the different synonymous words for 'street' in English. In the corpus of street names of York, both commemorative and non-commemorative, it is not uncommon to find many streets indicated with synonymous and partially synonymous nouns with 'street', such as: road, way, avenue, drive, grove, lane, gardens, place, crescent, close, mews, vale, dene, rise, court, and yard. The word 'street' is a hypernym of the majority of the nouns mentioned in the list above, therefore all those nouns are hyponyms used to indicate specific types of streets. Furthermore, any type of street is a 'road': a general term used to indicate what connects two points of an itinerary. A street is 'a road in a town or a city that has houses or other buildings'⁵. There are many types of streets, or roads: residential roads, crescent shaped roads, roads that ends in a cul-de-sac, roads typical of the countryside. The terms 'grove', 'gardens', 'place', 'vale', 'dele', and 'rise' all indicate residential roads; A 'crescent' is a curved shaped road, while 'close' and 'court' are used to indicate small roads closed at one end (cul-de-sac). Furthermore,

⁵ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-italian/street>

a 'lane' is a residential road, but also a narrow road, especially in the countryside, while an 'avenue' is a main thoroughfare lined with trees. Historic cities, like the cathedral city of York, are usually characterized by 'mews', which are small roads surrounded by residential buildings once used to keep horses. The aim of this classification is to analyse the corpus of female commemorative names of York according to the number of streets per category, on the basis of the role played by these streets, i.e., as main thoroughfares or small narrow roads.

The figure below (Figure 11) presents the results obtained from the analysis of the different types of streets in the city-text of York, in order to identify extra evidence of gender bias based on the quantity of main roads and smaller and less significant roads named after female figures. From the graph above we can see that the 'court' group reported significantly more streets (10) than the other groups. The second and third group by number of streets are the 'street' (9) and 'avenue' groups (7). Despite the category 'other' having 9 streets, it is important to specify that it includes an ensemble of all those types of roads which occur only once in the city-text (e.g., 'Lady Hamilton Gardens', 'Lady Pesketts Yard') or those roads, whose names do not clarify the type (e.g., 'Marygate').

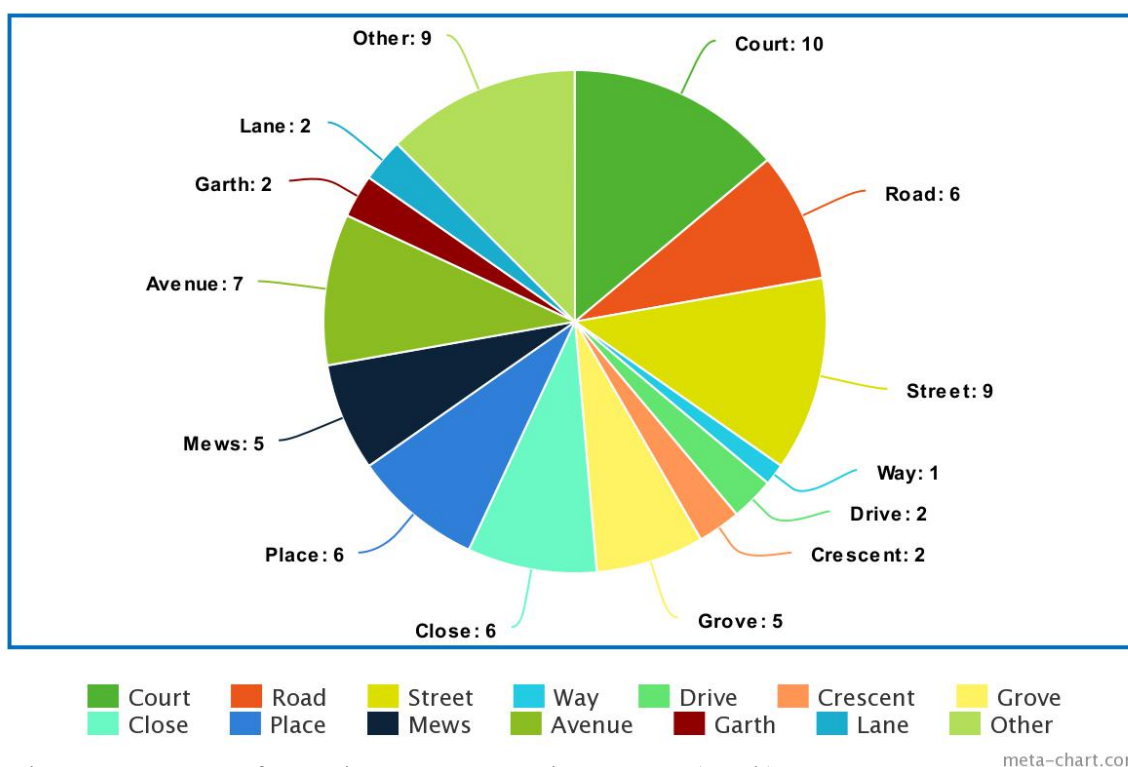


Figure 11: Types of Female Commemorative Streets (York)

meta-chart.com

The majority of the female commemorative streets of York are 'court', i.e., small roads closed at one end (cul-de-sac), but a considerable number of them are avenues (7), which are main roads surrounded by trees, mews (5), and, above all, residential roads, which can be called with different names but have the same meaning, counting a total of twelve residential roads. Furthermore, there are six 'roads' and nine 'streets', which, as hypernyms, have a more generic connotation but are especially used to indicate central, highly travelled routes of a city.

Chapter 4

Critical comparisons and discussions of the findings

This final fourth chapter aims to provide a detailed explanation of the results indicated in the third chapter, in order to conclude this toponymic analysis and fully answer the inquiries behind this case study: 1) Are the city-texts of Padua and York gender-biased?; 2) Are there any similarities between the two city-texts?; 3) Are there any differences between the two city-texts?; and 4) What do these similarities and differences suggest to us? This chapter aims to answer these inquiries using the data collected through the methodologies indicated in the second chapter and represented in tables and charts in the third chapter. The chapter is divided into two main sections: the first section is dedicated to the discussion of the similarities and differences between the two city-texts; the second section focuses on the critical discussion of the gender-bias issue of the city-text of Padua and a comparison with other European case-studies.

4.1 Similarities and differences between the city-texts of Padua and York

This case study seeks to investigate the characteristics of the symbolic urban sphere of the two cities: Padua and York. As mentioned in the previous chapters, despite belonging to two different cultural areas, these two cities have similar demographic, geographic, and cultural features. However, the particular cultural frameworks of these urban areas produce minor discrepancies, which can be effectively revealed only through an attentive (Critical) Toponymy analysis.

A Critical Toponymy analysis has been used throughout the entire process of collection and organization of data for this paper. In order to critically analyse toponyms, these data, or names, have to be linked to their cultural background, to the socio-cultural values they reflect. A system of analysis has been used to cast light on this connection, which can further highlight the implication of power of administrative authorities and specific cultural domains in the practice of street naming.

There are two main elements of analysis that can be applied and be used as criteria of comparison of two large corpora of data, both of which have more than 2000 names: the number of female commemorative names and their criteria of classification; the criteria of classification of non-commemorative names. The latter can also be grouped according to two main spheres: the religion sphere and the geographical sphere.

According to the first element of analysis, that is to say the numerical amount of female participation in the commemorative section of street nomenclature of the two cities, the city-text of Padua has 74 streets named after female figures, while the city-text of York has 72 streets named after female figures. The number of streets is slightly lower in the case of York, by two streets to be exact. Despite the close similarity between the numerical values of the two groups of female commemorative names, there is not such a notable difference. This difference is not represented by the two streets that differentiate the two city-texts and makes the corpora of streets of Padua appear slightly more gender inclusive, but it is reflected in the ratio of these two specific results to the number of total commemorative street names; the city of Padua has a total of 1,515 streets named after people (male and female), while the City of York has 451 streets, less than a third of the number of the streets of Padua. The discrepancy between these two values is even more evident if we take into consideration the quantity of streets of both corpora: the municipality of Padua has on the whole fewer streets than that of York: 2,189 streets for Padua and 3,397 streets for York; this might be because Padua is smaller, though more densely populated than the City of York. Nevertheless, a smaller specific value inside a larger generic group of elements has more significance when compared to a bigger specific value inside a smaller generic group of elements; therefore, 72 names, on a proportional point of view, is a larger value than 74, and Padua, counting more than three times the commemorative streets of York, should have more three times the number of streets commemorating female figures. Looking at the numbers, this is not the case; therefore, from this point of view, it could be said that York is slightly more gender inclusive than Padua.

However, Critical Toponymy analysis can be completely carried out not only by providing quantitative, numerical results, but also by examining qualitative characteristics, e.g., which women are commemorated, or information about the specific areas where these streets are located. These elements of analysis should not exclude the above-mentioned aspects of a simple quantitative analysis of data, but a complex list of inquiries about the qualitative characteristics of a corpus of data can provide more interesting and complete results.

In order to increase the range of inquiries of this current research, concerning the main first-level analysis, which focuses on the leading critical approach to gender studies

applied to toponymic investigations, female commemorative street names were categorised according to some specific criteria. As described in the previous chapters, the categories applied to analyse the data of Padua were provided by a group of Italian researchers, who created a comprehensive system to analyse and achieve specific results whenever they analysed a corpus of names of the streets of a city, regardless of the size of the urban area, or its profile in relation to a governmental authority, i.e., autonomous city or not.

In order to write a solid dissertation, I searched for reliable sources, not only as concerns the theoretical aspects of Critical Toponymy analysis, but also for the data, to which I intended to apply theoretical concepts and related Critical methodologies. The Italian association *Toponomastica Femminile* is indeed an authoritative voice of gender issues in the field of toponymy. It provides the public with important information about gender imbalance in Italian and non-Italian street nomenclature by carrying out attentive analyses of official street maps. Although citizens are allowed to consult these maps, it is not always easy and immediate to find them online or to ask administrative offices these maps for consultation, especially in the case of maps of small towns or offices of towns and cities that did not keep up with the new technologies and do not provide the public with documents simply available online.

In the case of Padua, the street map of the city, that is to say the streets of the municipality of Padua without including the large area of the surrounding province, is available online on the official website of the municipality of the city, i.e., *Comune di Padova*⁶. However, the street map or ‘*Stradario*’ of Padua is a very large and detailed corpus of names (2,189 names), collected in a pdf file that does not allow researchers to work on it easily, for instance, to extract a specific type of name, in this case female names. Furthermore, manually researching a large list of items needs a great deal of work and it could lead to small mistakes. Therefore, the work provided by *Toponomastica Femminile* and the categories used by the association of researchers are an excellent source material that simplified this overall quantitative/qualitative analysis.

In the case of the City of York, the street map of the city was also available online, but not as a public pdf file provided by the administrative authorities of York. The data were collected using online corpora of names of streets intended for other purposes; here,

⁶ <https://www.padovanet.it/informazione/mappa-della-città-vie-e-strade-di-padova>

the data were collected to help the real estate sector of York by providing more information about houses and buildings of the city, for instance the name of their streets and their civic numbers. Therefore, the major concern about the authority of this source and the risks of mistakes when manually researching these names was unavoidable. Concerning the first issue of validity of the source material, initially I tried to search for other source materials. I hoped to find a list of these names on the internet, but there were few websites and the official website of the City of York does not provide users, citizens, and outsiders alike, with a public file with the street maps of the city. On its website⁷ there is a section about street nomenclature, but it is merely informative and only provides information about which authorities select the names and how these streets are named, what to do to suggest a new street name or how to change the name of a street. Furthermore, they provide an email address, namingandnumbering@york.gov.uk, to contact in case of need. As a final resource, I wrote multiple times to this address, in order to obtain an official list of street names of York, but without success. The outcome of this search for a valid source for the data of York was a final corpus of data, as I mentioned above, provided by real estate services.

For the sake of consistency in the analysis of the two city-texts, whose purpose is to provide through the results not only insights into the gender situation of Padua and York but also to compare these two situations, initially I thought that using these same categories of organization of names created by *Toponomastica Femminile* also for the city-text of York could be advantageous, time-saving, and especially efficacious. This initial idea proved to be for the most part impractical, because of major differences between the two corpora of names commemorating female figures.

In the case of Padua, the corpus had already been analysed and organised by the researchers of the association, who created these thirteen categories that are comprehensive of every type of key figure with cultural and societal significance. However, the application of these same categories in the corpus of York did not produce a similar outcome. In the figure in the previous third chapter (Figure 5), which reports the categorization of the female commemorative street names of York, there are not thirteen categories, but only five.

⁷ <https://www.york.gov.uk/StreetNamingCharges>

I decided to change the criterion of organization of the street names of York, since what was needed was an efficient system that could provide an in-depth critical and qualitative analysis of the names; therefore, I came up with the conclusion that this discrepancy between categories of classification could be employed as a unit of comparison of two different situations, rather than as a sign of mistake of this part of the analysis, or as a suggestion to use the thirteen categories on the data of York showing the majority of the values void of names. On the one hand this could have demonstrated the same discrepancies between the cities, but on the other it would not have provided a sufficient analysis of the names left out. Therefore, I carried out a parallel analysis of these names according to similar but different criteria, represented in a specific table (Figure 5). Despite these criteria being different from that of *Toponomastica Femminile*, the first two values, the Virgin Mary and Saints, try to follow a similar logical pattern. On the other hand, the fourth category of ‘Royals’ is completely missing among the thirteen categories of Padua/Italy, while in the corpus of York it counts a large number of names (10), pointing to the importance of the monarchy in the UK, a constitutional monarchy, against the apparent lack of aristocratic symbolism in the city-text of Padua. The term ‘apparent’ is very much appropriate, since a close look into the category ‘Historical/Political figure’ of Padua (Table 3) shows that, albeit a very small number, there is one example of commemoration of an aristocratic woman: Mafalda di Savoia, the Princess of Savoy of the Italian noble house of Savoy, deposed in 1946. Albeit being a princess and one of the representatives of the Italian nobility, Mafalda di Savoia lived during the period of the Second World War, the consequent decay of the Italian monarchy and the establishment of the Republic; her standing during the war and representation more of an ideological and political party rather than simple noble rank make her not a simple royal member but a historical and political woman.

This example demonstrates that despite the main purpose of symmetrical comparison, specially made categories of classification produce more effective results. From the outcomes of this part of the analysis, it can be stated that different countries and their related corpora of street names can be effectively analysed by employing different kinds of instruments of analysis. The very same association *Toponomastica Femminile* could not use this system of categorization for all the corpora it analysed. The association carried out identical analyses on the street names of Italian cities, and it also analysed the

names of cities outside Italy. Multiple censuses were represented on their websites; the association analysed the streets of France, Jordan, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, also USA and Japan, including them in a specific separated group of ‘non-European toponymy’. The researchers were able to employ the same categories for the cases of Norway (Oslo), and Portugal (Lisbon). The analysis of the remaining countries produced more general censuses, with partial and incomplete lists of female names without a specific categorization. There is no data about the UK, or its cities (e.g., London); an interesting insight might be the analysis of the USA, the only English-speaking country of the list. However, this analysis was not carried out by the association, and it was only explained that the administrative authorities of USA and Japan do not use first names, family names, or generic proper nouns to name streets, but numbers. Researchers of *Toponomastica Femminile* have not dealt with the city-texts of New York, and Japan, restricting their analysis on other case studies, because their method of categorization and the purpose of their study clearly could not be used on streets named with numbers.

The case study of York, an English-speaking city does not coincide with the case of New York, in another English-speaking country; its streets are not named with numbers, but with nouns, a great quantity of which is commemorative in nature. However, as mentioned above, the system of categorization of names used by *Toponomastica Femminile* cannot be entirely applied to the city-text commemorative in nature. This is demonstrated by the specially-made category of classification of the streets of York: 37 of these names have been organised into a general category called ‘General female forenames’. I created this category for all streets named with a (female) first name. On the one hand, a street named after a first name is a clear sign of its commemorative nature, on the other hand, this can be completely considered as such only when followed by a surname, in such a manner to contextualise the name and link it to a person. The function of commemoration in a city-text is for citizens to commit specific symbolic relations to their memory, so that important people can become symbols of specific ideologies or of a social order of the present society.

The city-text of York is characterised by 37 female commemorative forenames without appropriate family names, from Adelaide (street) to Julia (avenue), to Theresa (close). These streets are commemorative, because they are named using forenames and

not general nouns, which can refer to everything, from general geographical elements to historical monuments in close proximity and are non-commemorative in nature. These female names are rather controversial, and there is no specific information about real existing people to whom they might refer.

The absence of surnames is the major difference between the corpus of female commemorative street names of Padua and York, and male commemorative names as well. It can be said that a peculiarity of the city-text of York is the absence of complete names, i.e., a name followed by a surname, in street nomenclature. This feature is not distinctive of York alone, but of all cities of Great Britain, as demonstrated in the previous chapter (Figure 9). Figure 9 only shows the first 10 names of the list of the 100 most common street names in Great Britain; however, after having consulted the list, I found out that the first commemorative name of the list is a single forename 'John' (street), ranked 44, and only after 'Victoria Road' (24) and 'George Street' (26), which are names referring to royals, Queen Victoria and one of the six British kings named George, and can be included in the category 'Royals', so they are not relevant to this specific inquiry.

Concerning the issue of general forenames, which also affects the corpus of male commemorative names of York, an attentive analysis shows that 6 names can be excluded from this general category and virtually included one of the categories created by *Toponomastica Femminile*. Blake Court, Blake Street, Chaucer Lane, Dante Way, Dickens Close, and Skelton Court are 6 streets named with single surnames that refer to well-known British and non-British writers. In this case, these surnames do not need a formal first name, because they refer to people, i.e., writers, well-known not only by York (British) citizens, but also abroad. From this analysis we can observe that the system of street naming used by York's administration follows the British trend to not use complete names when naming streets, demonstrated by the list of the top 100 names used to name street in Britain; however, some exceptions are made for the corpus of male commemorative names only. Therefore, Britain is not totally extraneous to the practice of having streets which are commemorative in nature, that is to say effective symbolic representations of people in the urban sphere; however, the data suggest that when British administrations participate in this practice, they do it so only for men. A name is not only a name, especially when it has a symbolic function, and a street named with a complete

name, a name followed by a surname, has more referential power than a street with a general name.

This combination of findings provides some support for the conceptual premise that a qualitative analysis of data demonstrates that the city-text of York is possibly as biased as that of Padua. Even though York has from a proportional point of view more female commemorative names than Padua, if we take into consideration the total number of female commemorative streets in the urban area, these names have less referential power and less influence over citizens' subconscious. Among 72 names, excluding the names belonging to specific categories, none of the 37 general female names might take hold of the attention of the public.

A general female, as well as male, forename is in no way a representation equal to the representation of people with their full name and surname. Furthermore, the "ambiguity of these street names makes them deeply gendered" and "because of the absence of their memory and heritage within traditional place-based names, they do not have the power to impose themselves in the collective memory, to convey an emotion. Their names on street signs are not much more than female proper nouns" (Felecan, O., & Felecan, N. 2021:275).

As mentioned above, this problem does not concern the female commemorative names of York, which are included in the other four categories of the chart (Figure 5). All these categories are characterised by names combined with titles, either noble or religious; it can be stated that because of these titles, streets make immediate reference to a specific context, noble or religious, and create specific symbolic associations in the public. An exception might be the case of 'Victoria Street', where there is no title, but only a forename. However, the cultural British context might help the public understanding the reference to not a generic Victoria, but to the most known queen of England of the late modern period.

A comparison between the female commemorative names of Padua and York can be made not only through the analysis of the characteristics of these names, i.e., by gathering them according to the reasons why people deserved to be commemorated, either be it their job or social role, but also through the analysis of the distribution of these names on maps. As explained in the methodology chapter and shown in the results chapter, I used the online service offered by Google, Google My Maps, to create ad hoc interactive

maps to consult, in order to directly see the exact locations of the streets named after women in Padua and in York. In the previous chapter, I included two screenshots of these two maps, available online on the website mentioned in the footnote⁸.

In order to carry out an exhaustive and efficient study of the map of Padua, I created two levels of indicators of names on the map. The main level includes all female commemorative names of the city, indicated on the map with red dots. The second level includes only the female commemorative names of the city, which are related to the religious sphere, included in the top three categories of classification of the names of the city: the Madonna, saints, beatified people and martyrs, nuns, religious benefactors, founders of religion orders and/or philanthropic organisations; these streets are indicated on the map with blue dots.

The main level of analysis shows the location of female commemorative streets of the urban area taken into consideration by this dissertation, the municipality of Padua. The red dots, which correspond to the streets, are quite evenly distributed. From the online map, it can be observed that the farther from the historical centre of the city, the less frequent the dots are. Furthermore, the western end of the area of the municipality includes a very small number of female commemorative streets; there are only two instances: Via Maria Gaetana Agnesi and Via Gualberta Alaide Beccari. The former was a mathematician and the first woman Chair of Mathematics at the University of Bologna, the latter was a writer, journalist, and activist between the 19th and 20th centuries.

The second level of analysis was included only later, when it became necessary to distinguish these red dots from each other and identify them in the urban context. For the case of Padua, I chose religion as filter of these names and the red dots, since this category has more names (30) than any other category. This criterion should efficiently locate which areas of the city include more of those names that refer to religious people. Catholicism is the pivot of Italian cultural heritage, Paduan as well, and street names might be a proof of it. Officially there are six districts of this city: Centre, North, East, South-East, South-West, and West, but each of them is divided into different smaller areas with their own names. Looking at the blue dots on the map, it can be stated that the majority of these streets are in the Centre district. Furthermore, analysing both levels on

⁸ <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1yMthUojoJXQTzmE9Z-PMMnX2-rzwjtc&ll=48.922902330347924%2C5.372377550000004&z=5>

the map, it can be observed that the further from the Centre district, the higher the number of female commemorative names is. Despite the high number of blue dots in the city Centre, it can be observed that there is no systematic order of their location: these streets are scattered across the entire urban area. There is no explicit concurrence of one of these streets with a nearby church or, vice versa, the absence of these names in a laical area.

On the one hand, there is no evidence of a higher number of these 30 streets near the Basilica of Saint Anthony of Padua or the Abbey of Santa Giustina, the two most important religious buildings of the city; only two instances can be reported: Via Santa Chiara and Via Santa Maria in Vanzo, which are the closest streets to these two religious buildings. On the other hand, Via E. Vendramini, a street named after a beatified Italian nun, founder of a religious institute for female orphans, is located near the Beato Pellegrino Complex, which was a former geriatric hospital, recently renovated and changed into the new headquarters of the Department of Linguistic and Literary Studies of the University of Padua and the Arts and Humanities library. Despite the new academic purpose of the building complex, both its name, Beato Pellegrino, and the names of the nearby streets continue to have original religious connotations. This second example demonstrates that urban areas actually change throughout the years, while urban toponymy mostly fails to follow this change.

The same methodology and process of analysis was employed in the analysis of the case study of York and its city-text. I created two levels of indicators of names on the map, as I did for Padua. The first main level includes the 72 commemorative female names of the streets of York, indicated on the map with red dots. The second level includes only the female commemorative street names of the city that are related to the religious sphere and included in the top two categories of classification of the names of the city: the Virgin Mary, and saints; these streets are indicated on the map with blue dots.

The main level of analysis shows the location of female commemorative streets of the urban area taken into consideration by this dissertation, i.e., the area governed by the City of York Council, which is considerably bigger than the area of Padua; this is the first and major difference with the case study of Padua. As a unitary authority, the City of York Council is responsible for most of the services of York's towns and parishes; whereas the town management of Padua does not rule over the towns outside the municipality and located in the province. Therefore, from the map, it can be observed that

the range of the female commemorative streets of the city is spread over a wider area. Furthermore, it can be noticed that the names are mostly scattered across the city centre, but a large number of them is also present in the surrounding area. The red dots of the surrounding area are mostly located in the northwest zone, that is to say, where most of the facilities, buildings, and streets, are to be found.

The second level of analysis shows 18 blue dots on the map, corresponding, as stated above, to the location of streets of York named after female religious figures. The location of these streets follows the pattern of the red dots, being these 18 names included in the general female group of 72 names; however, a close analysis of these names and the surrounding areas could be useful to provide with an additional point of view of the religious sphere and the extent of its influence on York's city planning and increase the comparative analysis of the city of York with Padua. Indeed, York has a considerable number of religious buildings, for the most part from the Medieval period. According to the 2011 Census data on religious beliefs⁹, more than the half of the population of the city is Christian; therefore, Christianity has a position of hegemony over the city and its cultural sphere and related symbolic representation. While Catholicism and the Roman Church prevail in Italy, Anglicanism and the Church of England prevail in the UK; however, before the schism, the country was under the influence of the Pope and the Roman diocese. This is demonstrated by the high number of Roman Catholic religious buildings, such as the Saint Mary Abbey. As of today, this Benedictine abbey is abandoned, as consequence of the religious reforms, known as the dissolution of the monasteries, ordered by Henry VIII. Two of the 18 streets that refer to religious female figures can be found in the nearby area: St. Marys Street, and St. Mary's Lane.

Concerning Anglicanism and Anglican buildings in York's territory, in the City of York we find the Cathedral and Metropolitan Church of Saint Peter in York, commonly known as York Minister, which is the mother church of the Diocese of York and the Northern Province of the Church of England. This cathedral was the first instance of Christian evangelism on British territory and initiated the long Christian tradition of the country, hosting Catholic ceremonies and, after the events of the Reformation, Anglican ones. In the nearby area, there are no evidence of streets named after female

⁹ <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/4be306f3-d566-4b9d-a74a-2bef7d04b393/religion>

religious people. York Minster is surrounded by Minster Yard on one side, and by High/Low Petergate on the other.

Furthermore, inside the area of the municipal authority of York, there is evidence of the proximity of streets named after religious women to nearby churches: St Helen's Rise, near St Helen Church, in the village and civil parish of Wheldrake, York, and St Mary Close, near the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, in the village and civil parish of Strensall. The first street is named after Saint Helen, a Roman empress mother of the Emperor Constantine I, also known as Constantine the Great. Constantine I was proclaimed Emperor at York in 306 AD, and he was the first Emperor to convert to Christianity, issuing the Edict of Milan that order to treat Christians within the Empire fairly. Therefore, it can be stated that in the City of York, the concurrence of one of these streets in the proximity of a religious buildings is higher than in Padua, where religious streets are scattered across the entire city, without following a specific pattern.

This part of the analysis, employing a more empirical methodology of streets examination through urban maps, presents some immediately dependable conclusions for a comparison between two cities, which are in a way more similar than not, but, nevertheless, present important differences that have to be discussed. These two cities have shown strong similarities regarding the main research inquiry of this current dissertation: the gender issue in elements of urban toponymy, or street names. A closer look into this first level of analysis, however, suggested a more complex situation that determines a second relationship, beyond toponymy and gender, between toponymy and culture. Culture is made up of different types of characteristics of a population and of a society, such as attitudes and ideological beliefs, which may be moral or religious. A Critical Toponymy analysis of the names of streets and the related gender issues can lead to analyse multi-layered cultural contexts of the cities object of the analysis itself.

In this case, the analysis of Padua and York pointed to a close similarity between the two cities regarding toponymy and gender imbalance: the amount of female commemorative street names of each city does not reach even a quarter of the total of names (>20%); furthermore, it also indicated several dissimilarities regarding the inter-relationship between toponymy and culture or beliefs. First of all, these dissimilarities are demonstrated by a disparity in religious stance of the two cities. Italy has a larger number of streets named after religious women (30) than York (18). Padua has almost double the

number of streets that refer to female Catholic religious people, who can be classified according to three different categories, while York has half the number of streets, which refer to a less heterogeneous group of women, i.e., only female Catholic saints. Despite this numerical discrepancy, which can be justified by proportional values in relation to the quantity of commemorative female names, the dissimilarity is based upon another perspective, which does not fail to look into the cultural contexts.

As mentioned above, Catholicism prevails in Italy; data show that the majority of Italians are Catholic, despite an increasing percentage of non-practising Catholics as direct effect of an ongoing process, known as secularisation. The Italian Republic, as stated by the Constitution and its fundamental principles, is democratic and independent from the Catholic Church, residing in the Vatican City State; however, Italy is universally and culturally regarded as a Catholic country with mostly Catholic citizens. In the toponymy of Padua this is demonstrated by a large number of churches and streets named after women (and men), who were recognised and commemorated for their involvement in Catholic matters. On the other hand, England has a similar Christian background, but throughout the centuries it distanced from the Catholic creed and the Pope in Rome, until with the Reformation it established its own church, The Church of England. The streets of York named after female religious people call back to a Catholic cultural background, by now lost and not in compliance with Anglicanism, which does not approve the characteristic Catholic veneration of saints, and above all the Virgin Mary. Nevertheless, in York 18 out of 18 streets named after female saints, St Mary as well, who are religious figures not in agreement with the present specific cultural religious beliefs of the Church of England.

As pointed out in the introduction to this paper, an in-depth analysis of a city-text requires a dual and parallel analysis of both types of hodonyms, i.e., streets names, that constitute the city-text itself, which can be commemorative and non-commemorative in nature. The commemorative hodonyms of the two city-texts were analysed in the results chapter and their similarities and differences were discussed in the first part of this first section; the second part of this section aims to conclude the analysis of the group of non-commemorative hodonyms, collected and arranged in the results chapter of this dissertation, by comparing their similarities and differences.

Starting the analysis from a quantitative point of view of these names, the number of non-commemorative names of the City of York is significantly larger than the number of non-commemorative names of Padua; almost 3000 names against 627 names. This can be considered one major difference between the two city-texts, the object of this current analysis. This second-level analysis on non-commemorative names helps understand the dynamics in the practice of street naming in both cities; therefore, the large number of non-commemorative names in York, as compared to the number of commemorative names, suggests that toponymic commemoration of people, symbolising specific leading, or subordinate, ideologies is not as common in York as it is in Padua. However, the existence of non-commemorative street names in Padua indicates a degree of acknowledgement by Italian administrative authorities of other symbolic elements to include in the toponymic urban fabric. Among the choices of non-commemorative names, it can be stated that the toponymy of Padua and York is organised according to two main categories of names: religion and geography.

Again, religion takes up a considerable part of the urban toponymy of these cities; data are proof of the Christian substratum of the cultural-symbolic sphere of these two European cities, and do add underlying meaning and indicate a situation of asymmetry between Catholic urban toponymy and Anglicanism hegemony, as demonstrated by religious female commemorative names. Furthermore, the number of religious non-commemorative names is larger in York than in Padua and it presents different features as well. The analysis of commemorative female religious names of both cities uncovered a mono-religious pattern of classification of these names; in other words, despite the different form consequence of the Reformation, the emerging generic Christian toponymic substratum reflects the domain of Christian values of both the Italian and English societies. This characteristic also denotes the pattern of classification of non-commemorative religious names; however, on one hand the group of religious non-commemorative names of York is more diversified than the one of Padua. The former group includes several types of names referring to: religious buildings, such as churches, temples, etc., and religious people, such as deans, friars, etc. Out of 76 streets named with religious non-commemorative names, 54 are named with the noun 'Church', or one of its synonyms, such as Chantry, Chapel, or Temple. Looking at the ranking of the 100 most

common street names in Great Britain, in Figure 9, included the previous third chapter, the third most common name is 'Church Lane', followed by 'Church Road' in sixth place.

A large number of these streets are named, as mentioned above, after religious figures; however, these streets cannot be considered commemorative in nature, since they are named employing general names referring to some of the most common and known roles among the clergy, e.g., Bishop, Dean, Friar, or Monk, without any specific forename that could indicate a more specific denotation. These names do not commemorate important or well-known religious figures; however, they directly contribute to the religious Christian substratum of the toponymy of the City of York.

The latter group includes the streets of Padua named mostly after religious places. In the case of Padua there is minor variety among the typologies of religious non-commemorative names, since the majority of these 20 streets are named after places; however, there are some instances of names referring to groups of people, i.e., religious orders (Via Cappuccini), saints (Via Ognissanti, meaning 'all saints' in Italian), and religious people (Via Cardinale, Via Diacono, Via Filippesi). These names contribute to the Christian and Catholic substratum of the toponymy of Padua.

The main difference between these two groups of names, besides the group of York being more heterogeneous than the one of Padua, is demonstrated by the marked Catholic connotation of Padua's names when compared to York's. The names of York refer to general Christian buildings used also by all Christian churches (Anglican too), and to religious roles played also by the Anglican clergy, with the exception of 'Quaker Green', which refers to a specific Protestant Christian confession; on the contrary, the streets of Padua are named after specific Catholic features, typical of the Catholic Church, e.g., the Catholic formula 'Agnusdei (Via)', or 'Ognissanti (Via)'. The analysis of these religious non-commemorative names affirms what was already discussed in the analysis of religious commemorative names of the two cities; in other words, Catholic hegemony of the Italian, and Paduan, culture is represented in the toponymy of the city, both commemorative and non-commemorative; instead, the Anglican hegemony of British culture, and also of York culture, is not represented in the toponymy of the city, either commemorative or non-commemorative.

The second category of organisation of non-commemorative street names includes streets named with geographical names. This category of names includes five subgroups

referring to two types of geographical features: urban, i.e., elements of the urban landscape with a given name, such as countries, regions, and cities; and natural/physical, i.e., elements of the natural landscape with a given name, such as rivers, mountains, and valleys. The main similarity between the case study of Padua and that of York is that both city-texts can be analysed according to this criterion of classification; however, the city-text of York employs a different category, which substitutes the 'rivers' category, to gather streets named with cardinal points nouns used as adjectives; e.g., 'East Lane', 'Eastway' etc

The main difference between the two city-texts is the total number of non-commemorative geographical names of the two cities. Despite the fact that the city of York has a higher number of non-commemorative streets, the share of geographical names is less than half the number of geographical non-commemorative names of Padua. The categories with the highest number of streets are: 'city' for Padua, with 170 streets, and 'physical geography' for York, with 63 streets. The categories with the lowest number of streets are: 'country' and 'rivers' for Padua, both with 33 streets, and 'country' for York, with 2 streets. An in-depth analysis of the category 'physical geography' of York shows that the geographical non-commemorative share of the city-text of York is more homogeneous than the one of Padua. The majority of streets of the former group is named after fields and various types of synonyms, such as valleys, and dales; whereas the group of Padua is more heterogenous, including two different types of landscape features: rivers and mountains. The 'mountains' category can be analysed as a cultural indicator of the city of Padua, since a considerable number (18) of these names refer to the Euganean Hills, one among the characteristic features of the city and its province.

Therefore, the city of Padua has a high number of streets named after cities included in the category 'city', while the city of York has a high number of streets included in the 'physical geography' category. Indicators of local features represented by urban toponymy might be streets named after the Euganean Hills for Padua, and streets named with the cardinal points for York. Streets named after cardinal points are quite common in Great Britain, with 'North Street' placed 29 in the ranking of the 100 most common street names in Great Britain. In the city-text of York there are 11 streets with this type of non-commemorative names, included in the third category by number of

names, tying with the ‘region/county/province’ category and surpassing the ‘country’ category.

Another difference between the two city-texts is represented by the final classification of the streets of York. The English language uses many nouns to say ‘street’; there are a good number of full-synonyms or partial-synonyms that add further meaning. These types of nouns and the number of times they appear in the city-text of York can be observed in Figure 11. This categorisation is typical of streets of Great Britain, while Italian and Paduan streets are named with the unique noun ‘via’, a less colloquial noun used to indicate urban streets. However, there are sporadic instances where the noun ‘vicolo’ is used in place of ‘via’, to indicate smaller and more narrow streets.

Concerning the relevance and size of the road, on one hand, it can be stated that there are only three female commemorative ‘vicoli’, plural of ‘vicolo’, translated from Italian as narrow road, in the city of Padua; on the other hand, the majority of female commemorative streets of York are not streets but ‘Courts’, which are small roads closed at one end (cul-de-sac). This analysis provides with interesting additional results concerning gender bias and gender issue in toponymy and street naming practices by showing a gender bias in the case of the City of York, whose share of female representation in the symbolic urban sphere is relegated to the smaller and less congested and known roads of the city. Furthermore, it can be stated that the same issue does not concern the case study of Padua on the same level; as stated above, the number of instances of female commemorative ‘vicoli’ is quite limited, i.e., three out of 74 streets only: Vicolo Santa Maria Assunta, Vicolo Santa Maria in Conio, and Vicolo Usuelli-Ruzza Enrichetta. The first two names refer to the Virgin Mary, while the third woman was a renowned writer and poetess; the Paduan professional institutite ISS E. Usuelli Ruzza is named in her memory. On one hand the first two instances, which refer to the Virgin Mary, have streets, or ‘vie’, named with the same name, i.e., Via Santa Maria Assunta and Via Santa Maria in Conio; the map shows that these narrow roads set off from the main ‘via’, or are close to it. On the other hand, Vicolo Usuelli-Ruzza Enrichetta does not have homonymous ‘vie’ (streets); it is a narrow road setting off from a main road with a different name (Piazzale Pontecorvo) and, despite being in the same neighbourhood, it is quite distant from the professional institute named after the poetess,

which is the only other instance of general commemoration of Usuelli-Ruzza Enrichetta in the city of Padua.

4.2 Gender-biased city-texts: a look at Padua stance in the European context

First of all, the analysis of the city-text of the city of Padua has contextualised the position of the city and its toponymy in the general European context; furthermore, the analysis of this city-text compared with the one of the City of York has allowed us to take a clearer look at the issue of gender biased city-texts, which affects toponymies differently. Padua's streets are as gender biased as the streets of the City of York, where the majority of commemorative streets of York refer to men, despite the fact that the number of commemorative streets in relation to the overall number of streets of the city is less large than the group of non-commemorative streets. On the other hand, Paduan streets are for the large part commemorative in nature, as numerical data suggest, so, it can be said that gender biased city-text is relatively a more pressing issue.

According to Oto-Peralías (2018:7), social and cultural values are reflected in the commemorative priorities set by the administrative authorities with power to decide the names of streets. The practice of street naming and street re-naming goes hand in hand with the historical and political changes of society. Therefore, it is true to say that values of the past become stratified on the city-texts and may blend with more recent values, which reflect new and different cultural ideologies.

The results of the analysis of the city-text of Padua, represented in the third chapter and further discussed in this fourth one, are a representation not only of the position of Padua in regard to the gender issue, but also of the capacity of Padua's city-text to follow these cultural and ideological changes. From the data, it can be understood that the city of Padua follows the current and characteristic fashion of most European cities to have a gender biased city-text. Among the previous studies on gender imbalance in the names of streets of European cities, analysed and discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, despite partially different applied methodologies to obtain the desired results, for instance, the use of official governmental data sets and efficient software to automatically elaborate data, it can be seen similar patterns of gender imbalance in the analysed city-texts; for instance, similar cases of gender biased categorisation of male and female commemorated figures, which relegates commemorated women to specific roles, mostly

linked to religion. The European case-studies discussed in the introductory chapter analyse the city-texts of: Spain, Santiago de Compostela, Paris, in the western region of Europe, and Bucharest (Romania) and Poland, in the eastern region of Europe.

The analysis of the Spanish female share of streets indicate a strong gender imbalance, with 12.1% of streets named after women as of 2020; furthermore, according to the analysis, “local authorities tend to resort to famous nationwide figures to a larger extent for female names than for male names” (Gutiérrez-Mora and Oto-Peralías, 2022:9). This value cannot be compared to that of Padua, since it includes a larger number of streets collected from all Spanish regions, or ‘Comunidades Autónomas’. A comparison between Padua’s urban anthroponymy with one of a single Spanish city, for instance, Santiago de Compostela, could more efficiently clarify the role of Padua in European gender biased toponymy and further uphold the thesis of strong biased features of its city-text.

Santiago de Compostela has less than half the number of streets of Padua, and only 36.2% of these names are commemorative in nature, compared to 69.2% of Padua. However, the female share of commemorative name of Santiago de Compostela is larger than that of Padua, with 25.3%, i.e., 97 streets vs. 4.8%, i.e., 74 streets. (Novas, 2018:121). The analysis of Santiago de Compostela shows that 51.5% of the female share of commemorative names can be categorised into the ‘Religious figures’ category, which includes “people who embraced ecclesiastical life and canonized figures” (Novas, 2018:121). This value is higher than the one of Padua (40.5%), which includes 30 streets distributed into three different values, i.e., the Madonna, Saints, and Religious benefactors, which together can be interpreted as the ‘Religious figures’ category employed in the case-study of Santiago de Compostela. From this comparison, it can be observed that religious, Catholic, hegemony is not only characteristic of Padua, but a common feature of Catholic influenced countries, in the present time, such as Spain, and a legacy of ancient times, in contrast with different religious values, such as in York.

The case study of selected cities in Poland resulted in 7,738 commemorative street names out of 25,469 hodonyms and 11% (878) of the total are female commemorative names. Again, the meter of comparison with Padua is not equal, but it is additional evidence of the spreading of the issue of gender biased city-texts up to the eastern region of Europe. The case-study of Polish cities categorised the names according to two

categories: historical and fictitious figures. The share of streets named after female saints is larger than that of female secular figures (Walkowiak 2018:341-342).

The city of Paris has 1100 streets commemorative in nature, corresponding to 59% of the total streets of the city (Ferguson 1988:386). As previously explained, the case-study of Paris does not analyse the male/female share of the city-text of Paris; however, it was useful to further understand the types of categories of classification to employ in toponymy analysis. In this analysis, the religious category was included as a general sub-category of 'Traditional elites', opposed to 'Modern elites'. As one type of traditional elite, religious streets occupy the last place, with only 140 names, surpassed by aristocracy, military, and political elites (407 streets). The categories with most commemorative names, both male and female, are the 'political' (traditional elite) and the 'writers' (modern elite) categories; despite the lack of specific gender analysis, this study represents an antithesis of what is shown by the Paduan, Spanish, and Polish studies.

This decline of the hegemony of the religious category on the other categories of classification of commemorative names, especially female ones, can be also studied in the case-studies of cities and countries of the eastern region of Europe, despite the high number of religious people, mostly Christians. The analysis of the Romanian hodonymy is a clear example of gender biased hodonymy, where the number of female commemorative streets remains at a percentage below 3% for all cities of the country (Felecan 2021:274). This case-study was based on the categorization of female commemorative streets into eight categories. The category with the highest number of streets is the one including historical characters and member of noble families. There are also many streets named with common female forenames, like the city-text of the City of York; this suggests a deeply ambiguous gendered context where women are excluded from symbolic sphere and do not have a place in the collective memory (Felecan 2021:275). Furthermore, despite the large number of religious people in the country, the study confirmed that compared to other western European countries "the association of religion with femininity is not commonly accepted" (Felecan 2021:277) and the name of the Virgin Mary is mostly absent, with only one occurrence in the capital city.

This analysis contextualises the toponymy of Padua in the European context and provides with data to compare different urban anthroponymies. The analysis did not favour the thesis about alleged clear division between western and eastern regions of the

continent. These Critical Toponymy analyses revealed the existence of similar situation of gender biased commemorative city-texts in all these major European cities; furthermore, they demonstrated, from a pragmatic and methodological point of view, the requirement of some categories of classification of data to carry out efficient Critical Toponymy analyses and highlight reflected cultural values, e.g., the religious category. What stood out from this overall analysis and comparison is that Paduan city-text is the most commemorative city-text out of all other European city-texts, with almost 70% of streets named after people. Padua commemorative toponymy is a distinctive feature of the urban sphere of the city.

Toponymy is subjected to different courses of action from those with the authority to name and slow sporadic changes that result in stratified city-texts. A call for gender unbiased toponymy, in the case of Padua, is needed to level the city-text up and reflect current cultural changes. Voluntary associations like *Toponomastica femminile* work in this sense to spread the knowledge of the gender gap in toponymy. On one hand, their initiatives and others alike help spreading the voice of this pressing matter. On the other hand, more pragmatic actions taken from administrative authorities can enlarge the group of female commemorative names used to name new streets, or rename old ones, in order to go towards not only a mere numerical equality but a more just symbolic representation of present and past renowned women. Despite the rejection of the project that aimed to add at least one female statue among the statues of Prato della Valle, the city of Padua is working towards a more just toponymy that will hopefully be the beginning of a new and different urban space. It can be recorded that since the beginning of 2022, 30 of the new roundabouts built in the city centre were named after present and past renowned women; the celebrated women belong to 'Modern elites'; some examples are: Gigliola Valandro, a politician, Graziana Campanato, president of the Brescian court of appeals, and Elvira Poli, the first female engineer graduate at the University of Padua.

Conclusion

In conclusion to this dissertation, it is evident that the issue of gender imbalance affects both the city-texts investigated in this study. The study of the toponymy of Padua and the City of York has identified within their city-text specific patterns that reveal male predominance over the names of the two corpora. The term ‘city-text’ represents in toponymy the collection of multiple elements with the same features; it can easily be referred to as a corpus of words, specifically names of streets, which occupy a place in the urban area and has symbolic significance in relation to chosen ideologies or cultural values. The symbolic meanings represented by streets names reflect indeed “ideological commitments and political concerns of local elites in charge of the semiotic make-up of the city” (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010:460). The theme of gender and related gender studies are advancing the frontiers of the majority of fields of science: biology, linguistics, and, overall, toponymy. In the last decades, gender studies focused on gender issues, such as gender bias and gender discrimination, which also affect physical signs, i.e., in toponymy, names given to streets and written on signposts, which are symbolic of present accepted leading ideologies.

This study has shown that Critical Toponymy analyses can effectively identify when hodonyms, that is to say names of streets, are biased in favour of one gender through a mixture of quantitative and qualitative analysis of corpora of names. What characterises this dissertation as well as all the recent studies on toponymy and related gender issues is the adoption of a critical look at place names, going beyond “etymological and taxonomic concerns and toward a critical interrogation of the politics of place naming” (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010:455). Place names have a dual function; they are practical instruments employed by citizens to navigate the cities, and they also have a symbolic function, because of the meanings humans apply to signs, words, in order to communicate between each other. Street names can be proper nouns and common nouns; their symbolic function effectively works when they refer to specific places, people, or things, therefore, when they are proper nouns.

In order to analyse gender issues in toponymy, the main analysis carried out in this dissertation focused on proper nouns, street names, commemorative in nature; that is to say, names, whose symbolic function is to refer and celebrate deserving and renowned people. What emerges from this study is that these commemorations are not gender

inclusive, since they fail to include deserving women of different fields, belittling female symbolic significance and relegating it to specific and inferior traditional social groups. The contribution of this study has been to confirm this statement and add to an already prosperous corpus of Critical Toponymy analyses about European gender biased city-texts evidence that female commemorative street names are bound to participate to the toponymy of a city to a lesser degree than not only male commemorative street names, which are their counterparts in accordance with a traditional standardised dichotomy between two genders, male and female, but also non-commemorative street names, that is to say proper nouns that do not serve as memorial but still hold significance and are symbols of cultural priorities. Therefore, this study established a quantitative framework for detecting gender bias in relation to corpora of honyms, and it demonstrated more clearly the position of power of the female share of honyms.

First of all, the most interesting finding to emerge from this study is that Padua is the city with the larger commemorative city-text. The commemorative nature of the names of the streets of this city is what distinguishes Padua not only from the case-study of York, but also from other European case-studies. Notwithstanding the relatively limited sample, which focuses only on the city of Padua and does not provide insights on other Italian cities, this work suggests that Italian toponymy merely with one city occupies a position of leadership within the group of cities with commemorative honyms. The city-text of Padua is peculiarly commemorative and above all gender biased, with less than 5% of female commemorative names. In a highly commemorative city-text, the ratio of gender bias commemorative honyms confers to the toponymy of the city a higher place among the ranks of gendered city-texts.

First of all, the quantitative analysis of numerical data was used to for comparing Padua and York. This method of analysis resulted in a specific, but partial, framework to understand the position of the female gender in the commemorative share of streets names of these cities. According to this framework the city-text of Padua appears to be more gender biased than the city-text of York; furthermore, similar conclusions that showed city-texts with a larger share of non-commemorative honyms than commemorative ones can be supported by previous quantitative analyses of other European cities, confirming what had been proved by the comparison of Padua with York, that is to say that the peculiar toponymy of Padua appears to be more commemorative, therefore, more

gender biased than the toponymy of other cities in both western and eastern regions of Europe.

Furthermore, this study has been another attempt to examine gender issue in toponymy thoroughly by adopting not only quantitative, but also qualitative methodologies to critically analyse toponymy to understand all implications and meanings of names and go beyond one-way inquiries about these corpora typical of pre-Critical turn of toponymy. The empirical findings in this study obtained by employing qualitative methods of analysis provide a new understanding of the female share of commemorative hodonyms and also of non-commemorative streets names.

The qualitative methods used for this study had been previously applied by other researchers to analyse other case-studies in European, and non-European cities and countries. The findings of these qualitative analyses of the city-texts of Padua and York contributed in several ways to our understanding of toponymy and related gender issues, providing with a detailed look into gender biased hodonyms of Padua and a close look at York's stance on the gender issue. This qualitative approach proved to be useful in expanding our understanding of female commemorative names. This approach is what took the analysis further and demonstrated that the city-texts of the case-studies of Padua and York from this point of view are both equally biased. The qualitative analysis of the female commemorative share of streets names of the City of York suggests that a number of female names, proportionally larger in relation to a smaller group of both male/female commemorative names, does not necessarily imply a lower bias against female names. The qualitative approach employs a system of categorization of these corpora of names that efficiently show uneven groups of names split into obsolete and modern categories, in relation to their impact and power over the present society.

In both the case-studies of Padua and York, the large majority of female commemorative names were exclusively included into the former categories, which correspond to 'traditional elites'; therefore, a clear bias in the categories of commemorated women can be observed only through an attentive qualitative method of analysis and, also in the case of York, it is proof of a biased city-text, demonstrated by patterns of exclusion of women specifically from 'modern elites' categories. This type of qualitative analysis based on the categorization of female commemorative names was carried out in the majority of the previously accredited Critical Toponymy analyses

mentioned throughout this dissertation. In these case-studies it was also registered a large number of female names in the 'traditional' categories, that is to say religion and nobility, opposed to a small number of names included in modern categories, including elites related to academic, scientific, political, athletic fields.

The toponymy of the case-study of York, as discussed before, also followed this biased system of inclusion of many religious and aristocratic, or royals, people; however, the study has identified an additional category, characteristic of the British urban context, missing in the city of Padua, but noticed in cities of Eastern Europe (Romania): common ambiguous female forenames. The relevance of the qualitative approach to analysis is also supported by this finding, since this category of names is not able to impose adequate referential power on the public, because it does not have effective commemorative signs linked to specific collective memory of renowned women. This category is an evident sign of biased city-text when it includes a larger number of (female) names in contrast to the other mentioned categories.

Additional findings emerged from the analysis of the non-commemorative group of streets names. This second level analysis, or sub-analysis, of streets names was useful to help understanding the mechanisms whereby administrative authorities with the power to choose streets names decided to build the toponymy of Padua and York. Consequently, this sub-analysis was useful to corroborate the main thesis on gender biased commemorative hononyms by indicating which cultural elements are deemed to be deserving of a considerable space in the city-text in place of commemorate important people, and more specifically women.

The analysis of non-commemorative names was carried out simultaneously on both city-texts of Padua and York. The empirical findings in this analysis provide a new understanding of city-texts, of their stratified nature and their connection with current cultural and societal values. This analysis served as additional proof of the need to employ a parallel qualitative analysis when examining toponymic data. The qualitative analysis of these names was employed to categorise names according to two categories: religion and geography. What emerged from the first category is that because of their stratified nature, as a consequence of the change of ideologies and political hegemonies that are reflected in toponymy, city-texts do not always fully correspond to present cultural and societal values of the city; despite the simultaneous stratification of new ideologies, or

cultural values, and new, or the initiatives of renaming streets, honyms are not able to keep up with these changes. An instance of this is the case-study of York and the asymmetry between stratified Christian Catholic non-commemorative toponyms, and dominating, current Anglican values.

One source of weakness in this qualitative analysis which could have affected the measurements of data was the absence of collected data from the previous five, ten, up to thirty years, which could have demonstrated the phenomenon of stratification and could have been additional support for the thesis of asymmetry between slowly changing toponymy and fast changing cultural and societal values. Another limitation of this study is the lack of official database of honyms for the case-study of York; indeed, official database of streets names and software to employ to automatically analyse data are needed to provide detailed analyses and eliminate any risk of errors related to manually analysing large corpora of names. Moreover, more toponymy analyses should be made available so as to further examine the situation of gender imbalance in the symbolic/functional sphere of our cities, and thus to help and support those initiatives that aim to produce more just and equal city-texts and enlarge the number of names commemorating women belonging to modern, relevant elites.

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Riassunto

Lo scopo di questa tesi è identificare in che misura i pregiudizi di genere caratterizzano la toponomastica, nello specifico i *city-texts*, della città di Padova, nella regione del Veneto, in nord Italia, e della città di York, nella contea dello Yorkshire, nel Regno Unito. Questa tesi effettua un'analisi su dei corpora linguistici. Le unità di questi corpora non sono tipici testi, o frasi, ma unità di odonimi scelti dalle autorità amministrative locali e assegnati alle strade di Padova e York.

Il termine odonimi, tra gli oggetti di studio della toponomastica, cioè lo studio dei nomi dei luoghi, è usato per indicare i nomi delle strade. Gli odonimi possono essere commemorativi, cioè nomi usati per commemorare e celebrare persone, oppure eventi, di rilievo storico e sociale, ma possono essere anche non commemorativi. I nomi di strade non commemorativi sono nomi comuni, che si rifanno a elementi culturali generali riconosciuti, ma che non celebrano nessuna persona o evento.

Questa tesi analizza da una parte il gruppo di odonimi commemorativi di figure femminili per capire come gli stereotipi di genere interessano la disciplina della toponomastica, dall'altra il gruppo di odonimi non commemorativi, per fornire un'analisi più dettagliata della toponomastica delle due città e comprovare la tesi di *city-texts* stereotipati. Il termine *city-text* è un termine inglese, senza diretta traduzione in italiano, usato negli studi di toponomastica, in specifico nelle analisi degli odonimi di una città, per indicare un corpus di odonimi, cioè un insieme di nomi che può essere di fatto interpretato e analizzato come testo. La necessità di raggruppare i nomi di strade in un corpus e interpretarlo come testo è dovuta al fatto che i nomi di strade non sono solo semplici segni, elementi urbani utili ai cittadini per orientarsi nello spazio, ma sono anche segni che rimandano a specifiche ideologie e significati impliciti, scelti e voluti non in base a principi di uguaglianza e rappresentazione dell'intero tessuto sociale, ma in base alle prerogative di una classe sociale dominante ed escludente, in grado di imporre un'unica prospettiva ideologica, stereotipante, come in questo caso-studio, in maniera implicita sulla sfera urbana e la sua toponomastica.

Questo studio di toponomastica confronta i risultati delle analisi dei *city-texts* di Padova e di York con lo scopo di identificare elementi di somiglianza o le differenze tra le due città, e comprendere se il *city-text* di una delle due città può essere considerato più discriminatorio dell'altro.

Lo studio della toponomastica non ha inizio recentemente, anzi, questa disciplina ha una lunga tradizione, in quanto i nomi delle strade, ma anche delle piazze, degli edifici, e di tutti gli altri elementi oggetto della toponomastica, sono inerentemente stratificati nel tempo e il loro studio, linguistico, etimologico, e storico, può essere utile per comprendere le dinamiche storiche di un certo luogo. Grazie alle tesi di Vuolteenaho and Berg (2009), è possibile sostenere che la modalità di studio della toponomastica tramite un approccio storico-etimologico-culturale, ha caratterizzato questo campo di studio dalla sua origine fino al XVII secolo e l'età della Ragione. Con il suo inizio, l'Illuminismo ha dato vita a una nuova ideologia che poneva la ragione, i sensi, e la scienza al centro di tutto, e ha fatto sì che anche gli studi di toponomastica andassero oltre, identificando nei nomi delle aree urbane molteplici significati impliciti. Inoltre, da quel periodo storico si è sviluppato anche un nuovo modo di governare, una nuova concezione di stato e di potere, in cui i toponimi assumevano un ruolo aggiuntivo, di controllo della città (Fabiszak et al. 2021). Dal XIX secolo in poi, tutto ciò che riguardava la città, incluse le scelte di denominazione e organizzazione dello spazio urbano, era a capo dello stato e della sua classe politica e amministrativa.

Sulla base di questo doppio ruolo dei nomi, la toponomastica di oggi può essere studiata e analizzata per identificare schemi di dominio di ideologie e pensieri, di dinamiche sociali di potere a favore di alcuni gruppi sociali e a sfavore di altri. I nomi della città, i toponimi, non servono più solo come strumenti di orientamento, ma come segni, elementi della comunicazione odierna, che rimandano a precise ideologie e significati. Lo scopo di questa tesi è comprovare l'esistenza di pregiudizi del genere femminile, analizzando da una parte lo spazio fisico dei *city-texts* destinato alla commemorazione delle donne, dall'altra la tipologia di ruolo sociale in cui queste donne si sono distinte e per il quale vengono commemorate.

Nonostante il secondo ruolo dei toponimi, nello specifico odonimi, come indicatori di ideologie dominanti e ruoli sociali stereotipati, l'analisi della toponomastica è rimasta fino alla seconda metà del secolo scorso focalizzata sugli elementi etimologici e storici dei nomi, omettendo un'analisi più dettagliata di presunte e implicite ideologie. Con *Critical Turn of Toponymy analysis* si intende un cambiamento "critico" di questa disciplina, che dagli ultimi decenni del XX secolo ha iniziato ad analizzare i toponimi, e quindi anche i nomi delle strade, focalizzandosi sulle dinamiche politiche e ideologiche

che caratterizzano il processo di nomenclatura dei contesti urbani, e quindi riconoscendo l'esistenza di un *bias*, cioè una propensione a scegliere specifici toponimi, o odonimi, escludendone altri. Questa tesi intende analizzare nello specifico il *gender bias*, ovvero pregiudizi e discriminazioni di un genere e predilezione per un altro. Una sezione del primo capitolo di questa tesi è dedicata ad una breve ma coincisa spiegazione del concetto di *gender*, ovvero del genere in italiano; questo concetto secondo una visione tradizionalista coincide con il concetto di sesso biologico e, attraverso una concezione binaria di entrambi, quindi sesso maschile e femminile coincidenti con genere maschile e femminile, attribuiamo caratteristiche, attitudini, gusti precisi ai due generi. Gli studi di genere analizzano il contorno sociale che si è creato in base a questa dicotomia, in cui non tutti si riconoscono, ovvero le identità non binarie, e in cui sussiste una asimmetria importante tra genere maschile e genere femminile. Lo studio del genere nella toponomastica ha come scopo identificare nei nomi di luoghi dinamiche di questo tipo.

Questa tesi si prefigge di analizzare l'asimmetria tra i due generi che si riflette nella toponomastica non solo da un punto di vista puramente numerico ma anche qualitativo, cioè di qualità, di coerenza di categorie di appartenenza di queste figure nel contesto sociale presente o passato. L'analisi, quindi, è stata eseguita utilizzando due approcci: quantitativo e qualitativo. L'analisi quantitativa dei dati, cioè degli odonimi, ha come scopo quello di analizzare la quantità di nomi del gruppo di odonimi commemorativi femminili e maschili in relazione al totale di odonimi dei *city-texts* di Padova e York. Pertanto, poiché precedenti studi di genere hanno rivelato una situazione di asimmetria tra rappresentazione maschile e femminile nella società, si può presumere che un'analisi quantitativa degli odonimi come quella effettuata per questa tesi mostrerà un'asimmetria simile.

Come accennato sopra, il processo di analisi di questi corpora di nomi si è basato sull'uso di una metodologia doppia, o meglio, mista: un'analisi numerica quantitativa unita ad un'analisi qualitativa delle categorie di classificazione di questi nomi, al fine di eseguire un'analisi critica della toponomastica, in linea con le trasformazioni apportate a questa disciplina negli ultimi decenni del secolo scorso, e contribuire al crescente corpus di analisi critiche della toponomastica delle città europee ed extraeuropee, dimostrando gli effetti positivi dell'impiego di metodi di analisi qualitativi e quantitativi e offrendo importanti approfondimenti sul valore referenziale non solo degli odonimi

commemorativi, ma anche degli odonimi non commemorativi. Le due metodologie sono state utilizzate anche per analizzare il gruppo di odonimi non commemorativi, al fine di produrre un'analisi dettagliata del contesto sociale-culturale delle due città in cui si identifica una situazione più specifica di *gender biased city-text*, cioè *city-texts* con caratteristiche di *bias* di genere.

La ricerca svolta dall'associazione italiana *Toponomastica Femminile* è stata il perfetto punto di partenza della mia analisi della toponomastica, cioè degli odonimi, della città di Padova. Questa associazione ha prodotto un'analisi dettagliata degli odonimi delle città italiane, ma anche europee ed extraeuropee, in cui osserva schemi ricorrenti di *bias* di genere, sia da un punto di vista quantitativo, sia qualitativo degli odonimi commemorativi femminili. Inoltre, la combinazione di una ricerca efficace e di una chiara illustrazione dei risultati in apposite tabelle suddivise per categorie di classificazione degli odonimi, mi ha spinto ad utilizzare i risultati ottenuti dall'associazione per la mia analisi di Padova e a cercare di aggiungere nuove informazioni ampliando l'ambito di analisi.

Al fine di ottenere nuove informazioni e risultati sulla toponomastica di Padova e il relativo problema di genere, il *city-text* di Padova è stato confrontato con il *city-text* di York, una città del Regno Unito. Lo scopo di questo confronto è quello di offrire importanti approfondimenti su entrambi questi due *city-text* ed esplorare le loro caratteristiche intrinseche, che possono essere efficacemente mostrate attraverso una spiegazione degli elementi che rendono il *city-text* delle due città diversi, oppure uguali.

Questa tesi analizza gli odonimi di York, al fine di identificare nomi di strade che presentano caratteristiche di *bias* di genere. I risultati dell'analisi di questo *city-text* saranno confrontati con i risultati di Padova, poiché un confronto può evidenziare alcune delle caratteristiche più importanti di questi *city-texts*, che, da un lato, possono essere elementi di distinzione tra le due città e le loro toponomastiche, dall'altro, possono essere elementi di assimilazione tra le due toponomastiche, e in questo caso, dimostrare schemi ricorrenti nelle scelte di odonimi in relazione a contesti sociali e culturali accumulati da dinamiche di discriminazione e stereotipi di genere.

Tra i limiti di questa tesi vi è l'impossibilità di fornire una revisione completa degli odonimi inclusi nei *city-text* delle città, vale a dire anche del gruppo di nomi di strade commemorative maschili. Il lettore dovrebbe tenere presente che lo studio si basa

sulla discriminazione di genere femminile che caratterizza la toponomastica; pertanto, nei limiti imposti dal tempo e dal numero di pagine di questa tesi, questa tesi si concentra sull'analisi del gruppo di nomi commemorativi femminili e su una parziale, sotto analisi di nomi di strade non commemorativi, al fine di corroborare la tesi di *city-text* con *bias* di genere a Padova e York ed esaminare il relativo contesto culturale generale di questi odonimi.

La mia tesi è costituita di quattro capitoli. Il primo capitolo delinea le dimensioni teoriche della ricerca. Questo capitolo fornisce innanzitutto una breve panoramica della letteratura sulla toponomastica, il campo scientifico alla base di questo progetto di ricerca. Spiegherò il quadro teorico della toponomastica, spiegando le funzioni svolte dalla toponomastica nel corso degli anni. Di conseguenza, al fine di contestualizzare questa disciplina di studio, fornisco una spiegazione del fenomeno noto come *Critical Turn of Toponymy*, che ha trasformato il modo in cui le pratiche di analisi dei toponimi sono state applicate per analizzare tutti i tipi di toponimi dagli ultimi decenni del XX secolo. Utilizzando le teorie sull'utilizzo della toponomastica nelle analisi pratiche di dati, nomi, fornite da Vuolteenaho e Berg (2009), è possibile dimostrare che l'analisi della toponomastica e, in generale, il campo della scienza noto come toponomastica, sono legati ai contesti sociopolitici attuali, e non un semplice conglomerato di teorie e concetti da utilizzare per studiare i toponimi solo da un punto di vista storico-etimologico.

Inoltre, in questo primo capitolo introduco l'oggetto di analisi di questa tesi, gli odonimi o i nomi delle strade e, nello specifico, i nomi delle strade commemorative. Con le teorie pubblicate da Medway e Warnaby (2014), è possibile spiegare esaurientemente il concetto di semiotica politica, che si focalizza sul legame che fa sì che i toponimi per scopi commemorativi riflettano significati culturali e ideologici impliciti, attribuitigli dalle autorità amministrative con il potere di scegliere la nomenclatura delle città.

La seconda sezione del primo capitolo si concentra sugli odonimi commemorativi e sul concetto di nomi di strade con una doppia funzione, e doppi significati. Per analizzare la letteratura prodotta sulla toponomastica e sull'analisi di odonimi commemorativi, ho utilizzato le teorie di Azaryahu (1996) e Rose-Redwood et al. (2010), che argomentano che uno spazio urbano può essere inteso come un'arena culturale in continua evoluzione, dove i nomi vengono utilizzati come segni di ideologie specifiche. Inoltre, in questa sezione, introduco il termine chiave di questa tesi, *city-text*, utilizzato

nelle precedenti analisi della toponomastica per indicare un corpus di odonimi che rappresentano l'insieme di discorsi passati e presenti e sono rappresentazione materiale nella forma di segnali stradali di specifiche ideologie.

L'ultima terza sezione di questo primo capitolo spiego il concetto di genere, sia come concetto chiave dei moderni studi sociologici, sia come tema delle analisi di toponomastica. Inoltre, concludo questo primo capitolo con una panoramica dei precedenti studi di toponimi *gender biased* di una serie di città europee.

Il secondo capitolo spiega la metodologia utilizzata in questa analisi. L'approccio metodologico adottato in questo studio è una metodologia mista basata su analisi quantitative e qualitative. In questo capitolo è spiegato il processo di raccolta, organizzazione, ed analisi dei dati per ottenere risultati e risposte ai quesiti alla base della tesi, che verranno illustrati nel terzo e quarto capitolo. La seconda sezione tratta anche delle fonti dei dati ufficiali e non ufficiali utilizzate in questa tesi. Inoltre, una parte del capitolo è dedicata ad un'analisi dettagliata delle attuali normative osservate dalle autorità amministrative con il potere di scegliere i nomi delle strade di queste due città, in modo da comprendere le caratteristiche che rendono le due città simili e diverse, e soddisfare i presupposti teorici sull'appropriatezza dei toponimi come indicatori culturali, in linea con le teorie sull'analisi della toponimia critica di Oto-Peralías (2018).

Come accennato in precedenza, ho utilizzato una metodologia mista di analisi quantitativa dei dati numerici e di analisi qualitativa di questi dati, cioè gli odonimi, che si basa sulla classificazione dei nomi in base a categorie specifiche, relative al lavoro, o al ruolo sociale svolto dalle donne commemorate nei due *city-texts*. Inoltre, in questo capitolo sono incluse mappe online appositamente realizzate per indicare l'esatta collocazione di queste strade nelle città e produrre un'analisi più dettagliata. La stessa metodologia mista è utilizzata per analizzare il gruppo di odonimi non commemorativi, al fine di ottenere due risultati principali: 1) la quantità di nomi di strade non commemorative in relazione al numero totale di odonimi di queste città, e 2) la prova di modelli culturali simili nell'uso di categorie di classificazione di questi nomi. Quindi, sia per gli odonimi commemorativi che per quelli non commemorativi ho effettuato un'analisi quantitativa preliminare, al fine di mostrare il volume numerico dei *city-text* e, soprattutto, del gruppo dei nomi commemorativi femminili, e una seconda analisi

qualitativa parallela, al fine di analizzare e contestualizzare questi nomi in relazione al contesto socioculturale di riferimento.

Questa analisi di ricerca si concentra sugli studi di genere applicati all'analisi critica degli odonimi, al fine di comprovare la tesi di stereotipi di genere presenti anche tra le fila degli odonimi, così da dimostrare la gravità del problema della discriminazione di genere nella nostra società, che influisce sul valore simbolico e materiale delle donne in tutti gli ambiti, compresa la sfera urbana. Il presente lavoro intende dimostrare questa tesi; quindi, in primo luogo, è necessario esaminare la dimensione di questi gruppi di nomi femminili in relazione al totale e, in secondo luogo, effettuarne un'analisi approfondita per comprendere in che misura e in che modo le donne sono commemorate nella sfera simbolica, rappresentata dal *city-text*, che riflette ideologie passate e presenti.

Questa tesi non è in grado di produrre lo stesso tipo di analisi per il gruppo di odonimi che commemorano figure maschili, sia a causa della limitazione dello spazio di questa tesi, come già menzionato, sia perché questa tesi mira a contribuire a una comprensione più profonda della discriminazione di genere femminile nei toponimi di due città apparentemente lontane, che non dovrebbe essere intesa come conseguenza né di un numero più elevato di odonimi che commemorano figure maschili, né della supremazia degli uomini in specifiche categorie moderne di classificazione, o élite moderne, che rappresentano il valore referenziale degli uomini in ruoli nella società più importanti.

I toponimi *biased* a scapito del valore referenziale delle donne in ruoli meno importanti nella società moderna non sono conseguenza del dominio degli uomini nel *city-text*. Al contrario, la possibilità di dominio di odonimi maschili commemorativi sul *city-text* di una città è causata da caratteristiche sociali sessiste intrinseche assegnate alle donne, cioè qualità negative, come incapacità e minore efficienza in certi ambiti lavorativi, rispetto ad una controparte maschile più meritevole. Pertanto, effettuando un'analisi critica della toponomastica, questa tesi mira a spiegare la questione del pregiudizio di genere e a evidenziare la necessità di una toponomastica più giusta non solo a causa dell'asimmetria tra il numero di strade maschili e femminili, ma soprattutto a causa dell'attuale condizione di sottomissione delle donne a valori sociali tradizionali incoerenti che si riflettono nel simbolismo del contesto urbano.

Il terzo capitolo presenta i risultati della ricerca, concentrandosi sui due temi chiave che caratterizzano questa tesi: 1) il numero di odonimi commemorativi sul modello binario di genere, e 2) l'analisi qualitativa degli odonimi commemorativi e non commemorativi.

Questo capitolo sarà diviso in due sezioni, una per ogni *city-text* analizzato in questa tesi. La prima sezione sarà dedicata ai risultati ottenuti dall'analisi critica della toponomastica del *city-text* di Padova; mentre la seconda sezione sarà dedicata ai risultati ottenuti dall'analisi critica della toponomastica del *city-text* di York. Le due analisi sono state effettuate seguendo step simmetrici di un processo di analisi misto consistente in un'analisi principale delle caratteristiche quantitative e qualitative della quota femminile di odonimi commemorativi e un'analisi di secondo livello delle caratteristiche quantitative e qualitative della quota non commemorativa di odonimi. In questo capitolo della mia tesi, sono incluse tabelle con gli odonimi commemorativi femminili, scritti in ordine alfabetico e i dati numerici sulla quantità di nomi in entrambi i corpora, vale a dire il numero di nomi commemorativi e non commemorativi; inoltre, insieme ai dati numerici sono incluse anche le percentuali dei nomi commemorativi e non commemorativi rispetto al totale dei nomi, e degli odonimi commemorativi femminili rispetto al totale dei nomi.

Per quanto riguarda la parte qualitativa dell'analisi, ho utilizzato un unico criterio di analisi di questi nomi, vale a dire uno schema di categorizzazione dei nomi, uno per Padova e uno per York, secondo una serie di categorie, che indicano ruoli o lavori specifici svolti dalle donne commemorate. Ho raggruppato i nomi in base al settore, ad esempio, religioso, accademico, scientifico, politico o atletico, in cui hanno dato un contributo eccezionale durante la loro vita e per il quale sono celebrate nel *city-text*; i risultati sono rappresentati in un apposito grafico a barre, che rappresenta efficacemente le categorie con un numero maggiore di nomi e quelle con un numero inferiore di nomi.

Il sistema di classificazione degli odonimi per categorie si applicherà anche al gruppo di odonimi non commemorativi. Tuttavia, in questo caso, ho utilizzato due diversi criteri di classificazione dei nomi: 1) religiosi e 2) geografici. Inoltre, il secondo criterio di classificazione include diverse categorie di nomi geografici per entrambi i *city-text* delle due città. Un ulteriore elemento di approfondimento di questi nomi è la spiegazione di mappe online appositamente realizzate che mostrano la posizione dei nomi delle strade.

L'ultimo quarto capitolo confronta i risultati presentati nel terzo capitolo e ottenuti con le metodologie indicate nel secondo capitolo. Inoltre, nel capitolo è compresa una discussione critica di quanto analizzato, al fine di comprovare l'ipotesi di stereotipi di genere nella toponomastica di Padova e York. Lo scopo di questo capitolo è quello di rispondere alle principali domande di questa tesi, in modo da capire se i due *city-text* presentano stereotipi di genere e se i *city-text* di Padova e quello di York sono simili o diversi l'uno dall'altro. Inoltre, una sezione di questo capitolo si concentrerà sul *city-text* della città di Padova. I risultati ottenuti sono stati confrontati con i risultati ottenuti da analoghe analisi critiche quantitative e qualitative della toponomastica di altre città europee, al fine di comprendere più chiaramente la posizione di Padova in relazione al problema di toponomastica condizionata da *bias*, cioè stereotipi, di genere.

Per concludere, in base a quanto rappresentato dai risultati nel terzo capitolo, ampiamente spiegati nel successivo quarto capitolo, si può constatare che la toponomastica delle due città di Padova e York è caratterizzata da stereotipi di genere, e che gli odonimi che la compongono rappresentano il genere femminile in modo diverso rispetto al genere maschile. L'analisi degli odonimi non commemorativi è stata utile per comprendere al meglio il contesto culturale delle due città, apparentemente diverse da un punto di vista culturale, ma simili nelle fondamenta, in maggior ragione dal punto di vista di inclusione asimmetrica e non equa dei due generi nello spazio urbano. L'analisi qualitativa dei dati e i suoi risultati possono essere interpretati come pretesto legittimo per una toponomastica più equa, non solo superficialmente nei numeri di odonimi, ma soprattutto nelle categorie di commemorazione, affinché venga dato alle donne giusto rilievo nella toponomastica, coerentemente a ruoli sociali di potere moderni, che ad oggi caratterizzano anche il profilo femminile in misura sempre maggiore.