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# COUTURE\_MODULE 4\_EMBROIDERY



# CONCISE HISTORY

Embroidery, the art of decorating fabric with needle and thread, is one of the oldest forms of textile art, dating back thousands of years. Originating as a practical method to reinforce clothing and household items, embroidery quickly evolved into a highly artistic and decorative craft.

Embroidery's origins can be traced back to prehistoric times, with early evidence found in Cro-Magnon excavations in Russia, dating to approximately 30,000 BCE. These finds include fossilized remains of heavily stitched and decorated clothing, indicating that even early humans used decorative stitching.



# Earliest evidence from Cro-Magnon excavations (30,000 BCE).

The earliest evidence of embroidery dates back to the Cro-Magnon era, around 30,000 BCE. This period, named after the site in France where remains were first discovered, showcases some of the earliest known examples of human creativity and craftsmanship.

**Fossilized Remains:** Archaeologists have found fossilized remains of heavily stitched and decorated clothing in Cro-Magnon sites. These findings indicate that early humans used stitching not only for practical purposes, such as reinforcing or repairing garments but also for decorative purposes.

**Materials and Techniques:** The materials used for these early embroideries likely included animal sinew, plant fibers, and basic needles made from bone or ivory. The techniques were simple but effective, involving basic stitches that have evolved into the complex embroidery methods we see today.

**Cultural Significance:** The presence of decorative stitching on clothing suggests that embroidery had a cultural or symbolic significance even in prehistoric times. It may have been used to denote status, identity, or affiliation within early human groups.

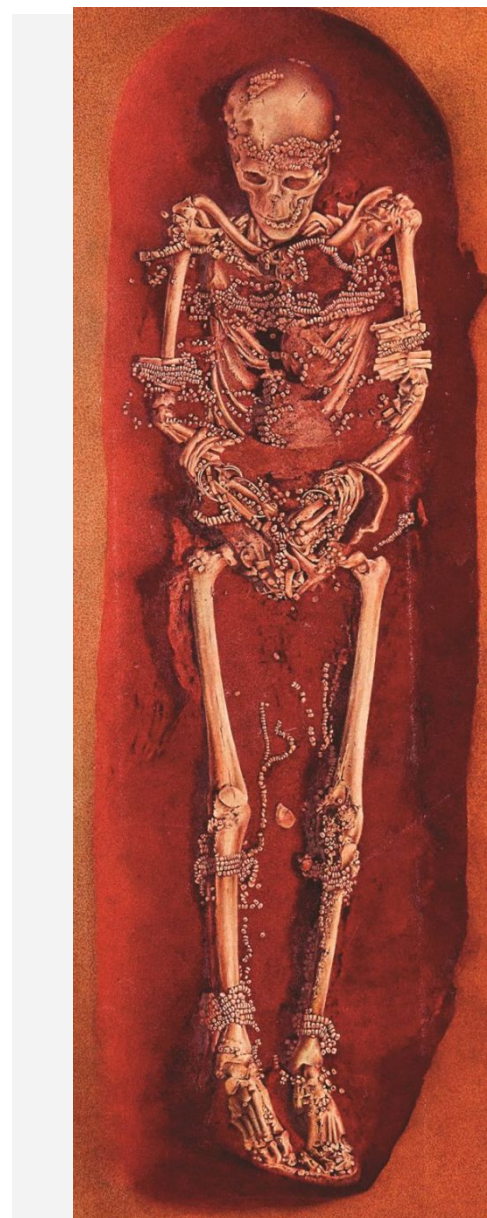


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Ivory beads and ochre—affixed to the pelvic bones of a child—likely decorated the burial clothing of this 10-year-old interred at Sunghir some 34,000 years ago.

*E. Trinkaus/Trinkaus and Buzhilova/Antiquity*



This photo montage shows the highly decorated remains of a 35- to 45-year-old adult male who was buried at Sunghir.

*K. Gavrilov/Trinkaus and Buzhilova/Antiquity*



# Embroidery in Ancient Civilizations

**China:** One of the earliest and most sophisticated examples of embroidery comes from ancient China during the Warring States period (5th-3rd century BCE). Chinese embroidery, often made with silk threads, became renowned for its intricate designs and fine craftsmanship.

**Egypt:** Ancient Egyptian tombs, dating to around 1400 BCE, have yielded embroidered textiles used for both practical and ceremonial purposes. These early embroideries often featured geometric patterns and motifs.

**Greece and Rome:** Both civilizations used embroidery to decorate clothing and household items, incorporating motifs inspired by their respective mythologies and everyday life.



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Opus Anglicanum: the beauty of medieval English embroidery

*Opus Anglicanum*, ‘English work’.

the medieval period embroidery was equated with luxury. Religious garments as well as fashionable clothing owned embroidery that was exquisite. Embroidery was used on book covers, bed covers and bed curtains, jupons, heraldry, purses, and belts.

Opus Anglicanum refers to a particular style of English embroidery valued throughout Europe during the 13th and 14th centuries. By the 15th century copy-cat embroidery workshops had been established in Northern Europe.

It was outstanding for its use of rich materials, gold and silver threads and jewels especially seed pearls. In candlelight this medieval bling glowed and sparkled. Within a cathedral it created a sense of awe when a bishop or an Archbishop moved about the altar or walked in procession wearing a valuable cope decorated with gleaming gold and silver thread.



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<https://www.historiamag.com/opus-anglicanum-the-beauty-of-medieval-english-embroidery/>

## Technique

How did the embroiderers create the desired effect? They used a technique of underside couching. This involved laying a metal thread on the surface and attaching threads of gold, silver and silk with a linen thread at regular intervals from underneath, therefore providing a surface on the ground fabric which would catch the light and give a sense of flow and texture. The spots where the metal threads were pulled down moreover created a pattern on the surface allowing a hinged effect. Appliquéd jewels were added and they would make a garment flow and glitter when the wearer moved.



## Middle Ages

During the medieval period, embroidery flourished across Europe, particularly in ecclesiastical settings. Churches commissioned elaborate embroidered garments, altar cloths, and tapestries. The Bayeux Tapestry, created around 1077, is a famous example that depicts the Norman Conquest of England.



<https://www.bayeuxmuseum.com/en/the-bayeux-tapestry/discover-the-bayeux-tapestry/what-is-the-bayeux-tapestry-about/#:-:text=The%20Bayeux%20Tapestry%20is%20a,by%20the%20Duke%20of%20Normandy.>

## THE FRIEZES, BACKDROP OF THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY

The central panel is framed by friezes measuring about 7cm (approx 3 inches) each. The friezes depict animals, both real (e.g. birds, lions, dogs, deer) and imaginary (e.g. griffins and centaurs). Aesop's fable of the Fox and the Crow is also represented. Similarly, the lower frieze is used to depict the dead on the battlefield in the final scenes.



# Main Characteristics

## Materials

Traditional tapestries were made using a variety of materials, including wool, silk, linen, and metallic threads. The choice of materials often depended on the intended use and the wealth of the patron.

## Techniques

**Appliqué:** Pieces of fabric are sewn onto a larger background fabric to create designs.

**Couching:** Threads are laid on the surface of the fabric and stitched down with small stitches.

**Satin Stitch:** Creates smooth, solid areas of color.

**Chain Stitch:** Produces a series of looped stitches that form a chain-like pattern.



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There are few techniques of embroidery and some of the most famous techniques are:

Hand embroidery

Cross stitch embroidery

Crewel embroidery

Stumpwork embroidery



# Hand embroidery

Hand embroidery is probably the type of embroidery you are most familiar with. Hand embroidery can be accomplished by learning a few, basic, embroidery stitches including: the running stitch, chain stitch, straight stitch, cross-stitch, satin stitch, stem stitch, and blanket stitch.

In addition to different stitches, there are many different patterns, including geometric, floral, landscapes, and so much more.



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## Needle Painting Embroidery

Needle painting is an artistic type of hand embroidery. In this technique, the embroiderer uses long and short stitches, varying the shades of the color, so that the stitches almost appear to be paint strokes.

This method is likened to painting a picture, only instead of paints, embroidery floss is used. Popular floss manufacturers offer many shades of floss colors, with slight color changes, to enable needle painters to give their work realism, detail, depth, and shading.



American Needlework in the Eighteenth Century  
[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/need/hd\\_need.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/need/hd_need.htm)



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## Cross-Stitch Embroidery

In cross-stitch embroidery, sets of two stitches, sewn across one another at right angles (like an X) are stitched onto cloth to form an image. Think of the cross stitches as though they are pixels on a computer screen, only using floss instead of pixels. As the grid is filled in, the stitched image is created. In counted cross stitch, you “count” the squares within the base fabric’s weave.

Alternately, there are kits that have the colored design printed directly on the fabric and you simply fill in the space with tiny cross stitches in the assigned floss color.

Base fabrics for cross stitch are evenly woven and cross stitch needles (also called tapestry needles) have larger eyes and are blunter than regular sewing needles. You use the same type of threads and floss as you do in regular hand embroidery.



## Crewel Embroidery

Crewel embroidery is the same as hand embroidery except you use wool threads or yarn instead of embroidery floss. The wool yarn is called, “crewel”, hence the name of this type of embroidery. Crewel has a long history, with one of its first known pieces dating back 900 years.

This historical embroidery piece, the Bayeux Tapestry, was stitched in medieval France and depicts the Norman conquest of England and is displayed in France to this day.

Crewel uses the same stitches as hand embroidery, but the thicker wool yarn produces a more textured piece of artwork. Because the wool yarn is thicker than regular embroidery floss, it is best to use crewel needles and woven fabrics, like linen.



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French Stumpwork  
Embroidery 1900

## Stumpwork Embroidery

In Stumpwork embroidery, the stitches are raised from the base fabric using fabric padding, wire, beads, and three-dimensional embroidery stitches. Stumpwork is another type of embroidery with a long history and was popular during the late 17th century.

Traditionally Stumpwork embroidery pieces depicted royalty, nature, and biblical and mythological themes. Fabrics with Stumpwork designs were sometimes used to cover boxes, called 'caskets', that were used to house sewing supplies, jewelry, and other small trinkets.

In the early 1900s, Stumpwork was used to embellish dresses and other clothing.

Today, modern embroiderers are exploring Stumpwork in new ways, using different objects to create spectacular 3D effects in their artwork.



# Characteristics of Embroidery

## 1 Base Fabric

The two different types of fabrics i.e. muslin and khaddar in plain weave was used. The unbleached fabric was preferred as it appeared textured and serves the purpose of the background that heightens the effect of the colorful embroideries . The household articles and utility items were made on khaddar which was dyed red, blIt was observed that the effect of embroidery was fine in muslin fabric, as the execution of stitches is smaller in size and detailed (Figure1). It was found most suitable since needle canue, or black.

It was observed that the effect of embroidery was fine in muslin fabric, as the execution of stitches is smaller in size and detailed (Figure1). It was found most suitable since needle can pass through it easily and effect of embroidery was similar on both sides of fabric. In khaddar fabric, stitch size was bigger and less detailed work was seen (Figure 2). Khaddar fabrics with lesser thread count were found suitable for simpler and less detailed work such as floral or animal figures with single sided embroidery.



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Figure1: Embroidery on Fine muslin  
Courtesy: National Museum, New Delhi



Figure2: Embroidery on Coarse khaddar  
Courtesy: Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba



## Embroidery Threads

Untwisted silk yarns were used for embroidery as they imparted smooth finish and uniform sheen to embroidery which resembled a painting effect 6 . For synthetic yarns mostly two strands were being used for filling and fine small areas were made using single strand of yarn . In case of silk yarns four to five silk filaments were slightly twisted together and used for embroidery. The gold and silver threads were used occasionally to heighten the effect of gold. At present, synthetic twisted yarn after unwinding was being used due to unavailability of untwisted yarns. When products made from twisted yarns after unwinding were washed in cold water, the same effect was achieved as in case of untwisted yarns.



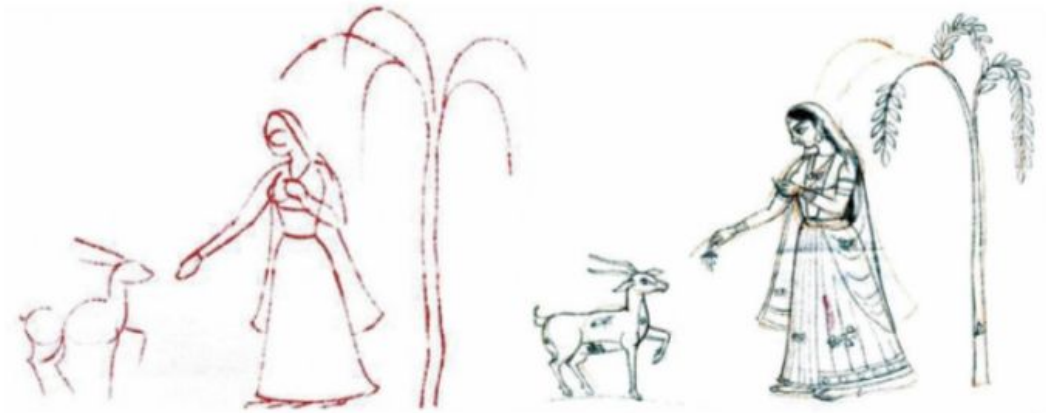
## Drawing (ulikan) of design on fabric

The usual method of drawing on fabric for mural is based on miniature paintings is as follows, the fabric was pasted on the ground with starch paste. In first sketch, line drawing was made in red dye which was obtained from sindoor, in light watery color as this color does not show under final sketch (Figure 3a). In final sketch outline was drawn in black color which was obtained from charcoal (Figure 3b). The details were cleared and color preferences were marked for the embroiderers .

The tracing of the design in folk style and household articles was done by the embroiderer herself or by some other experienced lady. The drawing was sometimes made directly on fabric or traced (Figure 4). The compositions by artist were perfectly drawn and balanced and at other hand drawings by embroiderers does not show no clear lines thus corrected while embroidering (Figure 5).



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a. Line drawing in light color

b. Final sketch with clear details in black

Figure3: Method of drawing on fabric by artist Courtesy: Pnixit Sharma, Chamba



Figure4: Tracing made by embroiderer on fabric.  
Courtesy: Suman, Chamba

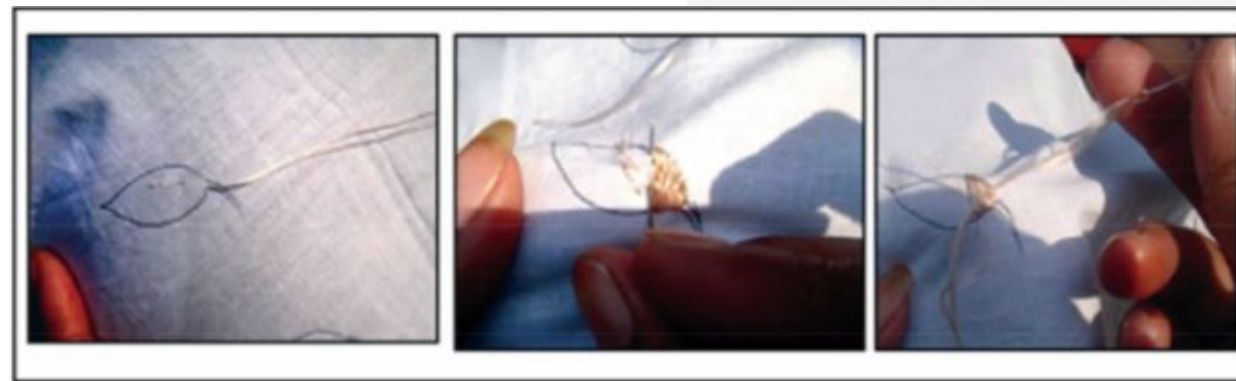


Figure5: Drawing marks visible under embroidery.  
Courtesy: Vijay Sharma, Chamba



## Execution of the craft

Embroiderers worked in a seated position on the ground, fabric was held under the knees to keep it stretch. To avoid entanglement of untwisted yarns, they were kept short length. For embroidery sharp pointed, medium length needles with large eyes were used. There was minimum pull or tension on the yarns as they were too delicate and break if handled with force. The most significant feature of embroidery was to start and end embroidery without knotting. For starting embroidery few running stitches were taken and stitches were then laid over them (Figure 6a, 6b). For ending, needle was slide under laid stitches (Figure 6c).



a. Running stitches for securing yarn

b. Covered by embroidery stitches

c. Needle slide under embroidery stitches

Figure 6: Steps to start and end embroidery Courtesy: Indu Sharma, Chamba



## Technical characteristics of embroidery

These were primary components while executing embroidery which included, different types of filling stitches, direction of stitches and outline stitch. Varied stitches were used for embroidery including double sided stitch, running stitch, cross stitch , buttonhole stitch and herringbone stitch.



# Table 1 Identification of stitches used traditionally in Chamba embroidery

For filling in embroidery the stitch most commonly used was variations of satin stitch and darning stitch to achieve the effect of needle painting. The embroidery was carried in such a way that it resembled the brush strokes of painting. The similar kind of embroidered work was being practiced in countries like China, Iran and Turkey using long and short satin stitches.

Stitch Type	Line Drawing	Old Specimen
<p>Long and short stitch: It was a filling stitch worked like double darning in long and short stitches alternately, interleaving the longer stitches into the spaces left by the shorter ones in return journey. The stitches were worked from bottom to top. In superior quality of rāmāis, close filling of long and short stitch in short length was used. Though long and short stitch was also seen in folk style in medium length and yarns were loosely spaced. This stitch was practiced by artisans presently.</p>		<p>(Courtesy: Calico Museum, Ahmadabad)</p>
<p>Brick Stitch: It was another variation of double darning stitch where stitches were offset, like bricks, singly or in groups of two or three known as brick stitch. Brick stitch was seen in few miniature style rāmāis due to the fact it required closely filled and structured arrangement of stitches. It was also observed that long and short stitch was worked very similarly to brick stitch, but there was more stitch blending while in brick stitch layering was seen. This stitch was no longer being practiced by the artisans.</p>		<p>(Courtesy: National Museum, New Delhi)</p>
<p>Encroaching satin stitch was formed by layers of closely joined short straight stitches. Several rows of vertical satin stitches were worked to give an almost woven effect. Encroaching stitch was observed in folk style and rāmāis similar to phulkari embroidery. This stitch was no longer being practiced by the artisans.</p>		<p>(Courtesy: Calico Museum, Ahmadabad)</p>



a. Small length stitch

b. Medium length stitch

c. Long length stitch

The long and short stitches further varied according to their length. In small length, the method of administering the stitch was same. The stitch length varied from 0.2cm to 0.4 cm. The stitch length was small resulting in uniform appearance due to closely packed yarns (Figure 7a). In medium length, the stitch length was ranging from 0.5cm to 0.6cm (Figure 7b). In long length, the stitch length was ranging from 0.8cm to 1 cm or even bigger, resulting in snagging of yarns and wavy appearance (Figure 7c). In samples with long length stitches overlapping of yarns was seen.



## Stitch Direction

An important aspect of stitching in embroidery was the direction in which the stitches fall within a design 7 . In embroidery, stitches were taken following the direction of yarns enclosed by a motif which can be vertical (rask-length), horizontal (aada-width)), slant and multiple directions (Table2).

Stitch Type	Line Drawing	Old Specimen
Vertical direction covers the area with vertical stitches across the design.		
Horizontal direction runs horizontally from one side of the design to the other.		
Slanting direction slants up or down from left to right, generally at an angle of 45 degrees 7 .		
Multiple direction satin stitches, it was found out that motifs were divided into smaller portions, and then each portion filled in by using stitches in different direction. This kind of stitch created an optical illusion resulting in shade variation by using single color yarn as well as added texture and visual appeal to simple looking motif. This direction was no longer used by artisans.		

(Courtesy: After Aryan, 2010)



## Ornamentation and textures

In embroidery ornamentation were either carried out using metallic yarn or embroidery thread. Metallic yarn was used to show effect of gold and brocaded effect in motifs as seen in costume of K a and Rūkmi i (Figure13). Embroidery threads were also used for adornment and to bring out fine details like in crown of Krishna and adornment of his feet, nails in red color

The texture was created by using special stitches, this creates visual interest, charm and gives the impression of realty. The textures were achieved by technique called voiding where narrow gap was created between rows of stitches



Figure 14: Embroidery thread used for ornamentation  
Courtesy: Calico Museum, Ahmadabad

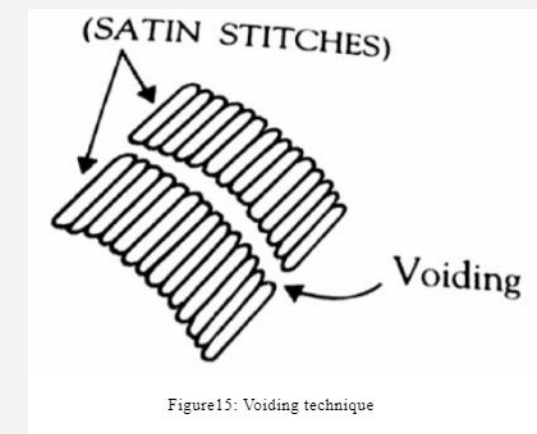


Figure15: Voiding technique



# Embroidery Techniques in the Balkans

**Balkan Embroidery Textiles** are an ancient and important cultural institution with a complex history. Simultaneously influenced by the design trends of the many - highly diverse - peoples of the countries of the Balkans of southeastern Europe, Balkan embroidery represents a unique development in Western art. Historically, the countries that comprise the Balkans include the deeply culturally disparate nations of Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Turkey.

And while there are a great many profoundly important cultural differences between each of these countries - differences that include religion, ethnic identity, and language, among a great many others - there is in fact a sort of unified aesthetic within the world of Balkan embroidery. Designs within this particular arena are often characterized by rich embroidery lined with tassels. There is also a tendency for these pieces to feature red and blue metal work, as well as angular and sparse lines - an aesthetic that can be found in other veins of Balkan art, most especially in the architectural design of the region



# What is the history of Balkan Embroideries and Textiles?

The history of Balkan embroideries and textiles is rich and diverse, reflecting the cultural, social, and historical influences of the Balkan region. The Balkans, a region in southeastern Europe, includes countries such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia. Each of these countries has its own unique textile traditions, yet there are common threads that tie them together.



**Ancient Origins:** The history of Balkan textiles dates back to ancient times, with evidence of textile production and decoration found in archaeological sites. Early civilizations in the region, such as the Thracians, Illyrians, and Dacians, engaged in weaving and dyeing fabrics for clothing, as well as for decorative and ceremonial purposes.

**Byzantine Influence:** The Byzantine Empire had a significant influence on the Balkans, and this is reflected in the region's textile traditions. Byzantine textiles were characterized by intricate designs, rich colors, and use of precious materials like silk and gold thread. Byzantine motifs and techniques were absorbed and adapted into local textile practices.

**Ottoman Period:** The Ottoman Empire ruled much of the Balkans for several centuries, and this period left a lasting impact on the region's textiles. Ottoman textiles often featured geometric patterns, stylized floral motifs, and intricate embroidery. The Ottomans also introduced techniques such as Ikat and used rich materials like silk and brocade.

**Regional Variation:** Despite shared influences, each Balkan country developed its own distinct embroidery and textile traditions. For example, Serbian textiles are known for their bold geometric patterns, while Bulgarian textiles often feature vibrant colors and floral motifs. Romanian textiles are characterized by their intricate embroidery and use of traditional symbols.

**Folk Traditions and Symbolism:** Balkan textiles have deep connections to local folklore, customs, and rituals. Many textiles were made for special occasions such as weddings, births, and religious ceremonies. Symbols and motifs were often imbued with meaning, representing fertility, protection, and other cultural beliefs.



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The most common form of embroideries in North Macedonia were traditional vests, especially those used in villages, which were in day-to-day use until the first decennia of this century. The embroidery was a characteristic traditional adornment, commonly found on female traditional vests, embroidered shirts and head covers.<sup>[1]</sup>

Female shirts, which resemble tunics and are typical of North Macedonia, contain traces of ancient forms connected to Old-Balkan ornamented tunic, even before the arrival of Slavic people and also used by other Slavic peoples. Sticking to the first stadia of the development of this clothing that is related to its shape, Macedonian shirts further developed their decorations, which also reflected the luxurious style of the Byzantine textile.

Among different females embroideries used for head vests are bride vests which also contain a lot of historical values. They have an apparent similarity in form, technique, ornamentation and function to the vests of some peoples of the Povolzhye region, which confirms distant cultural and historical relationships to those peoples.



Embroidery on a female shirt from the village Dunje, Mariovo from the beginning of the 20th century.

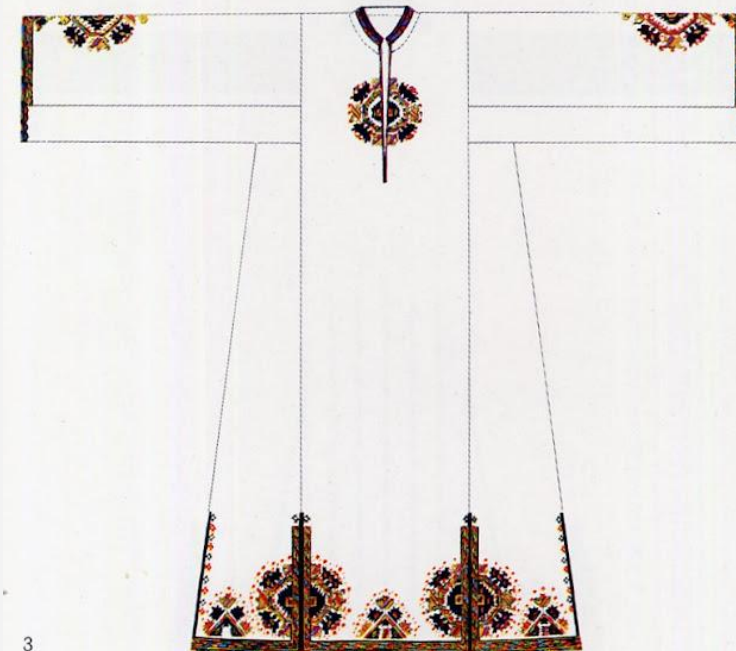


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The basic garment here is the chemise, koshula. This is traditionally made of heavy linen or hemp. Here is a drawing of the garment. This cut is typical for Macedonia, and has obvious similarities to that of Dalmatia.

As you can see, there is embroidery on the hem, sleeves and front. The basic colors used are black, red and gold with some admixture of green and blue. The motif known as '9 flowers' is often embroidered on the lower sleeve, and as you can see, sometimes repeated on the hem and front opening. Here are a couple of variations of this motif.





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The design is executed mostly in outline stitch and slant, or slav stitch.

Sometimes the hem is executed in different designs, like the following examples. The design above the hem is often larger and longer in back, which is why this first example is twisted





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14





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On some bridal outfits there is an attempt to add more embroidery, which results in the composition being lost.

Prior to the 20th cent. the women in this region wore a garment called saya over the chemise. This is a type of long vest which opens in front. It was made of very heavy white home woven wool. Over the saya was worn the apron and a sash, which held this garment closed. Those for more festive occasions were decorated with many pompoms.



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*The dress, košulja, from the Tetovo costume, with details of the very elaborate embroidery*



## Embroidery in Albania

Embroidery has always played a large part in Albanian life and was used extensively in costume. Traditionally both men and women were involved in the embroiderers craft, however, women were usually classed as amateurs and limited to that of a domestic base, while men organised themselves on a much more defined and professional base.

Albanian embroidery came in a number of guises and styles, but there were two main groups usually divided by language, with the Gheg to the north and the Tosk to the south. Work was often produced on linen, cotton and wool backgrounds. There was a strong emphasis on the use of gold and silver metal threads, which is said to have originated in Turkey itself. However, hand dyed yarns were also widely used although cotton for example, had to be imported as did silk, although there was a small amount of indigenous silk production.



Costume embroidery was produced for both men and women and was often produced in bands in order to attach them to different areas of jackets, bodices, shirts, trousers, skirts and aprons. Bands were also used to embellish various styles of hat.

As in many areas of the Balkans, embroidery design work, if not unique to specific local areas, at least gave a certain distinctive flavour of that particular area to a national style.

Albanian embroidery work and craft skills in general are much under-appreciated outside of the country. Admittedly this is partly due to the fact that Albania had self-imposed an isolationist attitude to the rest of the world for over half a century, but another reason is the general lack of detailed information and data concerning the traditional craft skills base of the country.



Illustration: Albanian silk embroidery



Illustration: Albanian embroidery using metal thread.



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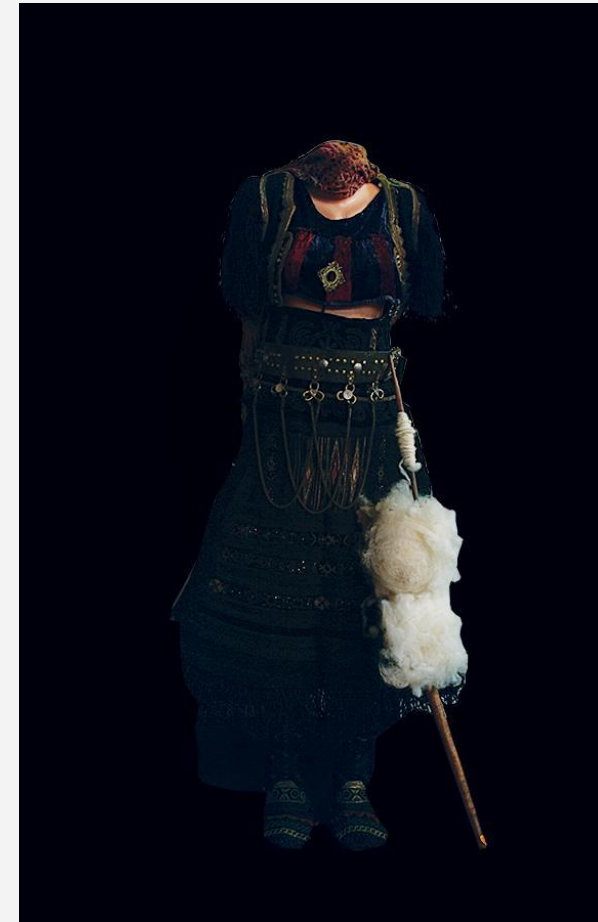


## SHKODRA

**Characteristics:** This region is known for its intricate designs and vibrant colors, Shkodra embroidery often features floral and geometric patterns. The work is typically done on heavy fabrics like wool and uses thick threads.

First costume is MOUNTAIN WOMAN'S DRESS WITH JUBLETS FROM DUKAGJINI

It should be noted that both the front and back are always embroidered with very interesting motifs that recall the symbolism of mother earth.





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This garment consisted of a knee-length shirt with very wide sleeves made of white silk or linen. The shirts were embroidered by the women themselves with gold and linen threads, or with silk, or with silver wire on the sleeves and at the throat. Over the shirt was worn a tight red velvet or kumashi waistcoat, densely embroidered, fastened to the chest with four buttons, it was embroidered only with tertil (fijeari) and laxhyhera (temina). Over the waistcoat was worn anteria of velvet, a kind of jacket with split sleeves up to the waist, this too was embroidered with gold thread on the front flaps and on the sleeves





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## CATHOLIC WOMAN'S DRESS

Characteristics of this costume are the sleeves with silk embroidery in colors orange, yellow, white, red, green, etc. Apart from the colors of the dense needlework, what stands out the most are the exquisitely rich floral and zoomorphic motifs neatly combined





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Men's clothing, where jackets, waistcoats, mints stand out, jamadans, kondosh, dollomat, which were made with expensive materials, embroidered mostly with gold and silver thread. They usually wore red festoons on their heads



Fig. 11, State Central Museum



Fig. 12, Veshje ceremoniale, shek. 19, *The Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary History of Russia*) Albanian Traditional Men's Costume, 19<sup>th</sup> century



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## XHUBLETA

The embroidery techniques that stand out in jubleta are varied, but the aesthetic purpose is the same: to create a visible relief in this garment. One of the techniques realized is that through gajtan. In general to popular clothing, here it is not embroidered directly on the piece, as we are used to seeing this technique today. Whether would be done in this way, the necessary relief in the decoration would not be achieved. In this case, the gajtan was woven separately with very thin spun wool thread and figuratively it resembles a braid. Then the formed spine, one, two or more lot, is placed on the piece. This is where cardboard models come into play, based on which the desired shape is given to the gajtan. After it is temporarily placed in the right place, procedit is finally fixed to the piece by sewing with a needle and thread. The needle passes between the scrotum during the rotations it takes in pursuit of motive. We often find gajtan combined with colored beads or even in black color.





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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM KOSOVO



Kosovo, 18th-19th century - Embroidered  
Sleeves - 1926.224 - Cleveland Museum of  
Art.

Wool, silver thread and sequins on plain  
weave linen

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yugoslavia, Kosovo, 18th-19th century - Embr  
roidered Sleeves - 1926.224 - Cleveland Museum of Art.tif](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yugoslavia,_Kosovo,_18th-19th_century_-_Embr_roidered_Sleeves_-_1926.224_-_Cleveland_Museum_of_Art.tif)



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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM KOSOVO



Young women's apparel.  
The floral embroidery symbolizes vitality  
and youth.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional\\_clothing\\_of\\_Kosovo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional_clothing_of_Kosovo)



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# The Art of Embroidery



[https://www.instagram.com/p/C3YZsiKNpq4/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/C3YZsiKNpq4/?img_index=1)



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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



The pirpiri (women's gold-embroidered coat) was the most magnificent garment of the Ioannina costume, luxurious and valuable (it was inherited by the daughter from the mother) like the entire Ioannina aristocratic costume, it was connected with the development, to a jealous extent in fact in relation to with the rest of the Greek area, of the folk arts in the economically flourishing city at the time

<https://mazilife.gr/%CF%87%CF%81%CF%85%CF%83%CE%BF%CE%BA%CE%AD%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%84%CE%BF-%CF%80%CE%B9%CF%81%CF%80%CE%B9%CF%81%CE%AF/>



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# EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



This uniform is an exact copy of the military winter honor uniform of the Evzone of the Presidential Guard.



Pavlos Melas armed and wearing the doulamas. Painting based on Melas's last photograph, shot on 21st August 1904.

<https://www.paradosiakes-endymasies.gr/endymasia/xeimerinos-ntoulamas-proedrikis-froyras-antigrafis/>

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pavlos\\_Melas.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pavlos_Melas.jpg)



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# EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



The president of the "Greece 2021" Committee, Gianna Angelopoulou, appeared at the doxology in the Metropolis of Athens and at the military parade wearing a dulama, made by Aristidis Tzonevrakis, one of the last Greek embroiderers or "terzides" as they were called during the Ottoman occupation

<https://www.trikalaidees.gr/%CE%BF-%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%B4%CE%BF%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%B1%CE%BA%CF%8C%CF%82-%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%AC%CF%82-%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%B5%CF%80%CE%AD%CE%BB%CE%B5%CE%BE%CE%B5/>



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# EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



Eleanna Tambouri, designer and entrepreneur in the field of tourism, pays tribute to her heritage, honors tradition and mixes elements of the past and the present with unparalleled mastery. The result is 5 handmade pieces that connect tradition with modern creation and can be part of any woman's wardrobe, at any time. The limited collection takes its name from the poem written by Rigas Feraios in 1797, in which he called on his fellow Greeks to revolt against the Turks.

"Thurios" collection of the Nevro brand by Eleanna Tambouri

<https://www.madamefigaro.gr/moda/fashion-news/122576/to-folkore-chic-tis-capsule-sull-ogis-thourios>



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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE

The term "dulamas" essentially refers to men's clothing, while the term "pirpiri" prevails among women. This is how this garment is mentioned in the book "Women's costume of the late Ottoman era" (Görünür Lale (2010), Sadberk Hanım Museum, Istanbul), as a Balkan "anderi" (pirpiri) of the Ottoman period.

In Albania, but also in Kosovo, these clothes for men and women have the general name "chubes".

In the same period in the Greek area, the term "jumbes" refers to a large men's overcoat that looks like an overcoat and to a special women's red overcoat of Kynouria in Arcadia (Peloponnesus). By analogy and in Sifnos, the external covering of precious European fabric is called doulamas.



[https://www.argolikeseidhseis.gr/2017/06/blog-post\\_815.html?m=1](https://www.argolikeseidhseis.gr/2017/06/blog-post_815.html?m=1)



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# EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



Original doulamades - and their female versions, known as “pirpiris” - converse with their modern version, made by fashion designers and artists.

“Dulamas the Majestic. Inspirations ...”  
Exhibition of the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation  
15-22 June 2017

<https://www.kathimerini.gr/society/914461/ntoylamades-pirpiri-kai-sygchroni-moda/>



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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



Left: Felt and gold-thread cloak of the Greek Revolution of 1821 fighter general Dimitris Tsokris (1796-1875), and right a modern white cloak by Aristidis Tzonevrakis.

"Dulamas the Majestic. Inspirations ..."  
Exhibition of the Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation  
15-22 June 2017

<https://www.kathimerini.gr/culture/arts/1013499/gnizontas-tin-paradosi-i-megaloprepe-ia-toy-ntoylama/>



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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



Bridal wear with "stoupa" or "good walk", the multi-layered dress with an embroidered wide hem. Skopelos, 19th c.

[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&Itemid=162&id=143641&lang=el](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&Itemid=162&id=143641&lang=el)



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# EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



Crete, Silk embroidery,  
Ethnographic collection, Historical  
Museum of Crete

<https://www.historical-museum.gr/eng/collections/view/ethnografikh-sullogh>

[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&Itemid=162&id=143641&lang=el](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&Itemid=162&id=143641&lang=el)



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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&Itemid=543&id=166678&lang=en](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&Itemid=543&id=166678&lang=en)

Bridal bolsters from Ioannina 18th century  
embroidered bridal bolsters from Ioannina,

Benaki Museum **VIDEO**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFtCfFN21Wc>

[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_multimedia&view=multimediaitem&lang=en&id=2430&Itemid=631](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_multimedia&view=multimediaitem&lang=en&id=2430&Itemid=631)



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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



The Karpathos chemise: an embroidered chemise of the Greek women's costumes from Karpathos, that dates to the late 18th or early 19th century,

Benaki Museum, **VIDEO**

[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_multimedia&view=multimediaitem&lang=en&id=2450&Itemid=631](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_multimedia&view=multimediaitem&lang=en&id=2450&Itemid=631)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9EUnd\\_Rp1KU&t=12s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9EUnd_Rp1KU&t=12s)

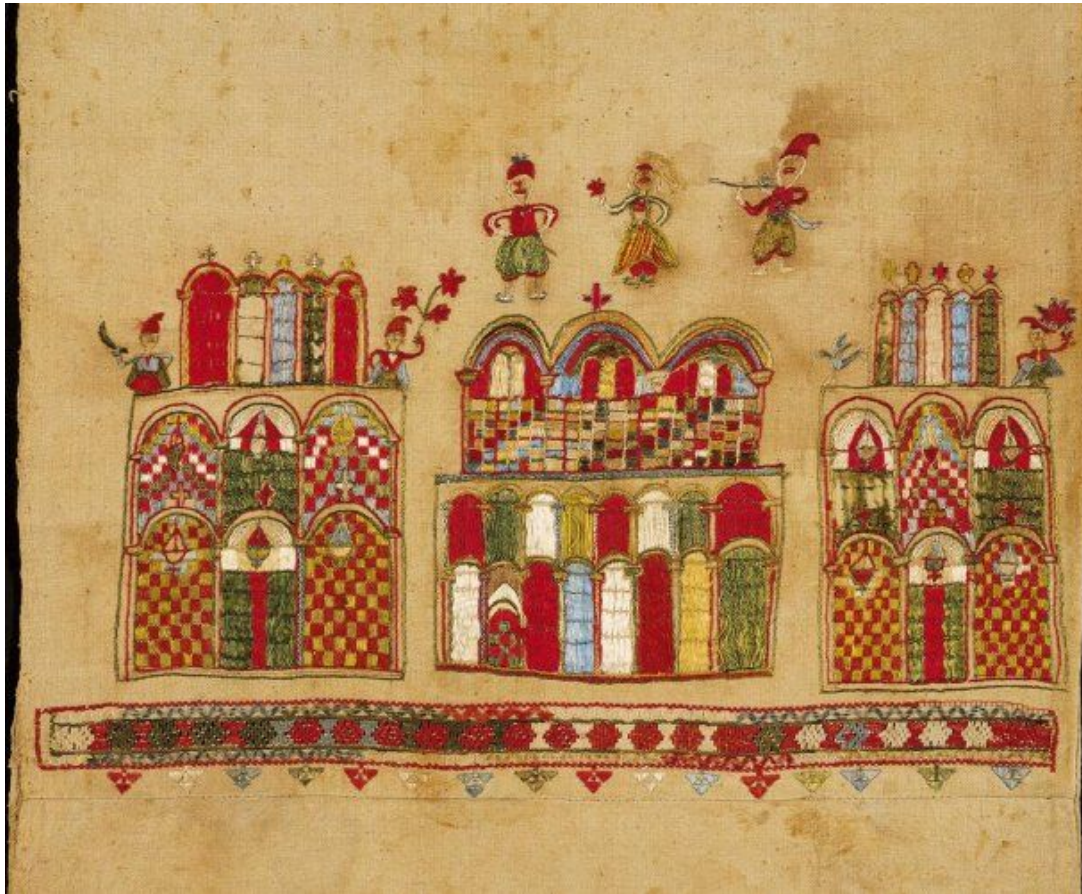
<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O366880/poukamiso-chemise-unknown/>



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# EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



Bridal cushion from Skyros island with a scene containing three monumental structures on which human figures are depicted. The structure in the middle is surmounted with a miniature scene of a wedding, the bridal couple and a musician. 18th c. 0.44x0.43 m.

Benaki Museum

[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&id=142013&Itemid=540&lang=en](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&id=142013&Itemid=540&lang=en)



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## EMBROIDERY\_EXAMPLES FROM GREECE



Bridal cushion embroidered in multicoloured silks and gold thread on a perforated background; the composition is dominated by a central winged female figure, the "good fairy", who shelters the bride and groom under her wings. The other motifs, consisting of stylised human figures, animals, birds and flowers are markedly smaller in scale and merely complement the decoration. From Lefkada, Ionian Islands, 17th-18th c.

Benaki Museum

[https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\\_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&Itemid=540&id=141941&lang=en](https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&Itemid=540&id=141941&lang=en)



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# Material for Practical Training

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Volume II. Athens: Benaki Museum

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## Exercise

1. Mention some of the earliest examples of embroidery.....
2. Mention some tools that are needed for embroidery.....
3. Mention the most important techniques of embroidery.....
4. What is a koshula? : a. dress b. blouse c. chemise
5. What is a saya?: a. dress b. vest c. coat



# ASSESSMENTS

1. What are the most important characteristics of Embroidery? Give examples
2. What are the basic techniques of Embroidery? Give examples.
3. Can you find similarities among embroideries of Balkan countries? Give examples.
4. Please find, if it is possible, traditional embroideries from your family and friends, photograph them and make a small exhibition



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