INdIAN NOrrHERN REGION OLD HERRITAGE HAND EMBROIDERY MANUFACTURING TECHNIQUES

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ABSTRACT
The embroidery handicrafts of a country reflect its rich cultural and artistic history and are an important part of that country’s economy. Embroidery Handicraft: Artists and craftspeople use a variety of methods and beautiful, colorful designs to create the most interesting of art. In rural and semi-urban areas, the embroidery craft employs a large number of artisans. It also contributes to the preservation of culture. Handicrafts are essential to the preservation of a country’s cultural identity, and can also be viewed as works of art in their own right. These works of art are often viewed as pieces of nostalgia, providing a connection to the past that can be shared by those who appreciate and admire them. Every state in India has its own textile handicraft. In this paper, only the ancient textile embroidery of the Northern Region has been discussed, in which the history of embroidery, the craftsmen who make it, the fabric, the color of the thread, and the motifs have been told. The Northern Region’s ancient textile embroidery is, Kashidkari from Jammu and Kashmir, Chambal Rumal from Himachal Pradesh, Phulkari from Punjab, and Chikankari from Uttar Pradesh. These embroidery pieces are also very expensive because they are only made by skilled artisans. In addition to being expensive, these embroidered items are also labour intensive and time consuming.

1. INTRODUCTION
Indian heritage, which includes Indian culture and embroidery, is the most diverse than that of any other country in the world. Indian culture includes various religious and moral values that are not found in any other country. Each state has its own distinct culture, traditions, and religion, which play a significant role in distinguishing the country from others, and the culture provides diversity that cannot be found elsewhere Jaitly (2007). Indian culture and Indian art forms, especially Indian embroidery, are famous for their originality and uniqueness.
Indian culture includes various festivals like Diwali, Eid, Baisakhi, Onam, Christmas, etc. Indian culture includes the archaeological creativity found in temples and monuments, Indian dance forms, and ethnic wear found in different states across the country. Indian ancient texts, different languages, diverse food styles, and, most importantly, Indian embroidery, which is unlike any other art form. Embroidery is an artistic way of expressing oneself and a way to make things look good. It can be used to decorate things like bed covers, furniture, bathroom accessories, clothing, and woven fabrics Shafi et al. (2021). Almost anything made of cloth can be embroidered to make the surroundings more interesting. Regional and cultural differences can easily be seen in each region’s unique style, which is made up of a variety of threads, colors, and patterns that have links to nature, religion, and the daily lives of the people. These things reflect their culture and way of life. When you think of embroidery, India, China, and Iran are the first to come to mind Naik & Vastrad (2008).

India is an ethnically diverse country, a center of culture, and a special place for craft techniques. Additionally, the handicraft sector is widespread across the world in both urban and rural locations. It represents the aesthetic, traditional, and sculpture-loving Indian lifestyle and is a very labor-intensive, cottage-based, decentralized enterprise. Indian weavers, craftsmen, and textile designers have long been praised for their use of eco-friendly, natural materials. Craftsmen create a variety of items that showcase their creativity, taste, and skill Abisuga-Oyekunle & Fillis (2017). Handicrafts are as diverse as the Indian community itself. India’s traditional arts and crafts come in a variety of forms, such as paintings, ceramics, home decor, clothing, needlework, and jewellery with intricate patterns and designs. The traditions of poetry, dance, music, sculpture, architecture, carpentry, metallurgy, craft, painting, and embroidery are reflected in the textiles and crafts of India. The crafts industry is the largest contributor to the Indian economy in terms of job creation and export profits, so the Government of India has launched various initiatives in various district clusters to create craft centers to support rural development.

This review paper is all about the traditional embroidery techniques of the Indian subcontinent, which are well-known around the world.

The 3rd century marks the beginning of Indian embroidery history. Megasthenes, a traveler and historian, records evidence of this. In the designs, he draws attention to symbols such as the poplar leaf, lily, saffron flower, and local fauna of Kashmir. Indian embroidery differs from other needlework in that it uses naturally dyed threads. There is a wide range of designs as a result of regional variations Tyagi (2012).

Indian embroidery reflects the cultural traditions of the people of India. Traditional embroidery is a highly specialized art, created by artisans with intricate knowledge in a particular field. The artisans have a sense of color and design that never fades. Indian embroidery art is widespread, and its harmony and grace never fail to elevate the art to the pinnacle of creativity. Traditional embroidery, still found in the country, is handcrafted, especially by rural women working from their homes, which helps supplement the family income. The embroideries include figures of animals and birds such as elephants, horses, and peacocks, as well as flowers and leaves such as lotus, lily, cypress, and poplar. The artisans are also inspired by fruits such as mango, which they recreate in artistic shapes Singh & Rani (2021), Dhingra & Bhandari (1998).

In the present study, traditional embroidery techniques that belong to the age-old heritage of India and are from different Northern regions of India have been
discussed. This review paper depicts the traditional process and methods of the embroidery-making process.

The embroidery art form is performed all over India, with each region having its own distinctive features. States Punjab are known for their tribal influence, while states such as Delhi, Kashmir, Lucknow, and Hyderabad owe their heritage to court patronage with embroidery done in silk, gold, and silver. India can be divided geographically into four regions: North, East, South, and West, with each region having its own distinctive feature, be it in the form of culture or art. In the paper, it is argued that while Northern Indian embroidery is ancient in origin, it has remained relevant and popular throughout history due to its intricate details, vibrant colors, and ability to tell stories of the past.

2. EMBROIDERY OF NORTHERN REGION OF INDIA

Northern Indian embroidery is renowned for its beauty and intricacy, with pieces created using a variety of colourful thread, fabric, sequins, and beads.

2.1. NORTHERN REGION

The states included in this region include Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh. The culture and heritage found in this region are a blend of natural beauty, particularly in Kashmir and Punjab, which have witnessed various empires such as the Mughals, Turkish, Arabic, and Roman invaders, the traces of which can still be seen in this state. Haryana is the most agriculturally advanced state, Agra is known for its tourist attractions due to its monuments, and Uttar Pradesh is famous for its beautiful architecture, temples, and carpet-weaving cottage industries. Each state is also known for its diverse textiles and embroidery art forms, which set it apart from the rest of the world. Kashmir is known for its shawls; Punjab is known for Khaddar, Varanasi is famous for Brocade; and Banaras is famous for Zamdani. Similarly, there is embroidery, which shows its speciality in different states.

2.1.1. JAMMU AND KASHMIR KASHIDA EMBROIDERY

Kashmiri embroidery is known as Kashida or Kashmiri kadhai. It is as beautiful as Kashmir. Kashida is an exquisite type of hand embroidery. This includes Jamwar, Sojani, and Aari’s works. Kashida is a cottage industry that provides employment to almost all the family members living close to Srinagar. Amazingly, men have historically been the ones practicing this type of commercial art, which has since become a father-to-son tradition. The boys of the family, who are between the ages of seven and eight, begin their Kashida work on inexpensive shawls with a very basic stem stitch and initially by outlining them, repeating the motifs on smaller samples. Continue to develop skills. He gains mastery of craft ability, hand, delicacy, and prophecy by the age of sixteen. His ability to do fine work on pashmina and Shahtosh shawls would be recognized after almost twenty years of continuous practice Naik (1996). Women do work, but they are able to complete relatively less work. Dealers fulfil orders by supplying fabric and designs. Although the craftsman can choose from a variety of threads and color schemes. Pastel shades and delicate motifs of flower creepers and thin chinar leaves are embroidered in Kashida. Before starting embroidery work on the selected design, it is traced on the fabric. These designs are traced on fabric by professional tracers called maquash bands. The cloth is covered...
with a perforated design sheet, which is stamped with charcoal or chalk powder to leave an impression Saraf (1987).

**Figure 1**

![Aari Work Done on a Woollen Shawl](image1.jpg)

Various types of wool, such as Pashmina, Shahtoosh, and Aslitus, are used in the production of embroidery fabrics; when used for embroidery, they are usually white or cream in color. Mill-dyed fabric in darker shades like black, navy blue, brown, bottle green, maroon, and so on; silk; cotton, chinon, and linen fabric are also popular these days.

Earlier, fine quality woollen yarns were used for embroidery, but today they are replaced by rich and lustrous silk threads. Silk threads are expensive; therefore, today's art silk (rayon) is used, which is less expensive. Brightly colored cotton threads with good colourfastness are also used. There are various shades of bright and light colors that are used in this embroidery. Scarlet red, blue, crimson red, purple, black, yellow, green, and brown. Earlier, the yarns were dyed with indigenous natural colors. Mills now use yarns dyed with synthetic dyes.

**Figure 2**

![Show the Aari Work on Woollen Shawl and Flowers Motifs Used in Aari Work](image2.jpg)
A simple running stitch is used to achieve the woven design effect on the shawl. The stem stitches are usually used in a darker shade, outlining the shape, and giving it shape. Darning stitch is used to finish the shawl’s herringbone; Doriya (open work) and Tolai bar (gold work) are also widely used to embellish the shawls. The single stitch style is considered the signature style of Kashida embroidery. Apart from this, there are many other stitches like satin stitch, herringbone stitch, stem stitch, chain stitch, knot stitch, and many more that have been creatively implemented. Although these stitches are not applied more than twice, there are many other internal ones Ahmad (2016).

Figure 3

The diverse flora and animals of the Kashmir region are reflected in the designs employed in Kashida. Birds like the magpie and the kingfisher, as well as flowers, butterflies, maple leaves, almonds, cherries, grapes, and plums, are common motifs. A common motif on shawls that have been embroidered comes from cypress cones Muzammi et al. (2021)

Use

- Kashmiri embroidery is primarily done on shawls and regional garments like phiran.
- Chain stitch embroidery is done on woolen floor rugs called Gabbas and Namdas.
- Nowadays, Kashida is also used to decorate household items like bed covers, cushion covers, lampshades, bags, and other accessories and various designers apparel.
2.2. HIMMACHAL PRADESH CHAMBA RUMAL

Chamba Rumal embroidery is famous for its uniqueness and stitching. Also, the inclusion of religion, mythology, and dedication adds to the importance of this artwork. This form of art has been common in the northern hills for a very long time—roughly since the 16th century. Chamba town is situated on the right bank of the Ravi river. It is one of the century's oldest former princely states. Rumal embroidery was prevalent at that time not only in Chamba but also in nearby areas like Bilaspur, Kangra, Jammu, Nurpur, Mandi, and Basohli. But most of the handkerchiefs discovered by art historians were from Chamba; thus, he was given the label "Chamba Rumal Agrawal & Mankar (2015)."

Additionally, Chamba stands out because of its exclusivity and uniqueness in the field. These are miniature objects of fine or coarse cloth exquisitely embroidered with vibrant unbleached silk thread in the shapes of squares, rectangles, and circles. Handkerchiefs were once embroidered in women's homes and used to cover offerings to gods and goddesses. They were also given and received as gifts during festivals and important events. The embroidered handkerchief, which was usually kept in the girl's dowry by her parents, also played an important role in the marriage. There are two types of napkins: folk and classical, of which the latter has a close association with reliefs and Pahari paintings Arora et al. (2014). The first step in making a napkin is to sketch the general layout of the chosen subject. Drawing and sewing were once exclusively the domain of women, but as paintings became more popular, people began to draw inspiration from them, turning the traditional handkerchief style into a classical one. In this instance, the outlines were drawn by painters, giving a sense of sophistication and grandeur to this art form. The most prosperous period for Chamba Rumal was the 17th century, during the rule of Raja Umaid Singh. Various tribes of Himachal Pradesh wear heavily embroidered garments.
Chambal Rumal requires very fine cotton or tussar cloth; unbleached, handwoven, or khadi cloth is used to give the cream and coloured textured effect. Two types of unbleached cotton cloth are used. The first unbleached cotton fabric made in Sialkot, Amritsar, and Ludhiana is a light, fine, delicate cambric. The second variety is a thick, fairly heavy kadar that is hand-spun and hand-woven. Usually, the women of Himachal Pradesh make designs or motifs by hand or by tracing. Traditionally, charcoal was used to trace the design, but oil is now also used. Untwisted silk floss, also known as "pat," is used to fill the gaps in the threads used to make Chamba Rumal.

Figure 5

Women occasionally dyed their silk threads, choosing tones and colors according to their preferences. Violet, bright pink, orange, carmine, deep reddish brown, lemon, and deep yellow, as well as dark green, parrot green, ultramarine, Persian blue, black, and white, are the colors that can be seen in Chamba needlework. Krishna is always shown in blue, with red feet and the chest of a bear. Red, blue, and white colors are used for Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwar, respectively. The gopis are depicted in vibrant colors such as yellow and green, deep pink, or red.

Double stitches are used in embroidery to create a reversible effect on both the right and wrong sides of the fabric. It is done so finely that not only is the background barely visible, but it is also very difficult to identify the right side since the work is never started with a knot but with a back stitch and the threads have never been joined by knots. It was also observed that in some of the old wall hangings, chain stitch was used for both filling and outlining, in which case the right and wrong sides of the work were clearly identified. However, chain stitch was not used on rumals. Gujjar women occasionally employed satin and herringbone stitches in their darning.

Usually the motifs and designs used in chamba rumal are taken from 'Pahari Painting' which has themes like the Puranas, Ramayana, and Mahabharata. Bagh,
Rasmandala, and the Battle of Kurukshetra are time-consuming embroidery projects. Scenes from Lord Krishna's life are also included. In addition, there are symbolic animal motifs such as leaping tigers and running goats. Emotions are represented by motifs such as galloping horses, flying rams, deer, cows, calves, horses, elephants, and birds. Rumal has 2 to 3-inch floral bodies on all four corners. The rumal's centre features a creeper motif with guldasta in the corners. Sometimes the complete rumal has an animal motif; the cypress tree is also widely used. Flute and tambura are two examples of musical instruments. Drums and veenas are also used in the art Ahluwalia (1998).

2.3. PUNJAB PHULKARI EMBROIDERY

The traditional embroidery of Punjab is Phulkari. 'Phool' means flower, and 'Kari' means work or the technique by which it is done. Phulkari's lineage has not been identified. It is believed to have originated during the Mughal period when there was a massive influx of flowers from Central Asia and Persia. Phulkari finds mention in Waris Shah's famous Punjabi folk tale Heer Ranjha (a love story). This is done with bright colors on shawls, dupattas and dresses. Phulkari is used on everyday clothes, but clothes worn on special occasions are heavily embroidered, this type of embroidery is known as Bagh. Bagh is a vernacular term which means garden, used to describe a style of embroidered fabric. Bagh is a generic term meaning "garden" and is used to talk about a style of embroidered fabric. Bagh Phulkari is also worn on the shoulders of brides during Lavan (a sacred sermon of Guru Granth Sahib). Silk thread is used to sew on the hand-spun cloth (khaddar), which shimmers as the bride walks. The records of that time tell how the common women celebrated and what they saw, heard, or thought at that time. The designs and patterns show what they did every day, what they had, what they believed, and how creative they were.

Figure 6

Figure 6 Sanchi Phulkari Made up in 20 Century (East Punjab) Graham (2004)
In Punjabi culture, when a daughter is born, the women of the family immediately start making beautiful phulkari. These Phulkaris will be worn during their wedding. The unembroidered garment was an important part of a girl’s material possessions, and it was also a way for Punjabi women to express their feelings and thoughts. Punjabi girls learned embroidery from their mothers at a young age. When she had daughters of her own, she taught them the same skill, continuing the tradition of phulkari, which has become a prominent part of Punjabi culture Hitkari (1980). According to different occasion they are wear type of Phulkari.

Technically, it is a design made on "khaddar" (handspun cotton cloth) with "dhabh-taropa" (dorn stitch) in "pat" (silk floss). Two or three pieces of cloth (wrap) were sewn together to form a "chadar." The combination of motifs, techniques, and colors of the three folk embroideries makes them easy to identify. Hand-spun and hand-woven Khaddar material is used for Phulkari. Basically, three types of handwoven fabric are used: Khaddar, which is loosely spun and coarsely woven; Chaunsa Khaddar, which is woven from fine yarn, and which is generally used for the fabric of bags. The third type of material is halwan, a lightweight fabric finely woven that is used exclusively for phulkari. Khaddar cloth is very strong and durable. Khaddar is used for phulkari as it makes embroidery easier. Phulkari involves counting the threads, and the coarse weave makes it easy to dye this Khadar material with the help of natural dyes. The ground color of the cloth was always "Nabhi" (a form of red), and every color looked good on this color.

Colors like black, brown, blue, and green are also used as base colors in phulkari. Before being given to "Rang-rez" (the dyer), the name of a family member was written at the end of a piece of cloth Tiwari & Kashyap (2022).

Phulkari was traditionally made from two types of thread: pat (without silk floss) and white cotton thread. The pat is called "Suchcha Dhaga" (pure thread). It is sold as "lachi" or "gutti," and because it is expensive, it is sold per tola (a traditional South Asian unit of mass).

Systematically dyeing the original fabric with kikkar (babul bark) and manjishtha (Indian madder) resulted in dark brown or red hues. The silk floss used in Phulkari Bagh and Chop. The silk floss is carefully folded with the wrong side out and washed in water with salt or vinegar, as using harsh detergents will bleed the color. In Dera Ghazi Khan (now in Pakistan), Amritsar, or Jammu, silk floss was traditionally dyed with majith red or indigo.

Darning stitch is used in both phulkari and bagh, but stitch length varies in both types. The standard length of stitches is half an inch to a fourth of an inch. Because each thread in the ground cloth is raised from the reverse side, almost no background material is visible. The background is completely covered with untwisted silk floss, which also serves as the body. Long and short daring stitches are used on the wrong side of the khaddar to outline the borders and marketing areas. Stem, chain, and herringbone stitches are used, and the edging is done by buttonhole Dutta & Bansal (2022).

Motifs used are geometrical patterns, floral designs are used for bagh. Motifs from everyday life are also taken. To create complex patterns, simple geometric shapes like triangles, squares, rectangles, and vertical and horizontal lines are used. Stylized motifs such as parrot, lotus or rolling pins. A variety of flowers like lotus, cotton and sunflower are also embroidered. Domesticated and royal creatures including cows, buffaloes, goats, cats, rats, donkeys, rabbits, pigs, frogs, tortoises, camels, and horses, as well as birds like hens, chickens, sparrows, pigeons, crows,
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and owls. Along with it household articles like utensils, rolling pin, brass urn, and pitcher are also used Kaur (2021).

2.4. UTTAR PRADESH CHIKANKARI EMBROIDERY

One of the significant sub-sectors of the Indian handicraft industry is Chikankari embroidery. Chikankari stitching is famous around the world for its fineness, delicacy, and elegance. Chikankari is one such embroidery technique in which fine white cotton fabric and white cotton thread are used. Shadow work is another name for Chikankari. In short, the Persian word "Chiken" is the source of the English word "chicken." Chikankari needlework was traditionally done on muslin, which is a fine cotton muslin. Due to the scarcity of muslin, the work is currently done with contrasting-colored threads on fabrics made of cotton, wool, chiffon, crepe, organdy chiffon, and silk. The history of embroidery was influenced by the elaborate carving patterns of the period used in Mughal architecture. Chikan art in Lucknow dates back over 200 years and was later supported by the Nawabs. Chikankari needlework is done in 5,000 houses in and around the villages of Lucknow. The craftsmen are from the Muslim minority community of the neighborhood. Women work professionally in Chikankari to the extent of 90%. Other centers of Chikankari work are in Delhi and Mumbai Sharma & Thatte (2021).

Chinkankari embroidery is traditionally done on a background of white muslin. In recent years, Chikan work has been combined with other types of embellishments, such as Mukash work, in which small pieces of flat wire are inserted into the fabric. This is mostly seen in Zardozi embroidery, as well as the use of beads and mirrors in addition to the traditional thread embroidery. Chikankari embroidery is done today on a wide range of fabrics, like cotton, semi-georgette, cotton blends, silk, chiffon, and organdy. These fabrics are lightweight, which makes the embroidery stand out.

Traditionally, cotton thread is used to create chikankari embroidery patterns on fabric. Chikankari embroidery is also done with golden zari, silver zari, woolen, and silk multicolored threads. In the past, this embroidery was done with white cotton threads that were not twisted. White cotton threads were mostly used on a semi-transparent muslin cloth. Today, it is done with a variety of bright and soft-colored threads Khalifa (2018).

The thirty-two (32) stitches used in chikankari are variations of six basic stitches: Bakhiya is first, followed by Murri, Tepchi, Phanda, Katav, Khatwa and Jaali. The most difficult and complex stitch is Jaali, which involves removing the warp and weft threads from the surface fabric.

**Tepchi:** On the right side of the fabric, a long running or darning stitch is made with six threads, crossing four threads, and raising one. Hand embroidery is an art and a skill. So, a row is created. It is mainly used as a foundation for more sewing and, on occasion, to create straight shapes. Its other name is "Taipchi" or "Tipkh" stitch.

**Bakhiya:** The top stitch in chikankari is called bhakia, which translates as "shadow work." Bakhiya stitch is sometimes called "shadow work" because it creates a shadow on the right side when embroidered on the other side of a chikankari kurta, saree, or dupatta.

**Hool:** A delicate detachable eyelet stitch is used. The fabric is pierced, and the threads are separated. Then, it is secured with small, straight stitches that are sewn with the same thread all the way around the right side of the fabric. This can be done with up to six threads and often serves as the center of the flower.
**Murri:** In chikan work motifs, it is a type of stitch used to embroider the center of flowers. Typically, they are rice-sized French knots. Murri is the oldest and most valuable form of chikankari. This stitch is becoming less common due to the decline in the number of craftsmen doing this embroidery.

![Figure 7 Various Designs of Mango Motifs in Chinkankari Embroidery](image)

**Jali:** This stitching ensures that the back of the garment has the same impeccable appearance as the front, as the thread is never pulled through the fabric. After careful separation of the warp and weft threads, the material is stitched with small buttonholes.

Motif mostly used flowers, foliage, creepers, flowering streams, fruits like mango, almond birds like peacock and parrot. Generally, motifs are picked from nature. Ghaspatti, belbuti, paisley etc Chaudhary et al. (2022).

3. CONCLUSION

The craft of embroidery involves using different types of threads to create attractive patterns on fabric. Embroidery is the art of using stitches as a decorative feature on fabric or other materials. Beads, sequins, and other materials are also used in the embroidery. The art of embellishing fabric with motifs, patterns, and abstract designs is known as embroidery. The type of embroidery depends on the fabric that serves as its foundation. Brijbhushan (1990)

India has a lot of different embroidery styles that are used in different places and with different materials. India has a strong, elegant embroidery heritage. Each Indian state and region have its own distinct style of embroidery. Needlework is not only used to decorate clothing but also to tell stories of society through motifs drawn from the natural world, religious inscriptions, the state of the economy, etc. Embroidery in India started in BC. The embroidery of ancient times still plays a very important role. Each state has its own unique embroidery technique, which is a source of income for the people there, whereas in ancient times artists used to express their thoughts, wishes, and dreams through embroidery on cloth. The natural beauty of Jammu and Kashmir can be seen in the Kashidakari embroidery. Religious motifs from the Puranas, Vedas, Mahabharata, and Ramayana can be found in Himachal Pradesh's Chambal handkerchief embroidery. Many geometric motifs and floral motifs can be found in this garden-themed Phulkari embroidery from the state of Punjab. Chikankari is a traditional embroidery technique practiced in
northern India, primarily in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Most of the motifs in chikankari embroidery are taken from nature, like parrots, mangoes, flowers, etc. All of this embroidery has been done since ancient times. These traditional styles of embroidery are not just popular for their intricate patterns and designs but also for their rich cultural heritage. This form of embroidery has long been associated with India's royalty and aristocracy, but it has become much more accessible to the general public in recent times. Vandana. (2018)

This paper is entirely devoted to northern embroidery, a practice that dates back to antiquity. The origins of Kashidakari, Chambal Rumal, Phulkari, and Chikankari embroidery are explained. Moreover, the evolution of these embroidery techniques is discussed in detail, along with their significance and current cultural relevance. Throughout this paper, a brief history of northern Indian embroidery is provided to give the reader context for understanding its development and purpose. Northern Indian embroidery is a practice that has been passed down through generations and has played a significant role in the culture of India Northern Indian embroidery is a complex and beautiful form of art that has survived through the centuries. Sattar (2022)

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS
None.

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