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# W E A V E R



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The publication is devoted entirely  
to the Macedonian weaving trade.





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## **ABOUT**

"The Weaver" is a project that contributes to the improvement of capacities, standards, and accessibility in the protection of cultural heritage.

The vision is the presentation and popularization of the cultural heritage and its protection of the Macedonian weaving trade.



## OVERVIEW

The rugs were made to isolate the cold and moisture from the floor, often made of clay in the country houses.

The weaver chooses a suitable material for the various needs and fills the fabrics with a technique for achieving more excellent softness, warmth, stiffness, or decorative effect.

By mastering the technological skill, the aesthetic moment in the fabrication of the material is enriched, and new forms, motifs, and compositions are born.

The centuries-old experience of a certain period of living and folk aesthetics has led to primary typological forms, which have become national characteristics without being completely original.



The textile skills have been passed on from generation to generation in the circle of the family. The girls grew up around the elders. From small children, they helped prepare the materials and took part in the fabrication of the fabrics. Even the maids were weaving.

The emotional experiences of the weaver - her longing for home attractiveness and coziness and the songs and fairy-tales - have contributed to the weaver's skill to grow to the level of artistic activity. By its size, massiveness, continuity in its traditions, and artistic values, famous creative weaving is the first-rate art of folk songs and dances.

Macedonian bedding and floor fabrics are characteristic features - the ongoing preservation of traditions - many times are the same compositions and decorative motifs for centuries.

Many decades ago, the decorative principle was preserved in many examples of similar comparisons found in many medieval churches, especially on the ground floor as covering.

There are hundreds of different ornaments, one of which is met in the last century and now on some carpet rugs, pillows, and aprons, which speaks of the people's prosperity. Those images were established already as "classic" decorative systems.



This observation of the traditional models, which are characteristic of the folk arts, is found in the presently produced bedding fabrics. There is also a personal contribution to the performance, a particular compositional or colorful nuance. There are rarely identical patterns performed by the same master or in neighboring villages.

In general, the compositional system of the folk fabrics is rhythmic and geometrically ornamental, with symmetrical constructions. This decorative geometry resembles the decoration of the Neolithic and Slavic ceramics.

Decorative motifs in more sophisticated fabrics also have pure geometric structures or represent geometrized stylized plant elements. The geometry is due to the technique of making the folk fabrics, which is manual.

Besides stylized birds, other animal motifs are unknown in material ornamentation. The figure is rarely used. The apparent nature of the genre is alien to the people's decoration and the folk decorative vision. And the most elaborate compositions are not exploited, nor baroque and realistic like the eastern carpets. Still, they preserve their geometrically, rhythmically, and symmetrically distinct structures. The logical connection is found in the geometrized system and the architectural interior in the past and modern times.



At first, all decorative fabrics, including bedding, needed for the household were made of family members. At this early stage in the development of the domestic industry, the creative process was continuous and combined. Later, the better, the more skillful, and the more creative artists specialized in their work in a branch of folk art and so on; Artistic crafts were being created. The work of the craft was directed to public service, and it produced commodity value. Specialists carried out individual production processes. As a result, the profession gained more remarkable finesse. All production activities were managed by the publicly recognized master- the weaver.

Skopje, Prilep, Ohrid, Dojran, later in Pehcevo, Berovo, Veles, Strumica, Debar, and other cities and villages are a true mass artisan and artistic flourish. The geographic conditions of the country and the social-economic development of the Macedonian people in the wake of the Turkish Empire helped develop the artistic fabrics. The vast meadows became stimulating pastures: mountain meadows allowed for the cultivation of a large variety of wool. That is the material from which the bedding and rugs were made. Two kinds of wool were used: a sheep-draped sheepskin in the spring and the tanning of the skins, a tabby.







Another general feature of the Macedonian bedding fabrics and rugs is their creative and executive immediacy, sincerity and purity of choices, compositions, and bright color - the result of the insights of national psychology. The works have an intimate and primitive character. They bring the charm of the close, unadjusted creative vision.

The people's fabrics of execution and purpose are accessible to other people. However, some carpet specimens speak of the pursuit of splendor. Therefore, the models expand to impressive formats in more elaborate solutions to satisfy the solemn architectural setting and more prosperous social class in these exceptional cases.

The wool is spilled on a shaft after being washed and dried. Until the introduction of mechanical ability, this was done by hand contributors. The undulating wool would shrink on a hook. In addition to spinning, the spinning was carried out on a wheel called a spinner. The advantage of the fact is that besides fast-spinning, two yarns could also be twisted, thus giving the yarn greater strength.

The second most important material used in the bedding was the coat. From it, the base was prepared. The coat was processed as in the wool. In the coat, which had a higher edge than the tabby wool, a special way of spinning a weft was applied. The woman would ease a slightly shaken wave with her left hand, and on the right, she would scroll the spindle with a twist to twist the thread. As a result, a comparatively thicker thread was obtained, which was preferred for weft.



The third material was cotton. Because of its significantly superior qualities (thin and uniform thread) and more excellent resistance to atmospheric influences since the end of the last century was used as the basis of almost all bedding fabrics.

Hemp is the fourth most crucial material used in bedding and floor fabrics. Well-dried hemp stems were soaked in water to soften. Then they were dried, and the "ringing" would begin. A particular wooden device chopped the stalks to break down into separate fibers. The material thus prepared would go astray.



Today, all fabrication is done with machined materials, but some women choose to do it by hand. This way ensures a quality, uniform thread thickness reflected in the fabrics' quality, smoothness, and durability.





# *"Tajane - Bojane"*

"Tajane "- the most famous custom of **Ivan's Day**, associated with the birth of John The Baptist (July 7/ June 24)- is a Macedonian Orthodox holiday that marks the custom associated with the summer ritual feasts. It is tied with picking flowers and knitting them in wreaths and tassels.

"Tajane "symbolizes the day when the Sun begins to shine, and from the customs that are performed on this day, those related to the plant fern are more striking. On the evening before the feast, the fern is taken. This is connected with the belief in its apotropaic power. The fern is placed on the bed, floor. Early in the morning on the day **Ivanden**, wreaths are put in the gardens to keep them from various diseases, natural disasters, and other accidents and misfortunes.

Fern, lavender, and other herbs, women place them between clothes and rugs for the whole year against insects, moths, and rats. Then, in the early morning of **Ivanden**, the clothes, beddings, and rugs are placed on the rustic balconies, on the Sun till noon. The belief is that they will be protected again against the moths. That is a good way for unmarried women to show theirs hard work and wealthy status as wellbeing, health, and prosperity will last in their homes.

## COLORING

The oldest fabrics were probably made with the natural color of wool. There was a reasonably rich palette of natural wool. Woven fabrics made of wool with natural colors can be seen today in Eastern and Western Macedonia villages and towns. The particular value of these materials lies in their soft tone harmonies.

In folk weaving practice, the colored fabrics predominate. Their aesthetic value depends to a large extent on the qualitative coloring. The resulting colors should have allowed them to be grouped into harmonious colors. Dyes should be weather-resistant and washable. Therefore, a lot of attention has been paid to the yarn coloring for bedding and flooring.

Two ways of coloring are known: natural and chemical dyes (with the development of the industry, synthetic dyes appear, which are drastically criticized for their lower quality, aggressiveness, and strong shades). Natural dyes are taken out of nature. To obtain the colors, peels or roots of certain herbs were added, as follows: walnuts (dark brown-black); indigo for blue color; onion for yellow-brown shades:

- Orange: Carrots, gold lichen, onion skins,
- Brown: Dandelion roots, oak bark, walnut hulls, tea herbs, coffee, acorns,
- Pink: Berries, cherries, red and pink roses, avocado skins, and seeds,
- Blue: Indigo, red cabbage, elderberries, red mulberries, blueberries, purple grapes, dogwood bark,
- Red-brown: Pomegranates, beets, bamboo, hibiscus (reddish color flowers), bloodroot
- Grey-black: Blackberries, walnut hulls, iris root,
- Red-purple: Wild berries, basil leaves, daylilies, pokeweed berries, huckleberries.



- Green: Artichokes, sorrel roots, spinach, peppermint leaves, snapdragons, lilacs, grass, nettles, plantain, peach leaves
- Yellow: Bay leaves, marigolds, sunflower petals, St John's Wort, dandelion flowers, paprika, turmeric, celery leaves, lilac twigs, Queen Anne's Lace roots, mahonia roots, barberry roots, yellowroot roots, yellow dock roots

The yarn coloring with natural dyes (except for the red colors) would be performed by every housewife.



No exact recipes existed, but the dye dose for the different colors was experimentally obtained. For the same reason, the color palette of the folk fabrics is not formally established. Various nuances were brought in each coloration. Sometimes, a material was started with one and finished with another shade of the same color.





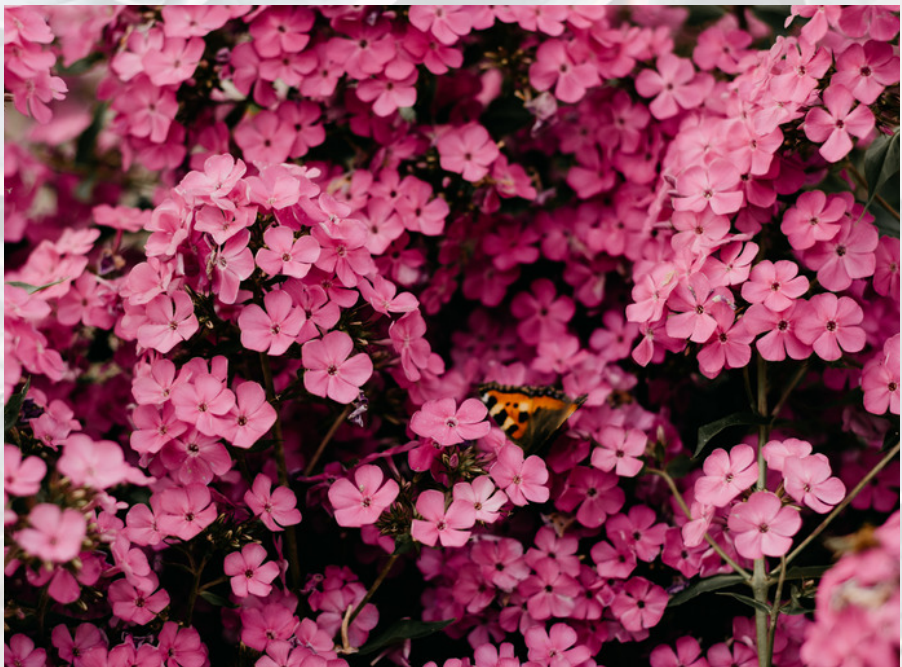
The weaving fabrics from the period of our Renaissance are characterized by various colors derived from natural dyes. In addition to the colors used in the beginning - orange, bright red, wine red, indigo, grass-green, brown and black - additional tones resulting from the consecutive coloring or mixing of several dyes are added to the color enhancement.

At the end of the nineteenth century, natural dyes were shifted from chemicals quickly spread because of easier handling.

The following types of chemical dyes are used: aniline and palatine. With the introduction of chemical coloration in textile production, the face of the bedding fabric also changed: more and more colors were easily and quickly obtained. At the same time, however, the difficulty of harmonizing and bringing the color of the materials into exquisite, soft, and sound colorful values.

Until now, the enthusiasm for the sharp multi-coloring required by chemical dyes has not been experienced. The value of high-fatigue material does not come from the variety and power of colors but their harmonious build and consistency.

It has to be admitted that, although technically more sophisticated, modern bedding fabrics have not yet reached the colorful perfection that we see in natural dyed dyes.



## WEAVING DEVICES

The appliance on which the weaving is carried is called a loom. Depending on the position of the main threads in weaving, we distinguish a horizontal and vertical loom. On the horizontal loom were weaved beddings and carpet rugs and the vertical carpet. A rigorous distinction of this practice is not possible because we weave rugs on a vertical loom, and we have carpets on a horizontal loom. We can assume that both types of looms were known to our ancestors during the creation of the state.

The most prominent application in the production of home bedding fabrics has found the usual horizontal loom. Until recently, there was no Macedonian house without a loom and a woman who could not weave.

The difference between the ordinary horizontal become the vertical carpet loom, in general, is expressed in the following:

- The base at the horizontal loom has a horizontal position.
- The length of the base at the horizontal loom is looped on the rear cross-section, and the vertical (kilimar) flannels around the two crosses.



- The weft in the ordinary loom is completed with a comb along the entire width of the base and in the carpet - with a narrow clump of a few points.
- In ordinary weaving, weaving is done with a shuttle, and in the carpet rug and carpet - by raising the base with fingers and piercing the chin with the threads by hand. From this, it can be considered that the carpet rug and the carpet are more involved with the unarmed hand, the grip, and the artistic understanding of the weaver.



The horizontal loom consists of two wooden rectangular frames elongated in one end and horizontally connected with small boards. The loom has two warp- beams - a front and a back one, as well as all the other instruments necessary for weaving - needles consisting of stitches of strong cotton wool. The loom also has a weaver's reed, through which pass the main threads. There are lots of other devices, such as pulleys, cogs, and pedals.





## MOTIFS & COMPOSITION

A crucial significant feature of Macedonian bedding and flooring fabrics is above all their functionality: as mats, rugs, and blankets to decorate the interior décor. Therefore, decoration is more or less consistent with the whole environment, enriching it without disturbing it in aesthetic terms.

Among the flat white tones on the walls, among the dark colors of the floor and the pale light of the small lattice window, the most striking spots are the rug, the bedclothes, the pillows, and the carpet. Through them, the multicolored wealth of the native nature is transferred to the Macedonian home. It reflects the artistic sense of the people and its sense of rhythm, softness, and rich harmony.

The artistic qualities of Macedonian bedding fabrics, apart from the material, the way of processing, the coloring of yarns, and the weaving technique, are determined mainly by composition, motifs, and colors.

There is a wide variety of motifs and compositional solutions in folk bedding fabrics. But, at the same time, they are built in the strict development of the elements and the composition.

Whether ornamental elements fit nature or have purely geometric shapes, styles are spoken of for themselves in the arts, geometric and natural-style. In this respect, an explanation must be taken of the possibilities of the material and the technique of performance in the various applied arts - ceramics, carving, metal forging, etc. - which impose one or the other style. For example, suppose a ceramic line is easily achieved with the brush or blade. However, it is more challenging to decorate the bent metal. In the case of smooth fabric, it is not possible to obtain circular lines or curved lines. This should be taken into consideration when looking at the decorative elements in the materials.

To understand the ornamental possibilities of the fabric, and hence to explain why in the Macedonian bedding, the geometric style prevails, it is necessary to analyze and follow the stages of execution of the figure, to discover its fundamental elemental way of building the decorative motifs in the rugs and the carpets.

The main decorative element in the colored rug is the strip. It is obtained by weaving a colored weft over the whole width of the base. In rugged rugs, stripping is initially retained. However, the colored wefts in some fields do not pass through the entire width of the base but tear and create separate figures. This produces a rug, which represents a transition from the colored rug to the richer carpeting. There is almost no special treatment in the carpet - the whole field is filled with symbolic motifs in an entirely conceived composition.



The motifs, composition, and color are the three most important components determining the face of the bedding.

The most widespread use in the life of the Macedonian is found in the rug. Due to their simple technical design, the rugs were probably the oldest and most basic household woven fabrics known to the Slavs and the Macedonians. By removing animal skins and mats, the rug, woven from woolen or hemp fibers and later from ragged scraps, laid the foundation for the residential and household culture of all nomadic or sedentary farming and breeding tribes and peoples. In their language, there are definitions of "gypsy," "fox triage," or "royal life." Initially, the rug was just a helpful cloth - rough and monochromatic. However, with the development of a sense of decoration in ceramics, the clothing, the jewelry, and the rug have also acquired their decorative appearance; it has become a human fabric - first as a "colorful rug" and later as a "carpet rug" and a "carpet."



# *"Lito weaving"*

The technique of **lito weaving** with two faces is common in Macedonian carpets. Unlike the surrounding centers, the rugs were made exclusively on horizontal looms. Their narrow base is woven in several folds (pieces), which are then joined, giving the final shape and dimension of the carpet—the process of joining the folds required to master skills from the weavers.

## RUGS & CARPETS

The rug is a product derived from the interlacing of base and weft. Macedonian rugs are rarely single-colored - weathered with a single-colored base and weft. A characteristic artistic feature of the colored rugs is the linear rhythm in their construction, consisting of parallel colored strips. This rhythm results from a simple yet solid and thick weave in straight rows with sequential buckling and wobble weft. As an alternate with a great sense of color combinations of different widths of stripes, the people create remarkable but straightforward colorful and rhythmic wealth and hence the artistic effect of domestic colored rugs.



The earliest evidence of the Slavs' production is given in Poland, a fragment of bed linen with a conspicuous 12th century. If we compare this fabric with Macedonian rugs, we will find similarities. The vicious system of the colored rug is expected in the Slavic and Slav countries.



The extensive and complete study of the linear rhythm, the color combinations, and the ratios in the Macedonian patterned rugs gives an interesting modular system. The famous weavers of sensation build and proportion the rhythmic elements of the rug.

In addition to the weft, the correct can be obtained from alternating colored threads only on the base. This pattern of patterning is characteristic of some fabrics, paths, sacks, and so on.

Mattress fabrics are obtained from alternating colored threads on the base and the weft, are encountered. Typical in this regard are the blankets.

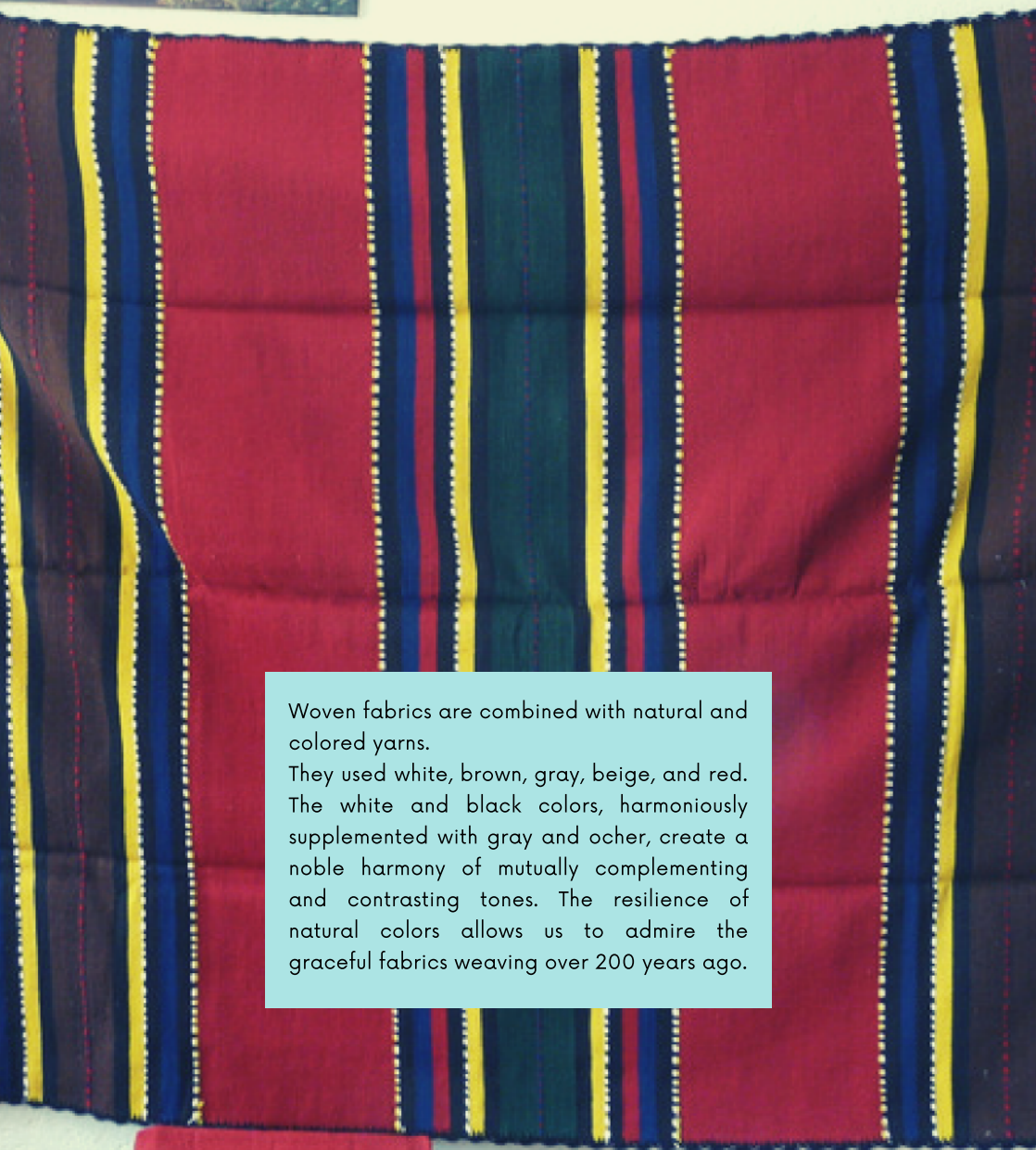
These are the most typical ways for the rhythmic organization of stripes in the Macedonian patterned rug. There are many deviations, which in some cases lead to unrealistic artistic decisions.

The third crucial artistic element in the colored rug is the color. The selection, combination, color participation of the colors, and the intensity of the individual colors influence the aesthetics of the rugs and carpets.

The richest in the harmonious combination of colors are the rugs of yarn dyed with natural dyes. Apart from the contrasting treatment in light and dark, the principle of warm and cold is also covered. The warmest color is the red, the coldest - the blue. This optical effect is conditional because it depends on collating the colors between them. For example, the green pigment in terms of red is cold, but the blue is warm. The contrast of the light and dark strips clarifies the composition, and the warm and cold colors are balanced.







Woven fabrics are combined with natural and colored yarns.

They used white, brown, gray, beige, and red. The white and black colors, harmoniously supplemented with gray and ocher, create a noble harmony of mutually complementing and contrasting tones. The resilience of natural colors allows us to admire the graceful fabrics weaving over 200 years ago.



One principle assists in the harmonious composition of the elements and the other in the equilibrium by color values. To achieve harmony in fabrics of yarns dyed with chemical dyes, the master needed to observe the principle of collective color participation more closely due to the sharpness of the colors.

Only one of the primary colors dominates, and all others are used too sparingly. The color of the older Macedonian rugs is restrained, and in the last two centuries, it is more intense. Most commonly used are white, black, gray, and red. A significant part of the fabrics still preserves the system of combined yarns with natural colors and dyed yarns. The green, yellow, and blue colors are used here, but they are rarely found in the same quantity.

Carved rugs are worked around the country. It is difficult to determine the origin of production. As a lightweight, when migrating the population, they were transported from one place to another.

Typical with the predominantly white color, obtained from the intervals of groups of black, sometimes red stripes, are the "white rugs" made of pure wool or hemp.

A steady rhythm and a specific color are the colored rugs, alternating wide black and yellowish-brown strips.

The fabrics from Eastern Macedonia are more exquisite in rhythmic and colorful terms. Predominant in them are the red and orange colors.

In the colored rugs, despite their elementary technique and decorative system, the Macedonian woman appears as a real artist. She has created some of the most famous and remarkable works of folk art.



## THE MASTERY

As we have seen from the preceding chapters, the artistic value of the fabrics is determined, on the one hand, by the material, the way of processing, the coloring, and the technique of execution and, on the other, the motifs, the composition, and the color, or, in general from the decoration.

Each material, with its specific qualities and features, influenced the decorative pattern of the fabric. Thus, the same ornamental shape, made up of different materials, has a different factual effect and exerts a different aesthetic influence.

Folk artisans have been very familiar with the specifics of the textiles, as they have in most cases processed them, so each material has been applied accordingly. From the coarser materials, they create coarser fabrics with elementary decoration and more elaborate fabrics - rich in motifs, composition, and colorful bedding fabrics.

There is no practice of mixing two techniques in folk bedding, as plastic decoration is not allowed on smooth material. The exception is only some bed covers. Mixing of two techniques occurs in some decorative fabrics intended for a wall. Still, in the flooring, the embossed decoration would impair their functionality - the comfortable step.





Folk artists have very well known for their practical use and the specifics of the material. Material selection, the application of one or another technique, or the decoration of the fabric have come to an end depending on the purpose and place in the interior. But the use of these bedding fabrics in different ages is different. For example, they have fabricated bedding fabrics from the coat, which they have put under the bed instead of the modern mattress. Today in the contemporary architectural environment can be seen such materials used to cover the floor.

Another example is that some rugs, which served mainly as warm blankets and today, cover the floor.

From these examples, it is clear that bedding fabrics cannot be grouped either by material or by the technique of execution, but solely or mainly by their decorative system.

The decoration in bedding fabrics, which is performed simultaneously with the fabric itself, is subordinate to the structural and modular textures of the fabric. Therefore, of particular importance for the creation and development of the decoration is the shape of the material, direction, and trends of movement.

The main shapes in the bedding are the rectangle and partly the square. For rectangles, the direction of movement is in both opposite directions along the length of the rectangles. For the squares in the direction of the weft. For example, the small side (width) is different from the large one in bedding. In the rugs, the ratio of the small side to the long side varies as well 1: 3,1: 5, 1: 7, etc. In the carpet they are considerably closer (smaller) - 3: 4, 2: 3, 1: 2, etc. In the carpet, the curb width is 1: 5, 1: 7, 1: 9, etc.

It is clear from this that the ratio of the width of the fabric to its length and the width of the curb to the width of the central field in the carpet is not random but is subordinate to specific modules. These modular dimensions are essential for determining the size of fabric and developing the decoration.



The decoration in the Macedonian bedding fabrics - colored strips and ornamental motifs - always stand out clearly and categorically. Of particular importance for the harmonic design is the proportioning of the decorative elements to the shape and size of the fabric.

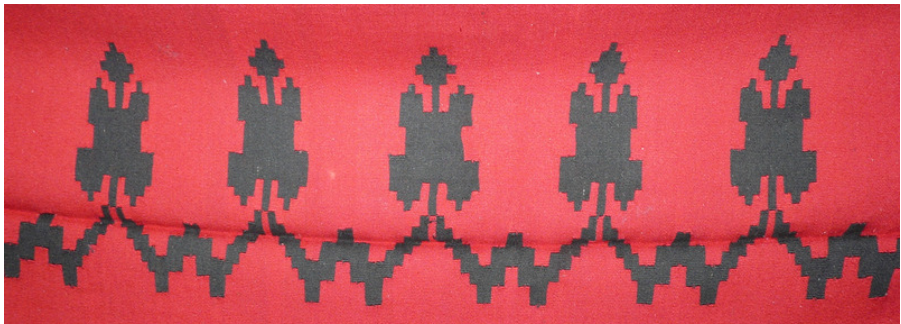
The elements of the Macedonian rugs are medium and moderately large and tend to small modular sizes. This gives a lively and agile rhythm, a "friendly psychological invitation" to step on them. The strips of ordinary colored rugs usually vary between 5-10 cm. Still, they also range from 10 to 20 cm and rarely reach up to 30 cm. Most commonly, the broad stripes alternate with narrower. The lines are not made more expansive in the carpet rugs, and friezes of decorative motifs develop in them. The motifs themselves are usually small, subordinate not to the colored stripes but the rational technological process of execution. In the smooth weaving technique of weaving, the ornamentation is carried out by hand: one hand covers the threads of the base and the other through the open mouth is the weft. The maximum coverage of threads from the base with the fingers of one hand in bedding patterns varies from 6 to 10, rarely up to 15 cm, so the width of elementary geometric motifs does not exceed these dimensions. For reaching a more significant size motif rug, several elements are linked so that the individual shapes retain their magnitude. With the technique tied, the extent of the motives is productive. It depends on the number of knotted knots that are determined by the artist's desire. The magnitude of the individual motif must also be consistent and be in some proportion with the dimensions of the center field.



The motifs performed in Macedonian carpets and rugs are geometric and imaginative. The master made these forms: the rectangle, the triangle, the diamond, and the trapezoid. The skillful combination of these elementary geometric forms has created a variety of motifs. By mastering the technique and increasing the aesthetic vision in the fabrics are implemented motifs taken from nature. The penetration of pictorial motifs into the fabric occurs mainly in two ways. In the first case, which probably dates back to older times, the mechanical connection of several elementary geometric shapes to the original artists has been given a motif that gives some approximate idea of an object or a living being from nature. Later, this resemblance was sought after, and as a result, a pictorial motive was obtained. Examples of motifs in this way are frogs, horses, etc. The second way to create a pictorial motif is to achieve the straightforward take-up by nature with the necessary simplification, leaving the most essential. The object taken from nature is reduced to an elementary image, a sign suitable for execution in the fabric. This creates an imaginary motif through stylization. Examples of such motifs are birds, flowers, plants, trees, human figures, etc. All of this was dealt with in one of the preceding chapters. Here we recall some of these principles to emphasize what has been achieved in the development of the motifs in the Macedonian bedding fabrics while at the same time suggesting some principles that modern artists should develop.

By contrast or polarity, we understand the impact of opposites. Structures and elements of opposites manifest the artistic decorative fabric. In the rhythmic sequence of its elements, contrasting moments are formed. The most characteristic of Macedonian fabrics are the following decorative contrast pairs:

- Contrasts in the direction: up-down and vertically- horizontally.
- Contrast form: dull-sharp.
- Contrast size: long, short, and narrow.
- Light Contrast: black and white and light-dark.
- Contrast consistency: narrow-wide and wild-seldom.



The contrasts in the direction apply equally to both the base and weft in the factual treatment of the fabric (patterned rug) and the composition. In standard smooth techniques, using the colored base and colored wefts, caries are produced. On the other hand, in the quadruple weaving technique, depending on how the base is brought into the shelves and the order of the feet footprints, the wealthiest fabrics are obtained: zigzagging and other drawings.

The principle of contrasts in the direction is vital in building the composition. For example, in the carpet rug, although the alternation of strips and friezes is in the order of the base, the friezes have a wobble motion. In the development of the motif, the tree stem develops along the length of the fabric, while the branches along the width, etc.

The second principle of contrasts in the form of the decorative shaping of fabrics finds the greatest application in carpet rugs - in the formation of friezes.

Light contrast is the most widely accepted principle in all types of bedding fabrics. Thus, one can say one of the essential principles of contrasting pairs: black and white and light-dark. There is no Macedonian bedding in which this principle is not covered in one way or another. It brings the most extraordinary clarity.

The last principle of decorative decoration in the fabrics is narrow and wide, thick and rare. It depends on whether we want to create the impression of a separate motif or to increase the distances between the motives.



We have created a slender composition. For example, as individual diamonds approach, the motif of the "horns" is made up of four or nine grains. Forward movement or approximation of motives is not allowed because there is fragmentation in the first case and in the second - overcrowding.

The weaving technique itself largely determines the symmetrical construction of the ornamental motifs in bedding. The mirror repetition of motifs and friezes is also applied in some carpets, which remains a characteristic style not only for the Macedonian bedding fabrics but also for a significant part of the works of the other parts of the Macedonian folk art.

The other basic principle of arranging the ornamental motifs in decorative fabrics is "free arrangement," asymmetric organization, or, as it is called, "dynamic rotation." With the asymmetrically designed decoration, the dimensions of the individual decorative elements and the spacing between them are not the same. However, this does not mean the chaotic composition of elements because they have to be measured and subjected to optical principles in all cases.

Asymmetry in its pure form has not been applied to Macedonian fabrics. They are affected symmetrically by the system, to a certain extent, by constructing some shapes, colors, and the lightness of the individual motifs. The asymmetric way of organizing the motif finds a great application in modern textile art. The asymmetric organization of the composition is a problem that faces contemporary artists and awaits its creative development. It does not follow from this that the symmetrical building is a principle that belongs to history and that today it should not be applied. We can say that only with the basic knowledge of the common ways of alternation and their creative enrichment, the artist will enter the asymmetry without endangering extreme distortions in the creative activity. From the past to the future, the rhythmic rotation and symmetry in the composition of the fabrics will be retained as a basic principle.

The free organization of the elements in the composition offers great opportunities for creative boldness. Still, it is known that the specialist shows the limitation. Nevertheless, the mastery of composing in the artistic fabrics makes it possible to find the proper size of the motif, to use the tendency of movement, and to organize the individual motifs in such a way as to achieve complete harmony. Another important factor contributing to the artistic value of the fabrics is color.

A major role in the construction of the artistic fabric is making a good selection and harmoniously combining the colors. With color harmony and composition, the embroidery fabric is an artistic work. This decorative panel brings the interior into the interior. An important condition for the harmonious fabrication of the fabric in color is the sub-color and the quantitative ratio of the colors. The most used colors in Macedonian fabrics, as we mentioned, are red, green, ocher, blue and black. The remaining colors are covered as additional and are used with a sense of measure.



## CONCLUSION

The Macedonian people have created a remarkable amount of material, technique, rich in motifs, compositional decisions, and colorful folk art. Many precious models were produced. For centuries, the nation's people have been participating in the cultural heritage, which is the national pride. Its have been established with acquired the right to exist. This art represents a significant share of the Macedonian people's artistic capital as its leading fund into the treasury of world material culture.

There was no direct creative contact between the craftsman and the artist. Folk applied art has never been adequately judged. There have been cases where it has been declared an art of ethnographic value only. The questions of popular aesthetics in the country are not affected. This is precisely one of the difficulties that must be overcome to provide a fuller look at artistic textiles. Typically, the study of folk art has been historically or ethnographically approached. Nevertheless, it is possible to capture the pursuit of the artistic view of folk art as a special kind of creative expression as art.



That is why, in conclusion, we draw attention to those essential principles that reveal the artistic nature of folk textiles. These principles represent the basic alphabet and elementary grammar of the materials. The examination of these traditional principles has been brought to the modern age with new aesthetics, sensitivity, and necessity.







## PRESERVING FABRICS

The storage area should be clean, cool, dry, dark, and as free as possible from drastic changes in temperature and humidity, thus ruling out the basement or attic. It is also best to set aside one drawer or chest of drawers just to store family heirlooms. Here are some specific suggestions:

Textiles should be stored as clean as possible because dust particles can cut fibers through friction and abrasion. Colorfast and washable items should be washed and stored unironed, unstarched, and unblued.

It is preferable to store textiles flat, subject to minimum abrasion, folding, and pressure. If folding is necessary, avoid sharp folds by padding at the points of folds with strips of washed unbleached muslin or old sheets. For maximum preservation, antique textiles, especially cotton and linens, should have no direct contact with wood, blue tissue, regular tissue, or other wrapping paper. Most paper tends to be acidic; acid is especially damaging to textiles. Instead, textiles can be wrapped in clean, white cotton cloth, such as an old sheet or pillowcase or muslin. Because textile fibers need to be in an environment where there is some air movement, fabrics should not be sealed in air-tight plastic bags or containers to prevent damage from moisture condensation.

Stored textiles should not be exposed to light because the natural cellulose fibers (cotton and linen) and animal fibers (silk and wool), of which most antique textiles are made, are damaged by the sun's and indoor fixtures' light rays.

Air conditioning in which the temperature is in the 65-70°F (18-21°C) range and the relative humidity is between 40% and 50% is ideal for textile storage. With these conditions, excessive drying is avoided, and mold and mildew growth caused by excess moisture are discouraged. Mildew and moths can be discouraged in temperate climates by keeping fabrics and their storage places perfectly clean, dry, cool, and regularly aired and inspected.

Use lavender, naphthalene-mothballs, or dry soap for protection against moths and other insects.

Textiles should be removed from storage periodically and aired. If the item has been folded, care should be taken to refold it, changing the position of the folds so that the same fibers are not subjected to the tension of folding, which can cause fiber breakage over a long period.

Avoid folding tapestries and rugs. If a fold is ever necessary, it should be made in the most natural direction for the textile, usually parallel to the weft.

- Reference from the Smithsonian Institution

# *"The Weaver"*

The Macedonian fabrics, created by generations of talented national masters, cleansed and established over the centuries that have reached today, are astonishing testimonies of the people's creative talents and artistic perception. They are the result of stubborn and long-lasting creative work. In them are laid the basic aesthetic principles, which are also very relevant for modern art textiles.

From the correct attitude towards our prosperous textile heritage, the critical utilization of the principles laid down in it and their creative interpretation depend significantly on the development of our contemporary artistic culture.

## MACEDONIA'S LAST WEAVERS

"Wrapping wool fibers in various plants and grasses and then burying them for six months with composted manure." - says Granny Ana, and that's precisely how she and other masters dye their yarns. The resultant colors are spectacular.

An inspiration to all, **Ana Pacemška** (president of the Association of Women Weavers SERAFIM- Berovo) also works with a group of 10-20 women in the small town of Berovo, who have all grown up learning these traditional skills.

Granny Ana uses a range of natural dyeing techniques, such as nettles, walnut shells, and bark, to produce appealing contents of deep, permanent tones for her handwoven products. In addition, she has improved her weaving technics and learned how to wash the fleece of sheep and how to turn it into wool by participating in lessons in Romania.

She even teaches weaving technics to others for the tradition to continue. The products she is making include handmade yambolia, woven scarves, knitwear, recycled woven cotton mats, woven rugs, and felt products. In addition, she is incredibly successful at felting with different styles and techniques.

She has collaborated in the past with different NGOs, embassies, and other government institutions that led her to travel the world and show and sell her work. As a result, tourists from all over to world come to Berovo to buy different products from Granny Ana.







"The majority of the weavers in the past were women, graceful masters who were passing on the tradition on the next generations," - says **Vida Stancheva** from Veles. "Our ancestors, the grannies, were to be commended. They were very diligent in the laborious craft which unfortunately is dying out nowadays."



"I'm not afraid of hard, labor work. Until my stamina keeps me going, I will continue to weave and to teach the younger generations of this genuine craft."

She collaborates with the NGO "Razboj" and government institutions that led her to pass on the tradition to the next generation of weavers. Together, they lead the Museum of Arts (the old school), in Bistrica, a beautiful village near the city of Veles, with huge touristic and cultural possibilities.



















# *"A legend"*

A doctor prescribed legs exercise to an older woman from Veles. To do something about her health, her son built her a loom. Every day, she would sit on the loom and work the pedals. She did become healthy and quite popular as she was making rugs and carpets and selling them.



## "RAZBOJ" ASSOCIATION

### Association for affirmation and presentation of the national trades

Many weaving workshops no longer exist. As a result, the number of women in villages and towns who continue the tradition of weaving products is small - says **Goce Stanchev** (president of the Association RAZBOJ- Veles).

In the past years, the NGO RAZBOJ was the only association in conducting ethno workshops for the younger generations to affirm and present the weaving trade (including the pottery and carpentry trades) in learning the trade and gaining creative skills.

From the primary schools near Veles, 40-50 children are involved in workshops, where they are divided into groups, in the House of Kasapovi in Veles, wherewith a master instructor, they learn the basic skills of the weaving trade.



They explained that the experienced masters of the weaving trade Vida Stanceva, Jana Atanasova, taught students first the theoretical skills of the old Macedonian craft and then practical work, making interesting objects for themselves.

"The goal is to affirm and instill in the young people the love for the old and already forgotten crafts and at the same time for them to get to know and study and at the same time to keep them from oblivion. And maybe some of them we hope will become a future craftsman for one of these crafts for which our success from the workshops will be even greater", Stanchev emphasized.



From the association, the belief is that this dying craft has a lot of potential in our country, for the young generations, from making souvenirs to the everyday use of weaving products and placement of the products globally.

The interest in the weaving trade is enormous. This should be used as the potential of the continuance of this cultural heritage.

Implementing the weaving trade in the educational system is something that the cultural heritage can benefit the most.







## DOCUMENTED PRODUCTS

### *Granny Ana, Berovo*

- Dolls, Christmas and New Year decorations, Jewelry, Bags, Slippers, Baskets

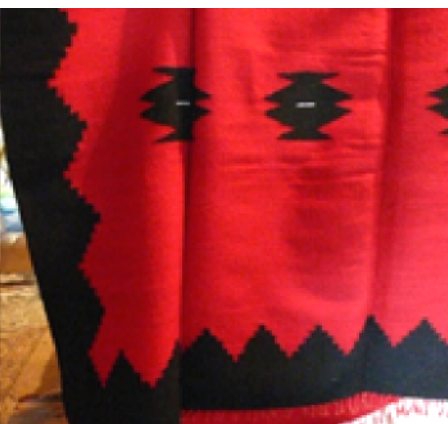


- Rugs and Towels

Rugs dimensions are: 160(165)x200(210), 60(80)x80 and 75x135cm.













*Grannies Jovanka, Lenka & Kalina, Pehcevo*



75x335cm



75x335cm



75x195cm





140x200cm



190x140cm



135x200cm  
Page 52



185x150cm



150x200cm



150x200cm



210x185cm



225x160cm



195x150cm  
Page 54





215x150cm



220x145cm



190x150cm





140x190cm



140x200cm



135x200cm



145x190cm



140x190cm



140x200cm



140x200cm



45x55cm



45x75cm



60x80cm



80x90cm



## *Vida Stancheva, Veles*

Vida Stanhceva weaves on demand.











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