

ANALYSIS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC TYPES OF UZBEK NATIONAL EMBROIDERED HEADDRESSES

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Abstract:

This study analyzes the ethnographic types of traditional Uzbek embroidered headdresses, focusing on their historical, cultural, and regional significance. Special attention is given to women's peshonaband and men's salla from Bukhara, highlighting embroidery techniques such as *zardozi*. The research demonstrates how these headdresses function as cultural identifiers and artistic heritage. Contemporary relevance and preservation efforts are also discussed to underscore their importance in modern Uzbek identity.

Keywords: Uzbek headdresses, *zardozi* embroidery, peshonaband, salla, ethnographic textile, Bukhara, traditional costume.

Introduction

Uzbekistan, a nation rich in cultural heritage and centuries-old traditions, has long been renowned for its exquisite craftsmanship in textile and clothing design. Among its most striking national attire elements are embroidered headdresses, which not only serve as decorative items but also reflect social, ethnic, and regional identities. The diversity of these headdresses across various regions such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva, and Fergana illustrates the depth of Uzbekistan's ethnographic and artistic history. This thesis explores the ethnographic types of Uzbek national embroidered headdresses, their symbolic meanings, materials, forms, and evolution over time. Headdresses have been a significant part of Uzbek traditional dress since antiquity. Historically, they symbolized the wearer's age, marital status, social class, and regional affiliation. In Uzbekistan, national headdresses often include exquisite embroidery, known as *zardozi* – a gold-thread embroidery technique that flourished especially during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The evolution of these headdresses reflects the broader socio-cultural transformations of Uzbek society. During the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanates of Khiva and Kokand, headdresses were not merely functional garments but also expressions of wealth and artistry. Women's and men's headwear, while differing in shape and style, both incorporated intricate embroidery, metallic threads, and symbolic patterns.

Typology of Embroidered Headdresses: Ethnographic classification of Uzbek embroidered headdresses reveals several distinctive types based on gender, age, and regional traditions:



Peshonaband (Forehead Band) – Bukhara, Late 19th to Early 20th Century. The *peshonaband* is a decorative forehead band traditionally worn by women. An exquisite example from the Bukhara region, now preserved in the Bukhara Ark Museum, showcases intricate gold-thread embroidery (*zardozi*) applied onto velvet. These bands were worn across the forehead, often attached to or complementing a larger headpiece. Typically, the *peshonaband* was not only decorative but also symbolic, often given to brides or worn during festive occasions. The embroidered motifs included floral and geometric designs, each bearing specific meanings linked to fertility, beauty, and protection from evil spirits.



Salla (Men's Turban) – Bukhara, 19th Century. The *salla* is a men's turban that gained prominence in Bukhara during the 19th century. These headdresses were often part of formal attire for scholars, spiritual leaders, and nobility. The *salla* shown in the Bukhara Ark Museum is a fine example of *zamindo'zi zar* – a ground-level embroidery technique using gold threads. Such turbans were carefully wrapped and embroidered with stylized ornaments, reflecting the wearer's status and religious affiliations. The *salla* was both a practical and symbolic garment. It provided protection against the harsh Central Asian climate while signaling wisdom and social authority. The embroidery was often done on fine cotton or silk fabric, combining elegance with symbolic gravitas.



Women's Decorative Headdresses.

Ethnographic records (Baxshillo Jumaev 2022) document several types of women's headdresses used in various regions of Uzbekistan. These include dome-shaped caps, richly adorned with beads, sequins, and gold embroidery. Many headdresses incorporated metallic discs (*tillaqosh*), symbolic of the sun and spiritual strength. A typical example includes a velvet base with dense *zardozi* embroidery, often paired with tassels and silver ornaments. These headdresses were especially prominent in marriage ceremonies and other cultural rites. The variation in patterns and structure reflects local aesthetics and cultural values.

The main embroidery technique used in Uzbek headdresses is *zardozi*, introduced in the region centuries ago and refined over generations. *Zardozi* involves applying gold or silver

threads onto velvet, silk, or cotton, often supplemented with pearls, beads, and sequins. In recent years, interest in traditional Uzbek embroidered headdresses has grown both within the country and internationally. Designers have begun to integrate traditional motifs into modern fashion collections, often reinterpreting them with contemporary aesthetics. Museums, such as the Bukhara Ark Museum, play a crucial role in preserving and promoting these artifacts. They provide not only a window into the past but also inspire new generations of designers and artisans. Educational institutions and fashion faculties, like those at Istanbul Arel University, also contribute to research and innovation in preserving textile heritage. Additionally, the revival of traditional crafts has been supported by state initiatives and cultural organizations seeking to protect intangible cultural heritage. Headdresses, once relegated to ceremonial use, are finding new life in contemporary fashion, theatre, and tourism.

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