

# East Europe, Russia, and the Caucasus



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# Macedonia: Ethnic Dress

- Women's Traditional Dress
- Men's Traditional Dress
- Footwear
- Snapshot: Embroidery
- Snapshot: Jewelry and Adornment

The Republic of Macedonia is a landlocked country on the Balkan Peninsula, bordered by Serbia and Kosovo to the north, Albania to the west, Greece to the south, and Bulgaria to the east. Until the early twentieth century, it was part of the Ottoman Empire, and after World War I, under the name of Southern Serbia, its territory fell within the newly formed Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. As the twentieth century progressed, borders, names of states, and the balance of power in the whole region shifted back and forth until, after World War II, Macedonia became a republic within the federal state of Yugoslavia and, in 1991, finally achieved independence. It became a member of the United Nations in 1993 under the name of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Its history and location have led to Macedonia being home to many different ethnicities, with the majority of the population being either Orthodox Christian or Muslim. Until the early decades of the twentieth century, most people led their lives engaged in agriculture in communities quite isolated from each other. Traditional dress was still worn, retaining the identifying features of each ethnic group.

The country is ringed by mountains and bisected by the valley of the river Vardar, which, to some extent, serves to divide dress into two basic styles, typical of either western or eastern Macedonia. The regions displaying the western Macedonian type are those areas inhabited by the two ethnic groups the Miaks and the Brsiaks and the Upper Vardar Valley (including the Skopska Crna Gora Mountains near the capital Skopje and a number of villages in the lee of Suva Mountain—Suva Gora). Traditional dress in these parts of Macedonia consisted of numerous garments, made mostly of white *klashna* (a thick woolen cloth) and a variety of head dresses. Clothes were richly embroidered and embellished with braids and much jewelry.

The eastern Macedonian type occurred in the Middle Vardar Valley and the Skopska ethnographic area. Outfits were generally plainer, worn without massive jewelry; in the isolated mountain areas in particular, they are thought to show characteristics of ancient Slav and Turkish dress.

## WOMEN'S TRADITIONAL DRESS

The essential women's garment worn throughout Macedonia on all occasions was the tuniclike shirt (*koshula*). It fitted tightly to the body and had a narrow, upright collar. The straight front and back parts were broadened by the insertion of slanting panels on each side, which in some regions were folded into many tucks. The sleeves fell loosely and broadened along the entire length with a

narrow insertion. Exceptions were sleeves from the Suva Gora villages, which were gathered into cuffs. The *koshula* was usually made of home-woven white cotton, linen, or hempen cloth.

A sleeveless, unbuttoned shirt, the *saya* (or *sagiya*), was put on over the *koshula*. This was constructed of two front panels, a back panel, and slanting side panels with slits up from the hem. The *saya* was usually made of the same white cloth as was used for the shirt, though in some places a thicker double-woven cloth (*chetvorno platno*) was used. The type worn in the Shopska ethnic area in the northeast was made of a thin woolen material in dark blue or black. Tight-fitting elbow-length sleeves might be added—either sewn on permanently or sewn loosely to be removable. Some *sayas* had additional false sleeves.

Outer garments made of a thick woolen fabric included the *klashenik*, *zoban*, *shayak*, and *shegun*. All these items were similar in cut to the *saya*. In the areas of the Miaks and the Brsiaks, and in southern Macedonia, they often had elbow-length sleeves decorated with embroidered appliqué. The *shegun* had additional false sleeves falling loosely at the back.

Another layer of clothes might be worn over the top in winter or for special occasions, particularly weddings. These would be made of white or black heavy woolen fabric and, in most cases, were worn unfastened. Warm garments made of sheep's fleece were worn in winter, made by specific craftsmen known as *kurchii*. Especially distinctive were the sheepskin coats from Upper Vardar: The *kozuf iabukliya* from Skopska Blatiya was knee length with short sleeves richly decorated with colored leather appliqué, and a similar version from Zegligovo was decorated with appliqué in woolen broadcloth. Young women from the Miak group richly embroidered the backs of their short, sleeveless sheepskin coats using wool thread. In Gorni Polog in Upper Vardar, coats were decorated all over with leather appliqué and triangle-shaped details in wool. Sheepskin coats from Skopska Crna Gora had applied beads, silk-fringes, buttons, and silver coins.

Clothes worn over the basic shirt were drawn to the body with a girdle, which was wrapped around the waist several times. The girdle of the Brsiak group was made from seven or nine strands of wool or goat's hair plaited together. The Miaks' girdle was woven and finished with a substantial fringe. In the central and eastern parts of the country, girdles were woven with linear ornamentation along their entire length, while in southern regions they were twisted into a spiral form. In some areas, a number of girdles of various widths were worn at the same time.

The apron was an obligatory part of women's dress, worn from an early age until the end of their lives. Different regional names for aprons included *skutnik*, *futa*, *zaviacha*, *opregach*, and *opashalka*. They were usually constructed of two parts joined horizontally or vertically. An ancient type was a small one-piece apron worn by brides, though the bridal apron (*chultar*) from the Prilepsko-Bitolsko Plain in the Brsiak area was larger and widened out at the lower edge, with a woven decoration of dominant concentric rhomboidal forms. In some western and northern areas, two aprons were worn, one at the back and one at the front of the body, but this was not a common style in Macedonia. The decorative details were often added to the lower edge and could be woolen fringes or pom-poms, spangles, braid, glass fragments, and coins.



This sleeveless felt coat with colorful silk and cotton embroidery and woolen tassel fringing is an example of bold, richly decorated Macedonian ethnic dress from the nineteenth century. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)

Women neatly parted their hair and arranged it into plaits before putting on a head covering. The number of plaits could be one or two but could also be up to thirty. Decorations made of wool, natural hair, and silk threads were woven into the plaits, usually augmented with silver coins and glass beads. Massive hairstyles were created by woolen additions in Mariovo and Prilepsko Pole and Skopska Blatiya. In the Suva Gora villages, old women braided silk threads into their hair; in Skopska Torbeshiya, brides wore silk threads combined with natural hair to create their coiffure.

The typical head cover among the Miaks was a square linen or cotton cloth—the *darpana*. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the Miak *darpana* would typically be almost entirely covered with embroidery. Especially distinctive were those worn by brides and young girls, which were draped over small oval hats. Head cloths worn in Golo Brdo and Debarski Drimkol were smaller and known as *korpi*, with characteristic long fringes reaching down to the waist. In the Suva Gora villages and Dolni Polog (Upper Vardar), very thin white head coverings were favored, which led to their wearers being nicknamed *belokrpke* (“white cloths”). In eastern Macedonia, covers were sparsely ornamented with drawn-thread work and relief techniques created during the weaving process. A silk head cover (generally known as *kavrak*) was adopted in the eastern parts of the country as well as in cities. It was folded in the middle and thrown over the forehead, then the ends were crossed at the back of the neck and knotted over the forehead.

Rectangular cotton *krpi* cloths worn in Skopska Blatiya and Skopska Crna Gora were ornamented along the lower edge in a woven or embroidered technique. The way of putting these on indicated the wearer’s social status. In Skopska Crna Gora, young girls wore one cloth, and married women wore two. In both regions, the cloths were held in place with a beaded band (*remen*), which, during wedding festivities, was decorated with silver coins.

Until the nineteenth century, women also covered their heads with the *sokai*. This was one of the most decorative and skillfully made head covers in Macedonia, mostly found in the west and southwest but occasionally also in the south. A rectangular piece of linen or cotton, densely embroidered with woolen or silk threads, was formed at the top into the shape of a horn, while the lower part fell loosely down the back. Many variants had an additional part, the *gaitan*, which was made of heavy woolen fabric and trimmed with red factory-made cotton to which beads, seashells, silver and gold coins, and a long black fringe were applied. *Sokai* were covered with additional rectangular cloths (called *ubrusi*, *marama*, or *krpa*). Various types of *Brsiak* linen *ubrusi* ranged from richly embroidered ones with attached fringes, shells, and coins (Poreche and Kicheviya) to those made of long rectangular pieces of fabric with decoration woven in at the ends and fine ornaments (*vegi*) embroidered along the edges (Mariovo and Prilepsko-Bitolsko Plains). *Ubrusi* were worn in different ways—thrown loosely over the *sokai* or wrapped around the head.

### MEN’S TRADITIONAL DRESS

Men’s traditional dress in Macedonia was simpler than the women’s. Its form was largely governed by the local terrain and the wearer’s occupation. The dress of the cattle-breeding mountain dwellers consisted of many pieces of clothing made of home-woven white and dark woolen cloth. Lowland dress was lighter, with simpler items of clothing, containing many elements made of cotton. In the west, clothes were made of white woolen material, and, in the east, the natural color of wool from dark-fleeced sheep was favored. Applied black braid was used as decoration in both regions.

The essential part of men’s outfits, as of women’s, was the straight shirt widened with wedge-shaped inserts on both sides. A shirt with up to sixteen inserts that was gathered in at the waist and was shorter than other types, known as *aita* or *vstan*, was worn by bridegrooms and other young men in parts of Upper Vardar in the early twentieth century, including Skopska Crna Gora and Skopska Blatiya, and also Mariovo in the *Brsiak* area. Sleeves traditionally hung loose, but styles with cuffs appeared later. White linen trousers (*gaki*) were pulled in at the waist with a drawstring. The legs were worn loose or gathered into the socks. Woven wool trousers (*bechvi*, *chashire*, *poturi*, or *shalvari*) were worn in the mountainous areas. They were usually decorated along the seams with applied black braid.

The *djamadan* and the *kurdiya* were sleeveless waist-length outer garments made of white or black woolen cloth, worn in Gorna Reka, Ohridsko Pole, Mariovo, Skopska Crna Gora, Skopska Blatiya, Miaks, Azot, Kicheviya, Gorni Polog and the region of Maleshevo. The *elek* and the *djeletka* were outer garments made of striped material called *aladja*. They were worn in the ethnic regions of Ovche Pole, Durachka Reka, Radovichko Pole, Pianetz, and Skopska Blatiya. These clothes were decorated



Two men wearing light traditional Macedonian dress of white cotton or linen. Romania, about 1938. Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images.

on the front with woolen and silver-gilt thread, braid, coins, and beads. The Miaks wore the long-sleeved *mintan* made of dark woolen broadcloth, richly embroidered with silver-gilt or black silk thread. Waist-length outer garments with short sleeves, such as the *zoban*, *kepe*, and *resechko kopare*, made of dark woven wool, were worn in the western parts of Macedonia. Their particular characteristic was the substantial collar on the back, shaped in the form of a hood.

In the northern, southern, and central regions, men wore knee-length, sleeveless outer garments made of white or black woolen cloth. These were decorated along the seams and on the front with black woolen thread. In Skopska Blatiya, Skopska Crna Gora, and Skopski Derven, they were called *djube* and were also worn as wedding attire. In Mariovo, the Bitolsko-Prilepsko Plain (Brsiaks' area), and Lerinsko (southern Macedonia), they were known as *kurdiya-guna*. Until the end of the nineteenth century, many of these clothes were made of white wool, but later cloth dyed black was used.

A special winter garment worn by men, particularly bridegrooms, was the long-sleeved *dollama*. This was a style favored by the Miaks and the Brsiaks. Made of white woven wool, it was knee-length, tight fitting to the waist, then flared downward with several inserted panels, giving it an emphatic bell shape. It was decorated with applied black braid and woolen buttons. Stockbreeders' winter clothes were *guna*, *sakma*, *kuntesh*, *pindjak*, *kushliak*, and *tarlagan*. Some of these had short sleeves, and they were

mostly worn thrown over the shoulders. Made of wool or a mixture of wool and goat's hair, these garments had large rectangular collars, which in bad weather were used as hoods. In winter, both men's and women's dress included *kozuv* (sheepskin coats) made by craftsmen. Especially distinctive were the men's *kozuv* from the Bitolsko-Prilepsko and Ovche plains.

Men's belts were much wider than those worn by women. In Skopska Blatiya, Skopska Crna Gora, and Skopski Derven, red woven girdles were richly decorated with beads, silver coins, braids, and buttons on the ends. Leather belts of various widths were worn over the cloth girdles. A typical feature of the dress in central and southwestern Macedonia was that the men as well as the women wore aprons. These were constructed of two cloths joined vertically or horizontally and frequently decorated with fine ornaments arranged in friezes, one over the other. In Ovche Pole, the frieze on the lower part was of woven floral and anthropomorphic motifs. Men wore the aprons from childhood until old age.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, men had specific ways of covering their heads and arranging their hair. They would shave their hair above the ears and at the back of the neck and then braid the rest into a plait. The head was covered with an oval hat, around which a long white cloth was wrapped. One part of the cloth was left hanging loosely down the back, but during the winter, it would be wrapped under the chin. Toward the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, this style of head dress was beginning to be abandoned. It was substituted by a lambskin hat (*shubara*). Men also wore the *fes* (elsewhere known as a fez), considered to be a legacy from Turkish-Oriental culture. In Mariovo, men wore hats of felted wool (*valavka*) with a long cloth wrapped around. Miak and Brsiak men wore oval hats (*kechinia*) made by tailors and decorated over the entire surface with machine stitching. In various northern regions, men covered their heads with a short rectangular cloth called *brishalka*, which was thrown over the head and tied at the back of the neck. This cloth was richly ornamented and worn on formal occasions, as well as for protection from the sun at harvest time.

## FOOTWEAR

Peasant sandals and highly decorative and colorful knitted socks were features of Macedonian traditional dress for both men and women. Socks usually stretched from the toes to the shin, while half-socks from the ankle to the shin were worn by themselves in summer or under socks in winter. Over the white linen trousers (*gaki*), men wore knee-high socks secured with small woven or embroidered straps. In some regions, woven leg wrappings were worn instead of socks, and they were held in place with the laces from the *opintsi* (peasant sandals). *Opintsi* were made of pig or cow skin in the most archaic type of domestic manufacture. The pieces of leather would be raw or tanned, formed loosely around the foot, and tied with hempen or leather laces. They might be decorated with red or black woolen threads. Especially distinctive were the *z'ltite chegli* worn by the Miaks, which were manufactured by craftsmen from several types of hide and decorated with a perforating technique. Brides in the Suva Gora villages and Dolni Polog wore slippers known as *tsrevie*, which were also made by craftsmen.



## Snapshot: Embroidery

In Macedonian traditional dress of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, embroidery was an obligatory decoration with a specific function and meaning. It immediately suggested the regional origin of each garment and was one of the important means of recognizing each separate social community. Most items of women's dress were embroidered, especially the white linen *koshula* and head coverings such as the *sokai*, *ubrus*, and *darpana*. Embroidered decoration was also typical of women's outerwear that was made of various weights of woolen cloth.

Embroideries on Macedonian dress can be broadly classified into two groups—those from the west side of the Vardar Valley and those from the east. Distinctive for the embroideries from the west was their dominant place in the decoration of the outfit. The embroidery was densely worked, with highly stylized geometric motifs being framed with further stitching so that the whole surface of the cloth was covered. There were numerous local variations across this half of the country. In the east, embroidery was simpler, in smaller dimensions, and more homogeneous across the region. It was characterized by a preference for more realistically interpreted floral motifs, which were framed by the unadorned cloth.

A distinctive feature of embroidery from all regions is that the domestically made woolen threads were spun and twisted together entirely by hand, without the use of any technical instruments. Embroidery on garments worn by brides might also be done in silk or occasionally silver-gilt threads. Typical of all Macedonian embroidery techniques is the fact that they were executed by counting the threads of the cloth, most frequently from the reverse side.

Regional characteristics were most expressively presented by the woman's shirt. Although its simple tuniclike form was the basic shape found all over Macedonia, there were a great many local variations in the decoration applied to it. Many components of design and technique contributed to this large variety, depending on the specific traditions of each individual community.

The most common technique was embroidery in slanting stitches (*polnez*), which were worked within previously outlined contours. The outline stitching was always done in fine black thread, which was sometimes left visible and sometimes covered by the *polnez*, for which thicker threads were used. Usually, *polnez* were stitched in one direction. Shirts from the Miak and Brsiak areas of western Macedonia were typically embroidered using this technique. Those from Kumanovo, Skopska Blatiya, and the Suva Gora villages in the Upper Vardar region featured *polnez* slanting first in one direction and then the opposite way.

Also in villages of western Macedonia, notably in Debar-ski Drimkol, the *skorci* technique was favored, in which back stitches were worked closely with tightly spun woolen threads to create a dense raised surface. Shirts from Skopska Crna

were embroidered with lightly spun thick threads in a number of different techniques, which contributed to the construction of an expressive relief structure. Two different types of drawn-thread work (*kinatici* and *kesme*), with designs worked in needleweaving over a grid of threads, are typical of Miak shirts.

The regional particularities of embroidered shirts were also expressed by the placement of the decoration and its composition. Sleeves were mostly embroidered from the wrist to above the elbow in bands of varying widths and in blocks of flat or raised motifs. In some regions, the embroidery extended along the whole sleeve up to the shoulder. Embroidery on garments from the Suva Gora villages was distinctive in that the main placement was on the shoulder. In addition to the embroidered border around the hem, the lower part of the shirt typically featured two pairs of embroidered rectangular fields set vertically on the main panel. These stitched areas could be of an impressive size. Many Macedonian shirts have the hem decorated with white embroidery as well as with insertion



Detail of a cotton dress from Skopska Crna Gora, Macedonia, nineteenth century. The outer sleeve is embroidered in wool with a zigzag pattern and a sun motif. The cuff is folded, with the reverse embellished by metal braid trim, beads, sequins, and wool embroidery on a band of cotton velvet. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)

stitches (*chikme*) joining seams together, giving a lacy effect. In some areas, embroidery was worked on separate pieces of cloth, which were then applied to the collar and along each side of the front opening.

The choice and balance of colors were likewise important indicators of regional identity. The dominant colors found in Macedonian embroidery were red and black. Traditionally, the dye obtained from the roots of the madder plant imparted a distinctive dark red, almost brown, color. A combination of light red and dark red threads was typical of the embroidery of Prilepsko Pole and the Bitola region of western Macedonia. In other areas, black was predominant, especially on women's shirts from parts of Upper Vardar, including Skopska Crna Gora and Dolni Polog.

Regional characteristics also distinguished women's head coverings, especially the *sokai*. The most common type was the wide *sokai*, which was formed into a horn on the top of the head. These were entirely embroidered in a counted-thread technique called *sokaechko*, which was particular to them. This was worked in vertical lines from the back of the fabric, creating very dense bands of stitching. The part fitting over the head was usually decorated with motifs within a geometric framework. Along the entire length falling down the back, the embroidery was arranged in parallel bands of different widths. The *sokai* from the western Struga-Ohrid region were slightly narrower and characterized by two dominant rectangular fields, one above the other, each decorated in a different way. Silk and woolen threads were used for the embroidery, done partly in *sokaechko* stitching and partly in a raised technique. *Sokai* were always worn with the larger head cloths—*ubrusi* or *marami*. The typical characteristic of these larger head cloths was embroidery worked so as to be the same on the back

and the front. In western Macedonia, *ubrusi* from Kichevo and Poreche were embroidered over the whole surface, whereas *marami* from the Ohrid-Struga region had wide borders along one side only.

The false sleeves of cloth or felt outer garments were also decorated with embroidery, which was worked on the same type of white cloth as was used for shirts, or over a different red fabric, and then applied to the woolen sleeves. The style of embroidery harmonized with the designs worked on the shirt to be worn underneath.

A rich repertory of designs occurs in embroidery on Macedonian dress, including plain and serrated rhombs, triangles, zigzag and S-shaped forms, octagonal stars, stylized flowers and leaves, and many other representational or abstract motifs, variously interpreted according to region. Apart from indicating the region of origin, embroidery served to indicate many other characteristics of the wearer, such as age, marital status, and whether he or she was in a state of mourning. Some embroidered ornaments and symbols kept their magical meanings connected with various popular beliefs and rituals of the ancient way of life. However, in most cases, the traditional designs were preserved and continued to be embroidered well into the twentieth century purely for their aesthetic qualities.

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## Snapshot: Jewelry and Adornment

Jewelry and adornment of all kinds in Macedonia represented a clear indicator of social and economic status and power. It also had a protective role. Women wore more and larger pieces of jewelry than the men. Adornment was used most often and in the most expressive forms during wedding festivities, when the woman was considered to be most vulnerable to the evil eye.

Adornment fell into four types—decorations of floral origin, animal origin, glass, or metal. Young girls and brides adorned themselves with flowers. Their garlands were made during the wedding festivities on a base of grapevine or cherry bark into which basil, ivy, periwinkle, and various other flowers were woven. In the regions of Mariovo and Prilepsko-Bitolsko Pole, the custom was to attach an apple to one end. Cherries were also used for decoration, being hung over the ears; like

the apple, their red color had symbolic meaning, identified with the idea of fertility. Brides of Skopska Blatiya secured a sprig of periwinkle to the back of their necks along with their other bridal ornaments. During holiday occasions, women decorated themselves with bunches of flowers that were either attached to the head covering, put over the ears, or tucked into the girdle, and they also held bunches in the hand when dancing or singing at festive gatherings.

Embellishment with colored feathers was especially distinctive. In some areas, feathers were attached to head decorations. A maiden in Skopska Crna Gora would decorate herself with peacock feathers when she reached the appropriate age to indicate to the community that she was ready to get married, that she was willing to "fly away" from her father's house. In Bitolsko Pole, young women wore goose-feather earrings



An illustration of Macedonian ethnic dress from Monastir (modern-day Bitola), Macedonia, from *Costumes of All Nations: 123 Plates, Containing Over 1500 Coloured Costume Pictures by the Finest Munich Artists* (London: H. Grevel and Co., 1913). The woman in the center has rows of coins as part of her chest jewelry and attached to her head covering, which are some of the traditional adornment styles of the country. Picture Collection, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

that were made by boiling the feathers in hot water, modeling them into small balls, then rolling them in flour to obtain a clean white color.

Jewelry made of metal or glass was the most widespread. Both large and very small glass beads were knitted or threaded together and hooked onto certain parts of the clothing. Items made of beads were girdles, bracelets, chest adornments, decorations that served a purpose of determining rhythm in dances, and ropes that held head cloths in place. The types of metal jewelry were many and various, made by skilled craftsmen using different techniques such as casting, beating, filigree, and granulation. Jewelry was worn on the head, around the neck, on the chest, over the girdle, and on the back of the clothes. Head covers were typically held in place with several metal chains decorated with coins and fine brass platelets.

The jewelry worn by Miak brides over their head covers consisted of several silver chains and large red beads. Brides in Ohridsko Pole secured their head covers by means of a decoration with glass stones in the middle and several strands of chain attached to each end, which were buttoned above the ears. In Dolni Polog, brides hooked above their ears bundles of spiral springs with gold coins attached to the ends, which created special effects as they moved.

Earrings worn by women ranged from the simple to the large and spectacular. In the southern regions, minted gold or silver coins were worn as everyday earrings. During wedding festivities, substantial earrings made of many coins were worn by the bride to express the economic and social power of her family. Earrings from Gorni Polog were also very large and distinctive. These were in the form of a triangle with attached

large silver decorations and chains. Massive earrings with glass stones, chains, and large red beads were also worn in Debarsko Pole. Women frequently wore these huge pieces of jewelry attached to their head covers so as not to have all the weight hanging from their ears. Strips of cotton material with silver coins sewn onto them were also worn around the ears in some regions.

Chest jewelry mostly consisted of several rows of chains or a single chain decorated with silver coins. Crosses worn on the chest were of various sizes and techniques, the most expressive being those made in filigree. Crosses and silver coins were also attached to the jewelry that secured head covers, in some places hanging down from the top of the head to under the chin. Another type of chest jewelry included pieces that had various names in different regions, such as the *ledenik* (Skopska Blatiya), *podgushnik* (Mariosvo Pole), and *polesotsi* (the Miaks). These were all variations of a massive decoration covering the whole chest that was constructed with a base of thick fabric onto which many silver coins were sewn in an arrangement like fish scales.

In many parts of Macedonia, decorative two-piece and some times three-piece metal buckles, known as *pafti*, served to fasten the girdle around the waist. In the northern and northwestern regions, they were leaf shaped, while, among the Brsiaks and in the south, they were round. In Lerinsko Pole, massive *pafti* known as *gubetsi* were richly ornamented, representing

the high skill of the artisan workshops. The Miaks and Brsiaks wore chains decorated with coins over their aprons, hanging under the *pafti*. Those worn by the Miak people were impressive, with up to fifteen chains embellished with lavish filigree work and silver coins.

Metal decorations in various forms, known as *pantzuri*, were worn over the back of the body. They were usually plaited into the hair or hooked onto the clothes. The maiden's *pantzur* was made of metal rings hooked to one another, whereas that worn by married women consisted of a single large silver coin with smaller coins attached. In Sredorek and Slavishte (Shopska area) and Skopska Blatiya (Upper Vardar), strips of leather or cloth decorated with silver coins hung down the back and were hooked onto the outer clothing to form a cross.

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*See also* Embroidery in East Europe, Russia, and the Caucasus; Albania.