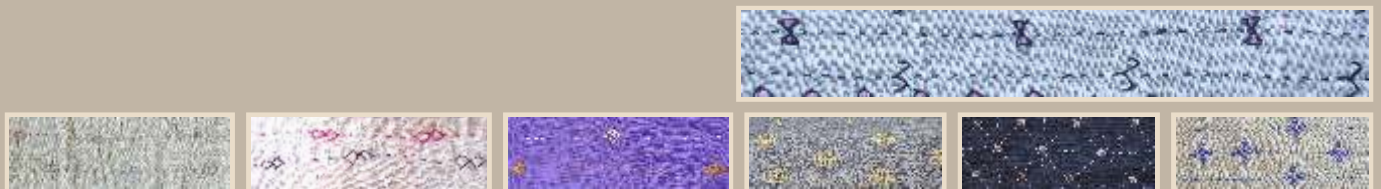


COMMUNITIES: MEGHWAAD MAARWAADA, HAALEPOTRA

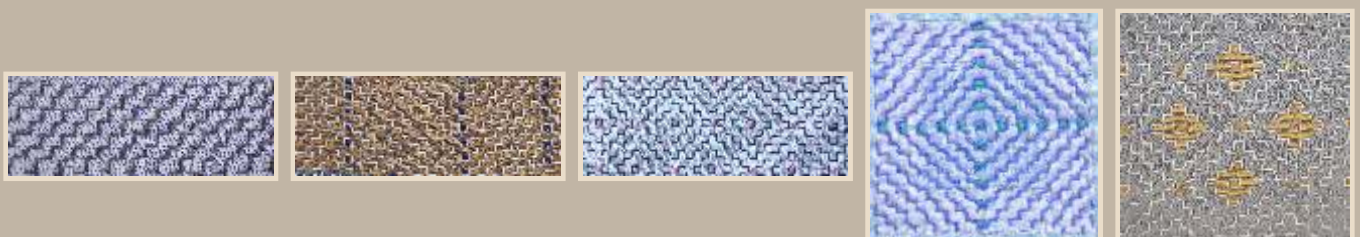
EMBROIDERIES: KHUDI-TEBHA, KAMBIRO, PAKKO MUKKO, KACHCHO KHAARAK, KACHCHO KAMBIRI


The Meghwaad Marwada and Haalepotra communities are best known for their **Khudi-Tebha** and **Kambiro** embroideries which they render on two household products - quilts and handbags.

The origin of **Khudi-Tebha** can be traced back to the traditional practice of converting multiple layers of old and new lightweight fabrics into one thick fabric. Continuous lines of the running stitch - the *tebha* - were rendered to hold the layers together. At intervals, the *tebha* was manipulated to create diamond-shaped details called *khudi*. The *khudi* ensured that the *tebha* did not unravel. Though simple, Khudi-Tebha was decorative and gave new life to once-used fabrics.ew and very small products. The largest product that they embroider is the *kanjari*, that measures only 80 X 45 centimetres.



Kambiro embroidery was always done on new fabric. It decorated products such as a newborn baby's blanket. The *kambiro* stitch was a more complex version of the *khudi*. It followed the warp and the weft of the fabric to create geometric forms that resembled ascending and descending steps.





Kambiro was also combined with Khudi-Tebha. When used thus, the kambiro was used very sparingly - as a highlight in a central area or in the border.

Colour played a key role in adding interest to the simple designs of Kambiro and Khudi-Tebha. Craftswomen also created a detail called the *jaat* to fill-in and highlight the khudi. The *jaat* was rendered in contrast colour.

During the 1970s, Shrujan worked with craftswomen of the Meghwaad Maarwaada community to transform the sparingly used kambiro into the main feature of the design. The size of the kambiro was scaled down and the quality of the stitch was enhanced. This new avatar of the kambiro helped create variety within the product range of quilts and bags.

Several other interventions by Shrujan with the Meghwaad Maarwaada and Haalepotra communities took place during the mid- to late 1990s. These focused on exploring the potential of the khudi and the tebha. The simple khudi was worked upon to create a huge repertoire of elaborate motifs in a variety of colours. The quality of the tebha stitch was enhanced. The stitch became small and uniform.

The new, improved Khudi-Tebha was embroidered on fabrics such as silk, tissue, organza, voile and *mulmul*. Three-dimensional elements such as beads and sequins were also incorporated within the embroidery.

These interventions helped increase the product range. A new line of women's clothing featuring Khudi-Tebha was developed. Quilts became a premium, high-end product. Cushion covers, jackets and bags also featured these embroideries.

Meghwaad Maarwaada and Haalepotra craftswomen also embroider a variety of **Pakko** and **Kachcho** styles on their personal clothing. The Pakko styles such as Pakko Mukko use a *pakko* stitch as the primary stitch to create the entire style or to create its main distinctive features. The Kachcho styles such as Kachcho Katari and Kachcho Kambiri use a *kachcho* stitch as the primary stitch to create the entire style or to create its main distinctive features.

Craftswomen use the term *pakko*, meaning strong, durable, to denote stitches that lock. The opposite of pakko is *kachcho*, meaning fragile. Kachcho stitches do not follow the locking principle.




The embroidery of the Meghwaad Marwada community celebrates the big and the bold. It is also ornamented with colourful accessories such as pompoms, beads, tassels, sequins and metallic discs.

The *kanjari*, the blouse worn by women is long, almost knee-length. The fondness for ornamentation is seen in the borders at the edge of the *kanjari*. A mix of printed and solid coloured fabrics is used for the borders. They are further highlighted with simple machine-embroidery details and small trims such as rickrack.



Haalepotra craftswomen embroider Pakko Mukko that is of a very high standard. This embroidery uses silver and gold metallic threads. This makes Mukko difficult to render and demands high skill and dexterity of the craftswomen. Even so, Haalepotra craftswomen enjoy this embroidery so much that they render Mukko not only on their ceremonial clothing but also on their daily wear garments.





Embroidery is an integral part of the lives of the craftswomen. And the pursuit of excellence is a strong motivator. Craftswomen acknowledge that the criteria for evaluating creative excellence vary from one embroidered piece to another. They have, however, identified a set of indicators by which the technical excellence can be assessed.

The indicators of technical excellence in Khudi-Tebha embroidery are:

- embroidery runs along **or** across the grain of the base fabric
- length of the running stitch is uniform
- space between the stitches is even.

The indicators of technical excellence in Kambiro embroidery are:

- embroidery runs along **and** across the grain of the base fabric
- entire composition is always right-angled
- length of the running stitch is uniform
- space between the stitches is even.