



EMBROIDERIES IN KARELIAN TRADITIONAL COSTUMES

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FOLK COSTUMES / TRADITIONAL COSTUMES

- Folk costumes in Finland refer to traditional festive and everyday clothes worn by the peasant population in the 18th and 19th centuries
- Finnish traditional costumes from the 19th and early 20th centuries can be found in the collections of the National Museum (Helsinki), the South Karelia Museum (Lappeenranta), the North Karelia Museum Hilma (Joensuu) and the Lahti City Museum (Lahti)
- In Finland, at the end of the 19th century, researchers and students traveled around in Finland and collected traditional costumes and other objects
- The national costumes (from 1885) are based on these costumes. There is a good collection of national costumes in Jyväskylä at the Finnish National Costume Center (in connection with the Finnish Crafts Museum)



Hilda Olson, Kansanpukuinen nainen, Sakkola, 1868, Finnish Heritage Agency



KARELIAN TRADITIONAL COSTUME

- In this TRACTion research project, we have studied Karelian traditional costumes from the South Karelia museum from 19th century
- In Finland, the costume remained "traditional" till the latest in the Karelia region (and in Lapland)
- Due to several wars, contacts with European cultural life were cut off from Karelia
- Ending under Russian rule in 1721 and due to the donation land system, the poor economic situation of the Karelians prevented the spread of fashion trends from Western Europe



Magnus von Wright, Räisälän kansanpukuja, 1860, Finland's National Gallery



SELF-RELIANCE IN CLOTHING MAKING

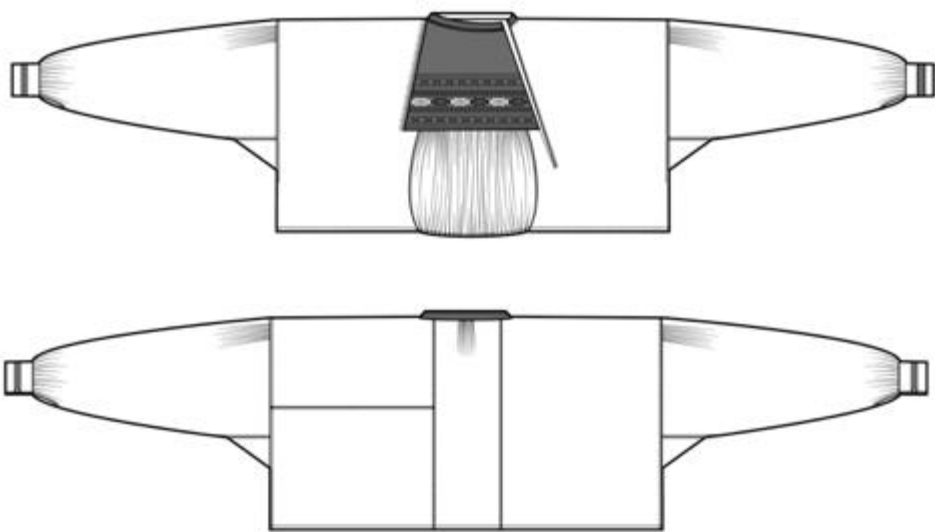
- The textiles were self-made from start to finish:
 1. sheep were raised/ flax was grown/ nettles were gathered
 2. yarns and fabrics were made
 3. textiles and yarns were bleached in the sun &/ dyed with natural dyes
 4. clothes and textiles were made
 5. And they were decorated with embroidery and ribbons
- The embroideries in Karelian clothes are abundant and rich in color
- Only the imagination and the craftsman's skills were the limit when it came to decorating the costumes
- The decorations and colors of the folk costumes differed between regions





SHIRT

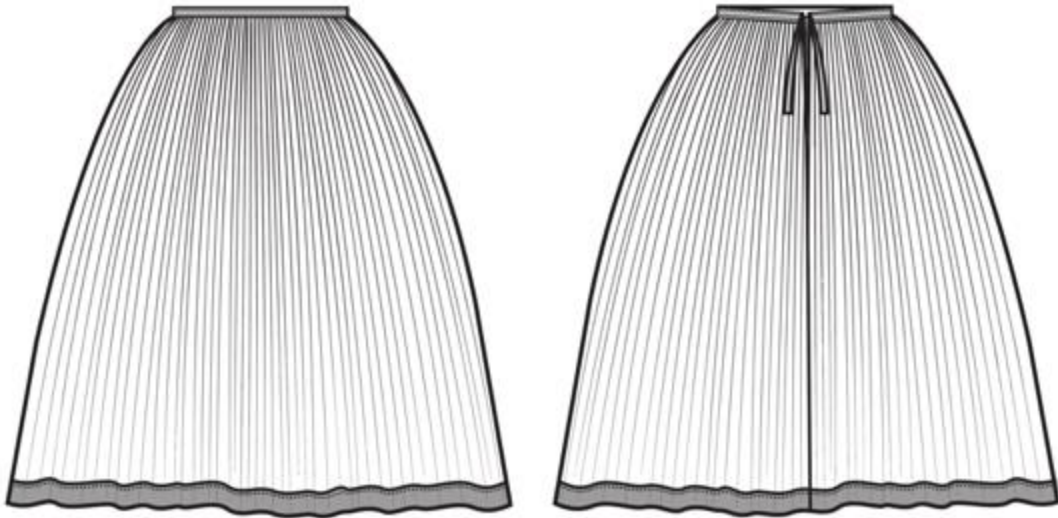
- Embroidered front (Rekko), collar and cuffs
- Embroidery yarn: wool
- Casual shirts were usually long and made of hemp or linen
- The upper part of a festive shirt was made of fine fabric (e.g. linen or purchased cotton) and the lower part was made of coarse linen





SKIRT

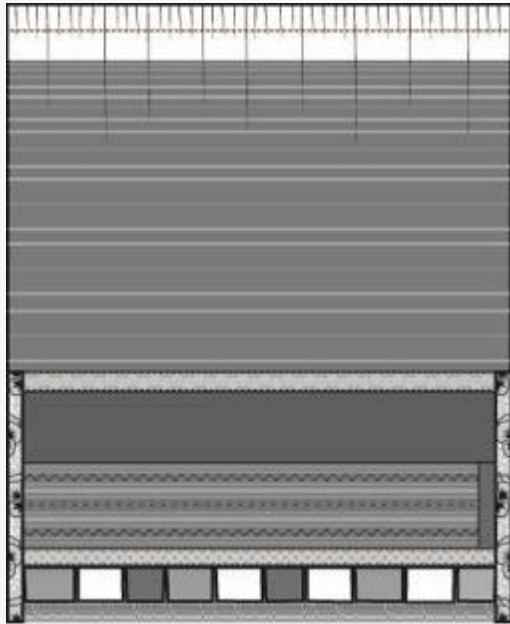
- Densely pleated or gathered
- Braided ribbon at the waist
- A red (or yellow) stripe on the hem
- Some had suspender-like straps (Hurstut skirt)





APRON

- Woven striped wool fabric
- Embroidered parts made by wool yarn
- Purchased ribbon and fabric decorations





HEADGEAR SOROKKA / HARAKKA

- Material linen
- Embroideries wool
- Made with running stitches
- Used by married women



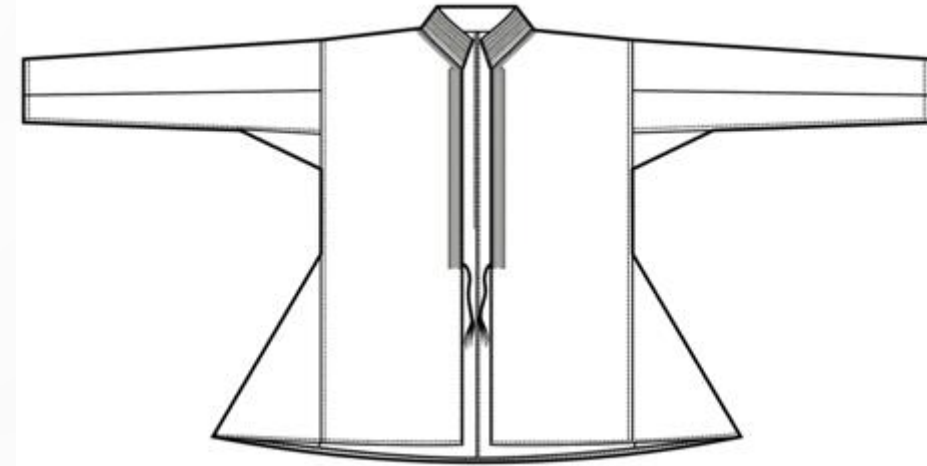
Harakka/ Sorokka 5122 from Uuskirkko, made 1850-1900, South Karelia museum

Harakka/ Sorokka from Rautu, made before 1883, The National Museum of Finland



SUMMER COAT (KOSTULI)

- Embroidered front and collar
- Made of linen
- Embroidery yarn: wool



Coat 3564 from Koivisto, made 1800-1900, South Karelia museum

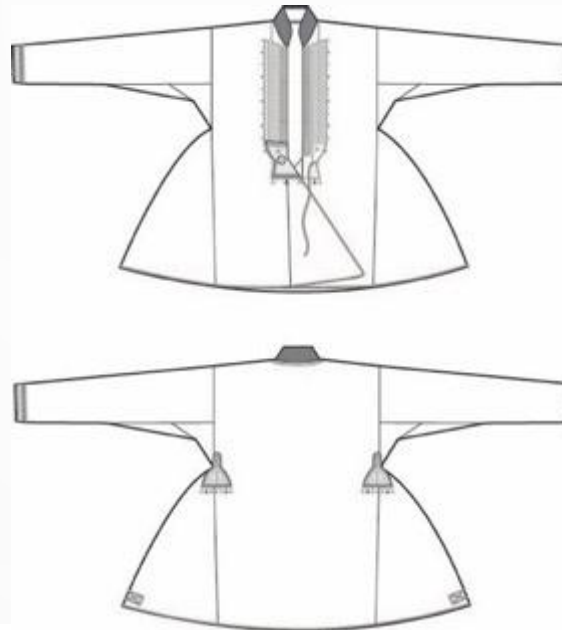


WINTER COAT

- Embroidered front, collar, cuffs, hem and waist
- Material felted wool
- Embroidery and decorations wool and chamois
- There are no "pen" markings for the patterns on the fabric



Coat 3051 from Kivennapa, made 1800-1899, South Karelia museum





HOW DOES TRADITION BECOME MODERN?

- Lauri Greis used his grandmothers traditional costume from Antrea as a base for his Karelian Sportslore BA collection
- The design is based on an old idea that is utilized in a new way
- The object is made using a traditional method and technique, but the design is modern, something new
- <https://aalto.fashion/lauri-greis/>



National Costume from Antrea, The National Costume Center of Finland and looks by Lauri Greis from Karelian Sportslore BA collection



DESIGN TASK

- Make a sample of Karelian embroidery, like in a video tutorial coming next
- Design task: how would you use traditional technique (Karelian embroidery) in your own design /new modern way?





MATERIALS AND TOOLS NEEDED FOR THE TEST:

- Fabric (felted wool)
- Embroidery threads (wool or cotton)
- Scissors
- Embroidery needle
- (Tailor's chalk or pencil for marking patterns)
- (Tape measure or ruler)





VIDEO LINK:

- <https://tractionproject.eu/news/university-of-helsinki-traction-team-educational-video-running-and-cross-stitching-in-karelian-folk-costume-embroidery/>



