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Traditional art crafts of Russia: the connection of times and cultures

Abstract. The article examines the creation of a unique collection of artworks representing the culture of the ancient Maya civilization through the medium of Russian traditional art crafts. This collection was first presented at the international exhibition held at the Russian house of science and culture in Paris (France) in March 2026. The scientific problem addressed in the study involved the theoretical and practical exploration of the feasibility of embodying Maya civilization artifacts through various Russian traditional art crafts, including artistic embroidery, artistic lace-making, Kholmogory bone carving art, jewelry art, Bogorodskoye artistic wood carving, Fedoskino lacquer miniature painting and Rostov enamel. A fundamental condition of this project was the unconditional preservation of the regional and historical artistic-technological traditions inherent to each specific art type.

Keywords: traditional art crafts, artistic embroidery, artistic lace-making, Fedoskino lacquer miniature painting, Rostov enamel, Bogorodskoye artistic wood carving, Kholmogory bone carving art, jewelry art, fashion show, Mesoamerican culture, regional and historical artistic-technological traditions, Maya civilization.

In a multinational state such as our country, it is necessary to speak differentially about the cultural heritage of a specific region and each individual nation. In this context, we will discuss traditional art crafts as the splendor of the artistic heritage of the Russian people.

The most crucial aspect is the understanding that the regional and historical artistic-technological traditions of each specific type of traditional art crafts must be preserved. Occasionally, as it turns out, the compositional features do not fully comply with these conditions; however, the essence of a specific type of traditional art craft is preserved. And here is the confirmation of this.

The Embassy of the Russian Federation in France, represented by Ambassador Alexey Yuryevich Meshkov, proposed that the Russian university of traditional art crafts participate in the event by presenting the culture of the ancient Mesoamerican period through the medium of Russian traditional art crafts (Fig. 1⁶). A situation has emerged that necessitates the study and artistic interpretation of the Mesoamerican culture (2nd–9th centuries AD) through the

⁶ Figs. 1-8. Russian house in Paris : site. – URL: <https://france.rs.gov.ru/news/vecher-v-russkom-dome-v-parizhe-posvyashhyonnyj-nauchnomu-naslediyu-otechestvennogo-etnografa-yu-v-knorozova/> (Accessed: 25.09.2026).

medium of Russian traditional art crafts. The resulting collection is to be presented at an exhibition to diplomats from Latin American countries.



Fig. 1. A.Yu. Meshkov,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
of the Russian Federation to the French
Republic and the Principality of Monaco
(concurrent)

First and foremost, a roadmap was developed, which included:

- analysis of exhibits and documents from the Mexican Museum in Paris;
 - review of literature and historical replicas reflecting the heritage of ancient Mesoamerican culture (cave paintings depicting nature, clothing and everyday scenes; detailed sketches of women's clothing, male and female figures, depictions of activities and narrative compositions);
 - selection of samples for replication;
 - identification of specific types of Russian traditional art crafts, the application of which, albeit remotely, correlated with the selected samples, but was deemed potentially feasible.
- The next stage involved the selection of six types of traditional art crafts:
1. Fedoskino lacquer miniature painting – for the reproduction of cave paintings, depiction of nature, everyday life and narrative scenes;
 2. Rostov enamel (Finift) – for the miniature replication of the scenes previously rendered through Fedoskino miniature painting;
 3. Bogorodskoye artistic wood carving – for the creation of sculptural works created during the studied period of the Maya civilization, but executed in wood rather than clay. The technique was deliberately complicated by the researchers, as working with wood is significantly more challenging than modeling with clay. The creation of exhibition pieces required the highest professional mastery of Russian artists, for whom working with linden wood at our university was the only available option;
 4. Kholmogory bone carving art – for the creation of a Mesoamerican calendar and individual masks made of bone;
 5. Jewelry art – for the creation of jewelry items such as upper arm and forearm bracelets, brooches, narrative necklaces, earrings and rings;
 6. Artistic embroidery – for the decoration of loose-fitting women's clothing, which is depicted in the cave paintings without any artistic embellishment.

All works were executed by students of the Russian university of traditional art crafts in the same sequence as any academic assignment during the educational process, namely: sketching; preliminary design variants for each item, regardless of the type of traditional art crafts; project execution; materialization of the developed and university-approved project (by the University's artistic and scientific-methodological council).

Thus, the exhibition featured the following items:

- 10 unique works of Fedoskino lacquer miniature painting;
- 6 miniature pieces of Rostov enamel work;
- 10 artifacts – unique works of Bogorodskoye artistic wood carving;
- 5 works of bone carving art – a Mesoamerican calendar, a pyramid, a mask and a panel (a replica of a cave painting);
- over 20 pieces of jewelry art.

As for the artistic embroidery, the University presented 31 women's dresses, which were structurally executed strictly according to the sketches copying the cave paintings. Overall, the process of their creation – from sketches to material realization – represented a serious project, which was implemented and presented at the event as a fashion show.

Through the collection of women's clothing adorned with artistic embroidery, it was necessary to demonstrate:

- the essence of Russian artistic embroidery;
- the interdependence between a specific women's clothing model and the technique of executing a particular type of artistic embroidery;
- the coloristic interrelationship between the fabric from which the model is made and the type of artistic embroidery;
- the specific features of the garment's construction and the selection of the artistic embroidery type.

It was precisely Russian artistic embroidery that served not only as the decoration of each item but also demonstrated the wide spectrum of its application in women's clothing, regardless of the century, formation, country, history, silhouette, season, etc.

At the same time, the regional and historical traditions were fully preserved in each type of artistic embroidery applied directly to each exhibited piece: coloristic, constructive, technological, compositional, aesthetic and others.

On March 23, 2026, the exhibition opening took place at the Russian house of science and culture in Paris. The event was attended by: Ambassador of Russia to France, A.Yu. Meshkov, Permanent Representative of Russia to UNESCO, R.Zh. Alyautdinov (Fig. 2), President of the Russian university of traditional art crafts, V.F. Maksimovich (Fig. 3), Director of the Russian house of science and culture, S.V. Zhilina.

The event was attended by Ambassadors from all Latin American countries, as well as Chargé d'Affaires of the Republic of Belarus, N. Vorobyov, and others. In total, there were more than sixty officials present. The exhibition left an unforgettable impression: everyone was amazed by the artistic excellence of the works of traditional art crafts – Fedoskino lacquer miniature painting and Rostov enamel, Bogorodskoye artistic wood carving, Kholmogory bone carving art and jewelry art – as a testament to the splendor of our people's artistic heritage.

The exhibition made a particular impression on the diplomats from Latin American countries and the staff of the Embassy of Russia in France. The models

for the fashion show included diplomats and staff members of the Permanent Mission of Russia to UNESCO.



Fig. 2. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to UNESCO, R.Zh. Alyautdinov



Fig. 3. President of the Russian university of traditional art crafts, academician of the Russian academy of education, doctor of pedagogical sciences, professor, V.F. Maksimovich

The fashion show was accompanied by a presentation of each piece featuring artistic embroidery and artistic lace-making. These were presented as examples of the artistic-creative interrelationship between the Mesoamerican model and the modern vision of this model, embodied through the application of contemporary types of artistic embroidery.

This is particularly important, as the models showcased more than 10 types of Russian artistic embroidery, each of which corresponded to a specific region of origin, preservation and development of this art type. It was precisely these regional specifics that were highlighted during the fashion show (Figs. 4–8). The models showcased the following types of artistic embroidery:

- Vladimir surface stitches ('Vladimir verkhoshvy');
- Mstyora white-work ('Msyora belaya glad');
- Ivanovo stitch ('Ivanovo strochka');
- Russian satin stitch ('Russian glad');
- Nizhny Novgorod guipure;
- Oryol spis;
- Kadom veniz;
- Goldwork;
- Satin stitch;
- Colored wrapped thread work ('Colored perevit').



Figs. 4-7. Fashion show of the Russian university of traditional art crafts at the Russian house of science and culture in Paris (France). March 23, 2026



Fig. 8. Fashion show of the Russian university of traditional art crafts at the Russian house of science and culture in Paris (France). March 23, 2026

Unique artistic embroidery was represented by six regions of Russia: the Vladimir, Ivanovo, Tver, Nizhny Novgorod, Ryazan and Oryol regions.

Such a wide territorial and artistic distribution of traditional art crafts – which includes all types of this art presented at the unique exhibition at the Russian house of science and culture in Paris – is characteristic and possible only in our country, Russia. And the Russian university of traditional art crafts, as the only higher education institution in this field in Russia and the world, trains precisely these artists who not only preserve this art but also contribute to the development of each of the 29 types of traditional art crafts, presenting them at exhibitions in our country and annually in foreign countries, thereby contributing to the formation of an ethical and reasonable attitude towards our country – RUSSIA.