

# NATIONAL EMBROIDERIES IN KRAJNSKA EMBROIDERIES IN GORENJSKA

The majority of the motifs are inspired by plant life, but geometrical motifs can also be found. The most popular plant pattern in Gorenjska is the carnation. Few are houses in Gorenjska that do not have a symbolic carnation decorating their windows and hallways, since it is an important national flower, often mentioned in folk songs as well. However, there are other plant patterns used, such as fern, ears of wheat, grapes, etc.

Apart from the carnation, the heart is a very popular pattern as well, which is an imitation of the core of an apple cut in half. The heart can be seen not only in embroideries but also painted, carved or burnt into furniture, on pots and other cooking utensils, on tools, on wooden boards decorating façades, etc.

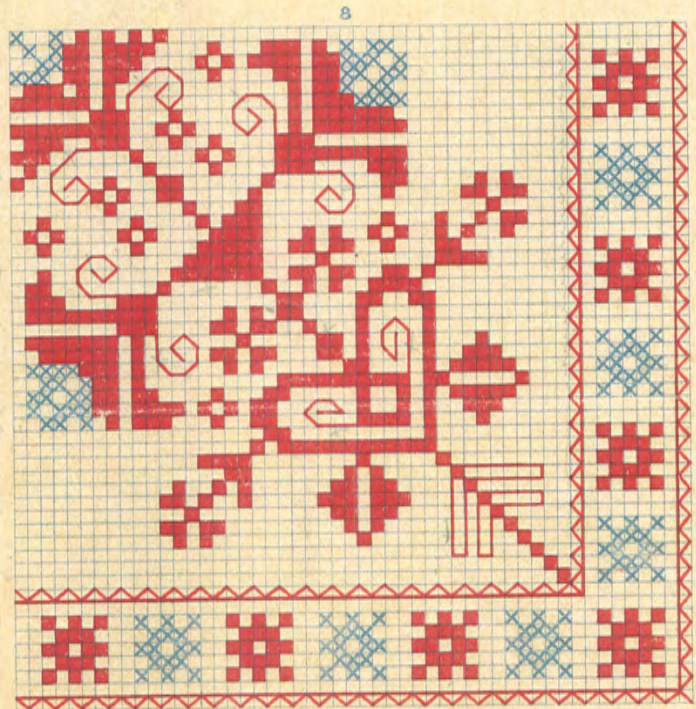
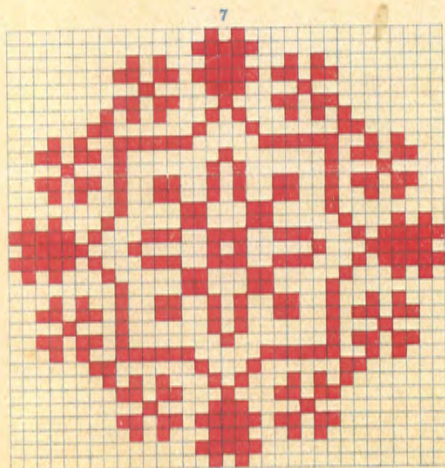
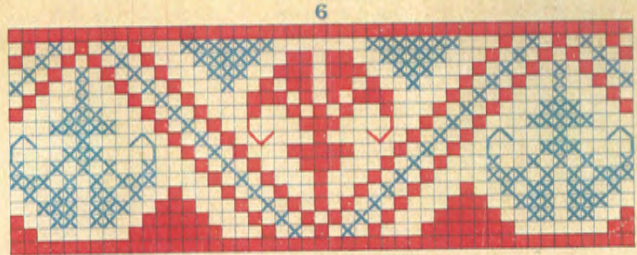
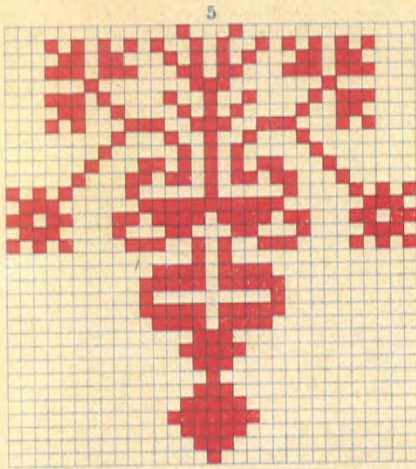
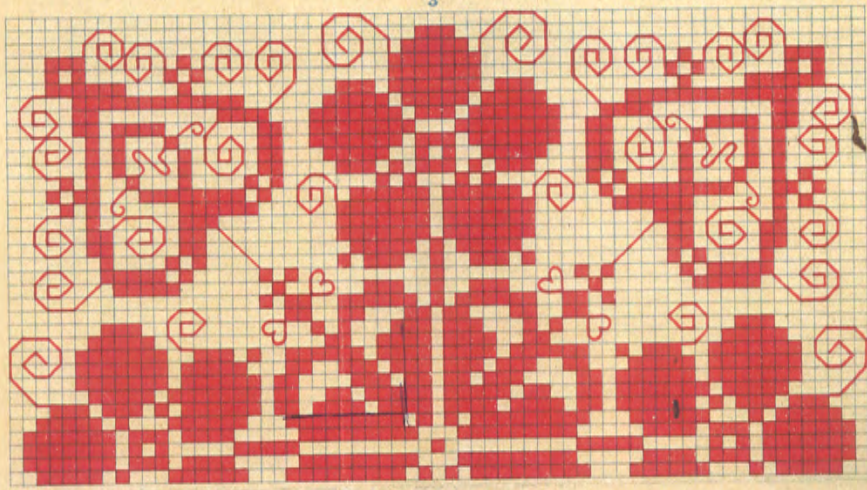
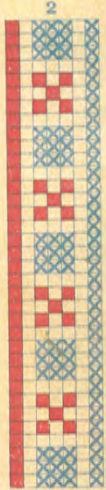
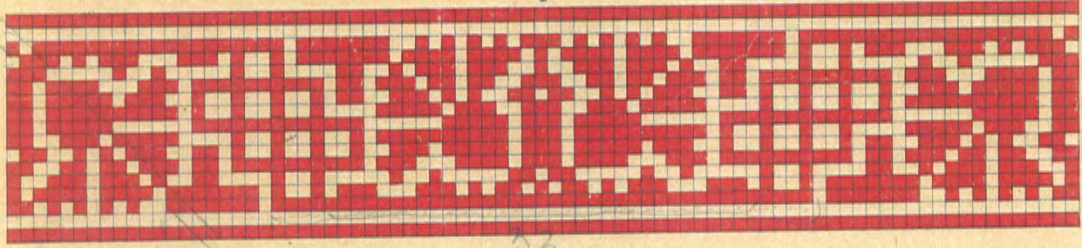
Of course, Christianity also influenced the motifs used. The most common one is called the “Heart of Jesus and Mary”, pierced through by spears and crowned with a handle-like crown. The “Heart of Jesus” comes with a Christogram, or a monogram of Jesus, which is present not only in embroideries but also painted on or carved into furniture (especially chests, doors, wine containers, etc.) as protection against misfortune. It is still used nowadays, even though the meaning of the letters *IHS* in the monogram is lost – the monogram came to be from the Greek name for Jesus, *IΗΣΟΥΣ* or *ΙΗCOYC*.

This motif, the “Heart of Jesus”, comes in many variants. The actual heart can be made small, the crown and the spears transformed into flowers and similar. Fern leaves are used to make webs. The original simple motifs have been, over time, transformed into many secondary complex motifs, yet all preserving an extraordinary sense of good taste. Versatile forms and variants abound.

The name of Mary is often used in conjunction with the Christogram. These two forms are embroidered into tablecloths of various kinds, which are used in churches or intended to be used as a covering for a newly baptised baby, or used to cover tables and wicker baskets on Easter, Christmas and other such occasions.

From the animal world, several motifs are taken, mostly birds.

The geometrical patterns on embroideries from Gorenjska are made by using the cross stitch mostly. If the stitching needs to be thicker, the chain and upright cross stitches are used as well. Only a few patterns use the running stitch.



These patterns are stitched on home-made linen using home-made thread or yarn, as well as cotton and wool, and rarely silk. The colour of the thread is generally black or red and blue, and only occasionally green, dark purple and brown.

The patterns are found on sheets, pillow covers, tablecloths of various kinds, rags and gloves. They are used very decoratively. The pillow covers come in two sizes: small (rectangle-like) and large, long. There are typical patterns used on large covers: a the central band and two side bands along the edges. All the bands are decorated with “little trees” (*drevesca*) along their sides.

