

The taboo of virginity

Maham Amjad
Textile2020

Introduction

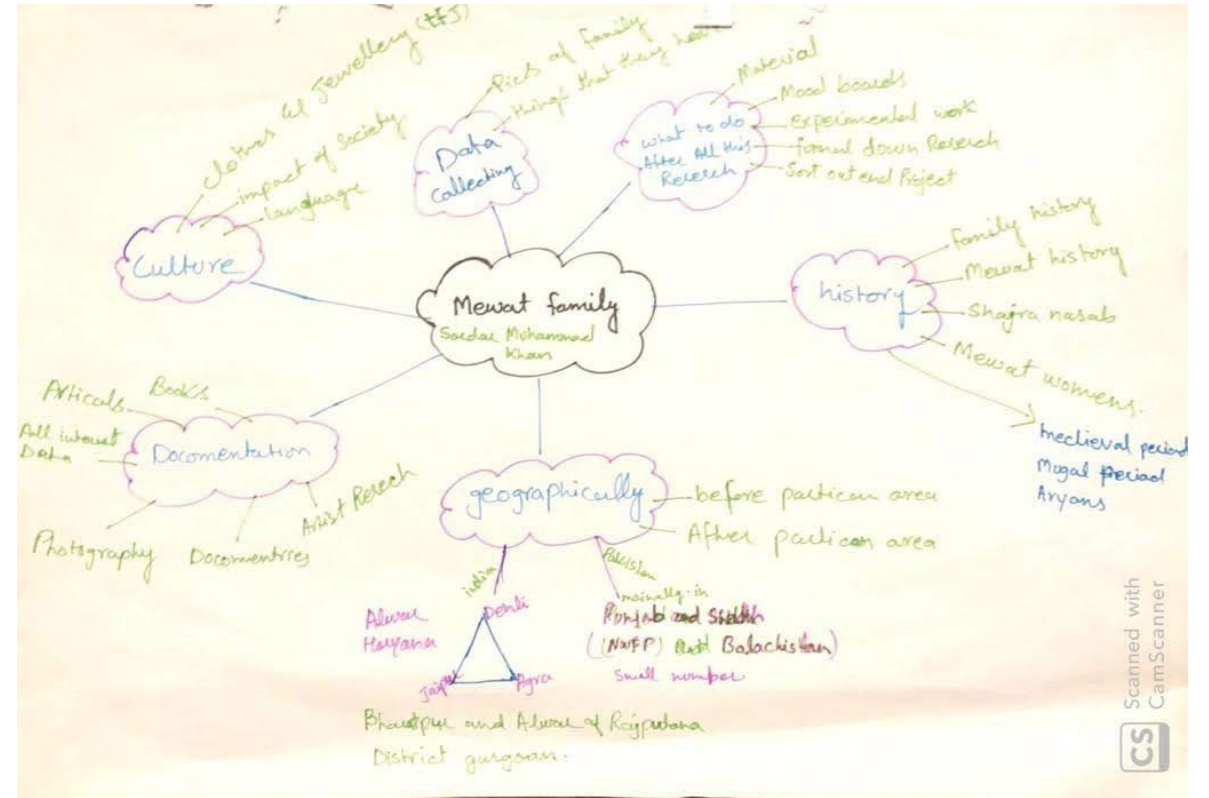
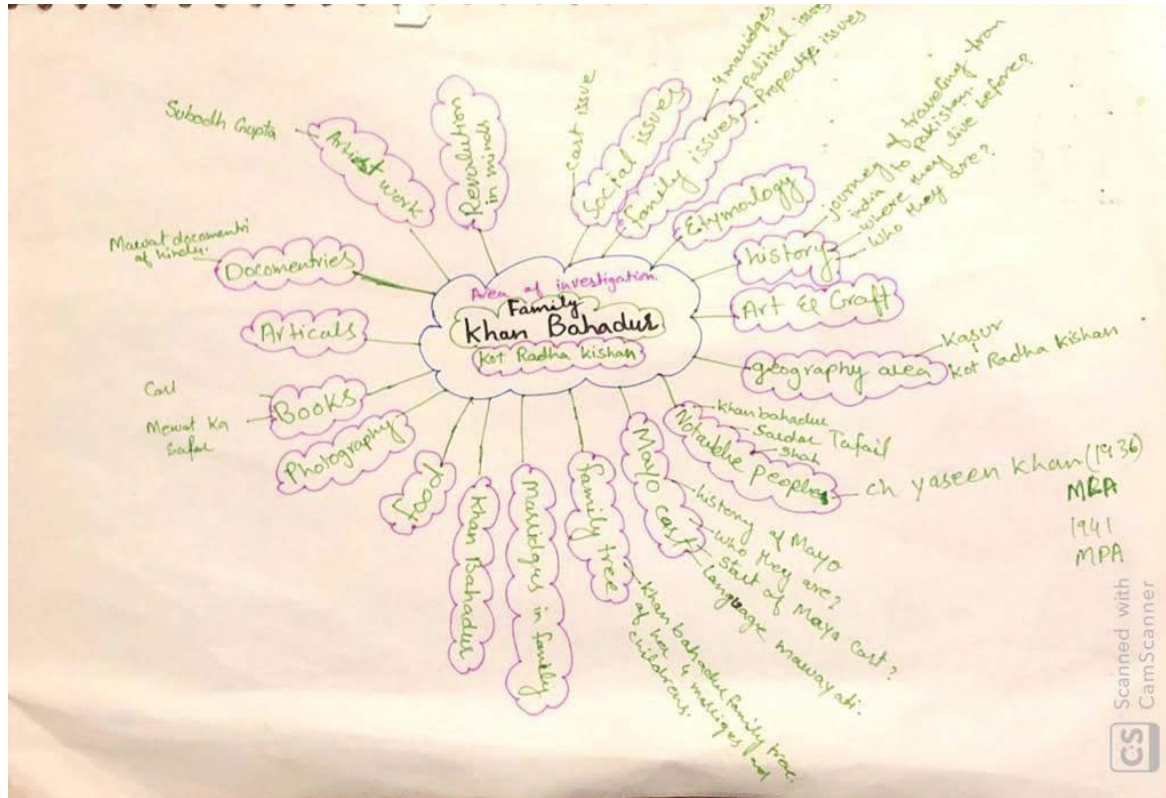
VIRGINITY TABOO

The virginity of a bride is still considered a virtue in communities throughout the world. Virginity testing, the examination of the genitals as a way to determine sexual chastity, remains popular in communities that place a high premium on virginity for social, economic, and religious reasons.



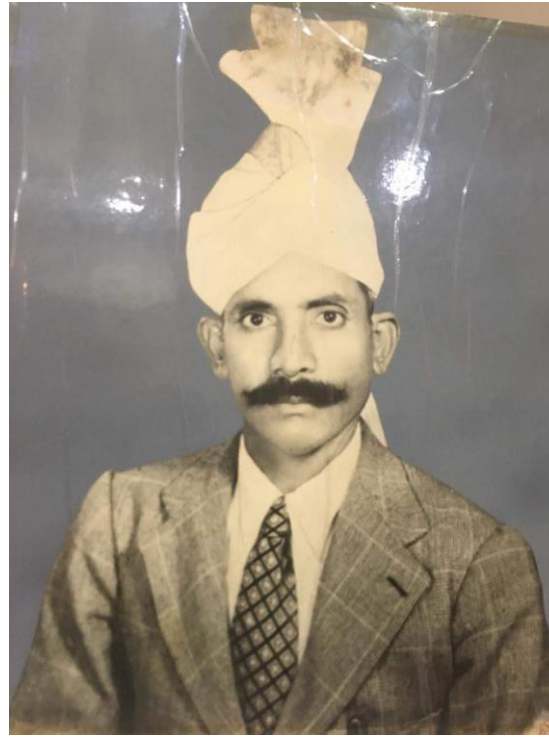
Mind maps

Primary research





Sultan Ahmed Khan
Brother of my great grand father

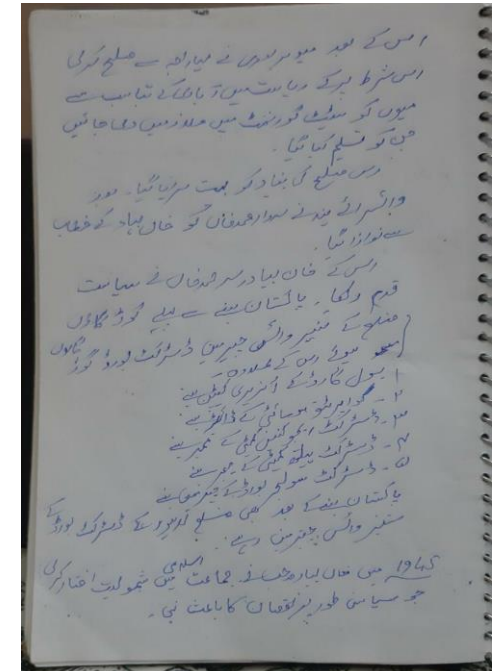
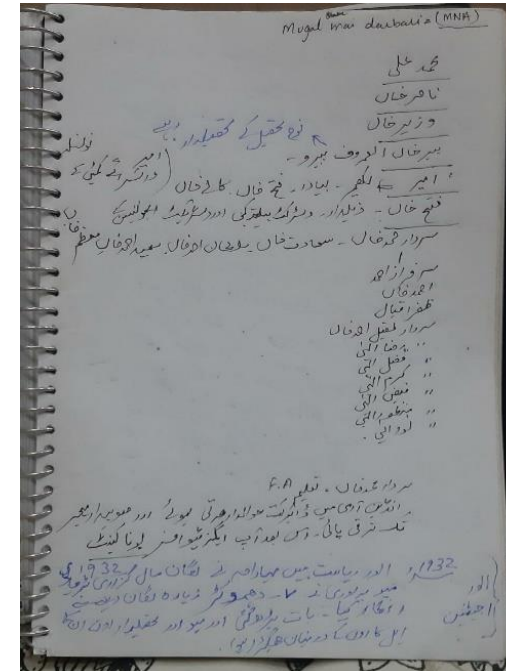
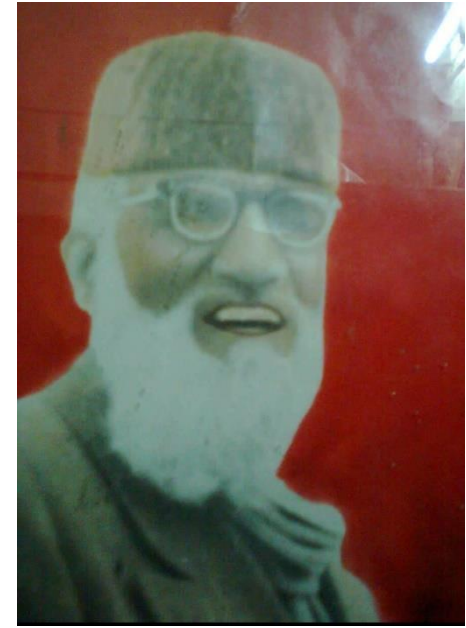


Sultan Ahmed khan

I interviewed one of the brothers of my great grandfather Sultan Ahmed Khan. I got a lot of authentic information from him directly about the efforts my great grandfather had put particularly for the mewatties and others as well. He wrote my family tree in urdu with the help of this I started to complete my family tree.



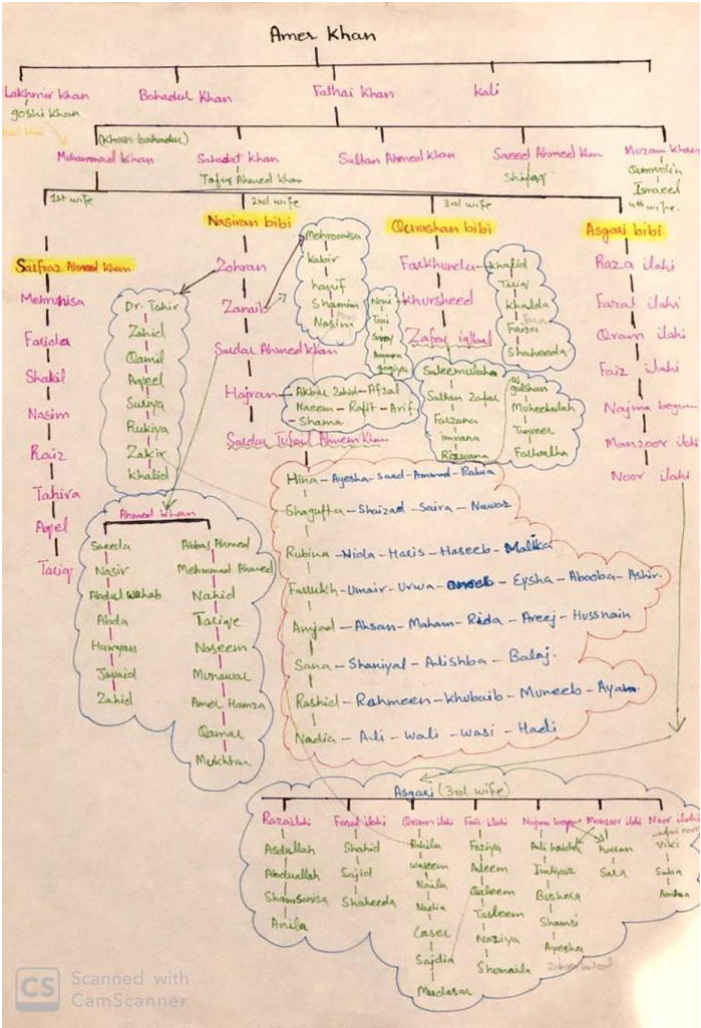
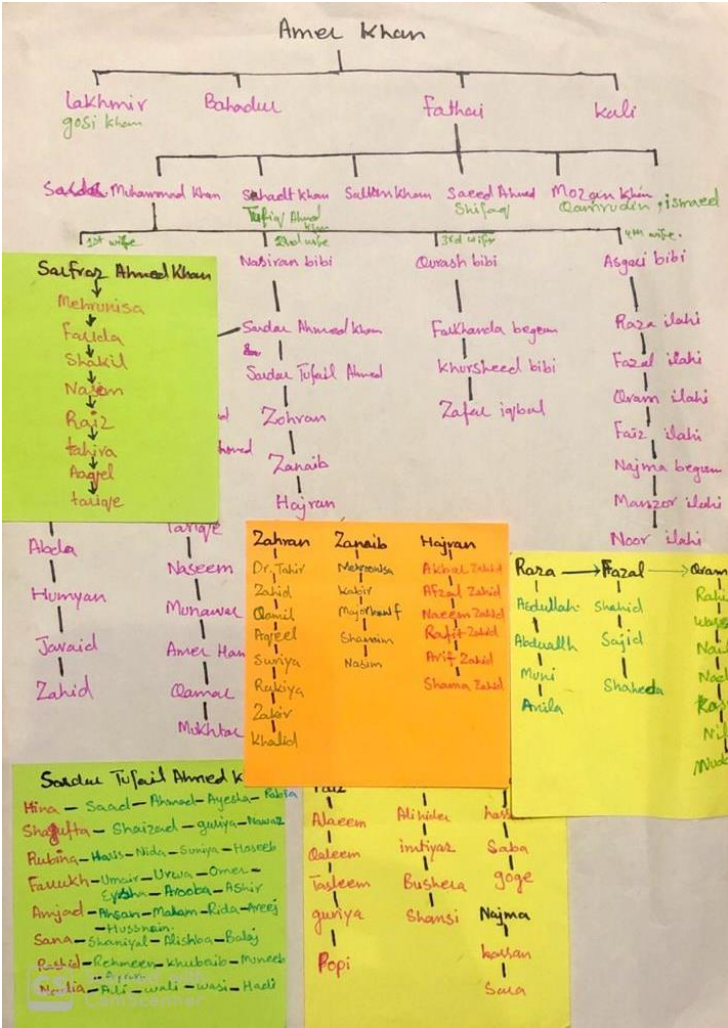
Sardar Muhammad Khan (khan bahadur)
My great grandfather





Brothers of my grandfather live near by my house. I visited their place to take help from them to complete my family tree and to understand the culture of mewatti tribe.

Family Tree



Here is my family tree. My great grandfather had four wives and even I don't know exact number of his offsprings. In my research I interviewed one of the brothers of my grandfather Sultan Ahmed Khan. I got a lot authentic information from him directly about the efforts my great grandfather had put particularly for the mewatties and others as well.



Shahabuddin Khan Meo

Founder Trustee and Chairman of the Munshi Qamaruddin Khan Foundation for Education and He is a researcher in the Department of History, Quaid-e-Azam University

I met uncle Shahabuddin Khan Meo in Islamabad.. He is my dada's sister's daughter's husband. He wrote many articles on Mewati tribe. I talked about Mewati culture, history and my own family history. His house is like a library and numerous things related to Meo people. I found a lot of pictures there that helped me a lot to research about Mewati culture before and after partition.

Secondary research

Research resources that I found their

Books

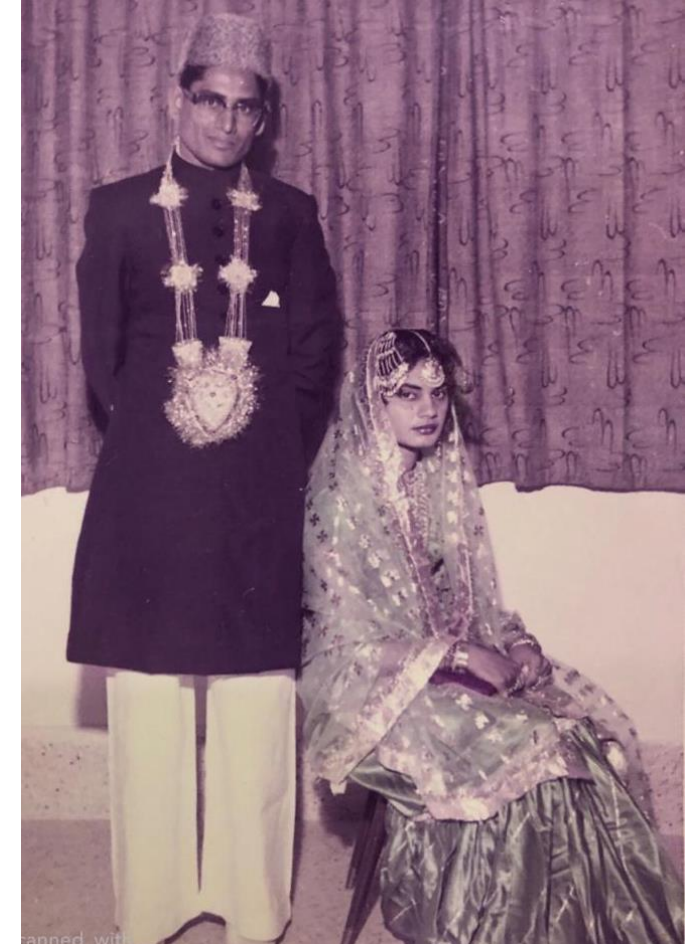
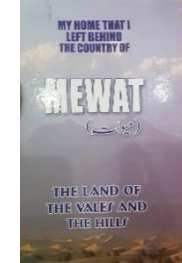
- Resisting Regimes by Shail Mayaram
- State history against state by Shail Mayaram
- Mewat by Nizamuddin
- Contestations and accommodations (Mewat and Meos in Mughal India) by Suraj Bhan

Articles

- Meoni of Mewat by Yoginder Sikand
- History of Mewat by Shahbuddin
- Meos of Pakistan by Younginder Singh
- Kingship and marriage by Shahduddin
- Call of Mewat (the Tribune)
- History of Mewat by Shahduddin
- What should we know about the Meo Muslims of Mewat by Hindustan Times
- Subaltern history and Meos of Mewat by Dr. Shail Mayaram

Thesis

- Kingship and marriage by Zara Ahmed 1983
- Culture patterns of Mewat community by S.M Akram Ejaz 1957
- Assimilation of Meo community by Ambreen Kanwal 2000



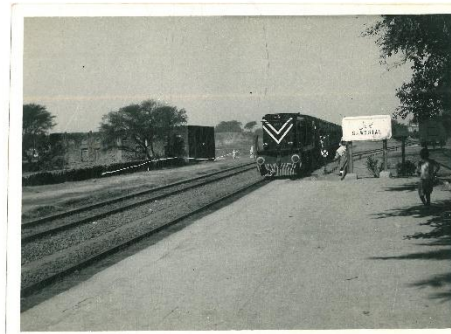
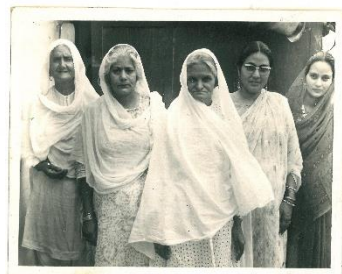
MR and MRS Shahabuddin 1965

Collected photographs

These are the pictures that I collected from my uncle shahabuddin and some of my family members.

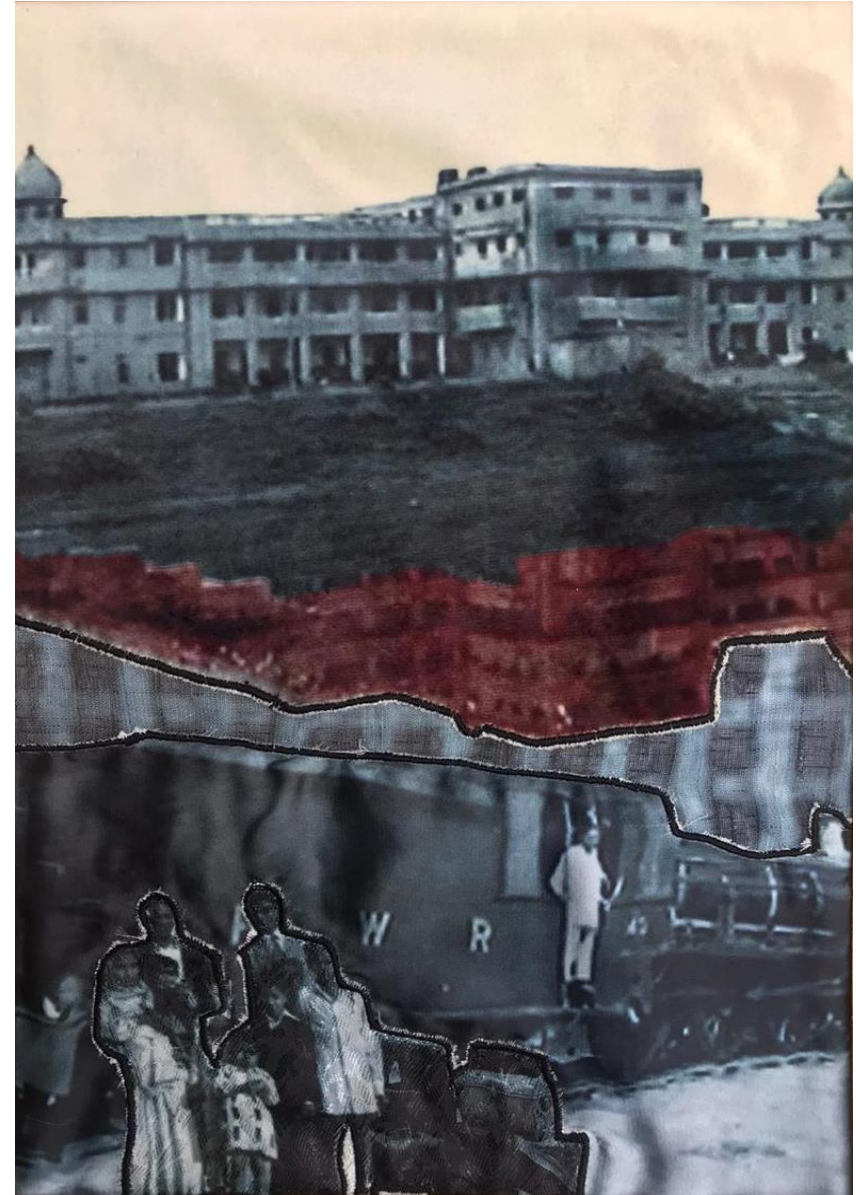






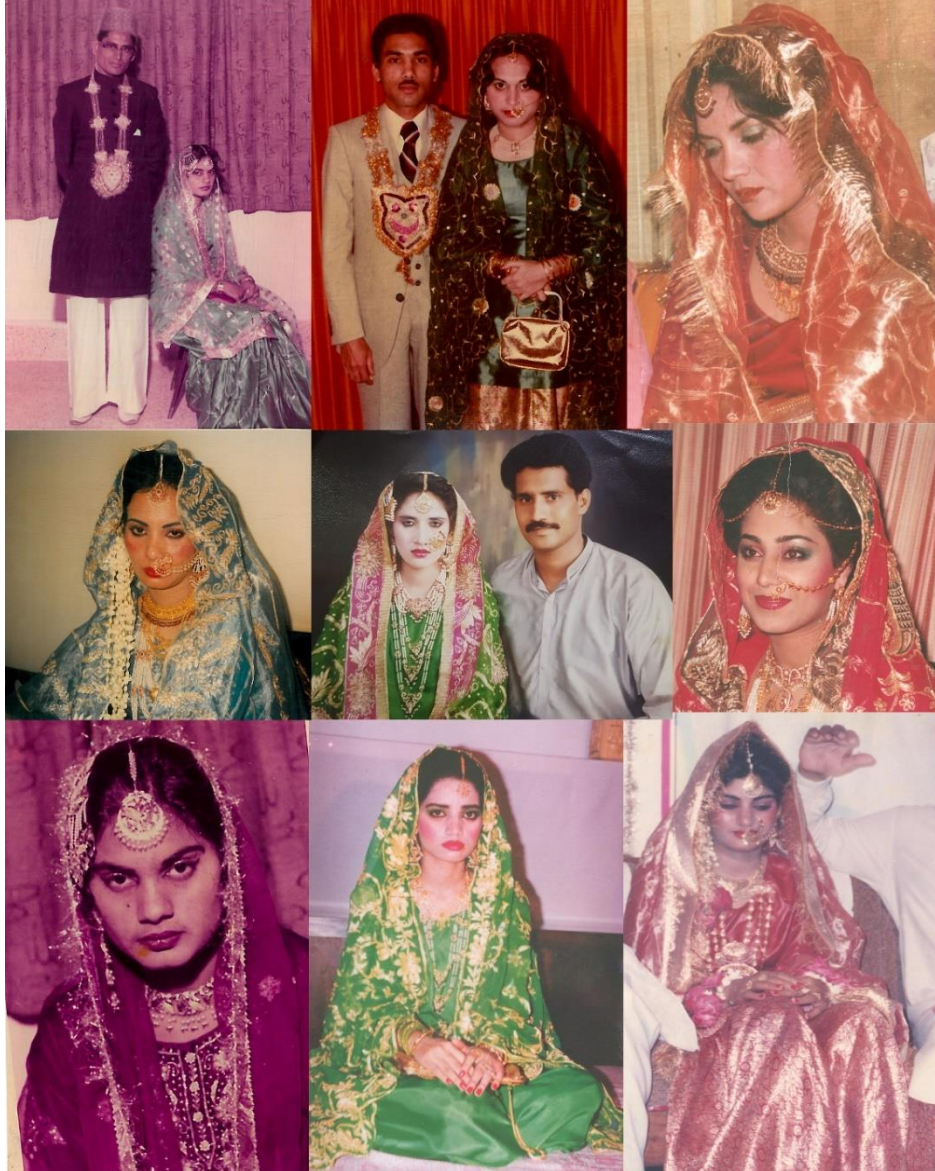


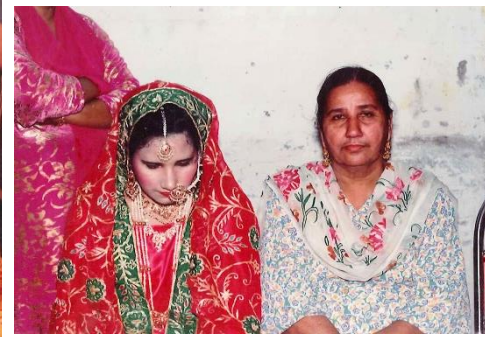
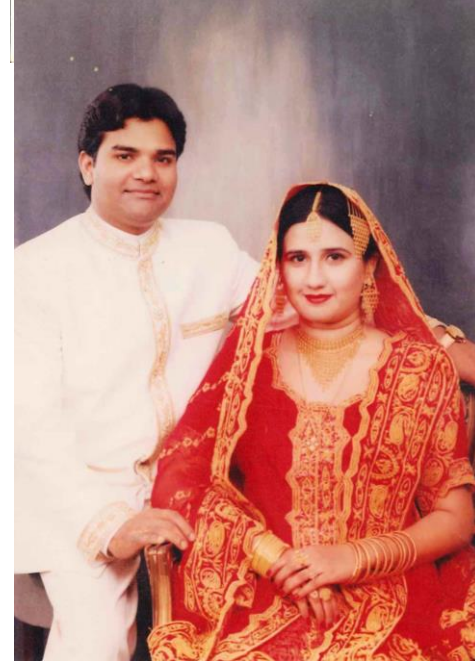
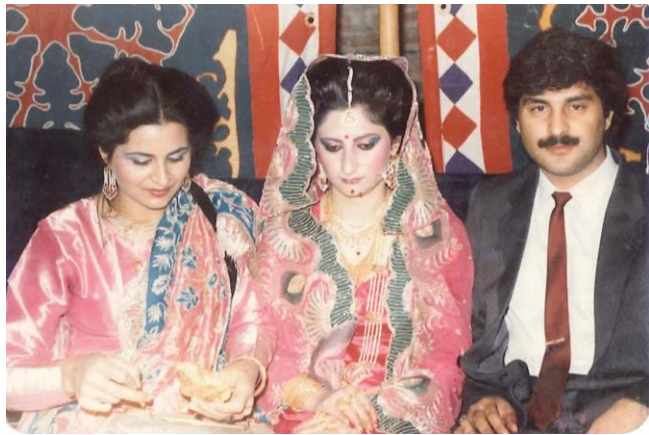
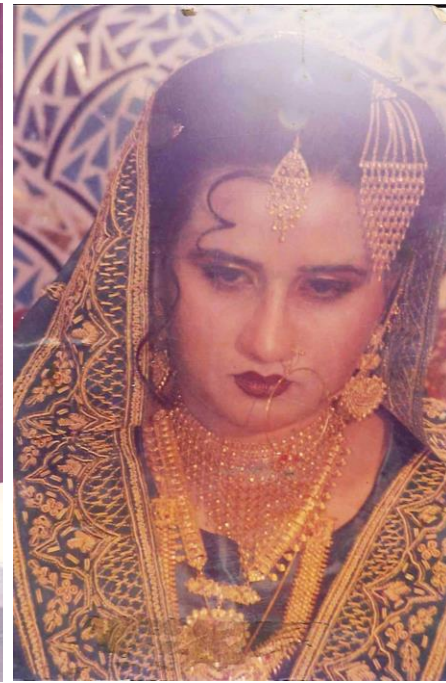
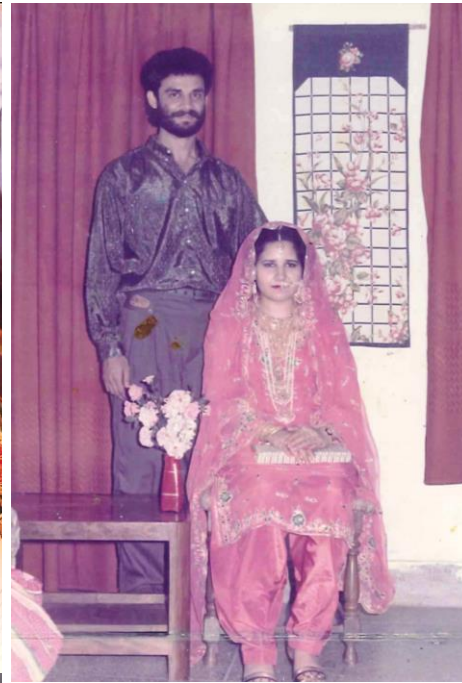
When I didn't find any direction I used my pictures to make collages and do some experimental work.

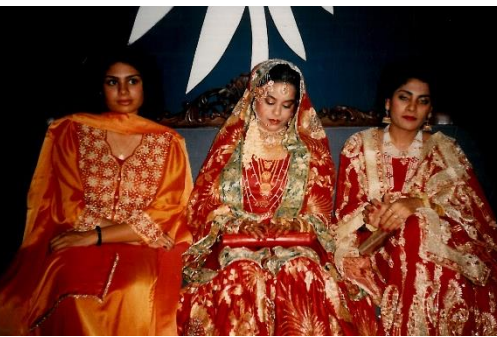
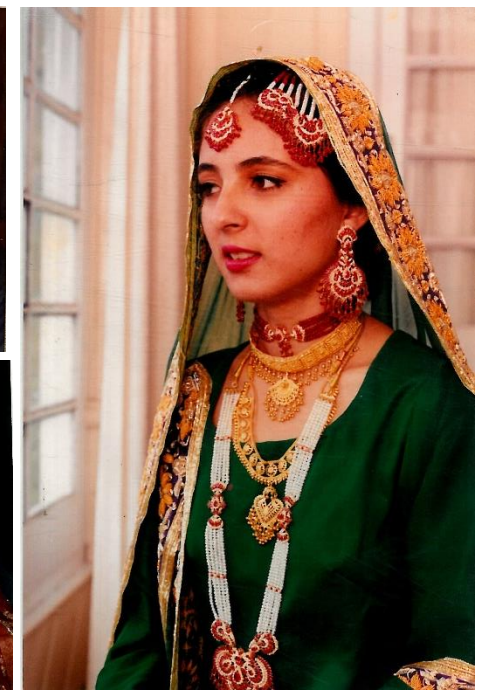
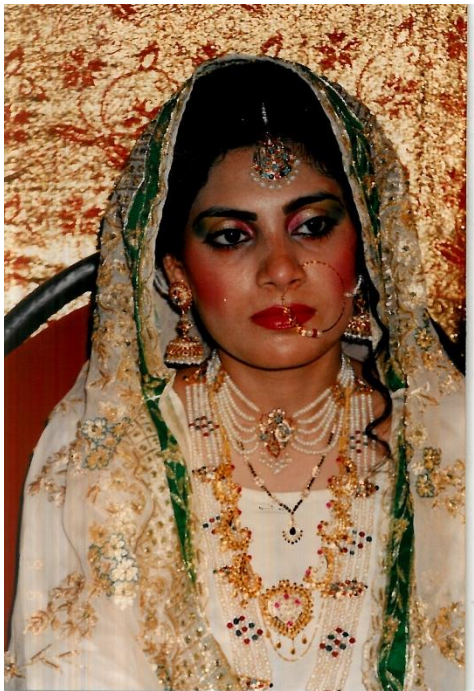
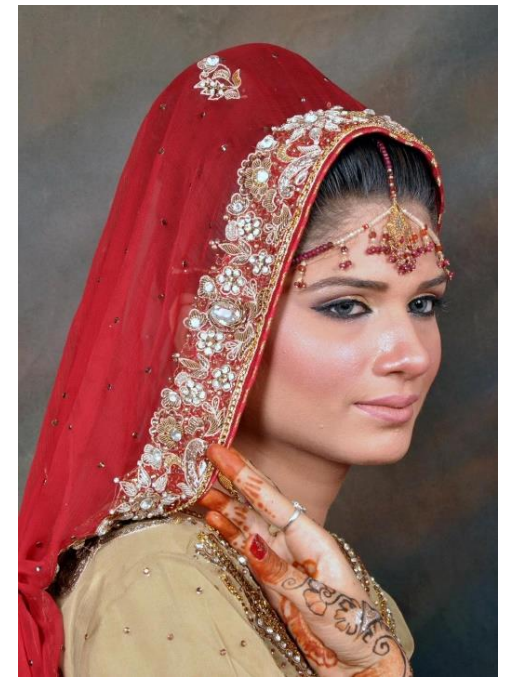
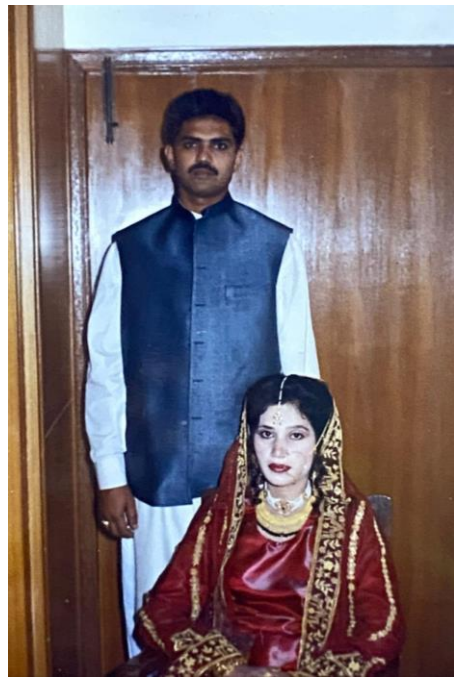


Old pictures of Meo brides

In this hole journey my phopo and my all family members helped me a lot and they also gave me their old pictures for my thesis.

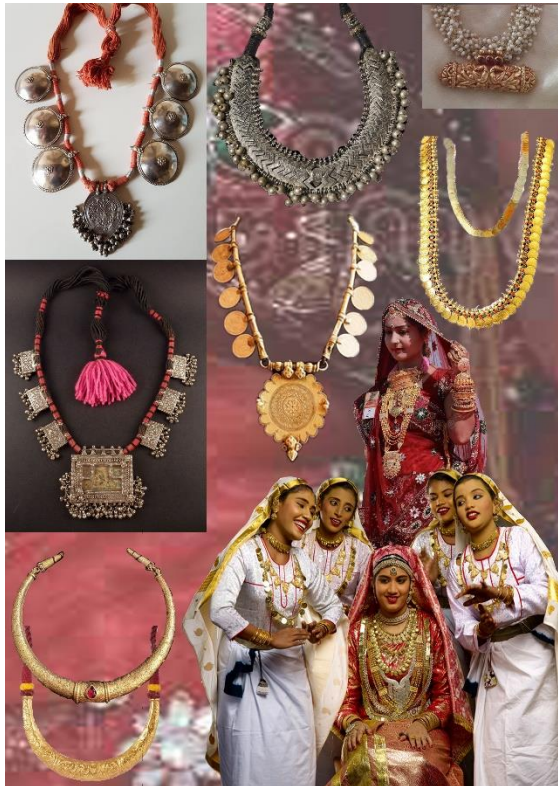
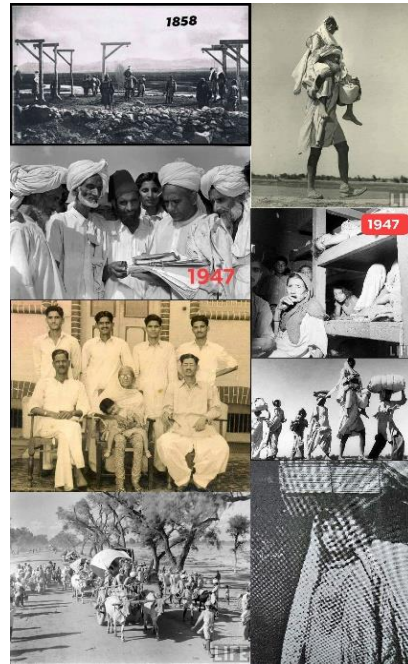






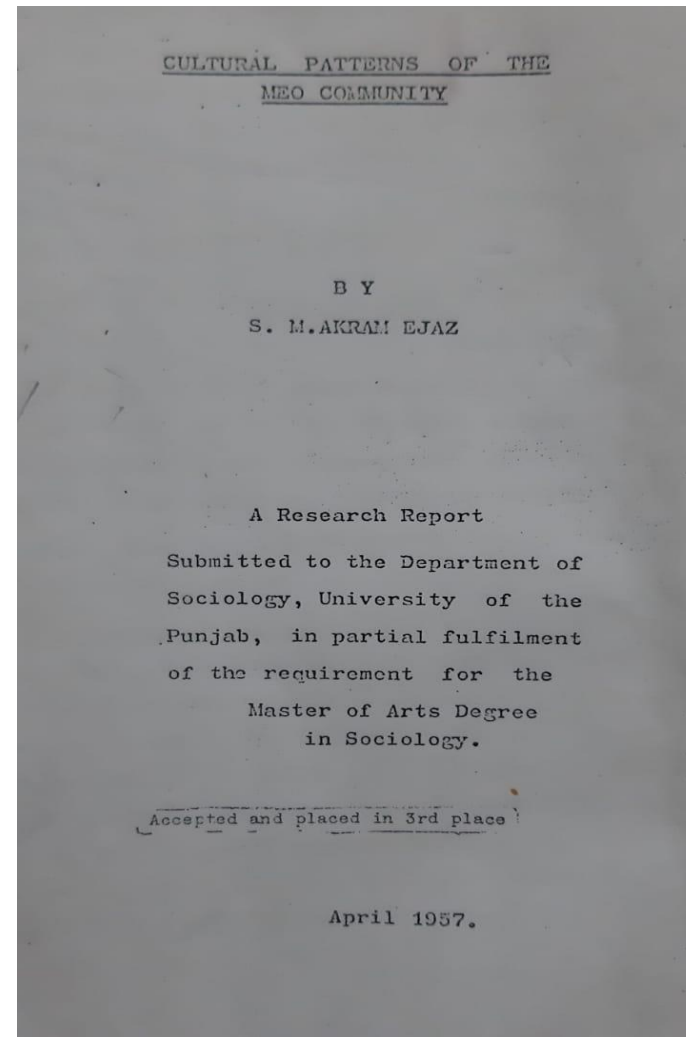
MOOD BOARDS

I interview my grandmother to make it understand old customs and traditions of mewatt. All these mood boards related to jewellery are made by the help of grandmother. She helped me by drawing the designs of jewellery and one by one telling the names of them which she used to wear and see in her time.

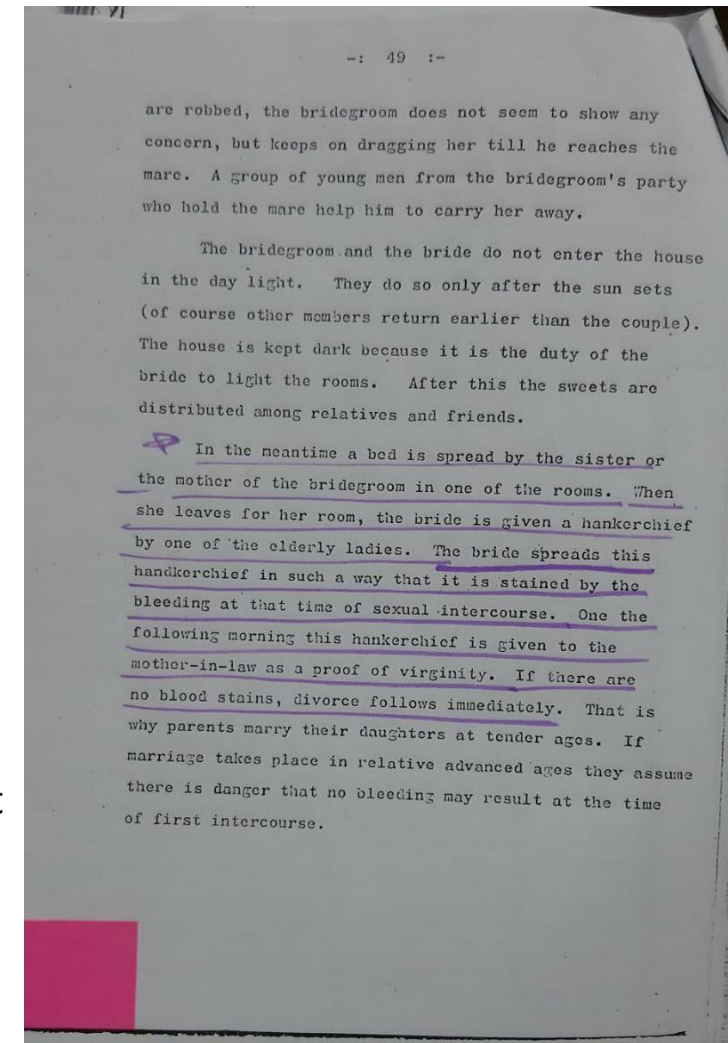


Research Gap

While researching on my ancestral tribe Rajput Meo, I discovered the rituals and traditions of Mewat in India, one of them being the virginity test for a newly wed on her wedding night. Taking this as my take-off point for my project, I explored how the policing of women happens as they are objectified, divorced, or even killed as outcomes of customs .

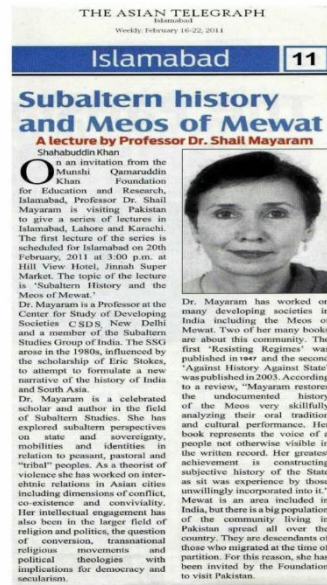


This is the thesis book where I read about the virginity test.



Online survey

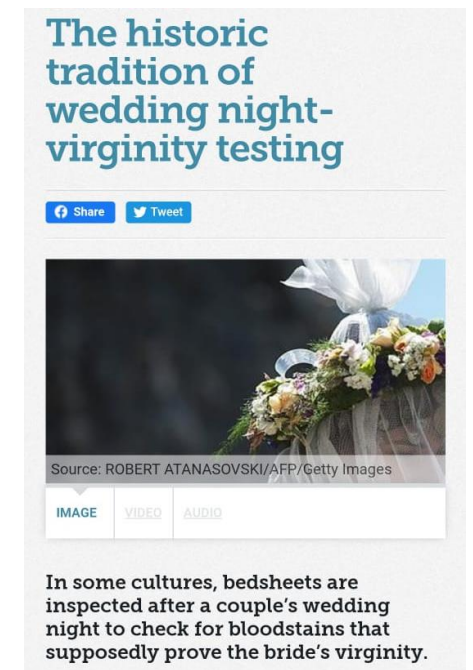
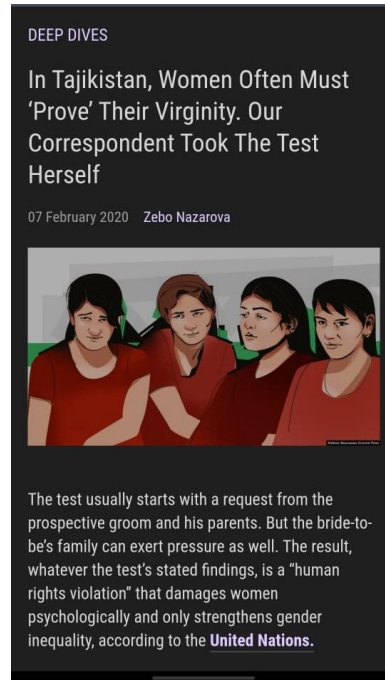
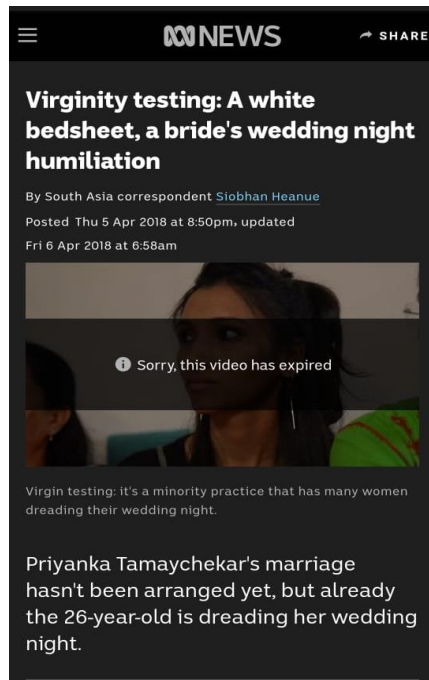
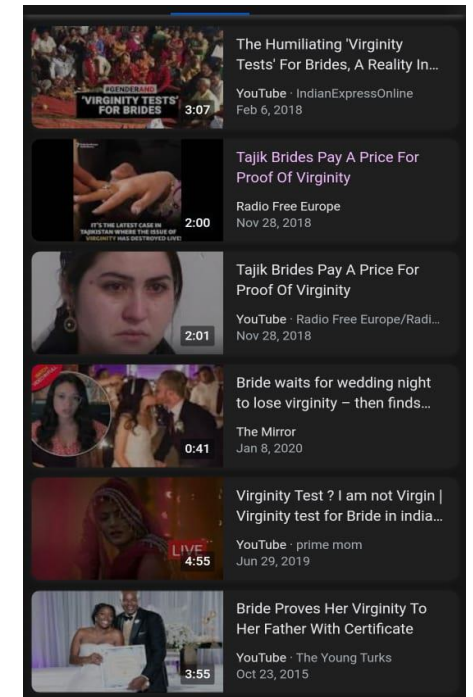
- I read so many articles and watched documentaries about virginity test happened on wedding night how they treat what they do with the couple and the family of a bride in different cultures.



The humiliating ‘virginity tests’ for brides, a reality in India’s Kanjarbhat community

#GenderAnd: “Virginity test is a character certificate of the woman. Even the bride keeps the cloth with her bloodstains as a memento of pride,” says a member of the Kanjarbhat community

Written By **Parth M N** |
Updated: February 7, 2018 12:42:41 pm



#GENDERAND



Virginity test for brides is still a reality in the Kanjarbhat community of India.

Siddhant

#GENDERAND



Who are Kanjarbhots?

A denotified tribe, Kanjarbhots migrated from Rajasthan to parts of Western Maharashtra & Gujarat.

#GENDERAND



Youngsters from the community are speaking against the practice.

In the Kanjarbhat tradition, a couple is expected to consummate their marriage on a white cloth.

Siddhant

If the girl bleeds, she passes the test.

Siddhant

If she does not, it is assumed she has had premarital sex

Siddhant

and the marriage can be annulled.

Siddhant

The Kanjarbhat caste councils oversee the test.

Siddhant

The community has a set of codified rules.

Social boycott of those who break rules is common.

#GENDERAND



Youngsters from the community are speaking against the practice.

Members have found support, among others, from a 90-year old.

#GENDERAND



Janabai
Member, Kanjarbhat Community

Boys and girls these days are educated.

It does not look good. The panchayat should end it.

They know their rights and that is why such practices should end.

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My mother told me I have to follow the traditions of the community

and we can't challenge something that has been going on for hundreds of years

That's when I realised that it is the pressure from the caste panchayat.

It is a kind of fear. The need of the time is to eradicate the system.

The Maharashtra state government passed a law criminalising caste panchayats in July, 2017.

Siddhant

It was important to bring the practice in the public domain.

So, I went on Facebook and talked about it.

Initially, 5 boys and girls joined the group but now we have grown to 35.

We have also created a Whatsapp group called Stop the V-ritual.



It's important for the girl to be virgin before marriage.



There must be some way to check the virginity.



Hello, Father. I am ready to get married.



Mom! Dad! - What's wrong, son?



Father, I don't want to stay with this girl, that's it.

I mean she's not virtuous.



Next Day Panchayat

The council has heard everything.

...the council decides that Shivani and her parents...



WE PROUDLY SAY - WE ARE MODERN, BUT ARE WE...?

So the council decides in the favor of Samarkant and his parents.



Women took the case to the court

A case like this in such a modern society...sounds really strange.

But the court must decide on the basis of circumstances and evidence.



But educated orthodox men like him...

..ask for your character certificate with your virginity.

What right do you have?

This is an insult to the entire women race.

No one has the right to question my parent's values.

Why are only women asked... are you virgin?

Today in this court, I want to publicly ask a question.

Mr.Samarkant are you virgin?



Myself, Dr. Abha Singh. Gynecologist.

Virginity has been given a very big importance in our society.

But there's no solid

Method to prove virginity.

There is a thin membrane called hymen, Which partially covers the vaginal opening.

During physical relations...

...this hymen,

Which is very delicate, tears...

...and that cause bleeding.

And this bleeding was considered as

prove of deflowering in our society.

I want to tell you an important point.

Physical relation isn't the

Only reason for hymen's tear.

As we know ..women these days take part

In many activities like men.

They play games like cricket, hockey, kabaddi..long jump high jump

And the hymen tears due to these activities can be break...

So if the hymen is already torn ..or the

Absence of bleeding on first night..

Doesn't prove that the women

Isn't a virgin..

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Artist research

Aline brant

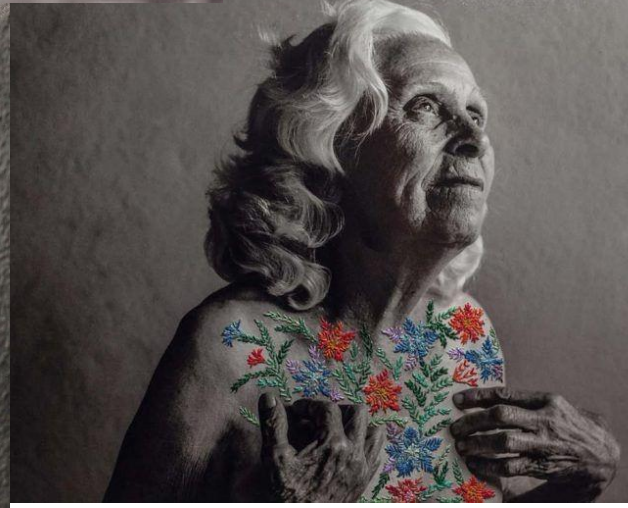
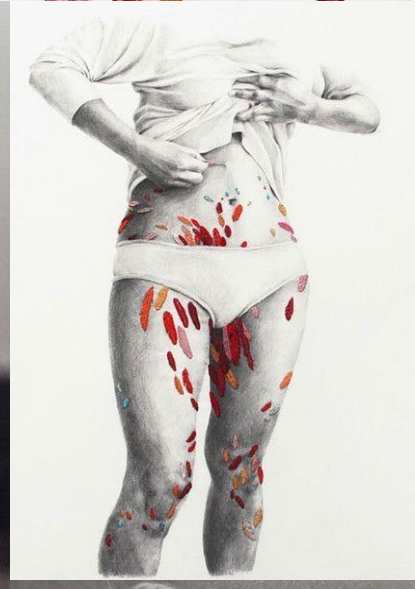
Aline Brant is one of those artists we are grateful they exist, as they are bringing so much happiness and innocence in our dark world. Indeed, this 34 year old Brazilian photographer perfectly knows how to capture light and love in her pictures and how to redistribute them to her beholders.

Her photography are displaying human beings in their simplicity, illustrating every step of life from playful children to elders full of pretty memories. The pictures are taken in natural light, without many effects, in black and white or in color, with truly delicate, organic tones. Her subjects are either in a neutral background or merged in a bucolic surrounding. However, Aline Brant doesn't content herself with making sweet photography. She is also retouching her pictures in a very special way, not digitally, but by patiently and carefully embroidering the photographic paper.

This unique and original concept is truly adding more poetry to her already gorgeous photos. With her embroideries, the artist is reconnecting her models with nature and dreams. Celebrating smiles and bodies, she gives us a sheer feel of freedom and hope.

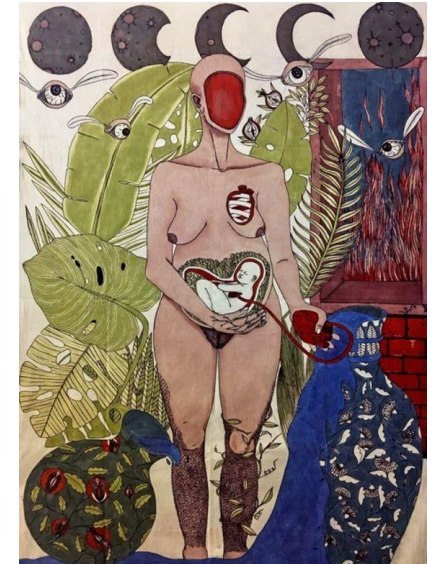
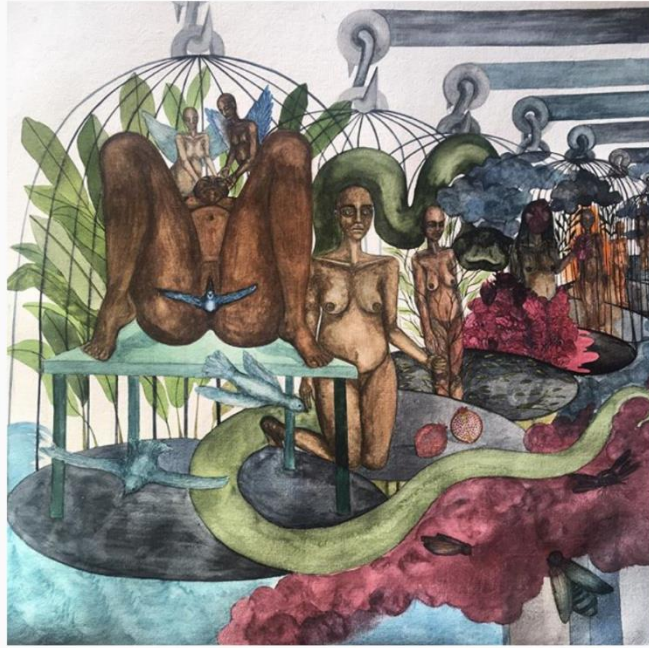
We are children again, forever. The intimacies shared are chaste, glorified and natural. With a lot of tenderness, the Rio de Janeiro based embroiderer is revealing the inner beauty of women and men with colored threads.

From complex designs to minimalistic touches, the embellishments are recalling us to enjoy the simple pleasures and to marvel of nature's wonders. The work of Aline Brant is essential in the fact that it is reminding us that nature is full of harmony, sweetness and love, that humanity should be too and that it is through art that we could find our lost paradise again.



Sarah Naqvi

Sarah Naqvi's uses embroidery to convey the idea behind her art rather than the aesthetic. The textile artist uses embroidery and watercolor to add a subtlety to her captivating art that takes on the subjects of gender, sexuality, menstruation, masturbation, body positivity, race, religion, and so much more. Her embroidery is driven by issues that girls and women experience globally.



Jakkai siributr

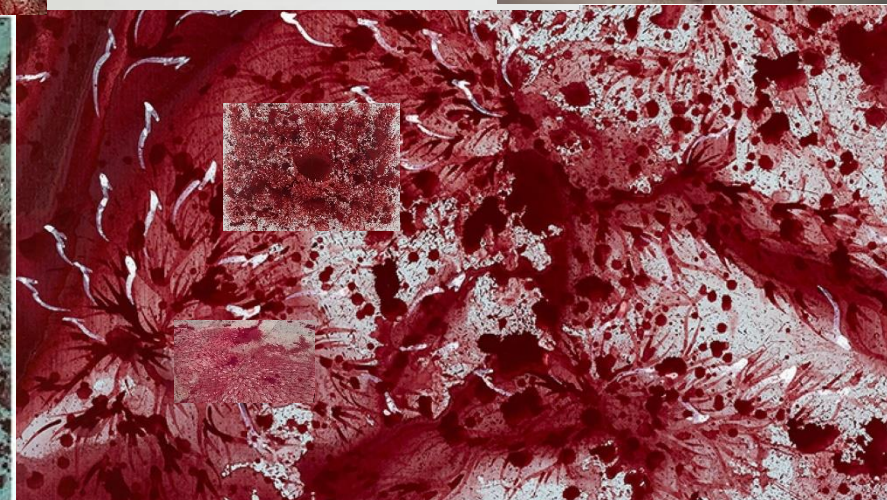
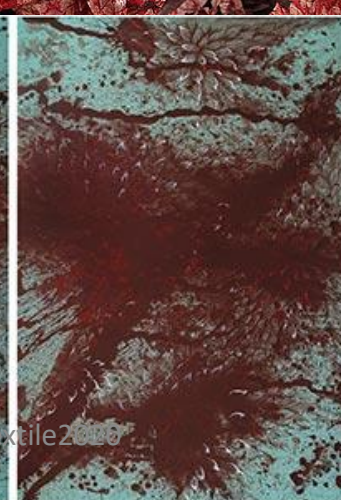
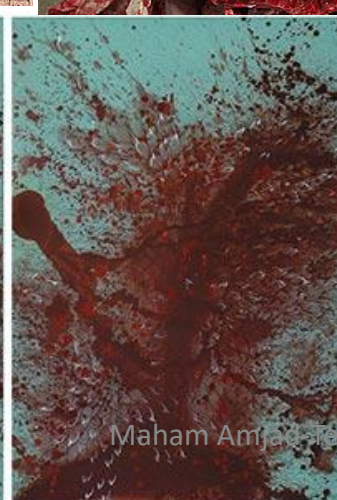
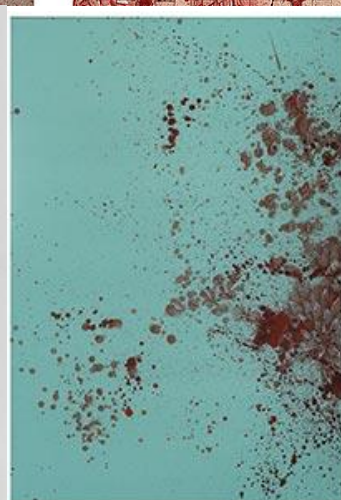
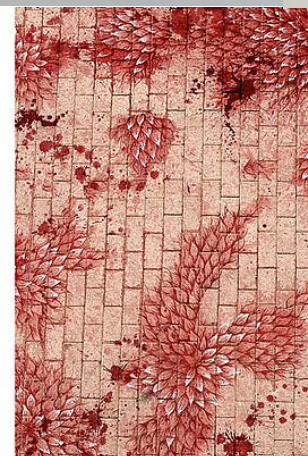
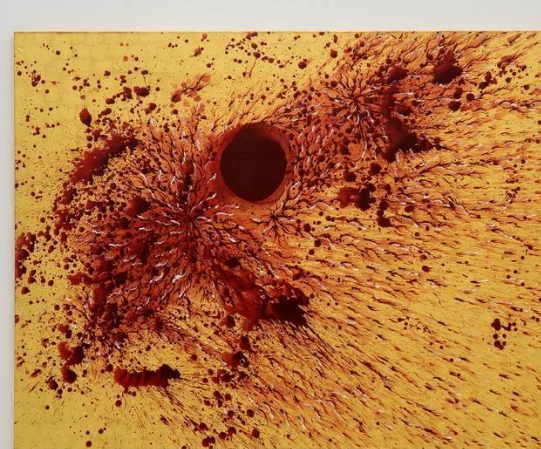
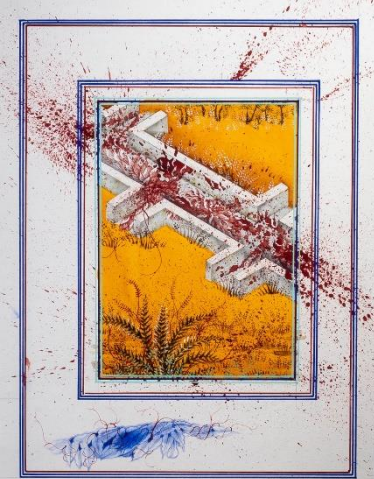


Imran Qureshi

Imran Qureshi's practice is firmly rooted in the tradition of miniature painting, the subject he still teaches at the National College of Art in Lahore, an art form that reached its zenith during the Mughal Empire. Imran Qureshi has been exhibiting locally and internationally for almost twenty- five years and has greatly expanded the language of miniature painting, both in traditionally sized and crafted works and in many original variations in the form of site-specific installations, three-dimensional works, videos, and paintings on paper and canvas. His work is exemplary of a practice that combines a local background with a global outlook, artistically, socially and politically.

A master of the art of miniature, Imran Qureshi reworks the painting style typical of Mughal courts in the 16th to 19th centuries to depict flora, fauna, body parts, and calligraphic script. Following bombings in his home city of Lahore, he introduced blood-red paint into his palette, splattered or delicately drawn in works that contrast violence with beauty. Plant tendrils become splitting capillaries, human feet are patterned with tiny leaves, and oval canvases are covered in gold leaf. In pieces as small as six-by-eight inches or as large as room-size installations, he represents in abstracted terms the collective history of his country.







Subodh Gupta

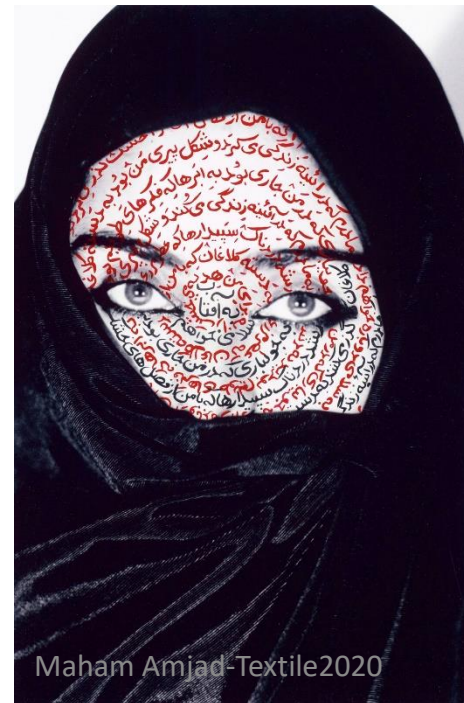
Subodh Gupta is a contemporary Indian artist. Working across a variety of media, he is best known for his monumental sculptural works composed of everyday metal objects such as lunch boxes, tin cans, and cookware. Self-described as a representative of a cultural history, his work translates a spiritual quality through the items from which they are composed



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Shirin nishat



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Abstract

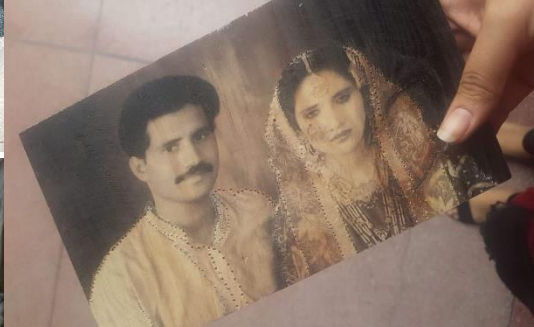
Thesis statement

My thesis streams from my cast Rajput Meo, a triangle formed by Delhi, Agra and Jaipur as I explore traditions which date back to generations. Exploring Mewati culture, S.M Akram Ejaz in his book Culture Patterns of Mewat Community, 1957 I read about the distressing Virginitiy test, which had been practiced for decades. The test justified as being part of cultural norms and traditions and social practices, has been primarily revolved around women proving their virginity through the show of a stained white sheet to the entire clan. Newly-wed brides faced serious haunting repercussions, based on the outcomes of the test. The themes of 'red bedsheet' and crude labelling of the bride as the 'product' was and still is a testament to the misogynistic and patriarchal nature of the society which goes on to explain why people are obsessed with virginity. The custom practiced is viewed as the most 'culturally appropriate" method of testing allowing the bride to prove her virginity, the outcomes of which, may also lead to violence, shaming and divorce. Following the outcomes, my work comments around the prevalence and effects of virginity tests on the female victims and how they can be marginalized and alienated from the society. A world-wide phenomenon, this was practiced in all royal households in Europe as well throughout history to ensure Royal bloodline.

I have worked with the pictures of traditional Mewati brides using and highlighting the 'dupatta" as a metaphorical connotation to ensure the protection, honour and innocence of the bride along with the dichotomy of life under this veil.

Technique

- UV printing on wood
- Heat supplement and digital printing on different fabrics
- Machine embroidery
- Hand embroidery
- Adda work



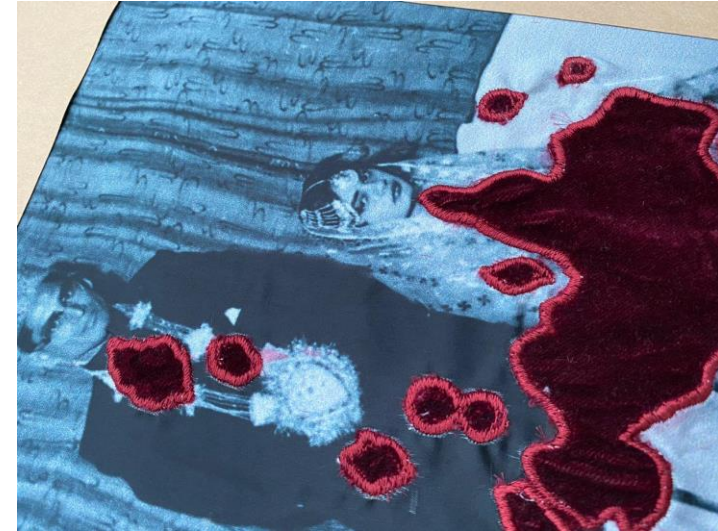
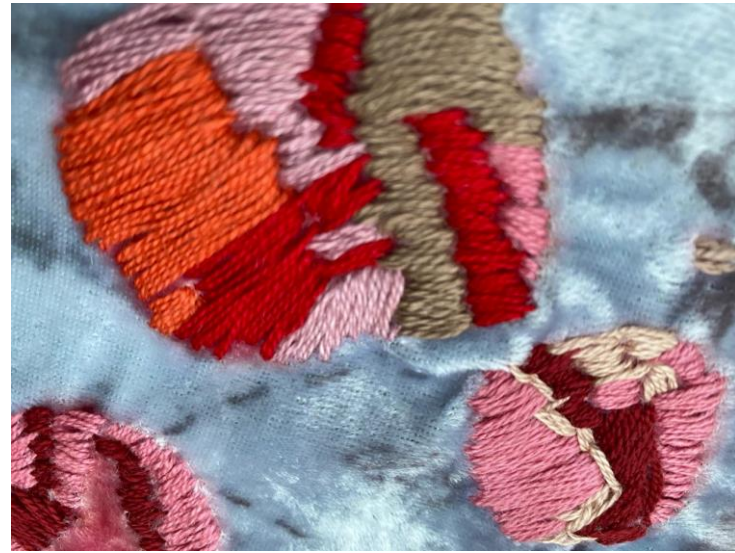
Materials

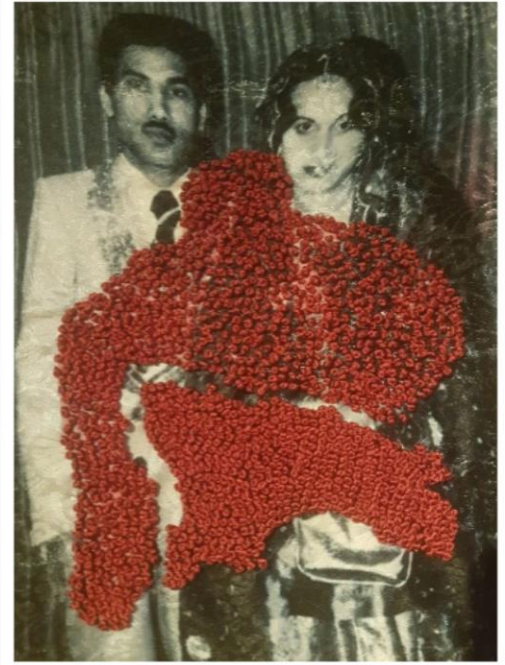
- Dabka
- Naqshi
- Kora
- Lapa
- Raisham threads
- Tilla , Gotta
- Anchor threads
- Stones and Beads
- Raw silk , organza and chiffon, Brocade
- Wood



Fabrications

Sampling work in detail with process





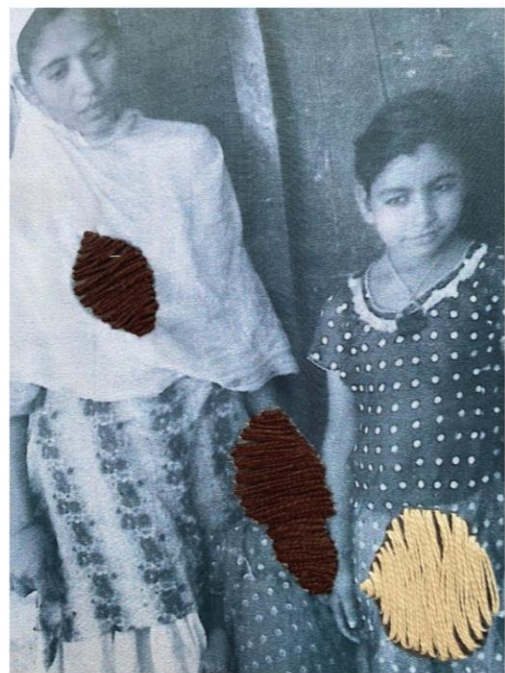
Techniques

- Heat sublimation printing on silk and brocade
- Machine embroidery
- Hand knot stitches

Material

- Organza, velvet and silk
- Tilla and silk thread



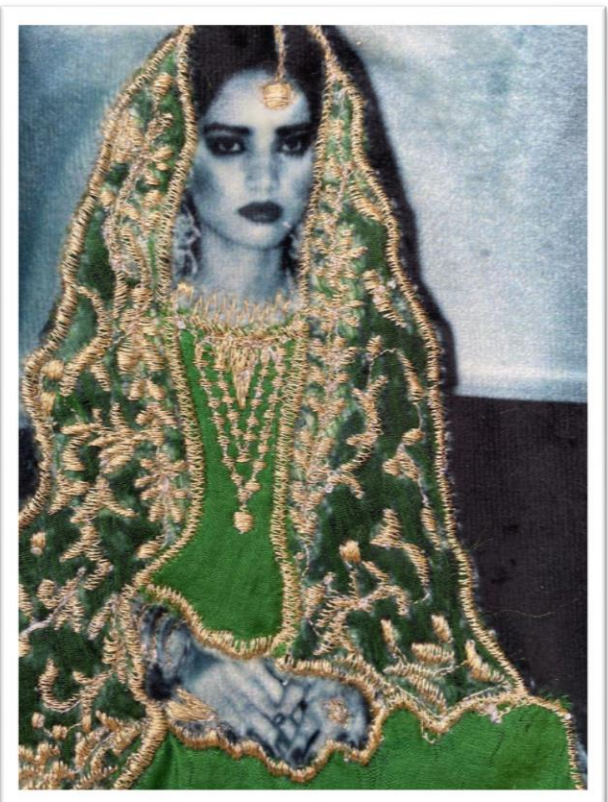


Technique

- Heat supplement technique used to transfer images on silk and velvet
- Hand stitches are used to represent virginity taboo indirect words

Material

- Anchor thread
- Silk and velvet



Techniques

- Heat sublimation printing on silk and valvet
- Machine embroidery

Material

- Organza, valvet and silk
- Tilla and silk thread
- Kiran and lapa

Mini thesis Display



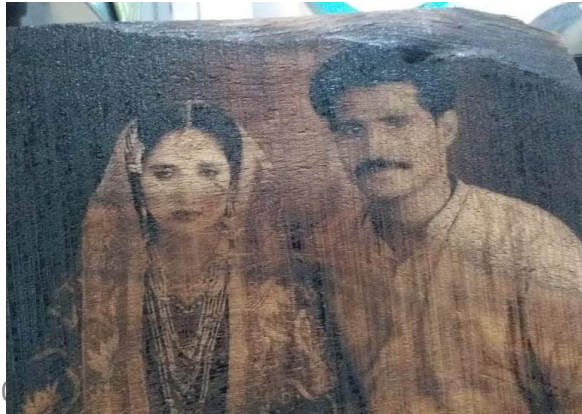
Final direction

My inception point for the respective project revolves around the theme of virginity test and its complications for the newlywed on her wedding night. My mini-thesis basically comprised of a direct model to depict my stance on the taboo of virginity, that is, utilizing brides' photographs via printing their photographs on fabric and highlighting their bloodstains through embroidery. I also made pragmatic use of an indirect model, that was hinged on giving exposition to the women's' dupattas, for the sake of denoting their weight and to take into account the stereotypes and ridicule faced by them on account of that factor. The wood encapsulated my final idea. Wood reflected the tough and exhausting lifestyle of the female faction. The purpose of embroidery was to bring the beauty of the women into the limelight and help the viewer gauge how women were scorned and let down by the other echelons of the society.

Printing on different woods

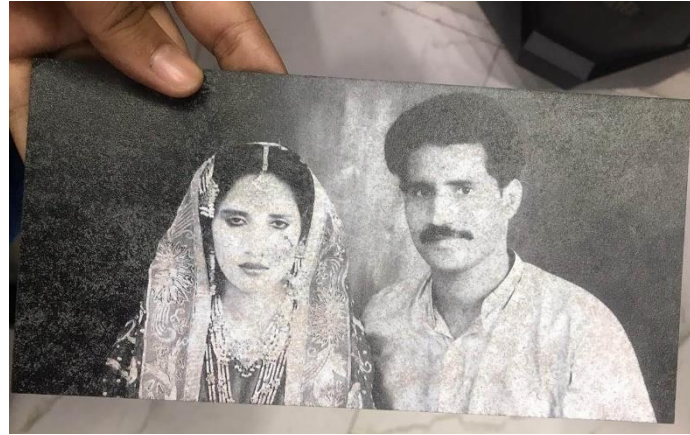


Double printing with white

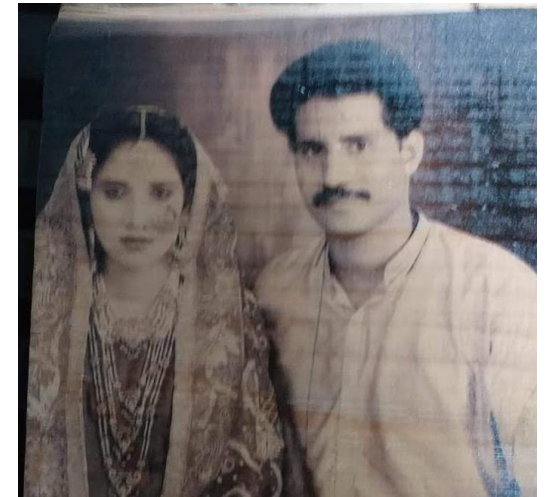


Direct printing

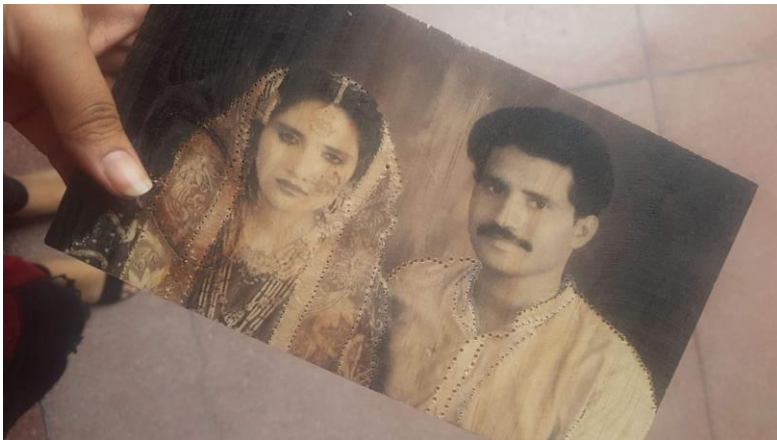
Tali wood



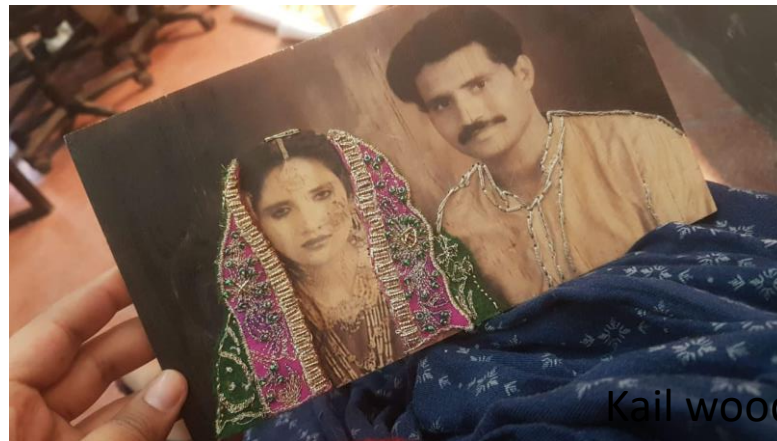
Lasani wood



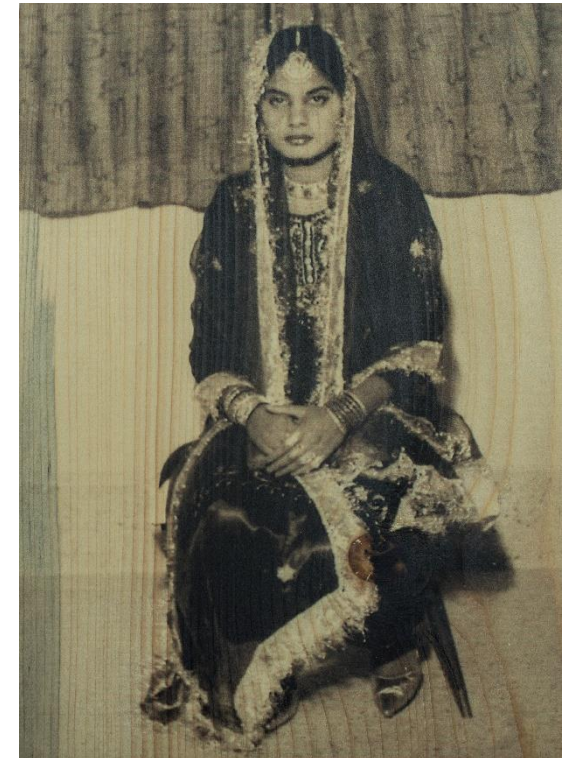
Deear wood



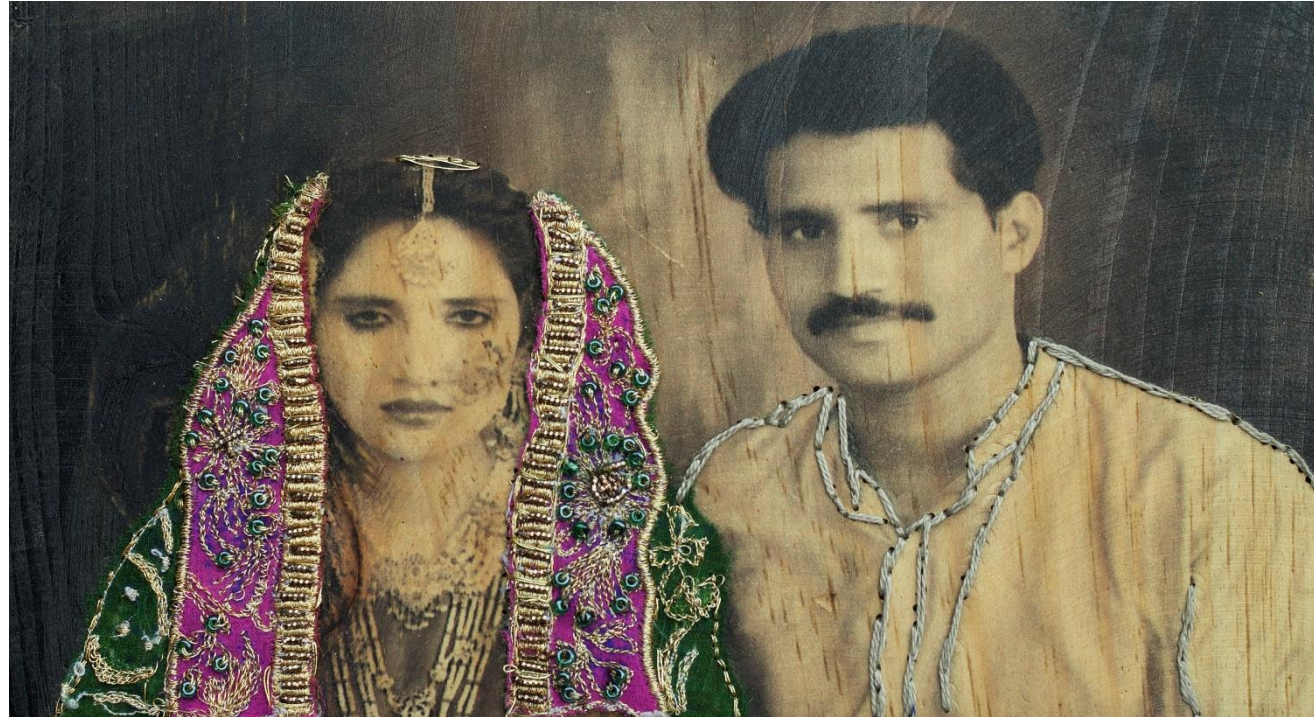
Kail wood



Kail wood





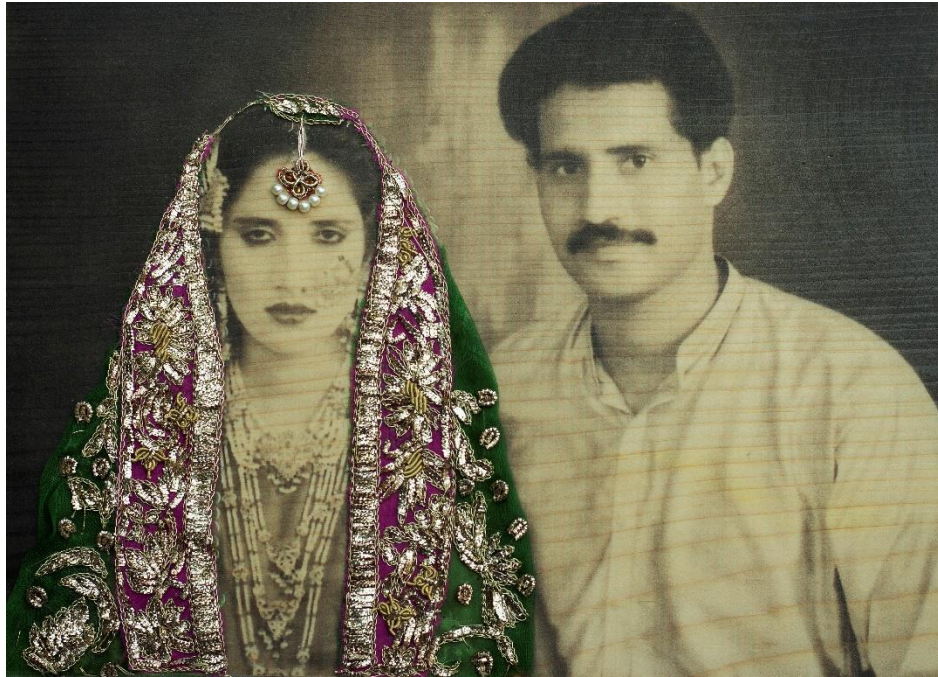


Size: 5x9

Material: Tilla, Kora, silk thread, beads, pure organza and wood

Technique: UV printing, machine and hand embroidery

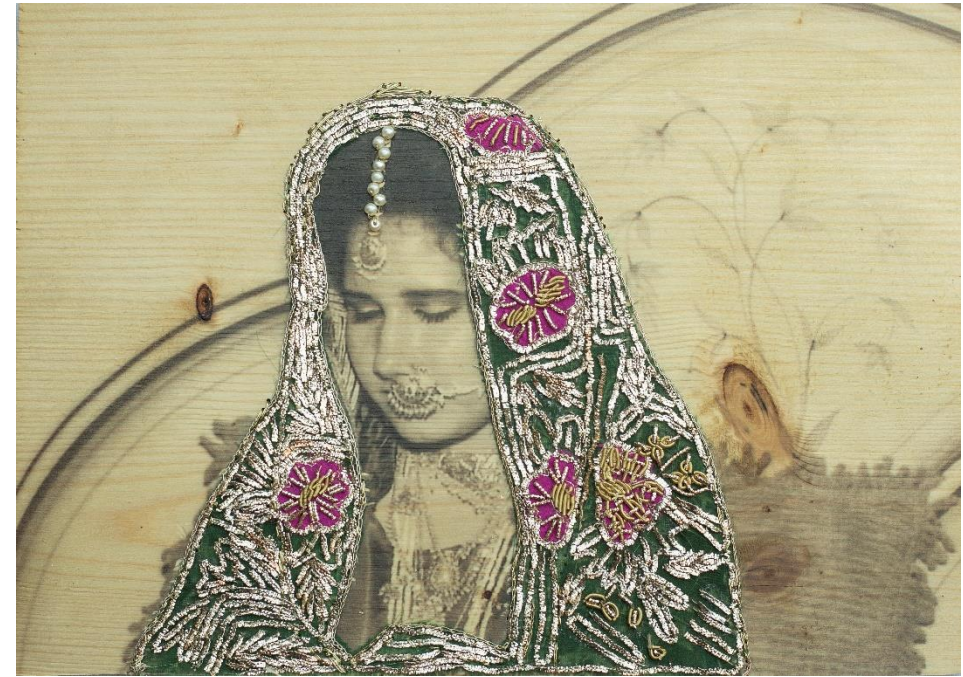
first sample



Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka, tilla silk thread, beads, pure organza and wood

Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka, tilla, silk thread, beads, pure organza and wood

Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 7x10

Material: kora dabka,tilla,silk thread,beads,
pure organza and wood

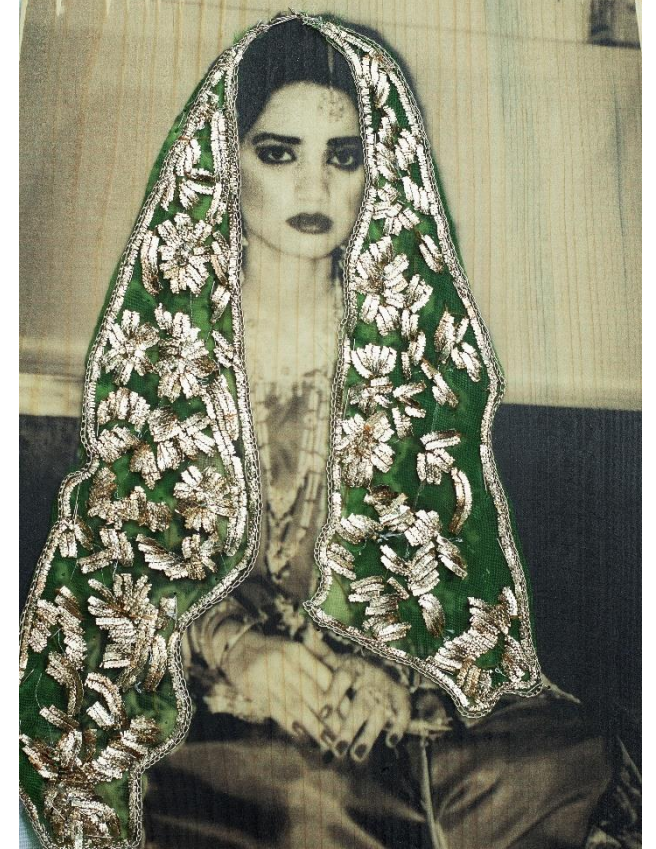
Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and
adda work



Size: 7x10

Material: kiran,tilla,silk thread,lapa,
pure organza and wood

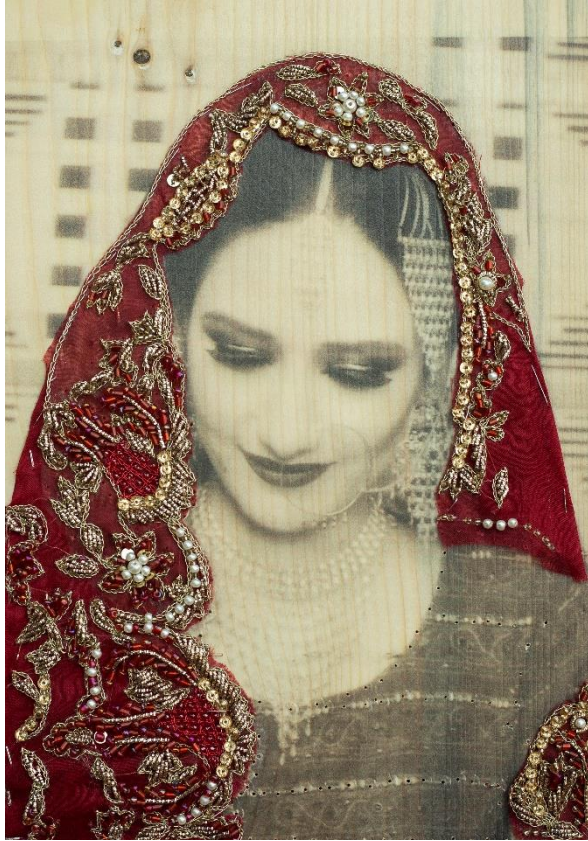
Technique: UV printing, machine and
hand embroidery



Size: 7x10

Material: Dabka,tilla,silk thread,pure
organza and wood

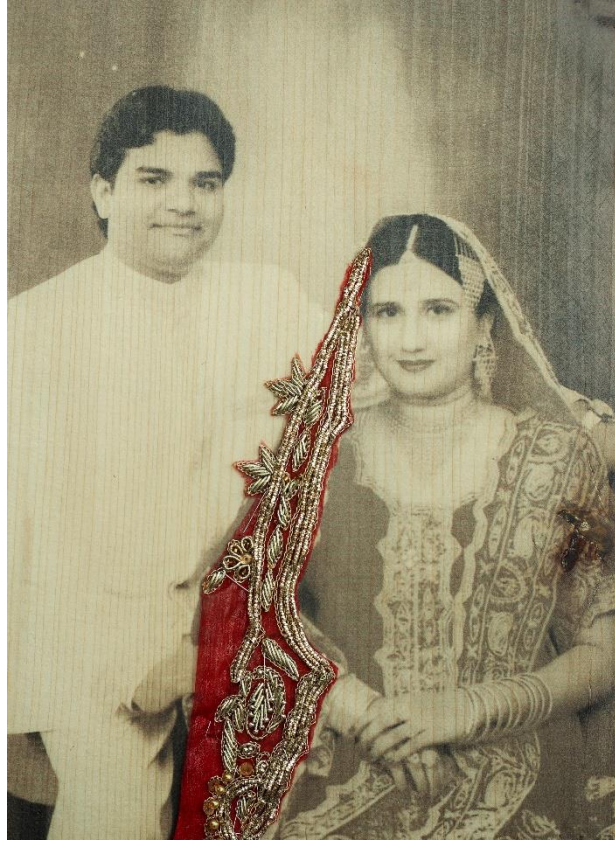
Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery
and adda work



Size: 7x10

Material: kora dabka, tilla, silk thread, beads, pure organza and wood

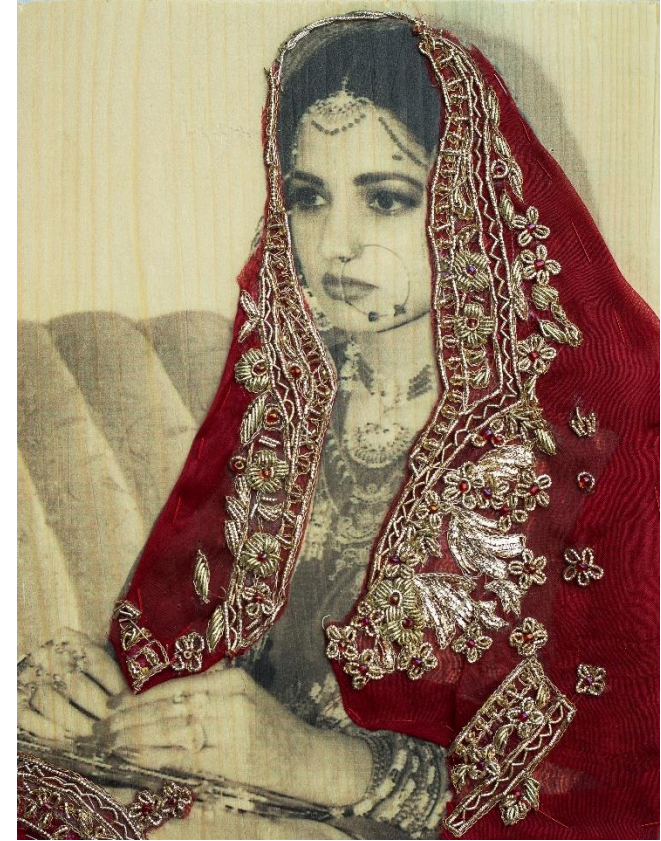
Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka, tilla thread, beads, pure organza and wood

Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 7x10

Material: kora dabka, tilla, silk thread, beads, pure organza and wood

Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 7x10

Material: kora dabka, tilla, silk thread, beads, pure organza and wood

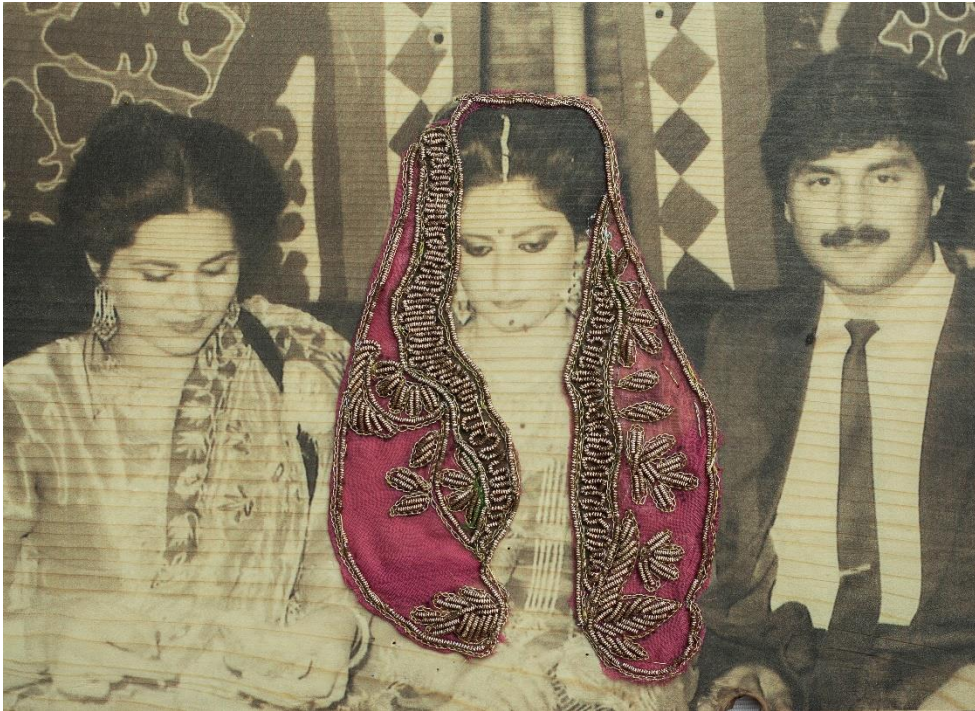
Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka, tilla, silk thread, beads, pure chiffon and wood

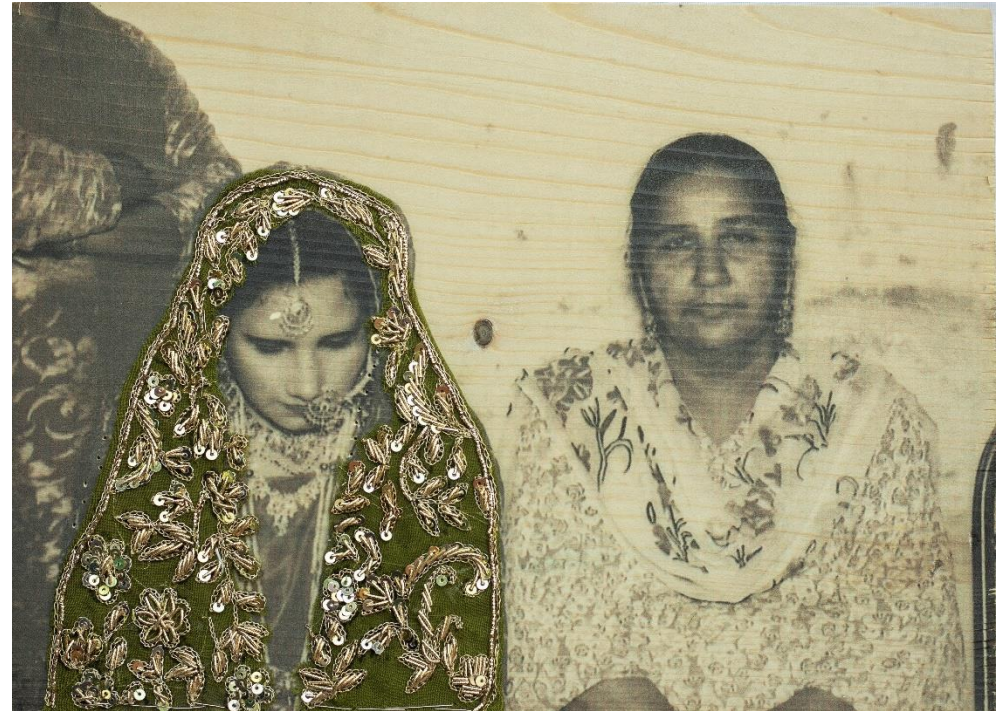
Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka,tilla and silk thread,
pure chiffon

Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and
adda work



Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka,tilla and silk thread,beads,sitarai,
pure chiffon

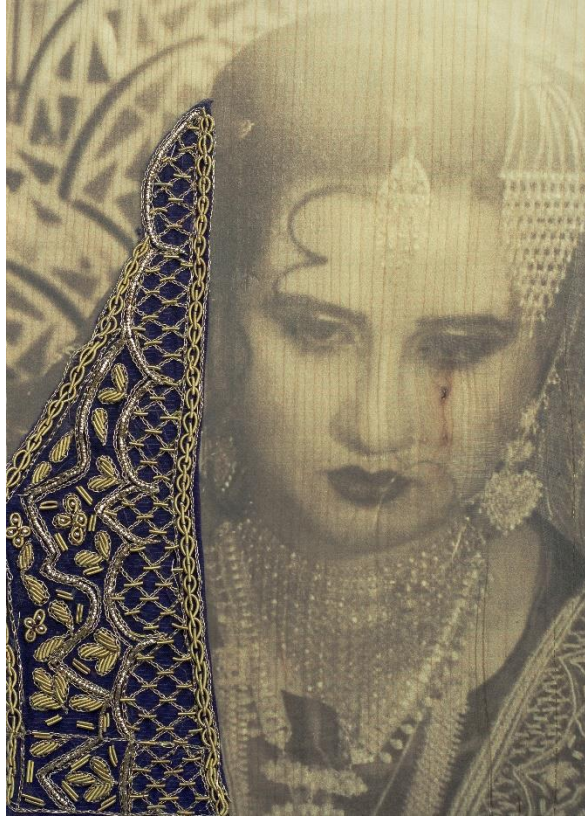
Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and
adda work



Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka, tilla and silk thread, beads, pure organza

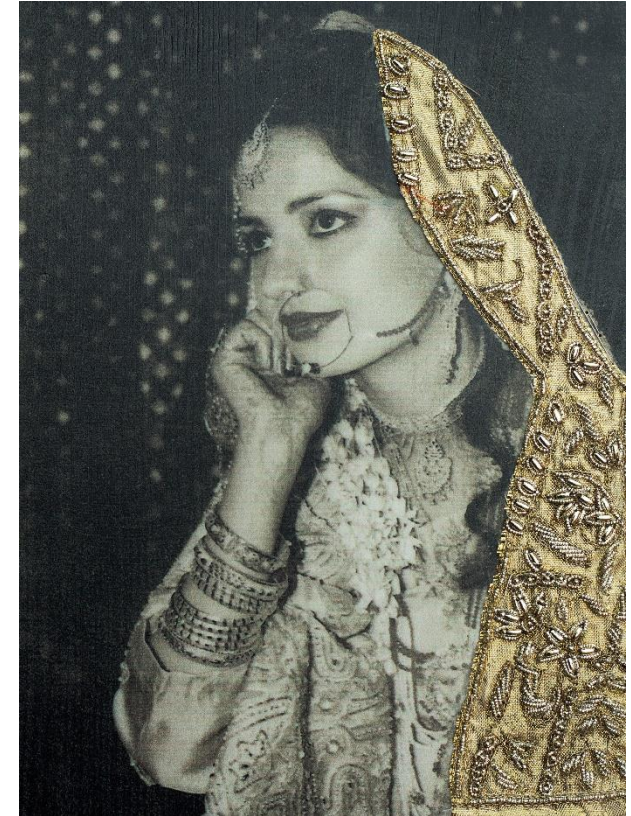
Technique: UV printing, hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka, tilla and silk thread, beads, pure chiffon

Technique: UV printing, adda work and hand embroidery



Size: 7x10

Material: kora dabka, tilla and silk thread, beads, pure organza

Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and adda work



Size: 7x10

Material: anchor thread and wood

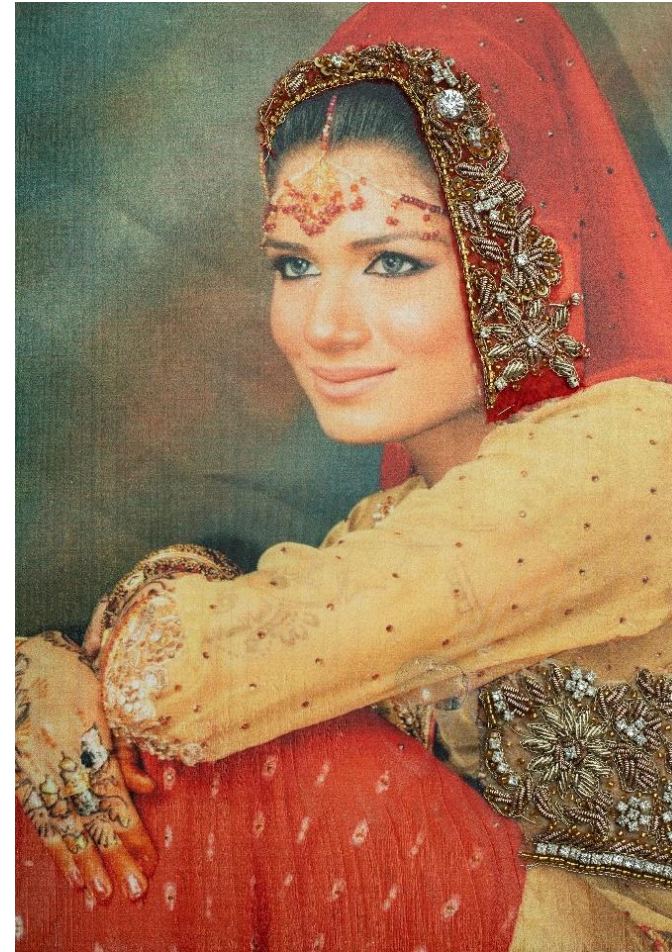
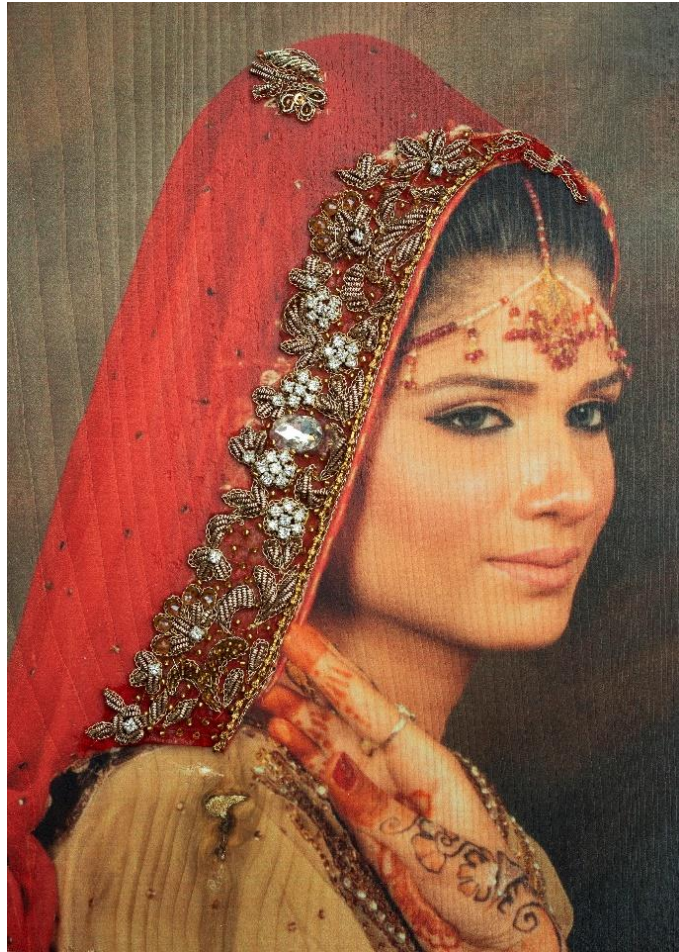
Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery



Size: 8x11

Material: anchor thread and wood

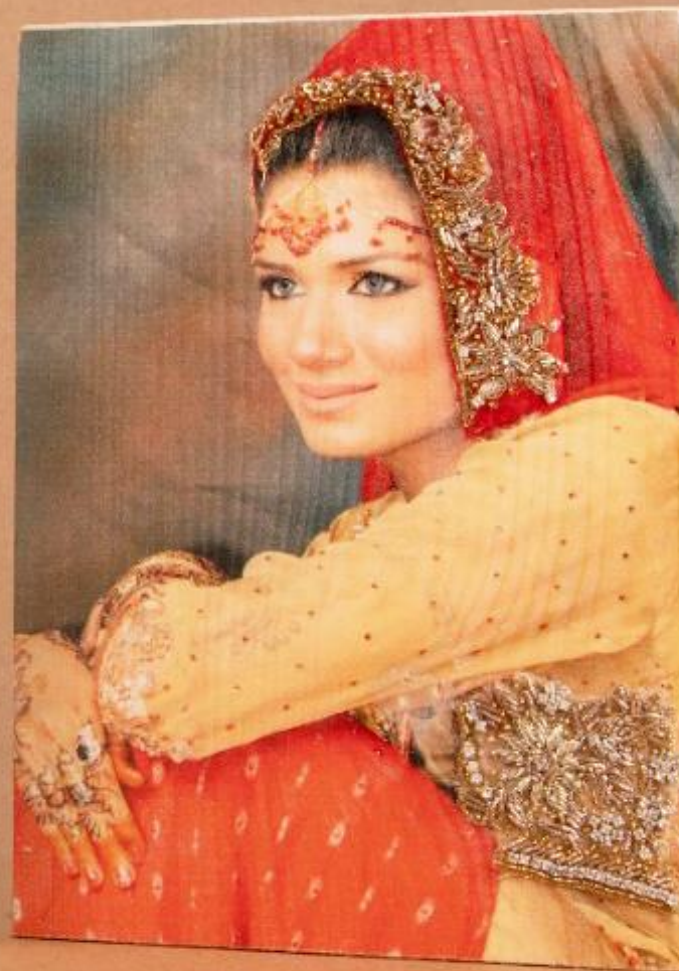
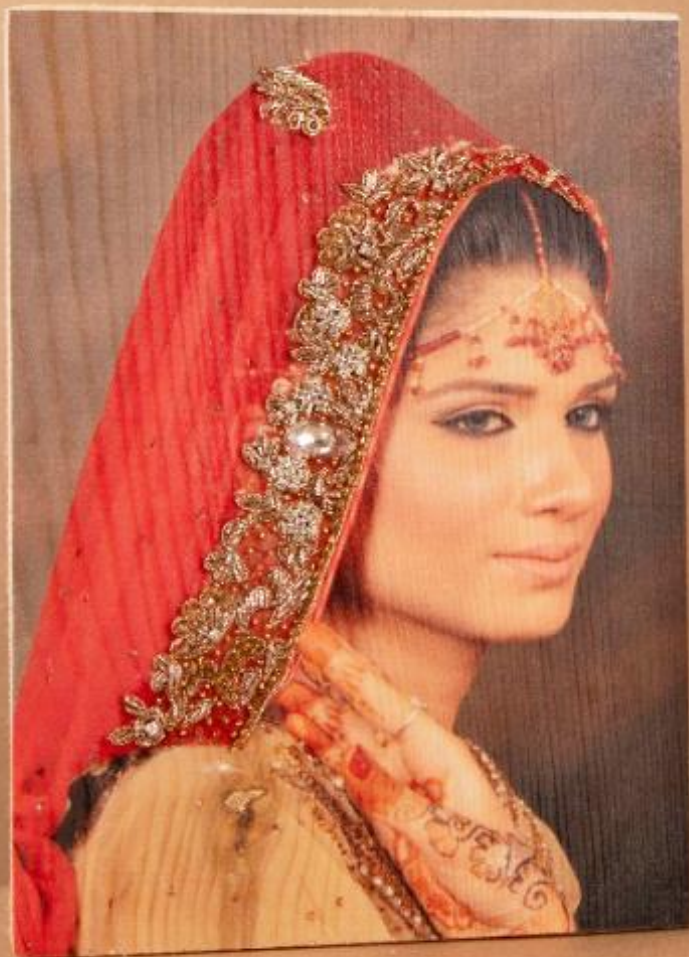
Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery

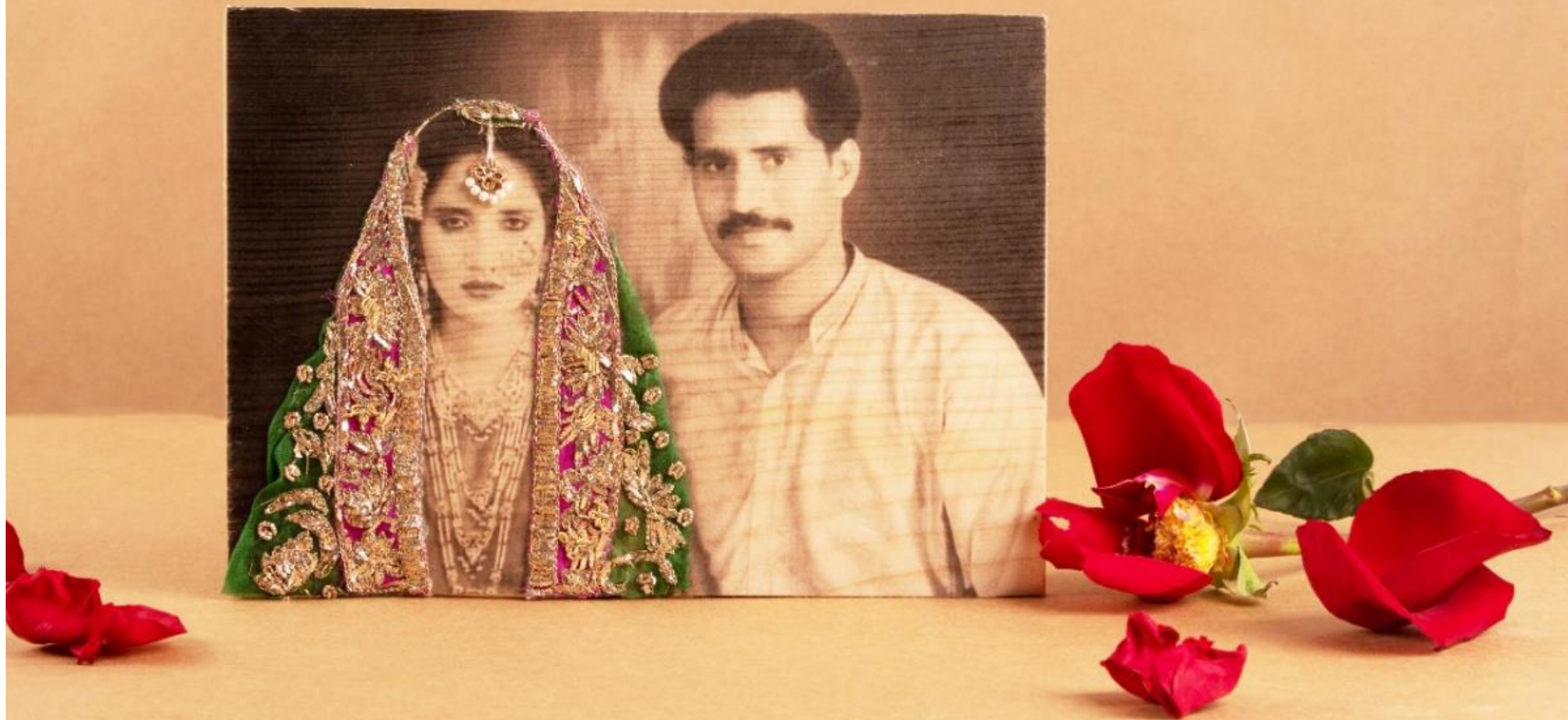


Size: 8x11

Material: kora dabka,tilla and silk thread,beads,stones,
pure chiffon,wood

Technique: UV printing, Hand embroidery and
adda work





Broken petals represents distortion in women's life on her wedding

The stain represents the brides who passed the virginity test were happily accepted by the society

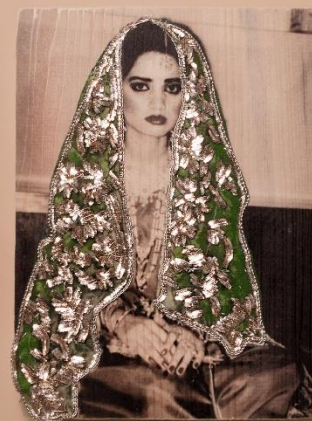




The brides photographs at the distance show those women's who didn't pass the virginity test were disowned by the society







Final display shoot







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Thank you