Hands On Learning
with Reading Museum Service

DOLLS FROM AROUND THE WORLD G149

Most of the dolls in this box were brought back from a holiday as souvenirs. They represent the traditional dress of the areas they originally came from.

Doll from Malta



The long black cloak is called a *ghonnella* or *faldetta* and is only seen on the islands of Malta and Gozo in the Mediterranean (see map). It is not known how it came to the islands but was worn by nearly all women right up until the Second World War. After this, it became less popular and by the 1970s it had almost completely disappeared.





The *ghonnella* was made to cover the head but not the face. The front of the hood was made into a frame by starching or adding a cane or piece of board. In the summer this large hood caught sea breezes and helped to cool the wearer and in the winter the shape could be changed to fit more closely.

This old postcard dates from about 1900. It shows a Maltese lady wearing the *ghonnella* and holding the material in place with her right hand, in the same way as the doll.

Doll from Morocco

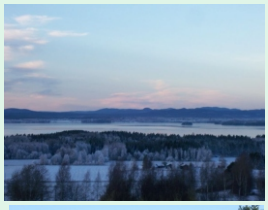


The female Moroccan doll has been handmade from leather. Look at the careful stitching on her legs. She is wearing loose, light clothing made from several different materials. In hot countries, like Morocco, it is best to wear loose clothing that covers most of the body. This way, the skin is protected from the sun and doesn't absorb too much heat. The scarf around the head would also help to protect from the sun as would the large straw hat. The hat is like a sombrero, which is worn in Spanish and Latin American countries. Sombrero is from the Spanish word for shade. In Morocco this style of hat is called a *taraza* or *dezzara,* which is also the word for fig-tree - a tree giving shade found in Morocco.

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Doll from Mora, Sweden







Mora is a town in the Dalarna Region of Sweden, which is highlighted on this map. Mora is situated on the edges of the picturesque lake Siljan and is famous for its annual long distance ski race, which covers 56 miles (90 kilometres). (Both pictured on the right).

Many old traditions have been kept alive in Mora, such as woodcarving, basket weaving and wearing traditional folk costume for festivals or special events.



The doll's hair is braided and looped over the top of her head. She is wearing a thick red woollen apron over a black skirt and a white shirt. She has a decorative collar fastened around her neck.

Costumes across Sweden always involve the use of bright colours. Mrs Märta Jörgensen explained the reason for this when she established the Swedish Woman's National Costume Association in 1902:

'We need strong colours in the peasant costume. They have an invigorating effect on our senses - and they are necessary as contrast to the deep, green pine forest and the cold, white snow'.

Doll from Greece



The Greek male figure is wearing a traditional pleated skirt called a *foustanella,* which is worn by men across Greece and neighbouring countries as part of the national costume. The length and style of the *foustanella* identifies where the man comes from. This style of clothing is normally only worn for ceremonies and special occasions, although you might see some older men wearing them in everyday life. The figure is also wearing a white shirt with wide, flowing sleeves and a beautiful waistcoat, which is embroidered with gold and silver. The style of the waistcoat varies in colour and style depending on the area. His shoes are decorated with large pompoms. On his head he wears a *megalo fesi,* which is a tasselled cap most commonly seen in the Aegean islands.

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Doll from Dolj, Romania



Dolj is a region in the south of Romania (shaded yellow on this map). The whole region is flat and has many rivers and lakes. It also has an area of desert called the Oltenian Sahara.

Traditional folk costume is similar across Romania with regional differences in colour and style. As with most national dresses, it is rarely worn today, except on festive occasions.



The doll's skirt is called a *fotã*, which is a straight piece of woollen material wrapped around and held in place with a waistband. The scarf on the head indicates that the woman is married. Unmarried women would have their hair uncovered and braided until their wedding day and after that they would always have to wear a scarf. This tradition is not followed today, as it would be impractical for everyday modern life.

The shirt is called a *Cămașă încrețitâ*, which translates as a shirt with a gathered neck. The sleeves are full and embroidered with coloured thread.

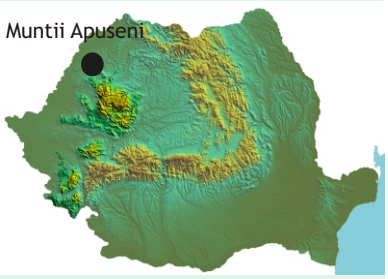


The shoes are called *opinci* and are worn with woollen socks or foot wraps. There is evidence for this type of footwear dating back to 2500 BC as a statue found at the archaeological site of Turdas, north Romania, was found with a very similar shoe. *Opinci* worn in the mountainous areas have raised toes, whereas those on the plains are flatter. The picture on the right shows the *opinci* being worn with woollen socks.

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Doll from Munții Apuseni, Romania



This doll is from Munții Apuseni, a mountain range in the north west of Romania (see map).

She is wearing a *catrință*, or straight apron, which is normally worn in a pair with one at the front and one at the back. The shirt is called a *cămașă cu șire peste cot*, which means a shirt gathered at the elbows. It is typical of this region to see the neck tightly gathered into an embroidered *cuipag*. Here it is bright red - the colour for young women. Older women have a black *cuipag*.





She is also wearing *opinci* with woollen socks.

In the past, communication in this mountainous region was difficult. People used the *bucium* to signal to each other. The *bucium* is a hand-carved Romanian wooden horn, which is still made in some areas along with many other objects carved from wood. The doll holds a *bucium* and the picture on the right shows a local shepherd with one in a photograph from 1912.

Spanish Dancer Doll



This doll is dressed as if she is ready to dance flamenco - a passionate, Spanish dance involving complicated rhythms and fast footwork. The dance originates from Andalusia although it is now common across all of Spain. Her skirt is wide so that when she spins around it flares out.



In her hands she holds some castanets, which are wooden shell-like percussion instruments. They make a clicking sound when tapped together, which helps to beat out the rhythm of the flamenco music. The person usually holds a pair in each hand whilst they sing or dance. The picture on the right shows a man and woman dancing with musicians sitting around the edges of the room. Both dancers hold castanets as does the seated lady on the left.