

Imagination about the crafts of other culture

Survey results from an exhibition of Uzbek embroidery in Japan

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異文化の工芸を想像する

日本におけるウズベク刺繍展示会におけるアンケート調査結果から

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要約

本稿は、ウズベキスタンの刺繍作家ズフロが日本で開催したスザニ展を事例として、その展示会に来場した人びとの想像力について分析したものである。日本でウズベキスタンは必ずしもよく知られているとは言えないが、異文化であるウズベキスタンの工芸品を見て日本人来場者がどう感じるか、また刺繍家や主催者と話したり、ワークショップに参加したりする経験によってどのような想像力が喚起されるかを考察した。とくに人類学的観点から、本稿では想像力を単なる空想ではなく、科学や合理的計算、AIが主導する未来とは異なる新たな現実や未来を創り出す原動力であると捉え、展示会アンケートでみられる回答者の想像力について分析した。

展示会アンケートの結果から、ズフロの刺繍や工芸品の魅力は、来場者の間でさまざまな感情をかき立てたことが分かった。彼女の作品やビジネスを継続していくためのさまざまな提案が想像され、いくつかの提案に基づいて実際の経済活動も生み出された。日本でも世界でも伝統工芸の継承がさまざまな困難に直面している今日、安定した経済収入を確保しながら伝統工芸が未来に引き継がれることを想像することは簡単ではない。それゆえ身体を介して感じた「感情」に応じて、不確実な未来に「良いこと」を想像しながら行動を決定し、新しい現実を創り上げていく行為が求められるのである。

0. Introduction

For about 20 years, I have been researching embroidery sold to tourists in Uzbekistan and embroiderers (Imahori 2006a; 2006b; 2023). One of the embroidery artists I have been researching since 2002, Zukhro Obroverdieva*¹ (hereafter Zukhro), received the Friendship

Award from Uzbekistan's President Mirziyoyev on International Women's Day in March 2020 (see Table 1). This is evidence that her embroidery work and business, which she has been working on for many years, have been highly praised. However, since she started her business in the 1990s, the number of cheap embroidery products has increased in tourist areas, so at the time of the award she was unable to sell her work to tourists in Uzbekistan. Embroidery designs are rapidly becoming standardized through market forces, and are sold without sufficient distinction between designs originating from Central Asia and designs brought in from outside due to globalization, whether they are hand-sewn or machine-sewn,

Table 1: Zukhro's Embroidery Business History (created by the author)

1953: Born in the Shofirkon district, Bukhara Province, Republic of Uzbekistan (twins). Learned embroidery from her mother, who loves embroidery. Was an art teacher during the Soviet era.
1992: Began making and selling embroidery.
1995: Founded her own embroidery company.
1998: Traveled to India to study dyeing techniques.
2002 to 2003: Received the Republic of Uzbekistan Best Craftsman Award and the Woman Entrepreneur Award. She also belongs to many craftspeople associations, including the Russian Artists Union, the Tashkent Craftsmen Association, and the Bukhara Craftsmen Association, and has exhibited at numerous exhibitions in and outside Uzbekistan.
2020: Received the Friendship Award from President Mirziyoyev.

the materials of the embroidery thread and fabric, etc. For this reason, Zukhro currently does business only with regular overseas customers who understand her work.

This paper will cite as examples the cases and research findings observed and collected at the exhibition "Uzbek Embroidery and *Suzani**² - The World of Zukhro Obroverdieva, Uzbekistan's Most Famous Embroidery Artist" (hereinafter referred to as the "*Suzani* Exhibition"), which invited embroidery artist Zukhro to Japan, and will examine the "imagination" of visitors to the exhibition regarding other cultural crafts, using as examples the various "imaginings" of visitors to the exhibition who were particularly impressed by Zukhro's embroidery works and wished to expand their sales channels.

1. What is "imagination" in Anthropology?

In cultural/social anthropology (hereafter simply anthropology), human imagination has long been a subject of this study. For example, many anthropologists have debated how

people use their imaginings to talk about events that are thought to be "unreal," such as myths and magic, and what they mean. However, if the word "imagined" as used in previous studies means that something that "does not actually exist" in indigenous people's world is "imagined existing," then this is a way of thinking that views their world as separate from ours (as seen in extreme cultural relativism). This way of thinking has long been criticized*³.

In his book *Anthropology: Why it matters* (Ingold 2018), anthropologist Tim Ingold explores this issue through a conversation between anthropologist Irving Hallowell and Chief Berens of the Native American Anishinaabe (also known as the Ojibwa) people of Canada. Hallowell, noting that Ojibwa grammar describes stones as living things, asks, "Are all the stones around us alive?" After a long moment of thought, Berens replies, "No, but some are alive." Through this example, Ingold argues that when what others say seems to contradict our sensibilities, it is easy to dismiss it as merely ritualistic and worthless, but such a view is insulting. To many people, this may seem like Berens' imagination or fantasy, but Ingold points out that experience and imagination are not so easily distinguishable, and the truth may lie in what affects us as much as we affect it. Berens' words make Ingold question our very approach, which treats the idea of moving and speaking stones as something obviously fantastical. Is a stone rolling down a slope under its own weight, carried by water or ocean waves, so different from "walking around"? Just as humans have voices, stones make noise when they collide with other objects or with each other. If "speaking" is a way for humans to make their presence known through sound, could the same be considered about rattling stones? This would mean thinking about life in a completely different way than science imagines it. It is to think of life as an invisible force of material circulation and energy flow that runs through the world, gives form, and exists for a certain period. This understanding has generally been called "animism" in anthropology, but today it can be seen as a kind of ontology, a poetics of life that goes beyond science, rather than a false belief in the spirituality of things. Ingold interprets the "return to ontology" that has been much talked about in anthropology in recent years in this way (Ingold 2018).

The importance of Ingold's argument in this paper is that by taking seriously dialogue with others who feel different from oneself, it suggests the possibility of opening a future in which we do not distinguish between experience and imagination, and coexist with others who have imaginings different from the familiar imagination of science.

Ingold is not the only anthropologist to focus on imagination. Many scholars have discussed imagination in relation to completely different phenomena. For example, anthropologist Arjun Appadurai, in his book on the world of finance, *Banking on Words : The Failure of Language in the Age of Derivative Finance* (Appadurai 2015), analyzes the behavior of traders who move financial markets. In modern financial markets, the

calculability created by models and predictive devices is a characteristic of derivatives, but actual financial actors do not always act according to the calculations of the devices. Some of them, called "device skeptics," prefer to practice contrarian trading, predicting a market decline at the right time and making a big profit by short selling. They are not driven by devices but have an "imagination of uncertainty" that makes good use of devices to bet on uncertainty. Appadurai believed that the reason for this is that financial markets are speech acts (future predictions of price fluctuations) that promise an uncertain future, and many traders are attracted to uncertain promises that have the potential to bring greater profits than the certainty that calculation brings. He argues that when thinking about modern financial transactions, we need to consider the gap between the mechanisms that enable them and the spirit of the "imagination of uncertainty" (Appadurai 2015).

An important aspect of Appadurai's argument that is relevant to this paper is the fact that some traders in modern financial markets deliberately base their financial transactions on "uncertain" predictions of the future, imagining that they will make large profits in the short term. Here again, far from being able to distinguish between imagination and experience, we can see that the imagination of uncertainty creates the experience of modern financial transactions. (Appadurai 2015).

Why is this imagination important in modern society? In his book *Homo numericus: La "civilisation" qui vient* (Cohen 2022), economist Daniel Cohen asks how humans are superior to computers and AI in modern society and explains with an example comparing a human driver with an autonomous machine driver. That is, even if a human has never fallen into a valley while driving a car in a mountainous area, he knows that he should not get too close to the side of the road. However, a machine driver needs hundreds of virtual accidents to drive safely. Tasks that are easy for humans are not as easy for machines as generally thought. Cohen focuses on the physical intuition that makes us feel emotions such as love, hate, stress, and relief as something that humans value in predicting an uncertain future in social life and planning actions accordingly. In other words, when humans judge what is good, they need to "feel" it intuitively with their bodies. Humans feel many of these emotions strongly, but machines do not. Cohen points out that even if a machine can instantly search hundreds of pages, it does not have the creative imagination of a human being, nor can it apply knowledge to uncertain situations. No matter how much a machine's performance improves, it does not have common sense or consciousness. It cannot refuse to do something so as not to offend others, nor does it have the fear of jumping off the fifth floor of a building. In other words, what machines lack is what humans call emotion (Cohen 2022). And finally, he concludes that the digital society cuts off the connection with others that humans assume when interacting with others, namely, the assumption that others will understand how we feel (Cohen 2022).

In this article, based on the discussions of these three scholars, I would like to consider imagination not as a mere fantasy, but as a driving force for creating a new reality and future that is completely different from the one brought about by science, rational calculation, and AI. Below, I would like to analyze how Zukhro's embroidery works at the *Suzani* exhibition that I organized influenced visitors, stimulated their imaginations, and brought new ideas to her business.

2. *Suzani* Exhibition*⁴

Exhibition Basic Information

The *Suzani* Exhibition was held from February 2 to 5, 2024.

In March 2023, after COVID-19 restrictions were eased, I visited Uzbekistan and met Zukhro. She had long known about the high interest of Japanese people in Uzbek embroidery, asked me if she could come to Japan. With her research cooperation, we decided to hold an exhibition in Japan. I felt that it would be impossible to invite only one specific embroidery artist from the many embroidery artists I had worked with in the past, but this problem was solved when she won an award in 2020.

The Zukhro exhibition was made possible with the support of Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (Strengthening International Joint Research (B)) for "Reconstructing the History of Handicrafts in Uzbekistan and Studying Regional Development through 'Traditions to Be Protected'" (Principal Investigator: Haruka Kikuta), in which the author participates as a research co-investigator. In what follows, based on examples observed and collected at the "Embroidery and *Suzani* in Uzbekistan: The World of Zukhro Obroverdieva, Uzbekistan's Most Famous Embroiderer" exhibition (hereinafter the *Suzani* Exhibition), I would like to introduce the impact that Zukhro embroidery had on Japanese visitors, and consider the ideas that they presented for expanding sales channels after seeing Zukhro embroidery works with their own eyes.

Approximately 560 people visited the venue over the five days. On the weekend of February 3rd and 4th, an "Embroidery Class Taught by Zukhro Obroberdieva" (hereinafter referred to as the "Workshop") was held, with 88 people applying, and 74 attending, learning

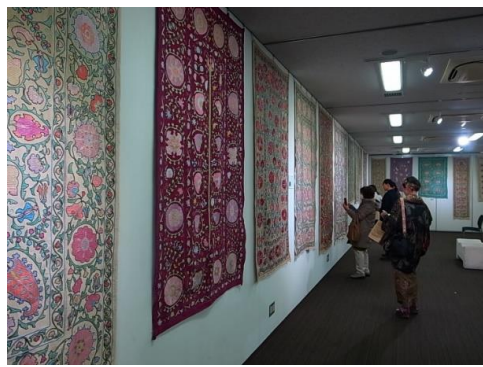


Photo 1: Visitors taking photos at the *Suzani* exhibition.

Photographed by exhibition staff on February 3, 2024.

Table 2: Summary of the Suzani Exhibition (created by the author)

Exhibition Information	
Title	Embroidery and Suzani in Uzbekistan: The World of Zukhro Obroverdieva, Uzbekistan's Most Famous Embroiderer" Exhibition
Date, location, number of visitors	February 2, 2024 (Friday) - February 6, 2024 (Tuesday)
	Unicom Plaza Sagamihara Multi-Space
	February 2nd: 51 cases, 3rd: 137 cases (188), 4th: 260 cases (448), 5th: 80 cases (528), 6th: 32 cases (560) 560 cases (total for 5 days)
Workshop	Embroidery Class Taught by Zukhro Obroberdieva
	Unicom Plaza Sagamihara Practice Room 2
Workshop Schedule, number of participants	Saturday, February 3, 2024, Sunday, February 4, 2024
	1st February 3rd 13:00-14:30 16 (18) participants
	2nd February 3rd 15:00-16:30 17 (18) participants
	3rd February 4th 10:00-11:30 14 (18) participants
	4th February 4th 13:00-14:30 12 (17) participants
	5th session February 4th 15:00-16:30 15 (17) participants Total participants 74 Total applications 88
Exhibit Type	There are over 40 items on display, including <i>suzani</i> (wall hangings) and <i>pano</i> (screens), as well as cushion covers, bags, jackets, tablecloths, handkerchiefs, scarves, etc. Visitors are given pamphlets explaining the meanings of motifs in Uzbek embroidery.

embroidery techniques from Zukhro. The concept of this exhibition was to focus on introducing the works of Zukhro Obroberdieva, a contemporary individual artist, and did not exhibit works of unknown makers or ages. Additionally, the distributed pamphlets explained that the creations were not simply art (self-expression), but that local female embroidery artists took the initiative in the business, and that the business generated income for subcontracted women in rural areas.

The venue was decided to be "Unicom Plaza Sagamihara," a hub for citizen and university interaction in Sagamihara City, Kanagawa Prefecture. The main reasons for this were that it is a facility that opens the research results of universities in Kanagawa Prefecture to the public, and its location is easily accessible from two major cities, Shinjuku and Yokohama. A multi-purpose space of 126 square meters was rented for the exhibition venue, which was divided into four spaces by three partitions, and more than 40 wall-hanging works, including *Suzani*, were permanently exhibited on the walls and partitions*5. The exhibited works were given captions based on Zukhro's stories. The captions included the name of the

work, material, size, year of production, production method, and type of embroidery stitch. Zukhro created the majority of the works after the decision was made to hold the exhibition, so more than three-quarters of the works were created in 2023. Many visitors were surprised at the speed at which the embroidery works were produced, even though they were all handmade.

All the pieces, from those made in 1997 to those made in 2023, were beautiful and carefully preserved. I was also surprised at how quickly they were made. One large *Suzani* was made by combining embroidered cloth from 10 people, and I found it very interesting that traces of the work remain today. [From a visitor's impression on February 4, 2024. Author translated from Japanese]

This speed of production is made possible by the presence of pieceworkers who have been working on Zukhro's embroidery for 20 years. The organization of large-scale pieceworkers is a characteristic of Zukhro's embroidery business (Imahori 2006a). Therefore, strictly speaking, most of Zukhro's works are not her own. The composition of the exhibition was decided by Zukhro, who visited the venue after her visit to Japan, in consultation with the exhibition staff. What makes the exhibition different from many other Central Asian craft exhibitions is that the works are not displayed behind glass cases, but are displayed in a way that allows visitors to look at the embroidery stitches, turn them over, and appreciate them directly. As a result, visitors commented, "I think this work should be appreciated through glass. It's a luxury to be able to touch them," and "Zukhro's



Photo 2: An example of exhibit

Photo taken by exhibition staff on February 3, 2024

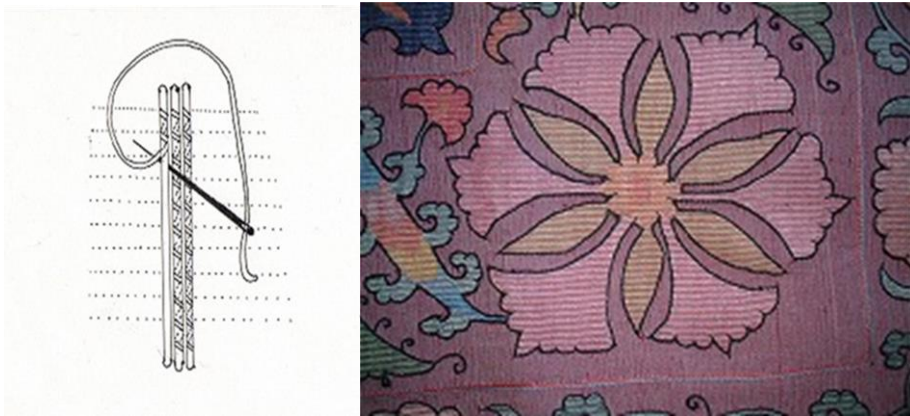
**Table 3: Caption of exhibit in Photo 2
(created by the author)**

Title	Checkerboard pattern <i>Suzani</i> (large size)
Material	100% naturally dyed silk thread
Size	3m×3.2m
Year of production (place of production)	Made in 1997 (Shofirkon District, Bukhara Province, Uzbekistan)
Production method	It took 10 seamstresses 5 hours a day to complete the project over 6 months.
Embroidery stitch	<i>Zamindo'z</i>

works are beautiful even on the back," and they were also able to take photos and share them on social media. Many visitors took selfies with the embroidery works in the background and uploaded them to social media such as Instagram.

Workshop Information

Zukhro herself held embroidery classes on the weekend of February 3rd and 4th, where she taught embroidery stitches. A total of five 1.5-hour workshops were held over the two days, with 74 participants. The class was held in the practice room at Unicom Plaza Sagamihara.



**Fig. 1 and Photo 3: "Zamindo'z" stitche
(created and photo taken by author)**



**Fig. 2 and Photo 4: "Qarsdo'z" stitche
(created and photo taken by author)**

Zukhro embroidery stitches are not often used in Japanese embroidery, and the participants were very interested in Zukhro embroidery stitches. In this workshop, we covered two types of stitches that Zukhro herself calls "*Zamindo'z*" and "*Qarsdo'z*" (see Figures 1, 2, Photos 3, 4). Both *Zamindo'z* and *Qarsdo'z* are types of satin stitches called Bukhara coaching stitches (Bosma) (Fukuda 2024: 25). *Qarsdo'z* is a technique in which a hanging thread is hung diagonally over the basic decorative threads that fill the motif to add decoration, while *Zamindo'z* is a technique in which a hanging thread is hung over the basic decorative threads that fill the motif in the same way, but in a straight line along the weave. The basic hand movements are the same, but *Zamindo'z* is more difficult because it includes beautiful straight-line decoration.

The embroidery class lasted about an hour and a half and consisted of the following steps:

1. Greetings and introductions (by organizer Zukhro)
2. Participants choose custom embroidery motifs*⁶ and have a sketch drawn.
3. Select embroidery thread
4. Participants are instructed on how to embroider and complete their piece.

While mainly acting as an interpreter for Zukhro, the author also explained about the embroidery motifs and threads, as well as the production and teaching methods in Zukhro's studio. Zukhro and her daughter drew sketches and handed them to the participants and instructed them on how to sew the embroidery. Participants had a wide range of options, including choosing a motif to embroider and choosing their favorite color from a selection of home-dyed, hand-spun embroidery threads.

For the embroidery sewing instruction, the university student exhibition staff who had received training in embroidery from Zukhro beforehand prepared to teach in Japanese. Participants ranged from beginners to advanced, including those who had traveled to Uzbekistan. Many participants were unable to embroider properly when they tried it themselves, even after being taught how to embroider once, so Zukhro and her daughter checked several times along the way to make sure the stitches were aligned. Some participants who had just started learning *Zamindo'z* started with simple *Qarsdo'z* but were unable to embroider properly. Zukhro asked the participants, "Is it okay to untie this?" and untied part of the participant's embroidery to demonstrate the correct sewing method. Through these experiences, many participants realized how difficult it is to finish beautiful straight lines in *Zamindo'z*, which is difficult to master. As the organizer, there were many questions such as "How long does it take to learn *Zamindo'z*?" and "How do local embroidery girls learn it?", so I explained the Zukhro teaching method that I had seen during my research. One of the workshop participants said, "I only realized how difficult it was after

actually participating. It changed the way I looked at the exhibited works." It can be said that the combination of Zukhro's teaching method, the artist's explanation of the stitches, and the participants' embroidery experience gave birth to new imagination in the works.

3. Imagination emerges from survey responses to Zukhro's embroidery

Survey responses regarding Zukhro's works and their value

The author conducted a questionnaire of visitors*⁷ to the exhibition over the five days of the exhibition. The survey method was to distribute papers with QR codes that visitors could use to access the survey items, and the responses were collected at the exhibition venue. To increase the survey collection rate at the exhibition venue, Uzbek sweets were distributed to respondents who showed the sending screen. The survey consisted of 22 items*⁸, and a total of 189 people responded. In this paper, in order to examine in detail the imagination of Japanese visitors to other cultural crafts, especially their ideas for expanding the sales channels of Zukhro works, items from the visitor survey related to the respondent's attributes, the value of the works, areas for improvement of the works, whether they wanted to purchase the works, the type of works they would like to purchase, the amount they could afford, reasons for not wanting to purchase, works they would like to create in the future, sales from publicly funded exhibitions, and ideas for expanding the sales channels to continue producing high-quality works are introduced. In the process of interpreting the meaning of the data, the knowledge of the author's field survey is also taken into consideration.

First, I would like to summarize the attributes of the respondents*⁹. The gender ratio of the respondents was 134 women and 37 men, so about three-quarters of the respondents were women. The age range of the respondents was relatively wide, with the largest number of respondents in their early 20s (university students) at 65, followed by those in their 50s (39), 40s (25), 60s, and 30s (22 each). As mentioned above, the most common way to find out about the exhibition was through social media or mailing lists (78 people), but there were also many visitors who heard about it from the organizers (52 people) or acquaintances/friends (51 people). The value of Zukhro's works, as well as the natural dyeing, embroidery stitches, and embroidery motifs that Zukhro places importance on in its embroidery production, have already been examined in detail in a separate article (Imahori, in press), so here we will only state the conclusion. The value of Zukhro's works was characterized by the following three characteristics.

1. The value of Zukhro's work was highly evaluated for the fineness of the embroidery stitches, the embroidery applied to the entire fabric, the originality of the design, and the

use of natural dyes. Most visitors recognized the special value of dyeing with natural dyes, but there was a certain understanding of the use of artificial dyes for the richness of color and design.

2. Visitors were interested in the beauty and technique of *Zamindo'z*, an embroidery stitch not found in Japan.

3. Visitors highly praised the extensive use of traditional motifs, the variety of color combinations of the motifs, and the richness of the designs. They appreciated not only the use of traditional and modern motifs, but also the skillful weaving of them together. In addition, 83 visitors also found value in the fact that Zukhro provides jobs to many rural women, which is not evident from embroidery alone, and they feel a sense of purpose in contributing to society as entrepreneurs.

To appreciate the piece, we need to pay attention to the embroidery stitches. As already mentioned above, the *Zamindo'z* embroidery stitches used by Zukhro do not exist in Japan. So many respondents were particularly interested in the *Zamindo'z* stitches, which look like they are neatly lined up in a straight line. In response to the multiple choice question, 110 people answered that "*Zamindo'z* straight lines are beautiful and neat," 94 people answered that "*Zamindo'z* straight lines are neatly lined up, but I wonder how they are neatly aligned by hand," and 98 people answered that "It is a stitch that does not exist in Japan, so I am curious about how it is sewn." Many visitors who did not participate in the workshop did not know the difference between *Zamindo'z* stitches and other stitches. If visitors are not familiar with embroidery, it is difficult to understand the difficulty of stitching immediately.

Therefore, it can be said that the 30 people who answered that "I do not really care about the difference in embroidery stitches" gave a low rating. The only people who gave a low rating to *Zamindo'z* were 6 people who answered that "*Zamindo'z* straight lines are too neat, and I get the impression that it was sewn by a sewing machine." At first glance, it may seem natural that *Zamindo'z*, which are difficult to embroider, should be so highly prized.

However, according to fieldwork conducted at tourist sites in Uzbekistan in 2023, *Zamindo'z* is poorly rated at tourist sites in Uzbekistan because it takes too much time and uses more than twice as much embroidery thread as *Qarsdo'z* and chain



Photo 5: Embroidered bags on display at Suzani exhibition

Photo taken by author February 3, 2024

stitch, and very few embroiderers choose this stitch. This is because most local people think that "tourists do not understand the difference between stitches" and "beauty of the design and color scheme is the deciding factor for purchase." Rather, it has been criticized as having a "sewing machine-like impression" and has even been shunned. In recent years, Bukharan embroiderers have tended to create chain stitch embroidery works*¹⁰. Therefore, *Zamindo'z*, was highly rated in the visitor survey, but this is because not only seeing the actual exhibits, but also the actual experience in the workshop and the explanatory captions by the organizers determined the direction of the respondents' imagination.

Imagining the economic value of the work - Survey results

• Responses to multiple choice questions

As mentioned above, Zukhro's embroidery work had a great impact on visitors, and its value was generally well received. Next, we will look at the results of questions about the economic value of Zukhro's work answered by visitors to this exhibition. As mentioned above, the *Suzani* exhibition was held with the support of a research grant, so the works could not be sold at the venue*¹¹. Therefore, the exhibited works did not have a selling price, and survey respondents had to imagine what would happen if the works were sold, based on their own values and experiences.



Photo 6: Embroidered cushion cover and tablecloths on display at Suzani exhibition
Photo taken by author February 3, 2024

Therefore, we would like to treat the following survey response results as data to know how visitors imagine and evaluate the economic value of Zukhro's work. However, it should be noted that the survey used both multiple choice and open-ended questions, and the multiple-choice questions had options set in advance by the arbitrary imagination of the author who created the survey. Therefore, the survey responses should not be viewed as objective data, but as opinions born because of mutual imagination between the artist (organizer) and the visitors, using Zukhro's work, a cross-cultural craft, as a medium.

As mentioned above, Zukhro creates her work on a contract basis, and she needs to pay the women who do the embroidery. In the first place, she creates her embroidery to sell, and it is customary to sell it at a fixed price. However, this time she is not bound by a fixed price and wants to know how much economic value the Japanese visitors to the exhibition find in

her work, which will bring new possibilities to her business in the future.

First, I would like to consider multiple choice questions. As multiple answers were possible for each option, the number of answers does not match the actual number of respondents. When asked if they had any intention of purchasing any of Zukhro's exhibited works, 166 out of 187 respondents (89%) answered that they would like to purchase them. Next, we asked what kind of work they would like to purchase, and the results are shown in Table 4 (see Table 4). The options for the question included the types of embroidery works that Zukhro exhibited at the exhibition, and 11 people answered that they would like to purchase large *Suzani* that are over 2m in length, which is Zukhro's main product, but the items that attracted the most interest were bags (76 people).

Table 4: Product types that respondents intend to purchase

(created by the author based on the questionnaire)

A large <i>Suzani</i> embroidery piece over 2 metres long	11
Medium-sized <i>Suzani</i> embroidery under 1.5m	35
Long and narrow embroidered fabrics, small, embroidered fabrics	56
Bags	76
Clothes	26
Cushion cover	56
Tablecloths	35

Next, participants were asked how much they would be willing to spend if they were to purchase Zukhro works (see Table 5). This question was not asked to intentionally separate the types of works, but was intended to allow Japanese visitors to the exhibition to imagine how much they would be willing to spend if they were to purchase a Zukhro works. To purchase a large *Suzani*, one person answered that they would be willing to spend more than 1 million yen, four people answered that they would be willing to spend around 500,000 yen, and a total of 25 people answered that

they would be willing to spend between 300,000 yen (7 people) and 100,000 yen (18 people). These are the approximate retail prices of large, embroidered clothes that Zukhro envisions*¹².

The most common answer was 50,000 yen, which is the price for a medium-sized embroidery piece (56 people), followed by 10,000 yen (58 people), which is the approximate price range for a small, embroidered cloth, bag, or cushion cover, 5,000 yen (44 people), which is the price for small items, and 3,000 yen (20 people). Only 11 people answered that they would pay less than 1,000 yen, which is not enough to purchase Zukhro's work. This means that the results are not that different from the prices Zukhro is selling for.

Table 5: Estimated purchase price of Zukhro's works
(created by the author based on the questionnaire)

Over 1 million yen	1	5,000 yen – 10,000 yen	44
500,000 yen - 1 million yen	4	3,000 yen – 5,000 yen	20
300,000 yen - 500,000yen	7	1,000 yen – 500 yen	10
100,000 yen - 300,000 yen	18	500 yen – 100 yen	1
50,000 yen - 100,000 yen	56	Under 100 yen	0
10,000 yen - 50,000 yen	58		

Next, we asked those who answered that they were not interested in purchasing Zukhro artwork why they did not want to purchase it (see Table 6).

The most common answers were "her work may be too expensive" and "it doesn't fit the atmosphere of my home." These results show that even those who do not want to buy Zukhro artwork have the image of high economic value and feel that it is difficult to purchase because it is "too expensive" or "it doesn't fit the atmosphere of my home."

To summarize the results of the multiple-choice survey above, economic value as imagined by visitors has two characteristics.

1. Nearly 90% of people wanted to buy Zukhro's works. Of the exhibited items, the ones people most wanted to buy were bags, cushion covers, and embroidered fabrics. The most common purchase price was 10,000 yen each, but more than 50 people recognized the economic value as 50,000 yen. Additionally, five people imagined that they were worth between 500,000 and 1,000,000 yen.

2. Reasons given for not wanting to purchase included the high price and the items not fitting into the atmosphere of their home.

Table 6: Reasons why respondents do not purchase Zukhro's works

(created by the author based on the questionnaire)

Her work may be too expensive	12
Her works are so large that there is no space to display them in Japanese homes.	4
I'm not interested in handmade products	0
I don't like the colors in her work.	1
Her work is beautiful, but it doesn't fit the atmosphere of my home.	12
The quality of her work is not worth the price.	0
Her work is not practical.	4
I don't know what to use it for	3

• Imagination for expanding sales channels for works as seen from free responses to the questionnaire

In this section, I will analyze the opinions and suggestions of the respondents for expanding the market for Zukhro's products. In addition, I will consider three of the four questions (Question 1: "Please tell us if there are any improvements that can be made in Zukhro embroidery (hereinafter, "improvements")" (45 respondents), Question 2: "Please tell us if there are any Zukhro embroidery works (hereinafter, "new products") that you would like us to make as new products in the future, or that you would like to purchase when new products (hereinafter, "new products") are released" (84 respondents), and Question 3: "In Uzbekistan, the price of embroidery products as a whole is falling due to the increase in cheap products from overseas, commercially available embroidery threads, and machine embroidery. It is a tough situation for embroiderers who want to create high-quality works with traditional designs. What can be improved to enable embroiderers to create higher quality works? Also, what is needed to create an environment where embroiderers can purchase new works?"). "Why not propose embroidered products that emphasize handmade quality like Zukhro with more confidence? Please let us know your opinions" (hereinafter, "sales expansion"). The impressions of visitors to the exhibition will also be analyzed.

First, the four most common free-answer questions about areas for improvement are summarized in Table 7. Most of the opinions were that there was nothing that needed to be improved, but there were also opinions on expanding the range of embroidery designs, improving the finishing of the works, increasing the number of colors and dyes of embroidery thread, and promoting the works. Some voiced concerns about the fraying and distortion of

Table 7: Suggestions for improving Zukhro's work by respondents
(created by the author based on the questionnaire)

1. About embroidery designs (it would be good to have more animal, modern, Japanese and classic designs)
2. About the sewing and finishing of her works (it would be good to improve the bag design, <u>frayed embroidery threads</u> , distortion of the fabric, rough embroidery of small items, etc.)
3. About dyeing and coloring (increase the number of eye-catching, dark, and refreshing colors, increase the number of colorful fabrics, and try changing the color of the embroidery borders)
4. About public relations, sales, and exhibitions (setting sales areas, need for public relations, exhibition methods, explanations)

the stitching of the works as products, while others saw it as the "flavor of handmade products."

In this regard, an interesting point was observed during the observation of the workshop mentioned above. By learning embroidery techniques from Zukhro, the workshop participants noticed the difference between the Japanese style, in which the embroidery thread is finished with a "finishing knot" at the beginning of sewing, and the Uzbek style, in which embroidery is started without a finishing knot*¹³. Japanese people who are familiar with Japanese embroidery techniques have the image that embroidery thread "frays," but the workshop participants were able to expand their imagination to include the differences in how threads are handled depending on the embroidery technique, such as "Uzbek style," "embroidery does not fray even if a finishing knot is not made," and "why the Japanese method requires a finishing knot."

As for new products, embroidery on many small items and practical goods was suggested in the survey (see Table 8). More than 40 types of goods and cloth products were proposed. The common keywords for new products were "items that can be used daily" and "small items." Below are some actual testimonials from respondents in the survey:

<Improvements> There is nothing to improve. I think it's hard to carry on traditions, but I hope they continue doing so. <New products> Smaller items are easier to buy. I hope that customers will become familiar with smaller embroidered items from there and then turn their attention to larger items. <Sales expansion> I think it would be good to differentiate from low-priced products thoroughly. [Woman in her 50s, visiting the exhibition through a friend's introduction. Author translated from Japanese]

Table 8: Types of new products suggested by respondents
(created by the author based on the questionnaire)

Product name
Placemats, handkerchiefs, slippers, bag-in-pouch, smartphone cases, pouches, tissue cases, PC bags with zippers, drawstring bags, bandanas, glasses cases, round tablecloths, tote bags, mobile phone straps, accessory cases, small embroidered cloths (A1), tapestries, <i>sukajan</i> jackets, stoles, shawls, trousers, brooches, futon covers, hair accessories, vase cloths, neckties, <i>kotatsu</i> covers, coin cases, tea mats, children's clothes, bags, bookmarks, hanging scrolls, hand towels, <i>furoshiki</i> , tablecloths, PC cases, friendship bracelets, eco bags, pen cases, pochettes, hunting caps, oblige, toilet covers, scarves, key chains

Like the woman in her 50s mentioned above, many respondents felt that Zukhro's embroidery was excellent and there was no room for improvement. In order to expand sales channels, it is necessary to create demand without lowering the value. Many respondents felt that it would be better to differentiate low-priced products rather than rejecting them. The reason why many respondents wanted Zukhro embroidery on small items is likely because Japanese respondents expect Zukhro embroidery to be applied to various miscellaneous items used in Japanese life. For example, some respondents, like the female university student below, suggested that Zukhro embroidery be applied to everyday miscellaneous items.

<Improvements> The animal patterned creations were cute, so I'd like to see more. <New products> I think this kind of embroidery would be good on denim fabric, such as pants. I'd also like to see it on smartphone cases. <Sales expansion> If it's something you can use every day, like a bag, and it's not too big, I think you can buy it as a little luxury, even if it's a little expensive. Larger items tend to be more expensive, so I think it's hard for anyone other than enthusiasts to afford them. [Female university student in her 20s, visiting after receiving an announcement from the organizer. Author translated from Japanese]

In Japan, embroidery is often applied to practical items and miscellaneous goods, and there are few products that are embroidered over the entire surface of a large piece of fabric. Many respondents, including young women, pointed out that rather than the price, they could purchase it as a luxury item that can be worn daily and is not too large. On the other hand, a response from a woman in her 60s suggested the following about the use of large, embroidered fabrics in Japan:

Table 9: Suggestions by respondents for expanding sales channels
(created by the author based on the questionnaire)

1. Disseminating information via social media
2. Distributing video of the production process and background of her works
3. Building her own brand and differentiating herself from cheaper products
4. Continuously holding exhibitions where customers can see actual products
5. Without diminishing the value of her work, communicating its value to those who can appreciate it.
6. Hosting workshops and tours where customers can experience embroidery
【Other opinions】 Collaborating with craftsmen and brands from Japan and abroad. A wide range of maintenance methods are carefully displayed.

<New Product> A typical Japanese home doesn't have much wall space, so even if Japanese customers like to purchase medium or large embroidered fabrics, such as fabric for bed covers or sofa covers, there are limited places to display them. For example, the Uzbek embroidered fabric is 30cm wide, and Japanese homes are often built in multiples of 30, such as 90cm or 180cm, so I thought that if you finished the embroidered fabric with pipes on the top and bottom and made something like a partition (to hide or divide a space) out of wood, it would be fun to display and fun to use. It's a very personal idea, but that's what I thought. [Woman in her 60s, visiting through social media and a friend's introduction. Author translated from Japanese]

This opinion was made in consideration of the actual size of Japanese houses and the width of Uzbek embroidered fabrics. The proposal to take advantage of the size of the fabric and sell it not only as accessories and miscellaneous goods, but also as fabric for interior goods (like a partition), suggests the possibility of expanding sales channels that Zukhro has not used.

Table 9 summarizes the proposals for expanding sales channels. The most common suggestion was to disseminate information on social media. Many also said they wanted videos that introduce the production process and cultural background, and it was found that social media and videos are the easiest route for Japanese visitors to obtain information. As mentioned above, the most common reason for visiting the exhibition was to obtain information on social media. However, since the appeal of the works cannot be fully conveyed through photos and videos, many people requested that the exhibition continue so that visitors can see the actual products. In addition, there was no proposal to produce at a lower price as a means of expanding sales channels, and opinions such as differentiating from cheaper products without lowering prices, creating their own brand, and collaborating with Japanese brands and craftsmen (for example, collaborating with brands such as BEAMS, which are popular among Japanese men) were prominent. Many of the proposals were about finding and selling to customers who understand and can purchase luxury goods without lowering their value. Rather than competing with cheaper products, they proposed approaching a different customer base. There was also a proposal to increase the added value of luxury goods sales by carefully displaying care instructions. Below are some specific suggestions from respondents:

<Sales expansion> I was impressed by the embroidery with animal motifs on display near the entrance to the venue. I thought the *Zamindo'z* was beautiful and wonderful. It is difficult to find customers in other countries for the local uses of *Suzani* (fabric belts, clothing, bed covers, etc.), so if it were sold as is, it would be treated as art and the price would be high. From a

business perspective, the soft aspect of being handmade using natural materials is good for the environment and should continue to be attractive overseas, so I think it is best to focus on that. On the other hand, the hard aspect of not only the *Suzani* fabric itself but also how to create a sellable appearance may be a difficult challenge. I hope they continue to explore ways to balance traditional culture and business. [Male in his 40s, visiting after receiving an announcement from the organizer. Author translated from Japanese]

Respondents pointed out that there is no need to devalue handmade products, and that the environmental benefits of using handmade and natural materials are also attractive. They also suggested adding value to handmade products through fair trade. However, they also pointed out that it is difficult to sell as a business if the same materials are used locally, and it is difficult to decide what kind of product (appearance) to make. The following male university student expressed a similar opinion.

<Improvements> If Uzbek embroidery is to be sold in Japan, it would be good to combine it with designs commonly used in Japan depending on the purpose of use. Considering the designs of decorations, clothing, and objects generally used by Japanese people, I think it will be difficult to get the current designs to be widely accepted. However, this is only from a sales perspective, and from a cultural perspective, I think it is beautiful as it is, and since it is a tradition, I don't think there is any need to go out of your way to change it. I think it would be good to sell two types of products that combine Japanese culture and local products. <Sales expansion> When exporting traditional industries overseas, I think there are differences in aesthetic sense due to cultural background, etc. Also, since Western aesthetic sense is generally positioned as high-end, I think the next step would be to incorporate embroidery from Europe and the United States or the country where her products are sold, or designs that are popular in that country. Alternatively, I thought it would be best to create a story using SNS and sell it with emotional added value. However, in the long term, I think it's best to incorporate designs that are popular locally. [Male university student in his 20s, visiting after receiving an announcement from the organizer. Author translated from Japanese]

From a sales and business perspective, it is noteworthy that there are opinions that it is difficult to sell the current designs in Japan as they are, and that it would be better to sell two types of designs: designs that blend in with the culture of the destination country and local designs. Zukhro understands this well and has been handling direct orders from Europe and the United States (for example, bags with logos such as "California") since the beginning of her business. On the other hand, she is also aware of that the value of her work lies in continuing to embroider using the traditional Uzbek colors and motifs of the

Shofirkon district in Bukhara Province where she lives. Perhaps imagining Zukhro's view that the loss of local identity would make it difficult to distinguish her embroidery from that of other cultures, respondent who mentioned above, commented, "In the long term, I think it's best to incorporate designs that are popular locally."

Next, we introduce the opinion of a woman in her 50s who participated in embroidery creation in Zukhro's embroidery class.

<Improvements> There is nothing to improve. They were all wonderful! <New products> It's hard to display large items, so I'd be happy if there were items the size of hanging scrolls, hand towels, or *furoshiki*. <Sales expansion> The difference between high-end and low-priced items becomes clear when they are displayed side by side, so it would be good if they could be displayed side by side and explained in writing or verbally. It would be nice if there was a facility where people could visit the workshop on-site and experience embroidery. <Impressions of the exhibition> The silk threads in her embroidery had gentle colors, and her works were beautiful and mesmerizing. After seeing X's post, I was looking forward to participating in the second workshop. I was worried that only people who do serious embroidery would come, but there were young people who said, "This is my first time embroidering!" and people who said, "I'm a beginner!" and gathered at the same table. All the participants were friendly, so I was able to experience it casually. The student who helped me was a very nice young woman. Thank you. Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to purchase any of the exhibits, but of course, I understand that there were various reasons for this. It seems that the works can be ordered online, but I'm worried that the more affordable ones will sell out before I can order them online. I would be happy if they would sell not only their works, but also design books and silk threads. Please hold another exhibition if you have the opportunity. [Woman in her 50s, visiting through SNS. Author translated from Japanese]

From the above responses, we can see that the embroidery experience at the workshop created an enjoyable experience. That is why some people thought it would be nice to have a facility where they could experience embroidery. The embroidery experience at the workshop strengthened their sense that "if you put high-quality and inexpensive items side by side, you can see the difference at a glance." That is why they said it is important to provide explanations that show the high quality of the work. In this way, many people pointed out that it is important to not only explain the embroidery work itself, but also the cultural background. In addition, there were many requests for more captions, as the captions in this exhibition were insufficient. When exhibiting crafts from different cultures, it is important to pay attention to the following points.

<Impressions of the exhibition> I was very satisfied with the number of works on display. Above all, I liked that there was a Q&A section in the exhibition caption. It was very interesting to deepen my knowledge through Q&A, such as "Why are there parts that are not embroidered?" and "What is this embroidery used for in Uzbekistan?" I would be happy if there were more Q&A sections like this in the future. It was fun! [Male university student in his 20s, visiting after receiving an announcement from the organizer. Author translated from Japanese]

Uzbek embroidery, which is a culture different from Japan, is high quality and beautiful, but many Japanese people are not necessarily familiar with the culture of the region of Uzbekistan. Therefore, the importance of not only the craft itself but also the caption that explains its value is immeasurable. This is because the caption broadens the imagination of crafts of other cultures. From this, it seems that what is necessary to increase the economic value of "crafts of other cultures" such as Zukhro embroidery and expand the sales channels is to provide many people with knowledge and experience that makes it easier to imagine other cultures, and to provide them with plenty of opportunities to see the actual products. Of course, even if all the above suggestions are realized, it is unlikely that crafts of other cultures will become explosive hit products in Japan anytime soon. However, as Ingold says, experience and imagination are not easily distinguishable. Imagination creates experience, and new imagination creates unprecedented experiences. This connection between experience and imagination can also be a bridge to create innovative businesses.

In fact, in August 2024, a Japanese travel agency organized a tour for Japanese tourists to experience Zukhro's embroidery locally and learn embroidery from her, and it was broadcast on Uzbekistan television*¹⁴.

Finally, I will consider how visitors to the exhibition were inspired by the actual embroidery works and how their previous image of Uzbekistan and Uzbek crafts changed. In a university class, I covered Uzbek embroidery and outlined the history of how the size, design, and names of embroidery works changed along with changes in the lifestyles of Uzbek women during the Soviet era. A student who attended that class commented as follows seeing the actual embroidery works at the exhibition:

<Impressions of the exhibition> I was very interested in your social anthropology class, so I went to see the *Suzani* exhibition. I was surprised to see that the embroidery was much more detailed and beautiful than it had been in the photos in your class. When I think that each piece is sewn by hand, I can feel the passion that has gone into each piece even more. [Female university student in her 20s, visiting after receiving an announcement from the organizer. Author translated from Japanese]

After seeing photos from social anthropology class, she commented that the works were "much more detailed and beautiful than I had imagined," and that the fact that they were "sewn by hand" helped her understand "the passion that has gone into each piece even more."

The following student was also one of those who attended the lecture and visited the exhibition.

<Impressions of the exhibition> It was much larger than I had imagined from what I had seen in your lecture slides, and I was shocked to learn that she embroidered it all by herself*¹⁵ [Male university student in his 20s, visiting after receiving an announcement from the organizer. Author translated from Japanese]

The student was surprised that the actual embroidery was much larger than he had imagined in the lecture, saying, "I was shocked to learn that she embroidered it all by herself."

What surprised these students who visited the exhibition was the big difference between the works they had imagined in the lecture and the actual works. These students had initially formed an image of Uzbek embroidery in their minds in my lecture, but when they saw the real works at the exhibition, they were "surprised" and "shocked." It seems that the gap between imagination and reality drew attention to the passion and skill that goes into Uzbek crafts. It is not just students who feel this way. For example, the following comments were received from members of the public who visited the exhibition:

I also found it interesting that the color combinations were more romantic and gentle than my image of Uzbek embroidery [Woman in her 50s, visiting after receiving an announcement from the organizer. Author translated from Japanese]

Before coming to the exhibition, she had her own image of the colors of Uzbek embroidery. However, the works on display had a more romantic and gentle color combination than she had imagined, which piqued her interest. Through the experience of viewing the works, visitors experience a different kind of "interest" than they had imagined. This sense of "interest" became the catalyst for repainting their previous image of Uzbek embroidery. From the above, it can be said that the visitors' feelings of "surprise," "shock," and "interesting" brought about new experiences that repainted their previous image of Uzbekistan. These new experiences and emotions may have already begun to sprout when Zukhro and I began to imagine holding an exhibition in Japan.

4. Conclusion

This paper has analyzed the exhibition of *Suzani* by Uzbek embroidery artist Zukhro in Japan and the imagination of the visitors to the exhibition. Uzbekistan is not necessarily well known in Japan, but the above discussion has focused on how people feel when they see crafts from a different culture, Uzbekistan, and what kind of imagination is aroused by the experience of talking with the artists and organizers and participating in the workshops. From an anthropological perspective, imagination is not merely fantasy, but a driving force for creating new realities and futures that are completely different from the future led by science, rational calculation, and AI, and the imagination of the respondents as seen in the questionnaire at the exhibition has been analyzed.

Below, I would like to discuss the findings of this paper.

First, visitors to the exhibition generally praised Zukhro's embroidery works. They praised the fineness of the embroidery stitches, the embroidery that covers the entire fabric, the originality of the design, and the use of natural dyes. Many people understood the special value of dyeing with natural dyes. They recognized the beauty of the stitches and the value of *Zamindo'z* embroidery techniques that are not available in Japan. Visitors praised her extensive use of traditional motifs, the variety of color combinations of the motifs, and the richness of the designs, and praised her for not simply using traditional and modern motifs but skillfully interweaving them. Her social contribution as an entrepreneur who provides jobs to many rural women was also great. By experiencing *Zamindo'z* embroidery in the workshop, participants were able to experience the difficulty of the embroidery technique, which changed their perception of beautiful embroidery itself and their imagination of its value.

Next, we considered the economic value of Zukhro's works as imagined by the respondents. Popular items that people would consider purchasing were bags and small embroidered cloths, many of which were priced between 10,000 and 50,000 yen. Respondents who would not purchase expressed concerns about the high price and whether the products would match the atmosphere of their homes. Areas for improvement included expanding the embroidery designs and finishes, increasing the variety of embroidery thread colors and dyes, and promoting the works. Regarding expanding sales channels, opinions included disseminating information on social media and distributing videos of the production process and cultural background. As the appeal cannot be fully conveyed through photos and videos alone, it was suggested that exhibitions where the actual products can be seen, unique brand building, and differentiation from cheaper products be made to find people who understand and will purchase luxury products. In addition, if selling as a luxury item, there was also a suggestion to carefully display care instructions to increase added value.

The above images of Zukhro's work and business from Japanese respondents conveyed their excitement and joy when they actually saw her work at the exhibition, such as "The silk threads in her embroidery had gentle colors, and her works were beautiful and mesmerizing," and "The animal patterned creations were cute, so I'd like to see more" In addition, by learning embroidery in the workshop and experiencing the difficulty of embroidery stitching, questions arose such as "How long does it take to learn *Zamindo'z*?" and "How do local girls learn embroidery?" Furthermore, they also felt the joy of learning about the work, such as "It was very interesting to deepen my knowledge through Q&A, such as "Why are there parts that are not embroidered?" and "What is this embroidery used for in Uzbekistan?" I would be happy if there were more Q&A sections like this in the future. It was fun!" Being attracted to other crafts such as Zukhro's embroidery work stirred up various emotions among the visitors, who imagined various proposals to leave her work and business in an uncertain future, and economic activities based on some of the proposals were carried out. This is not so different from Appadurai's point that many traders are attracted to investing funds out of hope for an uncertain future that may bring more profit than the certainty that calculation brings.

The changes brought about by their imagination are not limited to Zukhro's business. Visitors to the exhibition who saw the actual embroidery were surprised, shocked and intrigued by how different it was from what they had imagined, completely changing their image of Uzbekistan, its people and crafts. In addition, by embroidering with their own hands in the workshop, their image of Uzbekistan's crafts changed dramatically.

In today's world, where the succession of traditional crafts faces various difficulties both in Japan and around the world, imagining traditional crafts being passed down into the future while securing stable economic income is a very uncertain prediction of the future. The proposal to make hand embroidery a hit craft in another country may be an imagination separate from scientific speculation, like the prospect of fictitious profits from rising prices of financial products or the idea that stones are alive. As Cohen points out, AI and machines that have no body or emotions do not have the creative imagination of humans and do not apply knowledge to uncertain situations. However, just as the emotions felt by visitors to the exhibition introduced in this article as they saw Uzbek embroidery with their own eyes and experienced the embroidery stitching with their own hands changed their image of Uzbek crafts and Uzbekistan itself, when making decisions, humans act according to the "emotions" they feel directly through their bodies. And even if the future is uncertain, we may act while imagining "good things" according to the emotions we feel in our bodies and create an unprecedented future that connects Uzbekistan and Japan.

Is this probably an ability in which humans are superior to AI? However, this is only true in the current situation.

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*¹ For more information about Zukhro's embroidery works, please refer to Binafsha (2021), Rahmanova et.al. (2019), Rahmova et.al.(2017), UzME(2016).

*² *Suzani* is generally used as a term for Central Asian embroidery (see, for example, Sukhareva (2006), Morozova et.al. (1979), and Chepelevetskaya (1961)). However, in Uzbek, the term *Kashta* refers to the embroidery itself, and the term *Suzani* (especially in the Shofirkon district of Bukhara, where Zukhro lives) refers to large wall hangings or duvet covers, so in this paper we will use the locally used spelling of *Suzani*.

*³ The discussion of imagination that has influenced anthropology is undoubtedly Anderson's theory of imagined communities (Anderson 1983). Since Anderson's discussion, many anthropologists have developed different discussions of imagination.

*⁴ In the exhibition photographs used in this paper, the faces of visitors other than the organizers and staff have been edited to prevent their identification.

*⁵ Since the content of the exhibition changes depending on the period and time of the exhibition, we cannot disclose the exact number of exhibited works.

*⁶ Participants were shown several motifs used in Zukhro's work and asked to choose from them, which Zukhro or her daughter drew on the spot and handed to the participants. Some participants wanted animal motifs, but they were asked to choose from floral patterns, taking into consideration the difficulty and production time of the workshop.

*⁷ As will be described later, it is necessary to understand in advance that by using multiple choice questions instead of free-form responses, the options themselves contain the arbitrariness of the organizer who created the survey (and of course the questions themselves are arbitrary). Therefore, the results of this survey should in no way be considered objective data, but rather data generated by subjective interactions between the organizers and the respondents. The reason for using multiple choice questions was that we wanted to make it possible to quickly answer the 22 questions at the exhibition venue. Of the 22 questions, only four were free-form responses.

*⁸ Answering each question was not mandatory and participants had the option to not answer questions they could not answer, so the number of respondents for each item varied.

*⁹ From the questions about the respondent's attributes, it can be inferred that the visitors to the exhibition were divided into two groups. The first group was male and female university students who visited the exhibition venue with the introduction of the

organizer, author, university professor, etc. (54 people in the cross-tabulation of the items "introduced by organizer or acquaintance" and the items "university students in their early 20s"). The second group was women in their 30s to 60s who learned about the exhibition through influencers or SNS (98 people in the cross-tabulation of the items "women" and the items "30s to 60s"). From the interviews at the exhibition venue, it was found that the latter group had more travel experience to Uzbekistan than the former group, and many of them were interested in Uzbekistan and handicrafts. The former group visited the exhibition with the introduction of their professor, so they do not necessarily have a high level of knowledge or interest in Uzbek embroidery compared to the latter group. Even if they look at the same work, their evaluations and values may be different.

*¹⁰ Embroiderers who do embroidery for tourists often receive information from the shops about the types of embroidery that are popular there, and they often use that information to create embroidery that sells and bring it to the shops.

*¹¹ For more details on why no works were sold at the exhibition, please see the paper (Imahori, in press).

*¹² As the selling prices were not disclosed at this exhibition, the prices in this column are approximate estimates (calculated at approximately 150 yen to the dollar as of February 2024) based on Zukhro's idea of how much her works could sell for. When purchasing foreign crafts in Japan, fees are added on, so the item sells for a higher price than if one were to buy it directly from the manufacturer.

*¹³ In Uzbek embroidery, the hanging threads cover the basic decorative threads, so the threads do not fray even without the use of a finishing knot (see Fig 1 and 2).

*¹⁴ However, the reality and experiences created by imagination do not necessarily bring economic benefits. In a follow-up my fieldwork conducted by the author on August 23, 2024, Zukhro received a large order from a Central Asian goods store in Japan because of the exhibition and paid the subcontracted women to complete the work. However, even though the shop owner visited Zukhro on a sightseeing trip, she did not pay Zukhro for the order or receive the ordered items, so Zukhro criticized the store's response. In the future brought about by imagination, the imagined experience does not always proceed as expected.

*¹⁵ As mentioned above, most of the embroidery in the exhibition was completed by multiple seamstresses, but there were also a few pieces that Zukhro completed alone.