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CRAFTS CATALOGUE
BULGARIA - HASKOVO AND THE REGION



PRIORITY AXIS 2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF HASKOVO REGION



Haskovo is a city with rich history that has marks of the culture of different ethnicities and peoples who have passed through these lands. The crossroad geographical location of the city between the Orient and the West, between the North and the Mediterranean is the reason for cultures and civilization like Slavs, Thracians, Greeks, Proto-Bulgarians, Byzantines, Ottomans and others to leave traces. During the antiquity age, the area was an agricultural one with a strong development of viticulture. The area is rich of many Thracian relics, which testify for the active economic life and high material culture of the Thracians, as well as their ties to the Aegean and the Greek. In the middle of the 6th century, the Slavs began to settle in the area and until the 10th cent. they managed to develop the fortress Marsa (today Haskovo) in a medieval town with the typical at that time crafts, military garrison and population. At the beginning of the 11th cent., Marsa was destroyed by the Byzantine invaders. At the beginning of the 13th cent., these lands are once again blooming, but they never gain the significance and influence they had during the 10th cent. At the beginning of the 14th cent. the Ottoman Turks invaded the Balkans and Haskovo as well as the entire country fell under Turkish rule. The area of Haskovo appealed to the Turks because of the fertile land and the crossroad location of the area and they began to settle. The Turks turned the settlement into a typical oriental city with an official residence (konak), a mosque, a Turkish bath and a bazaar (charshi) and called it “Haskoy”. “Has” means “possession,” and “koy” - “village,” which means that the area was the possession of a senior Ottoman clerk. The crossroad location and the proximity of the Maritza River, which at that time was navigable and intense trade was booming, helped Haskovo to become an important agricultural and crafts center in the Balkan part of the Ottoman Empire. During the 14-19 centuries, the region was part of the Ottoman Empire. Towards the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, the city was established as a center of trade and craftsmanship activity, which was facilitated by the large outdoor fair in the neighboring village Uzundzhovo.



During the Renaissance (18th c) the city awakened and evolved. Community Centers and schools were opened, and even V. Levski visited the city several times in an attempt to organize the local population for rebellion. This was a time of economic and cultural development, as evidenced by the beautiful and rich houses of local wealthy men (chorbadji). On September 6, 1885 in Plovdiv, a coup took place and finally Haskovo, as well as the entire Eastern Rumelia, joined the liberated in 1878 Bulgarian state. After the liberation, many Turks left the Bulgarian lands and the population decreased. Haskovo became a border village, trade slowed down, and crafts were quickly dying. The city ceased to be a busy shopping center. The main livelihood of the population was agriculture. The region specialized in the production of vines, wheat, sesame, anise, maize. Tobacco, sunflower and cotton were mainly grown, which is the reason for the construction of tobacco warehouses, mills, oil-factories and spinner workshops. With the years and changes, the population grew and trade, agriculture and industry revived. Haskovo established as the center of the tobacco, food and textile industries, priority development was given to machine-building, and even after 20th century they remain leading in the economy of the

region, as well as the service sectors - trade, tourism, telecommunication. Haskovo is also a great cultural and tourist center; the Historical Museum, the restored Renaissance houses, the highest in the world Statue of the Virgin Mary with the Infant, the Alexandrovo Tomb and the nearby Haskovo Mineral Baths attract the tourists.

CRAFTS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT

Throughout Bulgaria's development over many centuries, crafts have been accompany the lives of the population and have been not only a means of livelihood, but above all a source of creative inspiration and beauty. In the past, the Bulgarians were agricultural people. The land they cultivated provided them with its productions and nourished them. However, in order to carry out their day-to-day activities, they needed instruments and objects they could not always make by themselves. This created the various crafts, meeting the needs and demands of the people and gradually they started to be made by the hands of professional craftsmen. The purpose of most Bulgarian crafts was to facilitate the work on the field or the household duties of the woman. However, some crafts also combined pragmatism with aesthetics and delivered beauty in the difficult daily routine.

Each craft involves a variety of activities related to the manual production of objects for which mainly local raw materials are used. They help not only the livelihood of the people that use them, but also educate dozens of generations of Bulgarians in honesty and hard work. They are the basis of the emerging movement for national self-determination. Crafts require a combination of skill and talent, but they can be learned practically by everyone. During the Renaissance, the structures of the craftsmen developed, which have a strict order, discipline and production morality, and in 1773 a decree of Sultan Mustafa III legalizes the structure and activity of the guild, their powers and traditional regulations, stages of training, exams, governing bodies, opening own store, judicial powers, penalties, etc.

There were training levels - Apprentice, Journeyman, Master Craftsman. Degrees depend on proficiency and skill, as well as years of experience.

APPRENTICE - Any boy at the age of 10 or more can go to work at a master to learn the craft without payment or for a minimum wage. Usually the hiring was done during the two major Christian holidays - St. George's Day and St. Dimitar's Day. Apprenticeship usually lasted three years. Usually apprentices do routine or unpleasant work as they begin to show ability and learn certain skills. In the first two years, the child receives only food (very rarely a pair of shoes). In the third year, he often receives an annual salary ("hack") of 50 stiver. In the second year, he begins to study the craft under the observation of the journeyman. During the third year, he is under the supervision of the master. The apprentice does not have right to state his opinion. If he is expelled or escapes from his master, by the unwritten rules of guilds, no other master has the right to hire him. The transition of the apprentice to journeyman depended entirely on the master. He personally proclaimed him in a journeyman by announcing this at the masters' meeting. The periods for learning different crafts were different.

JOURNEYMAN is an assistant to the master and future master of this craft. The Journeyman receives food, accommodation and 100-stiver annual salary. The Journeyman is considered as a member of his master's family and quite often eats at the table of the Master. Training is at least 4 years. Each year, his salary increases by 100 stiver. He keeps being assigned more and more serious work. After the fourth year, the Journeyman is a candidate for a master. The proclamation was strictly regulated. It was done with the consent of the general meeting of the masters under certain conditions. The journeymen could not have their own workshop. Once a year, some of the journeymen become masters and then they can open a workshop.

MASTER can become any journeymen who has successfully passed the exam, who has reached 20 years of age, and has paid a certain amount of money to the craftsmen association of the respective craft. This amount varies, according to the craft, from 20 to 300 strives. It is twice as small if the journeymen is "odzakullo", ie. his father is a current or former master of the same craft. Very often, due to lack of funds, craftsmen who have been announced as masters can not open their own workshop. In this case, they become a hired worker-master with their previous or other master, with a daily wage of 5 strives (without food).

Let's say a few words about the life of masters, journeymen and apprentices. Almost everywhere, the Masters work in their own workshop, above which they live. Usually they all lived in the home and workshop of the Master's family, eating at the Master's table. Most masters wanted to keep their students under strict control. The working time lasted about 14 hours, and in the days before major holidays and fairs it was much longer. The daily breaks were three - morning, lunch and noon. Morning and noon breaks were usually "on foot", between work, and this often happens with lunch as well. Just dinner was at the master's house. The lighting of the workshop was made with "gas flaps" and lighted candles and it was rare.

GUILD (ESNAF) – a closed association of master craftsmen from a particular craft in a particular settlement. The Sultan patronized the guild organizations because he had an interest in their development. The ultimate goal of each guild was to have a common benefit, therefore the reputation of the production was well maintained and each guild had strict rules how exactly the product should be made, what materials should be used and at what prices it will be sold.

Each Guild had its own annual patron holiday. On this day, after the solemn service in the church, all masters gather at a general meeting - “londja”. The participants appoint a guild council, usually consisting of two people - Chief Master (ustabashia) and Hist Guard (chausin).

An older, smarter, and skilled master was selected as **Chief Master**. His duty was to keep the guild's accounts, to keep the cashier and the seal. He was the representative of guild in front of the local authorities. He took care of the good course of the guild's works and solved any misunderstandings between the masters.

As **Hist Guard** was selected one of the younger and poorer masters. He must be “nimble and open”. The guard performs the service of a mercenary and an executioner. This position for almost all crafts was paid. The guard executed the sentences handed down by the Chief Master. They were different, according to the offense - there were fines, but there was also a beating given by the guard. The fine was in cash or in kind. In addition to paying to the guild, the “convicted” master also had to pay to the Turk Settlement Guardian (“zabitin”). If a master did not obey the decision of the Chief Master, the guard may come and close the workshop. Very rare are the cases when the guard sought assistance from the police station (the “konakka”) in order to bring a convicted master to his senses. Most often, the craftsmen's offences were: a “sloppy work” that undermines the reputation of the production of the entire guild; for unfair competition; for bad attitude towards an apprentice or journeyman; for an agreed but unpaid wage or salary.



Some masters were selling their goods only from the workshop, others were visiting markets – the wandering of markets and fairs is created when the crafts start to need a loyal person to take the risk not only to sell a piece of goods outside the settlement but also to return with the money because all road were dangerous for the purse, commodity, and the lives of people traveling on them. The roads to the north of the Balkan Mountains were in poor condition - narrow, uneven, muddy, impassable, without pavements and bridges. Goods of all crafts could only be transported by horses (and only in summer by wagons). Those people were **pilgrims “kurdziya”**. They were the first intermediaries between the producer and the consumer in our lands.

Typically, the pilgrim took a commodity in several ways: against money, on a record, for a vervative, on a notebook, or in exchange for another item. Depending on the merchandise, he packs it in bales or forged chests and defines a day for departure (never on Tuesday). When the trip was not related to a craft fair, is usually made in groups of 4-5 people. Traditionally, the pilgrim brings with him a little puppy that always stands by the horses and warns his master of unexpected nighttime guests with dishonest intentions. Each pilgrim with more than one horse takes with him a kinship boy (or a neighbour boy) as apprentice - to help him and teach him.

Sendoffs were emotional. The mother, wife or daughter of the pilgrim put a geranium on his head and he gives to the little children in the house 5 strives ("lead-in"), crosses and goes on the road. All relatives accompany him to the end of the village, to the so-called place "weeping stone". This usually is a big stone near the road that is used by the pilgrim to stand on it and get on his horse (that stone is sprinkled with the tears of the senders). Everyone kisses his hand, wishes him "good luck" and returns to the village only after they cannot see him anymore, after the first turn of the road. Every happy return had a tradition, when he approaches the village, the pilgrim shoots in the air to give a sign to his relatives that he arrives. When they hear the shot, everyone leaves their work and runs to the end of the village to meet him, and by the time he gets home, his house is filled with people thirsty to learn about his experiences on the road. In the free time, the pilgrims were engaged in domestic fieldwork (mowing, harvesting, and threshing) or selling the goods they bring. At that time, almost all of the pilgrims were determined and fearless men. Their power was worshiped not only by their loved ones, but also by the Turks. History does not know a case when somebody beaten by a pilgrim has complained to the authorities.

With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, most of the crafts have died, and little by the little the structure of the guilds has changed. Workshops have emerged to factories where workers are hired, not like before. The serial production of goods gradually pushed the handcrafted masterpieces of small workshops from the market. However, there has been a return to the roots and the desire of the young to bring old crafts into modern day life. Today, many of these crafts are seen as a tourist attraction, while others are on their way to disappear from our lands. In Bulgaria and in many other countries there is a Law on Crafts, the purpose of which is to regulate "the crafts, the organization of crafts and the craft training". According to the Crafts Act, "Craft is the production of articles or the provision of services listed in a list of crafts according to Annex 1 of the Act, in a craftsmanship manner. The list includes 129 crafts, subsequently in 2011 the list was reduced to 57 crafts, and now most local working craftsmen are in the field of hairdressing and tailoring services as well as construction.

TRADITIONAL CRAFTS FOR THE HASKOVO REGION

The folk crafts also carry beauty, imagination and creativity, as well as the specifics of the different areas in Bulgaria. They are part of the Bulgarian cultural heritage and our national identity, and should be protected as examples of folk craftsmanship and art.

There are many traditional ones in Bulgaria and the region such as:

- **Blacksmithing**, which includes: farriery, knife-making, axe-making, gun-making, clockwork-making, watchmaking and scales-making;
- **Weaving** - production of cloth, abies, strip-carpets, rugs, fleecy rugs and similar ones. This craft is also connected to making products of goat's hair (wool extraction); wool processing; wool felting (production of nonwovens-felts); dyeing the yarn, the wool and the tissues with dye extracted from the surrounding nature; the woollen braiding (the woven braid is the braided woven cord, which decorates the traditional folk costumes, made of baize); and fulling (natural washing under the blazing stream of the river for impact on woollen fabrics (woollen braids, frieze, belts) in order to make them stronger and thicker and in some cases to give a fluffy surface.
- Making musical instruments like the bagpipe.
- Pottery and the production of art ceramics.
- Goldsmithing and making of jewels

As well as many other folk artistic and traditional crafts.

There were many professions which are gone now and which today's generations would hardly understand such as:

- **Town crier** – s.o. screaming important news throughout the city or village.
 - **Shoemaker** – s.o. with a brush and a paste who polishes the shoes of the passers-by.
 - **Tailor** - master of the needle, who knew the secrets of the exact patterns.
 - **Typesetter** – set letters for words with lead letters so that the newspaper or paper page can be printed.
 - **Bath attendant** - in the city baths he rubs the dirt from the back of the bather and then soaps him/her.
 - **Carder** - visits the homes and with a special appliance he fluffs the flattened cotton and wool of mattresses, quilts, pillows.
 - **Cabman** – manages the horse crew in a cab.
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Here are some of the more typical ones for the region of Haskovo:

WINE AND VINERY

Vine-growing and wine-making are known in the Bulgarian lands before the formation of the state, even during the time of the ancient Thracians, which are believed to have laid the foundations of wine and viticulture. The Thracians are considered to be among the best winemakers in Antiquity, the aromatic and strong wine produced by them is famous throughout the world, and even Homer himself does not fail to perpetuate its qualities. In addition, the God of fertility, wine and joy – Dionysus, and his Dionysian feasts during which the lush maenads dance with small sickles in hand in honor of wine, occupied a central place in the Thracian culture. At the conversion of the Bulgarians, the cult of God Dionysus ceases and gives way to St. Triphon and the celebration of Trifon Zarezan in February, when the cycle of vines processing begins.



Vine growers take appetizers and wine vessels to vineyards and gardens to pray for fertility after the long winter. Since the church calendar led everything, the Bulgarians prayed with the words “Please Lord, Saint Triphon to help, to be born a lot Wine plays a particularly important role in Bulgarian history and its lifestyle, and its presence is central for almost every popular festive table. Haskovo region is within the wine-growing region “Thracian Lowland”, which is part of the historical and geographic area of Thrace - the cradle of wine production in the Balkans. Here the soils and climatic conditions are suitable for growing mainly red grape varieties, but some white ones also thrive. The unique Bulgarian variety Mavrud is grown here.

Wine Enthusiast Magazine, one of the most prestigious in the world of wines, has placed the Thracian Plain in Bulgaria second among the 10 best destinations for wine tours in 2017.

BARREL MAKING

For the production of good wine, besides good grapes, a good barrel is also necessary. The barrel is an unspoilt tradition in the Bulgarian lifestyle. The barrel entered our lands in the 19th century and since then our masters have perfected their skills. Men usually practice it. Fast and accurate movements of the hands and fingers are required. The material mainly used for the barrels is oak, acacia and mulberry. The trees are broken down into boards and then spread to dry. The boards are cut to the required length, and at the narrow side of the board, certain angles are made so a circle can be formed during the assembling. The thus assembled and hooped vessel passes the process of steam and fire treatment. The pre-prepared lids are being placed and it is being tightened with more loops. In the process of ripening and aging, the wine takes on specific flavors from the barrel’s wood, which give it taste and aroma.



WOODCARVING is the artistic processing of wood by cutting (carving) various decorative motifs and images. Originally for applied, and later for decorative purposes. This craft has been known to people since the Neolithic when the tool used was a sharp flint. On the territory of Bulgaria, the ancient Slavs knew the woodcarving technique, and after that, it suffered influences from the Byzantine, Roman, Muslim and Russian carvings. Woodcarving appear both in church architecture and interior design - iconostasis, pulpit, carved church's doors and in the home and living - carved ceilings, furniture, chests, wooden utensils, walking sticks, hooks, bobsleighs. Typical decorative motifs are figures, braids and arabesques, plant motifs and animal images.



ICON PAINTING



The word Icon is Greek and means image or portrait. The icon painting evolved in Bulgaria in the middle of the 9th century. During the Renaissance, men and women were portrayed in traditional clothes, herds with pastors, as well as Bulgarian saints, rulers, philosophers, teachers and others. When making the icons, a wooden pad is used on which a cloth is glued and covered with a primer. Once the contours of the image have been applied, the icon is gilded, in the past with forged gold leaves, and later with gold plates or gold dust. Foil (true gold leaf) is used now. Then

the icon is painted with paint, in particular egg tempera. The icon painting ends with the inscriptions and application of lacquer coating. Some icons have two-sided image.

COPPERSMITHING is a metalworking craft in which products are made of forged copper. The coppersmiths make mostly church utensils and household utensils - Turkish coffee-pots, trays, dishes, water utensils, dinner sets, cups, boilers, etc. Copper is one of the most heat-conducting metals and is very suitable for making utensils that have direct contact with fire. At the earliest time, the coppersmiths were pouring the copper into bars, and from them made up sheets from which they made the utensils. Later, in the middle of the XIX century, the import of copper sheets began. They were used to make both the walls and the bottoms of the utensils. The required shape of the walls and the bottom is done by forges. Then they are collected. According to the productions technology, the following forges are done in order to shape the utensils and to strengthen the product. Often these forges are done with such hammers and in such rate that they become part of the decoration. Only after that, if necessary, the other additional decorations by slate-pencils, appliques or cut-outs are being made. There are three types of decoration in the coppersmithing: functional, carved and engraved. The last of these are the inscriptions. In terms of content, they are initiations or morals.



One of the peculiarities of the Bulgarian coppersmithing is that it adheres strictly to the principle of functionality, both in forms and in decoration. The practicality of the product is more important than its artistic value. Unlike silver and gold, however, copper easily oxidizes, resulting to another feature in the production - **the tinning or tin coating** of the entire utensil or just of the part that is in contact with the food or liquid. In present times, most copper objects that are made are decorative.

Characteristic and profitable for the area, but now a little forgotten agricultural work is the cultivation of **SESAME**. According to old producers, sesame is sown only at sunset to have enough moisture in the soil, or it will not sprout.

Other activities that develop from this agricultural work:

HALVA-MAKING

Oil-bearing crops are grown in the world since 1600 BC. This crop is also acclaimed in the tales of Sheherazada - the famous saying “Sesame, open!” is related to it. It reflects the ability of the capsule that protects the sesame seeds to burst open only when the seeds are completely ripe. This is called dehiscence. Although the cultivation of sesame in Bulgaria has been traditional livelihood, today only few villages in Ivaylovgrad region cultivate it. Yachnadzhyistvo is associated with the extraction of sesame oil and tahan, which are produced by hand-presses in special workshops called “yahnadzhynitsa”. To obtain the tahan, the seeds are first washed in wooden or stone troughs filled with salt water and then they are dried, baked and grounded. The process of halva-making- is done by mixing a thick sugar syrup, extract of the plant Good-King-Henry and tahan. To get the extract, the plant is boiled in water, strained and beaten to foam. The mixture is heated to a high heat and when the halva is ready, it hardens and then it is cut with a knife. Sweets prepared on the basis of sesame, sugar, honey, vegetable oil and various nuts are found in the culture of almost all nations in the world, with the most common in Bulgaria being the tahan halva.



BOZA-MAKING

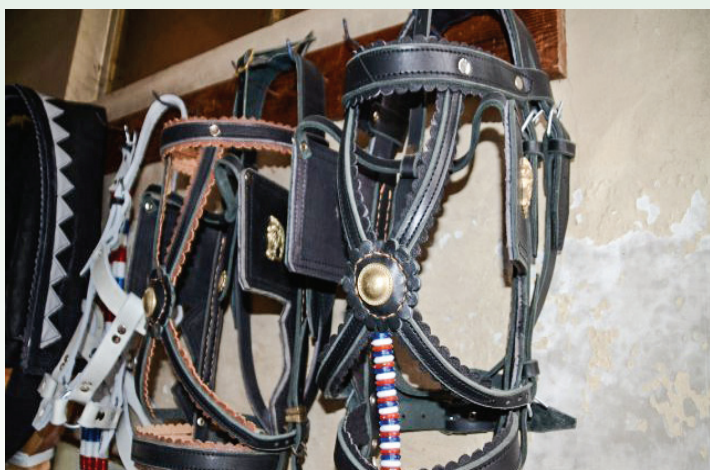
Boza is a low alcoholic beverage with a thick consistency typical for the Balkan countries and Turkey. The former masters made the boza from millet flour. First, it is being roasted, and then boiled in a cauldron for three hours. Then it is poured into a special trough, best if made of black fir, and then yeast (kvass) is put. It should stay like this for eight hours. Then it is blended with sugar and strained. It is drunk sweet or sour, depending on the taste of the customer. Few people know that many decades ago it was not only a favorite drink but also food. Back in the days crushed bread in a bowl covered with boza not only would save from starvation, but was also consumed “to strengthen the body and for good health.” Even more unbelievable is the addition of white cheese to the boza, which defines it as “liquid banitsa”. After the Liberation, peddlers began to walk around the streets of the city and offer their goods. They would carry large cans filled with boza, a small folding table, and several metal cups with welded tubing to drink the delicious liquid. To attract more customers, peddlers would shout: “boza huh, huh!” “Halva, boza, come on ... Halva, boza, come on ...” Usually peddlers were young men – helpers of the Masters Boza-makers and halva-makers.



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In modern Bulgarian pastry shops, you can find different kinds of boza. However, today it is produced by different technology. And the people who have been bearing since their childhood the memory of the scraping of the metal utensils at the streets and the screams of the peddlers claim that the taste is different. A city that still favors the production of quality boza in Haskovo District is Lyubimets. The boza is part of the traditional Bulgarian breakfast “Banitsa with boza”.

Leather production deals with the processing of animal skins for various purposes - mainly for the needs of shoemaking, as well as for various technical purposes



SADDLERY is one of the oldest leather craftsmanship that arose during the Bronze Age when the horse was tamed for carrying goods and for riding. The word sarac, translated from Arabic, means saddle. The Master Sarac work with processed leather from cattle, pigs, sheep and goats. The craftsmen produced harness and riding equipment, leashes, straps, suitcases, bags, belts, pouches, holsters, tsarvuli (traditional shoes at the times). Their instruments were zambak, a tayphel, a haulmount (a very sharp crescent knife), ornaments for decoration (Sarac threads, paints, adhesives, tar, etc.), and rhomboidal scissors. When sewing, the

sarac pulls the thread through wax so the needle can pass through the leather easier, to be more durable and to keep its quality over time. Once the sewing is finished, the seams and edges of the leather are being smoothed. There are three main sections of saddlery: saddlery (riding and loading saddles); buckling (making of belts for harnessing); upholstery (edging the saddles with straw, wool, etc.)

Nowadays, products from this craft can only be seen at the specialized craft fair, and there are still a few Saraces in the region that work with the old technique.

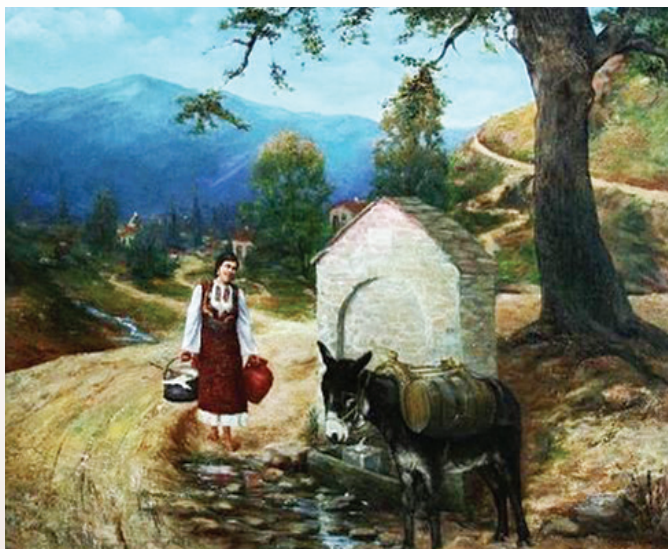
One of the important craftsmanship in the past - **shoe manufacturing** and shoe repair. They would make shoes from different materials such as leather, wood, rubber, plastic, jute, others and often consist of several different parts. Now this craft is overstepped by the serial production of the footwear industry. **Cobbler** - a shoemaker. But not one who changes heels or sticks your loose soles, but a man who will take your measure and will manually produce for you the necessary pair of shoes.

This craft is currently among the disappearing because of the entry of cheap, short-life shoes that simply can not be repaired.



WATER-FOUNTAIN MAKING

We all know the legend The spring of the White-legged (Gergana) by Petko Rachev Slaveikov. But what does the tap mean? This question is answered by many Bulgarian folk songs and legends that have come to us. In the past, the village water-fountain was a place where, besides pouring water, you could meet your friends. It was just the center of social contacts. The young girls and boys met at the fountain. Again, the future mothers-in-law watched their future daughters. Sometimes traders arranged meetings at the tap. A tap was usually called the entire water system through which water reaches people. In some cases, a small structure is built over the facility. This was done for greater convenience to people. Different types of fountains are found in the Bulgarian lands. Their variety depends on the material they are made of, the size of the trough



and the number of spouts. The most common fountains are stone. Typically, stone fountains are made of hewn stones. Sometimes they are decorated with stone sculpture. Most fountains were built either at the end of the village or at its center. Another characteristic of the old fountains are the metal pipes through which the water flows. In the past, rural and urban fountains with one, two or three spouts have been seen. In recent times instead of a sprout, they have a faucet that regulates or stops the water. Traditionally, these fountains were built for a reason. At the wall of the fountain was engraved the name of the donor or the event to be remembered. The construction of the fountains is wrapped in legends. I did not accidentally start with the legend of Gergana. There is a widespread belief in building a human shadow in the

newly built fountains. It was believed that the one, whose shadow was walled in, would begin to languish and soon would die and turn into a goblin. There is a legend that in the distant past when building public buildings such as churches or bridges, there should be a spiritual patron to keep them strong, so a human sacrifice should be made, as he/she or his/her shadow was being walled in the foundations or in an abandoned unfinished part of the construction. At night, unclean spirits go out and want a sacrifice, and if there is none, they destroy the building. That is why the first day the builders measure the shadow of the first human that passes by, take his measure in a nettle and place in the foundation, afterward the man dies. P.R. Slaveikov in his balad "The Spring of the White-legged" (1873) reflects the tradition in regards to the fountain between Habibcevo and Harmanli, where the shadow of maiden Gergana was walled in. With the water supply of the rural and urban population - the role of the fountain has decreased. Therefore the legends are forgotten.

MILLING is rightly considered one of the oldest Bulgarian crafts. In ancient times in our country were used handmade chrome mills, as evidenced by hundreds of similar mills found in the caves. Chromium mills were found in the royal dwellings in the first Bulgarian capital, Pliska. Today, 7 mills for flour for commercial purposes operate in the Haskovo region.



SILKWORM BREEDING:

The region is extremely favorable for the growth of mulberry trees, respectively, and for the cultivation of the mulberry silk butterfly - *Bombyx mori*, which is the main species used in the production of silk. The silk butterfly passes through several stages of development - egg, larva (worm), pupa and butterfly. The egg hatches out the worm. It is a little worm that feeds greedy with mulberry leaves, grows fast and reaches a length of 6-7



cm. The worms entangle white to light yellow silk cocoons and turn into pupa in it. Later, they pierce it and pour out as butterflies. These butterflies re-lay eggs, and so the life cycle is repeated. The cocoons reach the best quality before the butterfly takes off; they are made of a single continuous silk thread, 300 to 900 meters long, 10 microns thick and extremely robust. The right moment is selected and the pupae are killed - usually with hot water, during their sleep. Then the silk thread is extracted. From about 4000-5000 cocoons, 1 kilogram of silk is made. Cultivation of silkworms was more profitable than wheat, corn and grapes.

Domestic silk extraction was done in a very primitive way, repeating the ancient experience of reeling. A small amount of cocoons (about a kilo) is poured into a container with boiling water. As they soften, they were stirred with a stick or a broom in order to get the cocoon threads. They are carefully pulled out and laid on a smooth surface, low table, tray, then they are covered with sand, so they do not mix. First, the silk is wound on a flywheel, then on a pasma skein and at the end, it is twisted by hand or on a spinner. One of the most valuable qualities of silk is its strength, its durability.

Silkworm breeding is practiced in the spring, usually from the end of April to the second half of June, as the hatching and development of the pupae happens at the same time with the leafing of the mulberry. The premises with the silkworm should be warm, dry and clean and if possible turned to southeast. Silkworms feed on fresh mulberry leaves, eating up to 25 grams for their entire life.

Until 1989, the silkworm breeding is livelihood for more than 50,000 people, after which this sector is dying and now only a few representatives in the region remain.





APICULTURE

Apiculture at our lands has been known since the time of the Thracians, or 2-1 millenium BC. Slavic tribes have collected honey from the honey-combs of the wild bees. Later they learned to breed them in hives. When the Bulgarians led by Khan Asparuh settled on the Balkan Peninsula, they also brought their skills in beekeeping. Our country was considered a major producer of beeswax and honey. The technology by which beekeepers have grown bee families up to the beginning of the 20th century does not

differ significantly from today, even though the devices now are more modern and perfect. At the beginning, the shape of hives was conical. They were called beehives, thorns, “pavit” in the name of the plant Old man’s beard *Clematis vitalba* they used to knit hives. In some regions of the country, they used vineyards or willow wands. After making the beehive they were plastered on the outside and inside with a special mixture. Depending on the local traditions of the mixture, they added clay, straw, manure and ash from the hearth. This prolonged the life of the beehive and protected it from the impact of the weather conditions. In order to protect the bees from high or low temperatures, the beehives were covered by “hoods or caftans” made from straw. The swarming - the period when new swarms are released from the bee families, begins in the spring and lasts throughout the summer. The beekeepers have identified one or more people who ought to observe the swarming process and where the new swarm will be located. Bees usually choose a tree hollow. Then the chief beekeeper was taking the new bee families in a knit hive. To lure the bees, they smeared the hive with the honey. Likewise, they collected wild bees from the surrounding area. With the perfect organization, hard work, and the ability of the bees to predict the time with their behavior, the bees earn great tribute. From immemorial times in our country, the increased collection of propolis and its accumulation around the entrance of the hive indicates a cold winter.

If the bees go out earlier than usually in the morning, it will be sunny. On the contrary, if they stay in the hive or fly near it, it will rain soon.

The application of bee products in the Bulgarian folk medicine is extremely varied, such as the propolis that modern physicians call “natural antibiotic”.

Even today, in Bulgaria is prepared the homemade so-called “good ointment” with wax, which is an essential treatment for wounds, burns and injuries. The wax is also widely used in curative compresses called “court-plaster”. In a suitable container, mixture of wax, resin, incense and olive oil is heated. Then a cloth, soaked with the mixture is placed on the sick place.



CALENDAR OF TRADITIONAL CRAFTS BAZAARS IN THE HASKOVO DISTRICT

The Haskovo region has rich cultural tradition and many annual events are held to present handicrafts and traditions.

- At the end of **April** in the town of Haskovo are held traditional literary days **South Spring**.
- At the end of **May** in Kenana Park there is a festival of folk art **Beautiful Thrace singing and dancing**.
- International children's ethno-festival **Children of the Balkans - with spirituality in Europe** is held in the Municipality of Mineralni Bani on the occasion of **June 1** - International Children's Day.
- In the village Siva Reka at Svilengrad municipality is marked the **Feast of Harvest, Culinary and Crafts** at the end of **June**.
- The International Folklore Festival **Songs and Dances without Borders** in Svilengrad is held in the month of **June**.
- In the week of **September 8th**, in the town of Haskovo the **traditional feasts of the town** are held with the **Craftsmen's Street** under the motto **It is Bulgarian!**
- **A Crafts Fair** takes place in Dimitrovgrad in the month of **September**.
- International festival of traditional food, livelihood and crafts the **Intangible Cultural Heritage of Thrace** is held in the beginning of **September** in the town of Ivaylovgrad.
- The festival **On Harmana** with folk dances, music and local crafts and cuisine happens in the town of Harmanli in the middle of **September**
- At the end of **September**, there is a **Jazz Festival** in Haskovo.
- At the Haskovo History Museum, you can learn more about the local customs, traditions and way of life of the local people. Permanent expositions are "Archeology", "Ethnography", "Renaissance and the National Liberation Struggle", "Urban Life in the XIX Century", "Homemade crafts - until the end of the nineteenth century"

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PROJECT: ONE DESTINATION TWO COUNTRIES

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SUBSIDY CONTRACT № RD-02-29-40/20.03.2017 UNDER THE INTERREG IPA CROSS-BORDER
COOPERATION BULGARIA - TURKEY PROGRAMME (2014 - 2020) CCI 2014TC16I5CB005

CRAFTS CATALOGUE
TURKEY – EDIRNE PROVINCE



PRIORITY AXIS 2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDİRNE PROVINCE

Edirne province is located in the East Thrace region of the country, also known as European Turkey, one of only three provinces entirely within continental Europe. Edirne Province is bordered by Tekirdağ Province and Kırklareli Province to the east, the Gallipoli peninsula of Çanakkale Province to the southeast and international borders with Bulgaria to the north and Greece to the west. Edirne is the capital of the province, notable for serving as the third capital of the Ottoman Empire from 1363 to 1453.

Uzunköprü (in English long bridge) is a town in Edirne Province and is located approximately 60 km south from the modern city center of Edirne. It is named after the historical stone bridge, claimed to be the world's longest and under the UNESCO World Heritage List, along the Ergene River. It is a strategically important border town, located on the routes connecting Turkey to the Balkans and Europe. Uzunköprü is the largest and the second most populous town of Edirne Province.



The history of Uzunköprü as a settlement starts with the conquest of this region by the Ottoman Empire and the order of Sultan Murad II “Vakfı Sultan Sultan Murad Der Ergene” in 1427 to build there a bridge and a town next to it. Hodja Sadettin indicates the name of town as Ergene in his book called “Tacü’t Tevarih” (V.II.P.164) saying “...He made this place habitable to accommodate. He built a unique bridge extended throughout 174 high arches, which set a good example to the world. He established a town called Ergene on the one side of the bridge”. It commemorated by this name until the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent.

The Ottoman records show that during this period, there was no settlement in the place of Uzunköprü and it was the first Turkish city established in Rumelia by the Ottoman Empire.

It was built on one of the most challenging passages of Ergene River (in antiquity: Agrianes/Erginus or Riga) in the Balkans. Although there were many timber bridges in this region to provide passage through Ergene River, Sultan Murad II asked for the construction of a large stone bridge because such timber bridges were all destroyed after a while and they failed to provide passage under the seasonal conditions of all type. The land of Uzunköprü was on the way of Edirne-Gelibolu providing the connection of the period's capital of Edirne to Anatolia and the Balkans. The passage of the armies was blocked by the flooding of the Ergene River, so Sultan Murad II requested to build a great bridge here and the city of Ergene next to it in 1427. Upon construction of the bridge, a namesake town with two hundred dwellings, mosque, inn, baths and two hundred shops was established while the people leading their lives in the surrounding area were deemed to be responsible for the repair and maintenance of the bridge. Hence, the mobility of the Ottoman army was developed and the transportation was provided in a faster manner.

The bridge was constructed by the Architect Muslihiddin between 1427 and 1443 during the reign of the sixth Ottoman Padishah Sultan Murad II along with the epitaph on the bridge is featured to be the longest



stone bridge on earth surviving to date with 1392m length, 174 arches and 6.10m width. The reason why the bridge is constructed at such length is the fact that it was designed to provide passageway for the armies through the vast marshy land of the River Ergene and its tributaries while the location and form of the bridge built on the faulted fits perfectly with the topographical conditions of the land on which the bridge is situated. The year 1443, when the construction was completed, correspond to the pre-classic period of the Ottoman Empire architecture. In this period, the Empire built universally well-known superior structures. The architect of the bridge Muslihiddin, was the chief state

architect of the period. Architect Muslihiddin is one of the most important of all medieval architects and at the same time, he was the leading architect of the classical period of Ottoman architecture with the bridges, social and religious complexes and mosques he built.

With the order of The Magnificent Grand Vizier Mustafa Pasha, Architect Sinan the Great build the Cisir-i Mustafa Pasha Bridge with twenty arches over the river Meriç in Bulgaria in 1529. The town at the beginning of this bridge was called Cisir-i Mustafa Pasha Borough. In order to avoid confusion regarding these two towns with bridges, which were connected to the Edirne Province, the name of town Ergene was switched to Cisir-i Ergene. However, the public never accepted this change and adopted the name of Uzunköprü.

The development from the economic and cultural aspects of Uzunköprü, which was stillness in terms of the socio-economic during the war of independence, speeded up after the announcement of the Republic.

In 1913, the Turkish Building Association was established to defend Turkish culture, the national interests were renovated and the Community Centre was founded.

Towards 1926-27s, the industrial developments stood out with 10 flourmills working with steam and 1 fleece factory opening.

In the 1950s, 5 flourmills, 6 vegetable oil factories, 1 power plant, 30 warehouses owned by private persons were added to them.

Today the population is Uzunkopru is over 40.000.

CONNECTIONS WITH UZUNKÖPRÜ

According to the city almanacs of Edirne issued in 1893 and 1894, the town of Uzunköprü is 15 minutes away from the river Ergene and 50 minutes away from the railway station. The provincial centre of Edirne takes eight hours by road and two hours by train to get there.

The major railways and highways linking The Middle East and Turkey to Europe pass through the provincial lands. Transport in Uzunköprü is provided by highway. Uzunköprü has a connection to Kapıkule with the junction in Havşa at the İstanbul-Edirne Highway (E-5), to Anatolia via Çorlu-Silivri-İstanbul, to the Aegean via Edirne-Havsa-Keşan-Gelibolu-Çanakkale.

The State Highway extending North-South between Havsa-Keşan pass through the town of Uzunköprü. This way combines with the state highway of Edirne-İstanbul (E-5) and provides the link to the provincial center from the town of Uzunköprü. Uzunköprü which is a district of Edirne is 68 km away from the city center. Uzunköprü has a connection to Pehlivan köy, the town of Kırklareli, via the road to the East and to the towns of Meriç and İpsala via the road to the west.

All the train services starting from İstanbul (Sirkeci) to Europe passes through Edirne. İstanbul-Thessaloniki-Athens expedition is provided via Uzunköprü Eskiköy and the other links via Edirne Kapıkule.

The town of Uzunköprü is located on the plain of Ergene. The river Ergene passes through the settlement. It has a slightly inclined topography that the elevation goes up to the south. The province territory



consists of wide lowlands, wide valleys, fertile plains watered by the rivers of Meriç and Ergene.

The Town Center is at an altitude of 18 m from the sea level. The highest point, which is Suleymaniye Hill, is 378 m high. The county land is an alluvial plain that was formed by the wide fields towards the river Meriç surrounding in the north-south direction in the west and the river Ergene that flows towards the southwest- northeast direction from the middle of the river Meriç and these fields

The area extending on the south of the Ergene basin where the town of Uzunköprü is located is in the form of a slightly wavy plateau whose elevation is between 150-200m. The basin is sounded by Istanca Mountains in the north and Koru Mountains on the south.

Meriç rises from the Rila Mountain in Bulgaria. The river Meriç pours into the Aegean in front of Enez. Meriç has a length of 185 km along the line of Turkey-Greece.

The river Tunca is the largest tributary of Meric. It rises from the piedmonts of the Balkan Mountains in Bulgaria. After crossing the Kazanlak plain, it mixes with Meriç in Edirne.

The river Arda enters the province of Edirne from the border gate of Pazarkule. After 1 km it combines with Meriç in the vicinity of Ardakule.

The river Ergene which is a branch of the river Meriç rises from the Istanca Mountains, it combines with Meriç in the north of Ipsala.

Pravadi, Süloğlu, Basamaklar, Keşan and Büyükdoganca are among the important streams of Edirne. The lakes of the city are Gala, Dalyan, Tasalt, I.Tuzla, II.Tuzla, Bücüme, Sığırak and Pamuklu.

The dams of Karademir, Süloğlu, Kayalıköy and Kırklareli are located on the tributaries of the river Ergene. The Kadıköy Dam is located on the small tributaries mixing with the river Meriç and the stream Doğan, the Altunyazı Dam is on the stream Horala, the Aliç regulator is on the stream Basamak.

HAND CRAFTS IN EDİRNE REGION

During the Ottoman Era handicrafts in Edirne region were highly developed. Wood, box, flower craftsmanship, book cover works, ampliation writing, gravestone production were primary handicrafts. Unfortunately, most of them are now extinct.



Some of the crafts still practiced in the region are as follows:

In Edirne, Wood Works have a high reputation. With materials imported from İstanbul and Europe, **Edirnekari** fashion was created. It is the art crafts, which was used for the wooden Works of art, painted with oil paint in the 18th century. This panting method was used in making some decorative tools such as, hope chest, cupboard cover etc. The bouquets tied with ribbons, flowers placed in a vase and fruits decorated in a plate were also among the common handicrafts in those days. There were different colours on those handicrafts, which had light and dark shadows, and they were polished to be protected for a long time. Edirnekari are motifs and compositions of paints and varnishes made on materials of leather, wood and cardboard. The most distinctive feature of the craft is the durability of the paint. Characterizations of the pieces can be lined up in 5 articles:

- Geometric motives are rarely used in Edirnekari wood ornamentations.
- Baroque Style influence is strongly felt in many of the pieces.
- Usually herbal figures such as tulip, hyacinth, carnation, flower bouquet and fruits are used, along with geometric (rounds, bridges and stars) and Islamic shapes.
- In paint-ornamented pieces dark green, purple, yellow, dark brown and many other colours are used.
- Walnut, mulberry, oak, chestnut, boxwood and linden trees are usually preferred.



In the region **The Bridal Broom** is still alive today. Furthermore, the bridal broom, which is turned into a decorative good by assembling it with mirrors and embroidery, is an important ethnographical element in the wedding tradition of Edirne. Every girl that was to be married had to have such an article and the order for it had to be given in good time before the traditional Turkish wedding so that the craftsman did not have to make a rushed job of it. The broom symbolizes the diligence, the cleanness and the purity of the young girl, and the mirror her beauty. It is put into the trousseau of the young girls so it could bring luck and is kept for lifetime.



It is made from sorghum. First of all the raw material has to be just right. The heath stems are reaped with scythes in the countryside and then the seeds and leaves are stripped away before they are laid to dry in the sun. Then they are brought together into bunches, after which they are sent to the market for sale. Once those bunches are purchased by the broom-makers, they are being soaked in water for softening and easy processing. This is called wetting or finishing. The wetted fibres are placed in sulphur kilns to improve their durability and flexibility. After keeping in oven for up to 2-3 hours, the fibres are then separated into four categories by a chooser (traditionally called “zahireci”), where thin and weak ones are for processing, worn-out pieces are for trash, thick ones for election and those with short bottom and long sizes are separated for the top side of the broom.



The categorized fibres are formed into first shape with a bender. This process is called “roof”. There are three binders in the making of broom. The broom which is in “roof” form is taken by the binder, receives first form in their hands which is called “forked broom”. This process is followed by the thinning and shaving of the top side (handle). The sewing master decorates the bridal and mirror brooms. There are different types from hand brooms, brooms with stakes to small hand brooms and ball brooms. Those brooms had a symbolic language – if the mirror broom belonged to an unmarried woman, a nail with a large rounded head would be fixed to the handle. If the broom was hung outside the house door, it signed that the household included a girl of marriageable age.

One of the most known handicrafts in the region is **fruit soaps** - handmade soap in the shape of fruit, then painted and used as a flavouring for decorative purposes. History of this handcraft is quite interesting. This handcraft first appeared in Edirne in 1600s. It is known as “mis soap” because of its beautiful smell also known as Sultan’s Soap since Sultans used it for hygiene. In addition, not all the products were sold at the market. Some of them were sent to Topkapı Palace to use. Later it has become the biggest sector and some of the neighbourhoods’ names changed to “Sabuni (the one who produces soap)”. Bars of soaps are grated and they become like dough. Then they are shapes as different fruits and painted with color. These colorful and musky decorative figures are the most popular souvenirs in Edirne. Fruit baskets with soaps are item in almost every home in Edirne.

The production of the soaps is entirely handmade. Soap filfings are involved with water and crushed by hand just like dough. Then from the mixture are made a suitable size balls and each ball is formed by the skilful hands of the masters with the help of ordinary blades and plain water for smoothing. Different tricks to achieve the desired effect are used. For example, to look like an orange ball, roll it on grater, thus obtaining the orange peel. Then the fruits are stained with paint brushes. With imagination and master secrets to get original and impressive fruity forms - slices of watermelon, cherries, pears, peaches halved with pits and many more.

Edirne Embroidery - embroidery with needle is known in Europe as ‘Turkish lace’ /Oya/. The word “Oya” has not exact translation into other languages, and this confirms the thesis that art belongs to Turkish woman. Some sources indicate that lace in XII century started from Anadol, pass through the Balkans, Greece and from there via Italy to Europe. It is made with a simple needle and thread to sew on cloth woven on the basis of pre crochet or even unique technology - on the basis of horsehair.



Traditionally, the headdresses and scarves women wore on their heads, the printed cloths, and prayer and funeral head coverings were decorated with various kinds of oya, which was also used on undergarments, to adorn outer garments, around the edges of towels and napkins and as a decorative element in many other places. In the Aegean region even men’s headdresses were decked with layers of oya.



Oya edging, which appears all over the region in various forms and motifs, has different names depending on the means employed: needle, crochet hook, shuttle, hairpin, bead, tassel to name just a few. Sewing needle oya is a variety that was produced by affluent, aristocratic, urban women. The most beautiful examples of such oya, which was usually made with a sewing needle using silk thread, were produced in the Ottoman Palace.

Young maidens, new brides, and young women traditionally conveyed their loves—whether hopeful or hopeless, their expectations, their good tidings, their happiness and unhappiness, their resentment and their incompatibility with their husbands to those around them through the oya they wore. A woman adorned her head with oya embodying flowers, nature's loveliest gift to man, the species of the flowers differing depending on her age.

As the ex-capital city of Ottomans, Edirne had once been one of the main centers of Turkish **tiling and ceramics**. The decorative style, which the sultans left, the incomparable tiling of palaces and the monumental structures are significant parts of Edirne's cultural heritage. With its ceramics produced by skilful hands, Edirne still keeps esthetical values of the past alive today with their colours, motives and models.



In Islamic architecture tiles are usually part of the decoration of interior spaces in mosques, mausoleums, palaces, pavilions, fountains, imarets and libraries. In the early Middle Ages in production techniques are used for colour glazing grow and improve. They are due to exceptional and rare mosaic tiles produced in Edirne. In the 16th century began to produce tiles, which are drowning under the glaze. The predominant motives are floral and strip titles. In the mid-16th century, pottery with its red coloured reliefs under the glazing, and its hardness is highly appreciated worldwide.

Horse carriages and Phaetons, which are made of wood and metal, have had a special and important place in the history of Edirne. The horse carriages were used to carry goods whereas Phaetons were used to carry passengers. Both carts and phaetons have disappeared as a result of the developing technology.

Unique models of carriages and phaetons are made today by Ozcan Abaci in scale 1:05. Models are

sculpting from wood, as possible strictly in accordance with the originals in order to preserve the cultural heritage of Edirne. They are richly encrusted and decorated with typical contrasting colours for the region. The workmanship is extremely time-consuming and precise because of the many curved and fine details. High quality paints, varnishes and wood are used.

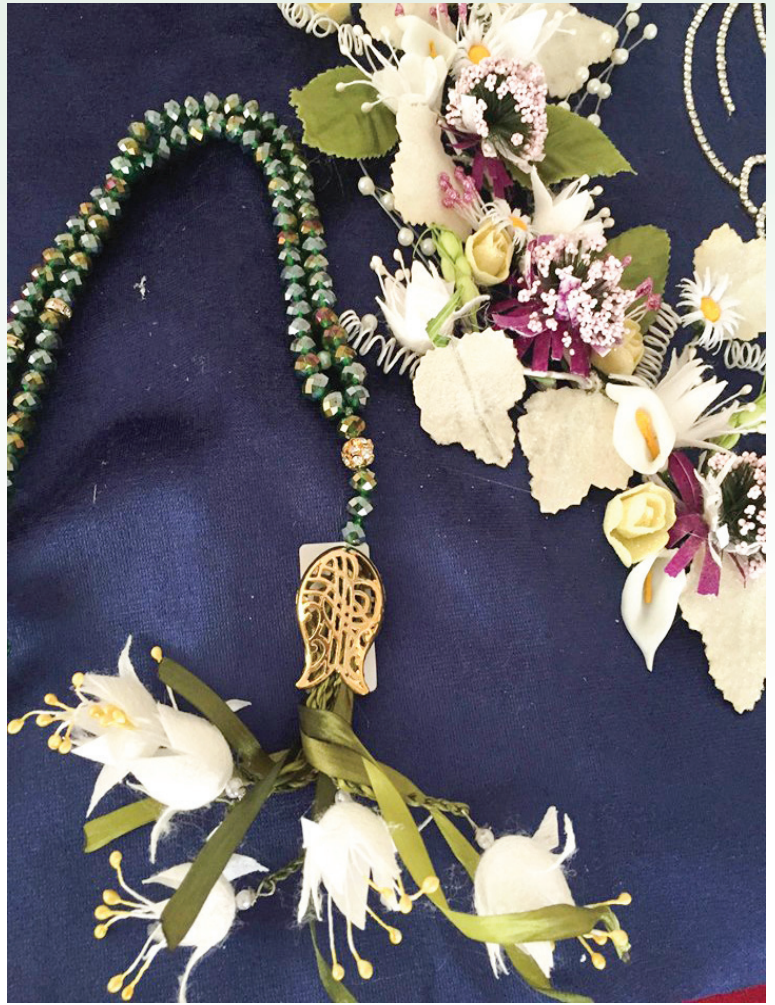


Today in Uzunkopru craft works are governed by two government institutions. These institutions are SODAM (Social Solidarity Center) and Uzunkopru Public Education Center Directorate. These institutions educate people on the various handcrafts. For example, SODAM opened 126 courses between 2013 and 2017. A total of 1927 trainees have attended the courses and 1697 of them received certificates. These Courses are:

- Silk Cocoon Hand Craft Course
 - Embossing Courses
 - Decorative Wood Refurbishment
 - Creating Home Textile Products
 - Creating Bedroom Products
 - Soap Production
 - Wire Curling
 - Jewellery Courses
 - Knitting and Knotted Jewellery Courses
 - Ceramic Moulding
 - Production of Jewellery with wires and nails
 - Painting Courses
-

- Basket Knitting Courses
- Textile Painting Courses
- Creating Decorative Home Accessories
- Creating Touristic Souvenirs
- Saddlebag Knitting
- Painting of Wood-Ceramic-Polyester Courses

Uzunkopru Public Education Center Directorate is a “free to educate” institution not only for handcraft but also almost everything that affects human life from sports to computer, agriculture to mechanics. Some of the crafts that still exist due to the efforts of this institution with a brief information are as follows:



Mis Soap Production Course: This is a traditional craft in Edirne region. This craft that some of us do not use or even do not know, goes back at least 300 years. Back then people used these products as a sanitation equipment or as a trinket. They look like it's been made from plastic or plaster but it is pure soap material as we know it today. This soap also known as “Fruit soap” and most known shapes are apple, pear, grapes, peach, wild cherry, banana, melon, strawberry, apricot and lemon. In 19 AD. this craft was the main income for the region. Back in Ottoman Empire era, these products were a tool for the girls that want to marry. In addition, these soaps used to be a present for the diplomats of foreign countries from Ottoman authorities.

Wood Painting: All the painting works that use paint, polish, varnish on the goods made from wood are considered as wood painting. Wood painting creates visually better goods and prevent them from outer effects.

Rug Accessories: With this course trainees gain cloth hardening, block preparation, colouring, ironing, gathering, ramification abilities.

Kırkyama (Textile products made by various fabric parts): Kırkyama is historically arise from cloth needs of poor people. Later it has become an art and decoration tool. Kırkyama originally means “forty patches”. This kind of knitting is made from various cloth parts and figures and takes its name from the production process.

Marbling Painting: Marbling painting is a colourful and valuable that transforms art into a visual feast and a marvellous decoration element for houses. Marbling painting is done by colouring the water surface but unfortunately, this art is not being used as it should be today. There were numerous trainings for this art but today the trainings are very limited in number and trainee quantity. This also makes this art and its products even more valuable. Back in Ottoman era marbling art was very important and a lot of people earned their income. By spreading across Europe from Eastern land, marbling painting called “Turkish Paper”. The most important things in marbling are the quality of the paints and brushes that are being used in room temperature.

Panç Knitting: *Panç* knitting is made with punch needle and wheel. Knitting is done behind the cloth. After the work done, it has to be glued with adhesive.

Ceramic Painting: Turkish ceramic art brings Anatolian civilization to you home with historical forms and elegance. Kütahya ceramic and İznik ceramic are considered as the home Turkish ceramic works and people are creating Ceramic works for decades. Ceramic art, one of the most important traditional Turkish art, mostly used for mosque, villa, palace, well, mausoleum interior and exterior decorations. Experts are using “under glaze technique” for ceramic arts rather than “above glaze technique” which is being used for porcelain polishing.



CALENDAR OF TRADITIONAL EVENTS IN UZUNKOPRU

Several annual events take place in Uzunkopru. The biggest event of them is Uzunkopru Culture, Art and Agriculture Festival. At the festival, there are stands with almost every kind of daily products. If you visit Uzunkopru during the festival, which takes place in September every year, you can find various handmade cloths, souvenirs, organic foods and drinks. In addition, the products of SODAM's and Education centre's trainees are being sold.

24th of November is the Independence Day of Uzunkopru. Every year on 24 November, several theatrical events take place. Most spectacular of those events is "rescue of the bride". The Mayor chooses an actual bride for the event. At the event, soldiers rescue the bride in a theatrical show and after that, the Mayor gives the bride a wedding present – a golden bracelet.

In the month of May, International Retro Car Rally Maritsa takes place with a motto Three Countries One River. As it is indicated in the name, only classical cars are allowed. Main aim of the event is not a race but to show friendship and brotherhood between the countries.

At irregular intervals, several local food stores are opening in the area. At these stores tourist can buy organic local foods, homemade drinks such as "şıra" which is made from grapes, various cheese and breads as they like.

The most interesting and largely known event in Edirne region is "Kırkpınar Oil Wrestlings". There are several rumours about its roots. Most known of these rumours is this: During the conquest of Rumelia, Süleyman Pasha, the brother of Orhan Ghazi, also conquered a few more castle with his soldiers. While returning back, soldiers began wrestling with each other in Samona (Greece). But two of the soldiers were unable to defeat each other. Later on, 6th of May these two soldiers began wrestling early in the morning till late night. Unfortunately, soldiers found dead at the location and they were unable to defeat each other again. Soldier were buried where they died under the fig tree. Years later, when their friends came to their grave they saw fountains where the soldiers were buried. After this incident, that location called as "Kırkpınar (forty fountains)" and the custom of oil wrestling has begun. This tradition still continues every year for 657 years.



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