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TRADITIONS, CRAFTS AND ETHNOGRAPHY

multimedia



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CRAFTS

In the past Bulgarians used to be farmers. The lands which they cultivated were giving them fruit and feeding them. But in order to carry out their daily activities, they needed the tools and equipment which they couldn't make themselves. This way various crafts were born to meet the needs and demands of the people.

Most Bulgarian crafts had the purpose to facilitate the work on the field or the household tasks of the women. But there

were crafts which combined pragmatism with aesthetics and delivered beauty during the difficult day life.

Nowadays some ancient traditions in the Bulgarian crafts are preserved in several ethnographic complexes in the country. You can become well acquainted with them live in AEC Etara, EAC Zlatograd, EC Old Dobrich, etc.



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COPPER PROCESSING

Copper processing is a metal processing craft, which produces forged brass and is also called coppery. The copper processing artisans usually produce utensils - pots, trays, bowls, containers for water, dish sets, cups, boilers, etc. Copper is one of the most diathermanous



metals which is appropriate for the manufacture of vessels which have direct contact with fire. Copper oxidizes quickly, therefore copper vessels should be tinkered or covered with a thin layer of silver. The pots should be forged out and shaped of copper sheets, and their decoration is mostly functional – it is part of the sealing of the elements of the vessel. You can watch a master coppersmith in real time at the museums of Etara and Zlatograd.



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POTTERY



Pottery is one of the oldest crafts in the Bulgarian lands. Potters make various types of pottery, mostly for domestic use - cups, plates, vases, pitchers, pots, jars, etc. The potter's wheel is used to shape, sculpt and add extra decoration. It can be drawn, engraved or applied. For the painted decoration is usually made by paint, as the

painted patterns are usually those typical for the respective region. The application is made of clay, which is placed after the forming of the vessels. The potter's wheel is used for engraving as well. This way various shapes are made - waves, spirals, etc. Master potters work in Etara, Zlatograd, the Old Town of Dobrich, etc.



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BRAIDING



Braiding is a craft, which is practiced for braid production - plaited cords, which were used for decorating the clothes in the past. Braids were made in various colors and contained white fibers of twisted yarn. Braids decorated the edges of clothes and

various shapes were made depending on the region of the country. Originally braids were twisted by hand, but in the first half of the nineteenth century the metal wheel, powered by water, came into use, and gave great impetus to the craft. After twisting, the braids were "burnt" and painted in various colors with natural dyes.

Leaves of sumac were used to achieve the black color. Braids are made in the old technology in Etara and Zlatograd.



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WOOD TURNERY

Wood turnery is one of the crafts which can be seen in the Architectural and Ethnographic Complex Etara. The wooden lathe was powered by water and it was used for making small domestic wooden containers and tools - mortars, lids, cutting boards, trays, etc.





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WOOD-CARVING

Wood carving is one of the crafts which added beauty and aesthetics to Bulgarian life. There were three types of wood carving - shepherd, home and church carvings. Shepherd

carving was the simplest type - its products were mainly shepherd crooks, whistles, flutes and other items with simple shapes and decorations. Home carving was especially





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popular in the 19th century. Bulgarians decorated their homes by woodcarving pieces. The more complicated the decoration was, the higher status had the owner of the house.

One of the most beautiful examples of this type of carvings are the two suns, carved in the Daskalova house in the town of Tryavna.

The church open-work carving was the most complicated of the three types. Nowadays quite beautiful wooden iconostases are kept in many Bulgarian churches.





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ICONOGRAPHY



Iconography is a craft which is closely associated with Orthodox Christianity. The canon is strictly respected in the process of the icon drawing. The Bulgarian iconography

is strongly influenced by Byzantine art. During the Age of Revival (18th-19th century) the Bulgarian iconography reached its zenith. During the five-century Ottoman dominion,



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iconography was a part of the mechanism which Bulgarians used to keep their Bulgarian consciousness. Very often, images of Bulgarian kings were drawn on the icons in order to remember and keep alive the Bulgarian spirit. Until the Age of Revival, most

iconographers were clergy, but later this trend was reversed. One of the most famous Bulgarian painters is Zahari Zograf (1810 - 1853) and his nephew Stanislav Dospevski (1823 - 1878) – both of them were representatives of the Samokov School of Art.





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LEATHERWORKING



Bulgarians. The tanning of the leather is quite time-consuming and requires much effort and treatment until the material is fit for cutting and sewing. In the leather workshop in AEC Etara you can become familiar with all the processes and learn interesting facts about this craft.

Leatherworking is a craft, associated with the tanning and sewing of leather clothes - coats, hats, slippers, linings of coats, etc. In the past such clothes were very expensive and worn primarily by the wealthy





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FORGERY AND BLACKSMITHING

Forgery and blacksmithing are crafts, associated with the production of various types of vehicles, drawn by animals - carts, wagons, drays. In order to make a vehicle which is strong and rides well, it requires many skills – carpentry, blacksmithing, woodcarving. The decoration of the cart or the wagon required the master to be an experienced artist. Nowadays this craft can be seen in AEC Etara, and in the town of Vratsa where an entire exhibition is dedicated

to drays and the great vehicle master of Vratsa- Mityo Orozov.





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GOLD-PROCESSING, SILVER-PROCESSING, JEWELLERY-MAKING.



Gold-processing, Silver-processing and Jewellery-making are craft in which a variety of ornaments are made, mostly female decorations and accessories. In Bulgaria in the nineteenth century there was a special tribute to silver. The toolkit of goldsmiths, silversmiths

and jewelry makers included many and varied tools. This craft was characterized by the use of patterns and the casting of a metal drain wire. Most often the masters were making buckles (complicated ornate decorations on the female belts), bracelets, rings and other jewelry.



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KNIFE MAKING

Knife making is a craft, which produces edged weapons, household scissors, knives, small folding knives, razors, etc. Each Bulgarian used to have his own knife, which they always carried with themselves - to help them in work or for self-defense during hard times, etc. Knives were made by a special technology. For example, under the rules of the Gabrovo knife making guild, the Gabrovo masters were obliged to include steel in each produced knife besides

iron. So their products were both strong and elastic.





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