

## **THE TRADITION OF FELT-MAKING IN UZBEK FOLK APPLIED ART**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article analyzes the tradition of felt-making in Uzbek folk applied art, exploring its historical roots, production processes, and cultural significance. Felt-made items in Uzbekistan have long been an integral part of everyday life and are still relevant as part of the national heritage. The article discusses the current state of the tradition, existing challenges, and potential solutions to its preservation.*

**Keywords:** *Felt-making, folk applied art, Uzbek culture, eco-friendly products, traditional craftsmanship, cultural heritage.*

### **АННОТАЦИЯ**

*В статье анализируется традиция войлоков в узбекском народном прикладном искусстве, исследуются ее исторические корни, производственные процессы и культурное значение. Изделия из войлока в Узбекистане издавна являются неотъемлемой частью повседневной жизни и по-прежнему актуальны как часть национального наследия. В статье обсуждается современное состояние традиции, существующие проблемы и потенциальные решения по ее сохранению.*

**Ключевые слова:** *войлоковыделение, народное прикладное искусство, узбекская культура, экологически чистые изделия, традиционное мастерство, культурное наследие.*

### **INTRODUCTION.**

The tradition of felt-making in Uzbek folk applied art has deep roots and is closely associated with the lifestyle of nomadic Turkic peoples. The art of felt-making has existed since ancient times, developing alongside the pastoralism and nomadic way of life in Central Asia, dating back to pre-Islamic times.

Although there is no exact information on when felt-making began, archaeological findings and historical sources indicate that this craft has been widespread in Central Asia since ancient times. Particularly among Turkic peoples, including Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and others, felt was produced from wool and used to create clothing and household items. Felt-making in Central Asia, specifically in the territory of Uzbekistan, was primarily related to the construction of housing for

nomadic peoples. Nomadic Turkic peoples used felt to make the walls and roofs of *yurtas*, traditional circular tents. These tents were light, warm, and resistant to moisture, thanks to the unique properties of felt.

The development of the felt-making tradition in Uzbekistan has largely adapted to local conditions. In Uzbekistan's major craft centers, particularly in cities like Samarkand, Bukhara, and Tashkent, this tradition flourished, with felt products adorned with national patterns being valued as part of the country's cultural wealth. Especially in rural areas of Uzbekistan, felt held an important place as a key element of the nomadic lifestyle.

In Uzbek folk applied art, the felt-making process was predominantly carried out by women and was based on manual labor. Each craftswoman had her own style, incorporating national patterns and symbols into felt products. This craft not only served household needs but also played an important role in shaping the aesthetic tastes of the people.

Currently, the tradition of felt-making in Uzbekistan continues to some extent, although its scale and widespread use have significantly diminished compared to the past. With the processes of globalization and the expansion of modern technologies, the practical importance of this craft has declined. However, in rural areas, particularly in mountainous and remote regions, the tradition of felt-making is still preserved.

Felt products are often created for decorative purposes, as a way to preserve and showcase folk art and cultural heritage. Artisans continue to produce felt rugs, pillows, and other items adorned with national patterns and symbols. In some places, efforts are being made to develop this craft for tourism purposes as well. Special training programs and workshops have been organized to study and preserve the tradition.

### **RELEVANCE.**

The tradition of felt-making remains relevant today as part of folk applied art, valued not only for its practical use but also for its role in preserving and promoting national culture. However, globalization and the widespread use of modern materials pose a threat to the survival of this tradition. The younger generation's declining interest in traditional crafts calls for special attention to preserve this ancient practice.

### **Challenges:**

1. **Loss of traditional knowledge:** The younger generation is not learning the techniques of felt-making and shows little interest in traditional practices.
2. **Declining market demand:** Traditional products that cannot compete with modern goods face decreasing market demand.

3. **Limited production opportunities:** Lack of financial support for local producers limits their ability to create competitive products.

**Solutions:**

1. **Education and training:** Establish special programs to teach younger generations the process of felt-making, involving artisans and organizing workshops.
2. **Applying innovations:** Introduce modern technologies and designs to improve the quality of traditional products and promote them on international markets.
3. **Support for producers:** Study local and international markets, and provide marketing and financial support to help small producers grow.

**CONCLUSION**

The tradition of felt-making in Uzbek folk applied art plays a key role in preserving and developing the cultural heritage of the people. This craft is valued not only for its practical use but also for its aesthetic and ecological significance. Increasing interest in felt-making and promoting the craft will help preserve national culture and pass it on to future generations.

The history of felt-making in Uzbekistan has developed over thousands of years. This craft, in addition to its practical significance, remains an integral part of the nation's cultural identity and heritage. Studying the tradition of felt-making in Uzbek folk applied art is crucial for preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of the people.

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