



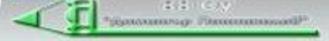
Sofia, Bulgaria



ЦЕНТЪР
ЗА РАЗВИТИЕ
НА ЧОВЕШКИТЕ
РЕСУРСИ



Еразъм+



The Art of Bulgarian Martenitsa



Tradition

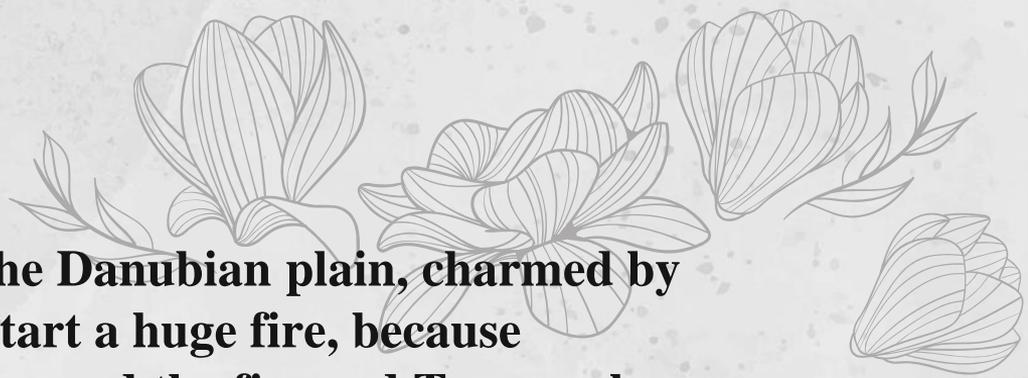
Martenitsa is a small piece of adornment, made of white and red wool, usually in the form of a bracelet or two dolls - a white male and a red female. Martenitsa is worn from Baba Marta Day (March 1st) until the person wearing them first sees a stork, a swallow or a blossomed tree. Tradition dictates that Martenitsa is always given as gifts, not bought for oneself. They are given to loved ones, friends, classmates and those people whom one feels close to.





The legend says

When Khan Asparuh arrived in the Danubian plain, charmed by its beauty, he chose that place to start a huge fire, because ancient Bulgarians believed that around the fire god Tangra chose who he would patronage. The feast began but the Khan wasn't happy – he didn't have the herb growing in abundance in his homeland, which by tradition had to be a part of the offerings for god Tangra. But out of nowhere a swallow flew by and landed on the Khan's arm. To its leg tied with a white string there was the herb – a gift from his sister Houba. During the long flight, the bird had gotten injured and part of the white string was stained red with its blood. Khan Asparuh took the herb and gave it as an offering to god Tangra, the white and red string he kept believing it would bring him health and happiness.

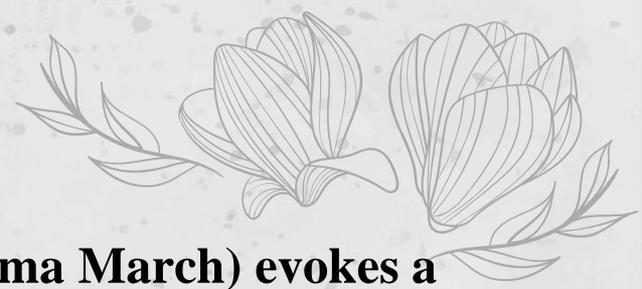


Symbolism

A typical martenitsa consists of two small dolls, Pizho and Penda. The red and white woven threads symbolize the wish for good health. They are the symbols of new life and the coming of spring. White as a color symbolizes purity and red is a symbol of life and passion. They are also associated with the male and female beginnings and their balance, also with the need for balance in life.



Folklore

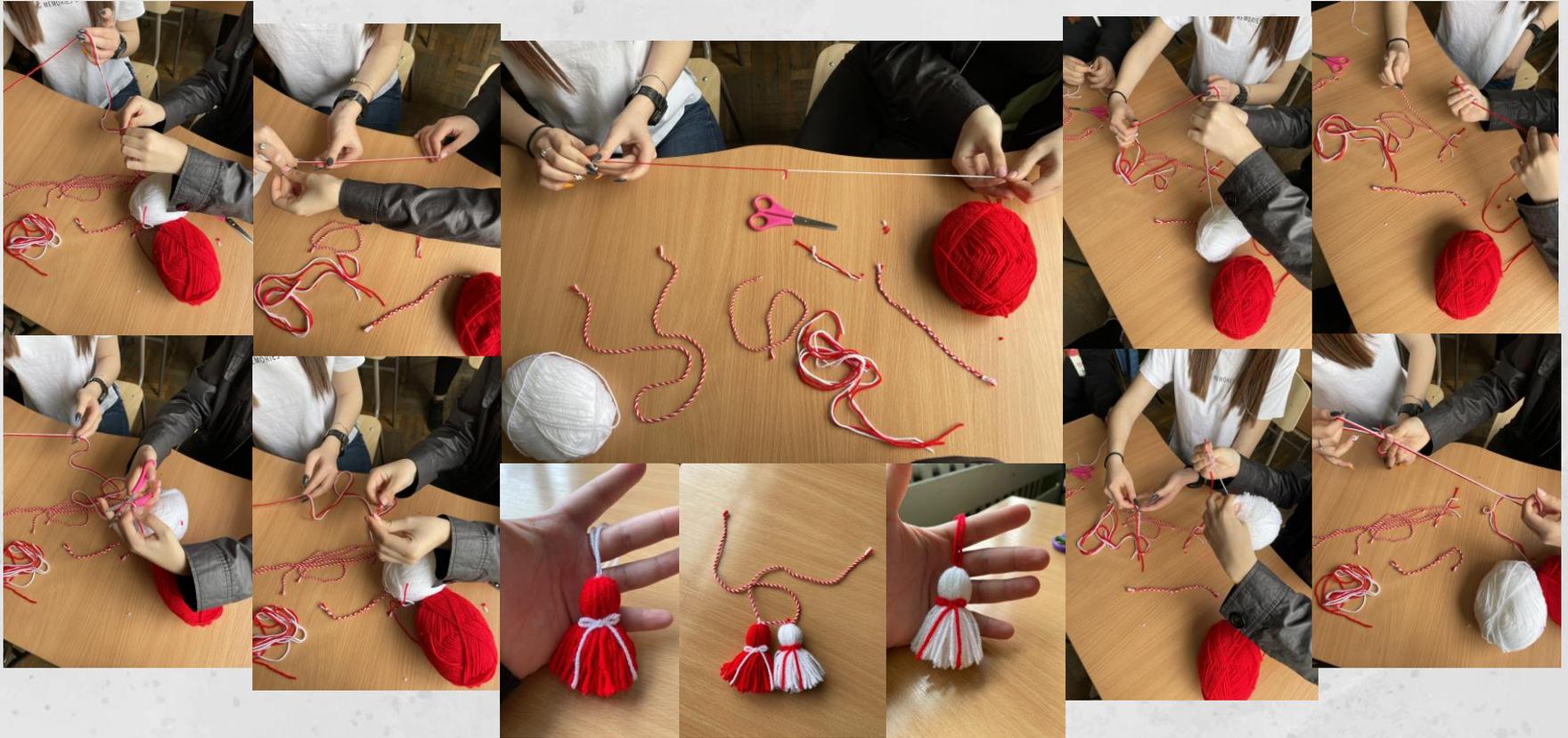


In Bulgarian folklore the name Baba Marta (Grandma March) evokes a grumpy old lady whose mood swings very rapidly. The common belief is that by wearing the red and white colors of the Martenitsa, people ask Baba Marta for mercy. They hope that it will make winter pass and bring spring faster. The first returning stork or swallow is taken as a sign of spring and as evidence that Baba Marta is in a good mood. The ritual of finally taking off the Martenitsa is different in different parts of Bulgaria. Some people tie the Martenitsa on a branch of a fruit tree, giving the tree health and fertility.

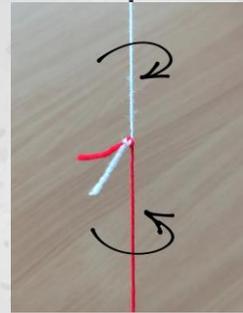
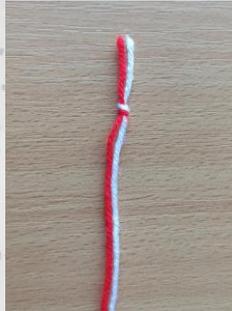
Others put it under a stone with the idea that the kind of creature (usually an insect) closest to the token the next day will determine the person's health for the rest of the year. If the creature is a larva or a worm, the coming year will be healthy and full of success. The same luck is associated with an ant, the difference being that the person will have to work hard to reach success. If the creature nearest the token is a spider, then the person is in trouble and may not enjoy luck, health, or personal success.



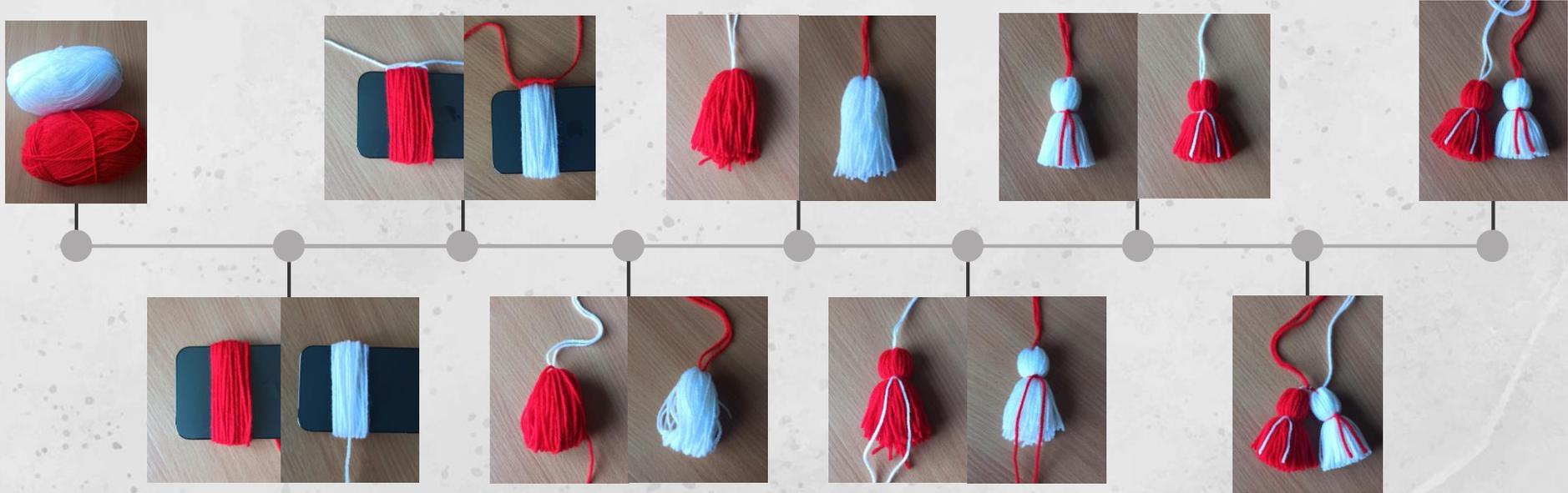
Our Workshop



The making of a Martenitsa bracelet



The making of Pizho and Penda



THANKS!

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