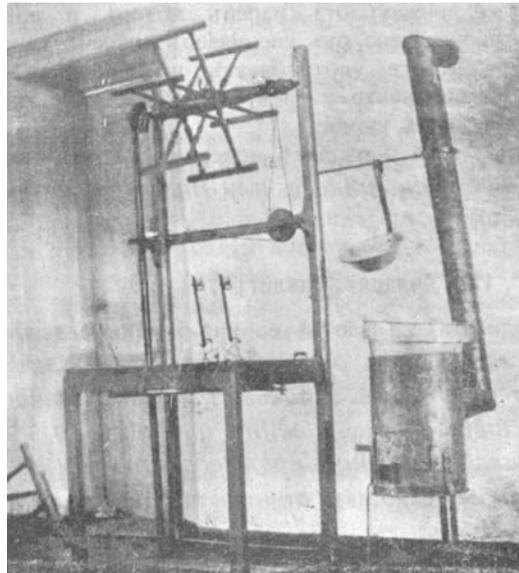


## The silk knitted products of Sericulture Experiment Station – Vratza



A new and unique production of knitted commodities made of 100 % silk has been created at the Sericulture Experiment Station, Vratza (SES).

**From the tradition to the present:** In 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries during the times of Ottoman domination the sericulture and silk production in Bulgaria were the best developed in Vratza and Vratza's district. The town and the region produced cocoons and raw silk which were sold in the Turkish Empire as well as exported to Russia, Italy, Ausro-Hungary, Romania etc. The town of Vratza was especially famous with the hand loom woven fabrics, called "burundjuk" and with lady's blouses hand knitted by pure silk twisted, degummed/dyed yarn, knitting bed/table covers, doily, embroidery and usage silk as tinsel for tunic decoration of twisted and degummed/dyed silk yarn. This traditional cottage based production used to continue until the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century then decreased due to the country's industrialization and that day's state policy.





**“Silk road” – the revived tradition:** Considering the existing traditions in Vratza in the original silk commodities production as well as the present market trends the Sericulture Experiment Station, Vratza through its department called “Silk road” revived the pure silk knitted production in year 2000. The idea is production of ecologically clean silk and it’s processing to ready commodities using the traditional methods from the past.

**The technology of production:** SES – Vratza produces by itself the silkworm eggs using for the purpose new silkworm hybrids, tolerant to adverse rearing conditions and diseases thus allowing rearing them without usage of any harmful for the people chemicals. The silkworms are reared by private producers who fertilize the mulberry trees by only farm yard manure and do not use any chemical fertilizers and agricultural chemicals. By this way the cocoons produced meet the criteria for a biological production and are completely ecologically clean. The further cocoon processing is performed by using ecologically clean dryers with hot air and silk reeling machines, designed on the principle of the famous traditional Vratza’s type cottage silk reeling machine called “dolap”, which was commonly used in the past. The silk degumming and dyeing are also made following traditional methods, used in the past.



**The silk commodities:** The “Silk road” department under the SES – Vratza produces the following products and commodities made by 100 % silk, following traditional technologies of production:

- **White silk cocoons;**



- **Raw silk suitable for further processing to be used in weaving or knitting;**



- **Silk yarn, suitable either for weaving or knitting;**



- **Machine knitted lady's silk blouses and cardigans;**



- Machine knitted lady's silk scarves;



- Hand knitted lady's silk blouses, cardigans and scarves and hand knitted silk doily.



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