

ERASMUS+ IDENTITY OF THE REGION – Greece



Extinct crafts

In Athens Greece

The Water Seller

- In the old city of Athens there was no running water in the houses. The water salesman was providing people with water. There used to be one such salesman in every neighbourhood with a steady clientele. His job was quite tiring as he had to carry water from the springs to the city several times a day.
- In time with the increase of population, the water salesman had to have an animal, usually a donkey or a mule, or an oxcart for bigger quantities, to carry the water container to the customers' houses.
- It was a job quite popular from spring to autumn when there was less rainfall.

Spyros Louis

- One of the most famous water salesmen of old Athens was Spyros Louis who was the winner of the classical marathon in the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896. Spyros Louis had to cover long distances every day in order to provide his clients with water. As a result he had developed great endurance which actually helped him in winning the marathon.



The Carrier – “Agogiatis”

The word that could best describe this job nowadays is taxi or bus driver. It was a time when there were no vehicles or proper roads, so even short trips needed a lot of organization. The carriers performed the ordinary routes connecting the city with other areas using mules or donkeys carrying both people and their merchandise, which was mainly food.



The Farrier

- It was the man who changed the horseshoes, the protective metal pedal that was nailed in the hoof of the horses, donkeys and mules when these were worn out because of every day use.



The Tinker

- Most utensils in the past were made from copper. Yet with time and use they were oxidized and became dangerous for poisoning. The tinker was the craftsman who used to polish the oxidized surfaces of the utensils with tin.



The Newsvendor

- It was usually a young boy, mostly in the past, who was walking through the streets and the most popular cafes and areas of the city selling newspapers either as a pedestrian or on a bike. However, there were those who preferred the newspaper bench where apart from newspapers they used to sell magazines too.



The Costermonger

- He was one of the most popular retailers of the past. He was, too, wandering the streets of the city having his goods (mostly fruit and vegetables) on a cart. He used to be a quite pleasant and sociable individual in his contact with his customers mostly housewives and informed them about the news of the day.



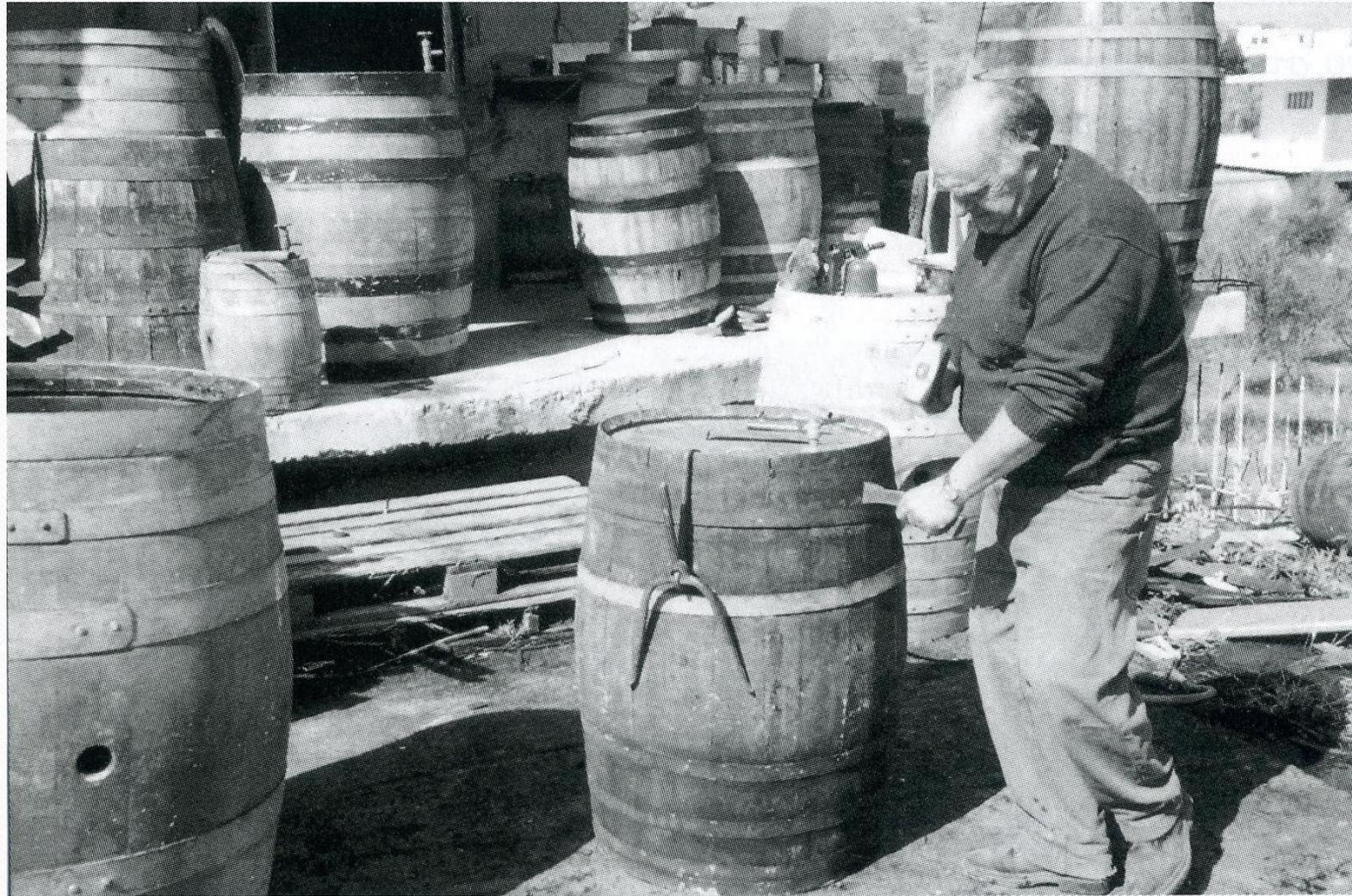
The Clay Jug Seller

In old Athens there was no fridge in the houses. In order to have fresh cool water, old Athenians had jugs made from clay where they stored the water they bought from the water salesman. Because clay is a material with tiny pores, water came through them and evaporated thus creating a cooling effect. This way Athenians had cool water in the hot summer months. The man providing them with the jugs was the clay jug seller.



The Cooper

- The cooper was a craftsman who constructed and repaired wooden containers which were flat on top and curved on the sides, called barrels. The construction of barrels demanded the knowledge of a special technique and tools for curved surfaces.



The Shoe Shiner

- The shoe shiner or boot polisher used to be a very popular occupation especially with the muddy roads of old Athens. Shoe Shiners used to be mainly young boys waiting for their customers in central squares of Athens. They cleaned and buffed and then waxed dirty shoes to give them again a shiny appearance.



The Chair Repairer

- In the houses of old Athens there were wooden chairs but because they were precious people did not use them, Instead, there were rough chairs the seat of which was made from bulrush. With time and use the bulrush was worn down making the chair useless. Here came the chair repairer who apart from making new chairs, he knitted bulrush and produced a resistant but at the same time comfortable material for seats.



The Shoe Maker

- In the past if you wanted a pair of shoes you had to visit the shoemaker who made shoes from scratch. He had his tools on a bench and would take the measures of your foot and then proceed with the construction of the shoes which were very expensive. As there were no machines, it would take time. In the cities where there were shops where many shoemakers worked together to meet the deadlines and the orders of the customers.



The Grocer

- After the end of 2nd World War, the small family run shops selling groceries (not meat or fish), non alcohol drinks and household use items were the spine of the trade. It was ordinary to be adjacent to a coffee shop or a tavern.



The Milkman

- The milkman would usually load his daily milk production on a donkey and would travel from the suburbs of Athens to the city every morning up to the 1950s. They would go to specific spots in the city and would sell the milk to their customers. From 1960 onwards they used glass bottles for their milk which they carried through the city neighbourhoods on bikes or small vehicles.
- In 1970, there was a change in legislation and the selling of milk in the streets was banned for reasons of milk quality.

Thank you!
