

# CREATIVITY IN CRAFTWORK

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This research addresses both **a theoretical and a methodological gap** in the study of creativity. Theories of creativity have often been preoccupied with ‘great’ creations and creators, to the neglect of **‘everyday’ forms** such as craftwork. Methodologically, the **microgenetic aspect** of the creative process is notoriously hard to capture and document in its simultaneous psychological and behavioural, social and material manifestation.

To uncover the microgenesis of creativity in Easter egg decoration, in Northern Romania, this project made use of the subjective camera, an audio-video device worn by the artisan at eye-level, offering first person recordings of creative activity. Participants were then interviewed based on the recordings.

### TECHNICAL SKILL

Traditional egg decoration in Romania involves drawing with wax on an emptied egg. This requires great technical virtuosity and several years of practice to perfect the craftwork.



### KNOWLEDGE

Egg decoration involves procedural knowledge and knowledge of motifs and their meaning. The motif here is a very popular one in Romania and it is known as the ‘lost way’ or labyrinth.

### IMMERSION

The artisan needs to pay attention and monitor the progress of the work at all times. For example here she counts the segments since the model requires an even number.

### AESTHETIC TASTE

Very important for Easter eggs is to look ‘beautiful’, to be appealing. Hence decorators adorn the eggs by creatively using, combining and personalising traditional motifs.

Microgenetic processes in creative craftwork are defined by:

- **technical virtuosity** in drawing the motifs with wax on the egg;
- **situated nature** and engagement here and now with the outcomes of work;
- **knowledge based** aspect including both procedures and knowledge of motifs;
- **aesthetic dimension** and the goal of generating the ‘beautiful’, the ‘artistic’.

