



CULTURE AND NATURE: THE EUROPEAN HERITAGE OF
SHEEP FARMING AND PASTORAL LIFE

ORAL TRADITION

RESEARCH REPORT FOR ESTONIA

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SHEEP-RELATED ORAL TRADITION IN ESTONIA

1. Introductory historical background, the importance of the subject in the context of Estonia

Land cultivation combined with animal husbandry has been the main source of subsistence for Estonians for millennia. Already in 2000 BC, goats, sheep, pigs and cattle were raised here; horses were introduced in the Bronze Age. Up to the second half of the 19th century, livestock were mostly kept for the purpose of land cultivation. The animals produced the manure needed for fertilising the fields and the workforce required for their tilling. A farm's livestock usually included cows and heifers, a foal or a yearling, 2 to 3 sheep, goats, pigs and poultry in addition to draught animals – oxen and horses. Pigs were the main meat animals, while sheep were mostly kept for their wool and hide.

The second half of the 19th century saw innovation in the field of animal husbandry. New farming methods – growing potato and clover, land amelioration and more effective tools – made it possible to start feeding the animals better. However, the main preconditions for progress in animal husbandry were the buying-out of farms and the transition to commodity production. Local animals began to be cross-bred with European breeds in the manor flocks. The importance of the economic role of domestic animals had therefore increased by the second half of the 19th century, in particular. As far as sheep breeds went, Estonian native sheep – who contented themselves with simpler living conditions but whose wool was of low quality and yield – were the dominant breed until the final quarter of the 19th century. In the late 19th century, during the mass buying-out of farms, so-called German sheep, who were more particular about their living conditions but whose wool was of better quality and higher yield, were procured mainly from manors.

Herding methods have varied by location and period. The herdsman typically herded both sheep and cattle together, but there were also separate shepherds. Each farm hired their own herdsmen, or they were hired jointly for the whole village. Most commonly, however, weaker-bodied adults or children from the farm served as its herdsmen. Pastures were typically large bogs, forests and shrublands. In most cases, there were no fences around the pastures, although a fence was sometimes built around fields and along cattle-trails.

In South-western Estonia, communal pastures and joint herding were commonplace until the era of collective farms. A herdsman was hired, and served ten or more years in the same place. The herdsman lived in a small hut built by farmers and equipped with a stove. Cattle,

horses, sheep and geese were herded together. Joint herding was also practised elsewhere in Estonia. In Lääne County, each farm family sent their own shepherd to tend the joint flock. In Central Estonia, it was common to have a shared herdsman, who was kept by several families in succession. The herdsman blew his horn in the morning and farmers' wives sent their animals to the village streets, where they moved along with the herdsman. The animals were returned by night. Joint herding was not common in Southern Estonia, where farms were located far apart. There, herding was a task mainly left to children. In some villages on the island of Kihnu, sheep were not herded at all – the animals wandered around seaside pastures and village streets on their own. Fields and meadows were surrounded by strong fences. Some villages also hired a shepherd, who tended the whole village's sheep, a herd of up to a hundred animals. During the manor era, until 1887, there was a manor shepherd in Kihnu whose task was to make sure that the manor's animals would not wander into the village and the other way round. It was also commonplace on the islands to take the animals to small islets for summer. Joint herding came to an end in most of Estonia in the late 19th century, when the pastures in shared use were plotted out and each farm began to herd its livestock on its own pasture. The farm pastures that had been plotted out were often located in the woods. In such a case, the animals wore bells around their necks. If the pasture was poor, i.e. had little grass, the animals were secretly grazed in nearby state forests. In spring, animals were mostly herded on fallow land (*sööt* or *kesa*), afterwards on pastures. In autumn, livestock grazed on clover aftergrass (*ädal*). In September, the animals were led to stubble fields (*kõrs*). During the period of collective farms, there were collective farm-owned sheep flocks that were kept on pastures surrounded by wire fences, with shepherds looking after the animals as well in most cases.

Estonians living in the rural society had mostly maintained a practical relationship with domestic animals in the 19th century. The purpose of sheep was to provide meat, wool, hides. The pragmatic peasant society was not familiar with pet culture. Although children could and indeed did have animals, their fate was still decided by adults. An animal was regarded as having a soul, and Estonians were characterised by a respectful attitude toward nature and all living things – both plants and animals –, but folk understanding nevertheless placed the soul of an animal a level below that of a human being: *a person has a soul, a beast has a breath*. The valuation of working animals was also well reflected in the minutes of parish courts. Ever since the late 18th century, parish courts were the courts of first instance for peasants, with the members of parish courts being chosen among the villagers themselves. Given that domestic animals were the providers of subsistence and food for the family, mostly horses, pigs and

sheep appear in court minutes – it was violence against these animals that impelled people to turn to court, often as keenly as in case of battery against people.

2. Descriptive overview of the subject

The natural environment and historical relations with neighbouring peoples have enabled the development of economic life, which in turn has influenced the societal and social structure, religion and folk culture. The Estonian traditional religion is very rich in various ideas and customs of rural religious and magical nature. On the other hand, people's attitude toward animals has been influenced by the arrival of Christianity, which directly subjected them to people. Domestic animals were an extremely important part of Estonian life. Oral tradition regarding cattle sorcery, animal slaughter, a herdsman's life, joint herding, wolves and bears is found up to the early 20th century, that is, until people could still remember the times when there were almost no enclosures or haylands, and livestock were threatened by wild predators, especially on woodland pastures.

Beliefs, rituals

There are many livestock-related beliefs and rituals in the oral tradition of Estonians. Various acts of protective magical significance that needed to be carried out to ensure the well-being of animals were widespread. The ritual of letting the cattle out into the open in spring was very important, both for protecting livestock against wild animals and for ensuring the prosperity of sheep. For example, a scythe was placed crosswise below the barn door to bring good fortune to sheep in some places. Putting chicken eggs in front of the barn door before letting the cattle into the open was also widespread – if an animal stomped on an egg and broke it, it meant that the animal would catch a disease later. Sheep counting was considered important – in some places, people believed that wolves would not touch sheep that had been counted, while elsewhere, it was believed that it was precisely the counted sheep that were killed by the wolves. To keep wolves at bay, wolf dung was spread on the sheep trail in spring, or sheep shears were clanked above the head.

When the sheep were let into the open, one sheep had a bell tied around its neck, a piece of bread was passed under the bell string and divided between the rest of the sheep to keep them together in summer.

When the sheep were let into the open for the first time, someone stripped naked, put on a coat inside out, and ran three circles around the flock growling, so that wolves would not touch the sheep in summer.

Lambs' ear tips were cut before going to the woods to make sure that they would still be there in the autumn.

It was generally believed that a cattle spirit, who ensures the prosperity of cattle, lives in the barn. There are many stories about barn spirits, who also included snakes – these were called *piilu*. Cattle protector Metsik (Wild) was also known in Saaremaa. It was a straw figure that was taken to the border between two villages on either Shrove Tuesday (*vastlapäev*) or Ash Wednesday (*tuhkapäev*). Metsik was supposed to protect the livestock of both villages from all kinds of mishaps and wild animals. It was believed that the cattle farmer was responsible for maintaining the good fortune of the cattle – where animals were mistreated, the cattle spirit disappeared. Where the cattle spirit had left, cattle prosperity disappeared and the cattle experienced several failures.

Given that witchcraft, too, was a hot topic in the old days, there are many stories of a farmer sending a wolf to another's cattle or performing other evil deeds; cattle has also been saved by means of witchcraft. Incantations were used to bring protection, health and fertility to livestock. During the time of all souls (*hingedeae*g or *jaguaeg*) in November, food for wolves has been put in the forest on rocks and stumps. Dead calves and lambs have also been taken to the forest, as it was believed that it would prevent the wolves from touching the cattle. Blood offerings were also meant to bring better fortune. The sacrificial animal was a particular species that was selected by drawing lots or due to certain characteristics. The most common sacrificial animal was a sheep.

If the sacrificial lamb fell asleep during the offering, things were believed to go well; if it broke loose, things were looking bad.

Elderly herdsmen were often considered sorcerers-shepherds. In Nigula parish, for example, there was an old herdsman who healed a biting wound. In Aravete, people talk about Kõntkäpp (Stump Paw), whose animals kept still on their own. Herdsmen are also known to have bargained with spirits. Sticks with great protective power were redeemed with blood. During Lent, shepherds went to the woods every Thursday night to hire the Devil as their herdsman. They did this on Holy Thursday, in particular, to ask the Devil to help them with herding in summer.

There are many beliefs and rituals concerning the washing and shearing of sheep. Women and children went to wash the sheep together. Once they arrived at the river, finer clothes were taken off and the sheep were washed, after which the younger women and girls started to splash each other with water. Children were caught and their faces were washed as well, so that sheep would have white lambs in winter. Once everybody was wet, they started eating. Food was shared and exchanged, but the first bite was given to the shepherd, to make sure that the sheep bred well. Young girls were also soaked with water when they arrived from their first sheep shearing. Sheep were sheared during the new moon in spring and during the waning moon when winter was approaching – that guaranteed soft wool, both the one that was being sheared and the one that was beginning to grow.

Sheep's behaviour was also used for predicting weather. If they tended to buck or otherwise skip around, bad weather was expected. If the sheep's wool was wet in the warm season, heavy and long rains were expected.

If sheep are lying on their bellies in bushes, rain will come in a few days.

If sheep are sweating in warm weather so that their wool is wet, it is said to mean that soon there will be great rain, which will fall for a long time.

If a black ram stands and holds his tail straight against the wind, rain will come, but if a white ram stands like that, it will be dry.

Everyone knows that if lambs jump and bounce on a summer's eve, the next day will be rainy.

In some parts of Estonia, St. Hanna's Day – 26 July – is the day connected with sheep; at the same time there are many other days in the folk calendar when people performed various rituals for the prosperity of sheep. Sheep slaughter and eating mutton is also connected to specific holidays: St. Hanna's Day 26.07, St. Olaf's Day 29.07, St. Lawrence's Day 10.08, St. Bartholomew's Day 24.08 and Michaelmas 29.09. An offering of sheep is also a part of the time of all souls and a part of the ending ritual of the harvest feast. Although Estonians have not performed public sacrifices or offering rituals during the past two centuries, farms have still slaughtered a sheep of their own according to tradition. An offering of sheep was part of the important economic events of summer, such as the harvest feast and the end of summertime. It also belonged together with St. Hanna's Day, which is related to the prosperity of sheep, and with holidays connected to thunder: St. Lawrence's Day, St. Bartholomew's Day and St. Olaf's Day.

Candlemas Day – 2 February – is known in the folk calendar as porridge day or the last Christmas day. Candlemas is one of the most important holidays of midwinter. A ritual for protecting sheep herds from wolves is known from Candlemas. It was said on Candlemas that women “sew” the wolves’ eyes shut, so that they could not come for the herd in summer. Therefore, women had to sew something during Candlemas, whether or not it was necessary. They just picked up a sewing project and started to sew the wolves’ eyes shut.

St. George's Day – 23 April – marked the beginning of spring and spring work in the Estonian folk calendar. In Estonia, the day is also known as the day of letting the cattle into the open, or *karjalaskepäev*. In its diversity, it was one of the most important holidays of the year even in the folk calendar of the early 20th century. St. George’s Day was made special by magical traditions, which ensured health and the development of the farm and repelled dark forces, accidents, wild animals etc. Wild animals were driven away by bonfires and several magical traditions, such as tying together fence poles or other objects – the jaws of wild animals would therefore be shut. In some places, shepherds lit juniper bushes on fire, so that wolves’ eyes would burn and they would not see the herd. The herding rod was brought home and put into the eaves, where it remained for the entire summer – such an action ensured good fortune for the herd. Cutting or breaking a herding rod or other twigs was forbidden on that day, because the breaking was thought to carry over to the animals. Therefore the twig was collected a day or two before. The first herding rod was overall a magical object, which had to be treated carefully; sheep could not be hit with it without purpose etc. Types of magical witchcraft include turning the tracks of the herd in early morning toward home and the tracks of wolves toward the forest. With that magical act, both parties were forced to move in those directions. An iron item was placed under the barn door, so that animals’ feet and they themselves would stay healthy and protected from predators. In some parts, an egg was put under the door or on the herding trail, or sometimes even thrown over the herd. The breaking of this egg meant damage for the herd and therefore it was better to slaughter such an animal early on. Walking around the herd, or “herd containing”, was important to ensure that the herd would stay together in summer.

On St. George’s Day, when children went to the forest with the herd, no twigs could be broken, so that the feet of the sheep would not get broken and that wolves would not go for the herd at the sound of cracking.

Where you find the tracks of wolves on St. George’s Day, turn those tracks around with all the dirt and earth, then the wolf will get lost and not know to come for the herd.

Before St. George's Day the shepherd is not allowed to make fire in the forest, otherwise a wolf will come.

On St. George's Day, a fire was lit before the evening, so that the wolf's eyes would burn. Those we were eager to light. Collect the firewood and go to a hilltop.

St. Hanna's Day – 26 July. The name of this holiday is connected to St. Hanna, mother of Virgin Mary, and the day is held to be a holiday of sheep. From the 17th century onwards, there are notes about St. Hanna's Day sheep offerings and feasts from Karksi, Halliste and Rõngu. According to 17th century customs, wax and wax figures were brought as offerings to the holy site. The holiday that was widely known even in the 19th century, became a holiday only important for the Seto people by the 20th century. A sheep was slaughtered there on St. Hanna's Day and the offerings brought to Annekivi (Hanna Stone) near Meeksi, for example. The head and legs of the sheep were blessed by a priest and some of the offering was left to him, while some was distributed to the poor. On St. Hanna's Day those carrying that name lit up a candle in the church. Whisks were brought from the forest, so that the sheep would thrive. St. Hanna was a protector of sheep and she is therefore turned to in matters of herd protection and in offering prayers and incantations, so that she would protect the herd and sheep from danger:

*Pure, holy Hanna!
Protect and hide,
breed and provide,
lull the young ones,
dress the old ones!
Keep watch behind the tree and bush,
behind stone and stub!
Tend the flock,
be a shepherd!
Pure Hanna,
watch over the shepherd!
Protect the sheep over summer
against woodland evil,
hide the flock from wrath,
protect the home from loss of flock!*

St. Olaf's Day – 29 July – the day of death of King Olaf II Haraldsson of Norway is celebrated mainly in Western Estonia and on the islands, where it was a sheep holiday, similar to St. Hanna's Day of the Setos. A sheep (calf or some other animal) was slaughtered to ensure good fortune for the herd and to fend off illnesses and the evil eye. It is also a harvest holiday in those parts. Like St. James's Day, St. Olaf's Day marks the introduction of new

food (grain or potato) and the beginning of harvest. Magical customs were also connected to this day – a stalk of grain was cut and held for winter. Nowadays St. Olaf's Day is magnificently celebrated on Vormsi island, where a church dedicated to St. Olaf is located.

St. Lawrence's Day – 10 August – this holiday, once known throughout Estonia, was remembered only in Western and Southern Estonia at the beginning of the 20th century. The day itself is dedicated to the fire patron St. Lawrence. Many of the traditions for that day are connected with making fire and the taboos related to it. In the 17th century, plentiful offerings were made at home or near St. Lawrence's chapels in several parts of Estonia. In Southern Estonia, this was the day when bucks were slaughtered; sowing rye began after St. Lawrence's Day.

St. Bartholomew's Day – 24 August – was the beginning of autumn, a harvest and sowing feast, at the beginning of the 18th century the day of the Mother of Sow or the Mother of Grass. For the past three centuries, at least, it has also been a day for sheep shearing and the last day for slaughtering bucks in Western Estonia and on the islands.

Michaelmas – 29 September – was a time of celebration and meeting people, because this was the day that the herding season ended and so did the contracts of shepherds: the shepherd was able to go to school. That day was like a holiday for shepherds. Even so, it was not universally determined that the shepherds were free from herding then, and farmers often tried to keep them until the first snowfall. Thus, attempts were made to conjure up snow on Michaelmas. If the shepherd was not otherwise set free, in Southern Estonia the shepherd dragged a white buck counter-clockwise around a stone – then snow would come and the shepherd would be free.

Nowadays, when Michaelmas traditions are lost and its celebration a thing of the past, we know it from the proverb “every buck has its Michaelmas” (*“igal oinal oma mihkclipäev”*), which is often recited when somebody is hit with a major misfortune, punishment or work. Even at the beginning of the 20th century, the contents of the saying were rather specific, because a sheep was slaughtered for Michaelmas and beer was made. In the 19th century, beer was thrown on the ground and foam from boiling meat was thrown on walls as offerings. Such offerings were supposed to bring good fortune for the herd in the following year.

In case of a major holiday, in addition to the main food – that is, mutton dishes (all kinds of food made from mutton and sheep blood: roast lamb, lamb soup, pudding) – fresh bread,

cakes etc. were served. The time of all souls, when forefathers were expected home, was about to begin. Turnips and yellow turnips were cooked. Beer was drunk.

On the eve of Michaelmas, all animals should be at home; who is left in the forest, is killed by a wolf.

A sheep was slaughtered for Michaelmas. It was a certain custom in the olden days; all outside work was done by that time and delicious food was then made to celebrate the end of work. The buck meant for Michaelmas was decided on beforehand. Sheep were also slaughtered for feasts, if necessary, such as weddings, christenings and funerals.

St. Catherine's Day – 25 November – is an old Estonian holiday with many customs ensuring good fortune for the herd. By the end of the 16th century, St. Catherine's Day had come to mark the end of outdoor work for women, while indoor spinning and handicraft commenced; that was the role of St. Catherine's day for many centuries. In 17th-century manuscripts, St. Catherine's Day is referred to as a day for honouring and serving St. Catherine, a patron of sheep. So the two customs became one and the day of autumn work became St. Catherine's Day. In Northern Tartu County, St. Catherine's Day was known as bleating day, *määgimise päev*, even in the early 20th century, because people went to bleat in other families' homes in the morning or during daytime. The bleaters were not masked – they were women and children in their regular clothes; adults alone or in pairs, children as a group. Those who came were offered goat porridge and raw peas, but also oats, turnips, hemp seeds, in the 20th century, first of all apples and sweets. Based on the gender, number and colour of clothing of the bleaters, it was determined whether goat or ewe lambs, twins, black, coloured or white sheep were to come. The lady of the house usually invited the bleaters to the barn to make sheep noises for the prosperity of the sheep. On St. Catherine's Day, everything connected with wool was banned. Shearing sheep was forbidden on St. Catherine's Day. In Southern Estonia, it was forbidden for the time between St. Martin's Day and St. Catherine's Day, because otherwise “a beggar (*sant*) would take the wool away”. In the 17th century, people ate chicken in sheep barns as offering food and imitated animals by jumping around in the barn. St. Catherine's Day songs focus on ensuring good fortune for the herd and things needed by women for their handicraft are asked as gifts.

Music

Sheep are often mentioned in runic songs, although less than cows and horses. Usually, the connection between sheep and wool is mentioned in runic songs; if wool is not mentioned,

then herding sheep and shepherds are the topic. Wool and work connected to it is also often talked about without mentioning sheep. Sometimes the wool of other animals, such as wolves, is mentioned. Many verses indicate that sheep were important for natural economy: songs about a mother's care always include a verse in which a sheep is given to the healer as compensation; St. Martin's and St. Catherine's beggars (*mardisandid* and *kadrisandid*) sing that they wish sheep to fill the barn (wool is especially important in St. Catherine's Day traditions). It is often said that a good sheep has kind wool.

In addition to songs where sheep are mentioned, there is shepherds' music. Shepherds' music is divided into vocal and instrumental music: shepherds' songs and instrumental tunes. Shepherds' songs include calls and shepherd's songs in a narrower sense. In instrumental music, various signals can be found. Shepherds' songs bring us to the everyday life of shepherds – to their duties, joys and sorrows. A child who has been assigned to herd another family's sheep, often an orphan, has to look after the sheep from early in the morning until late in the evening, far from the farm, whatever the weather. There are many songs, in particular, about the difficult life of a shepherd – there was little food and sleep. Weather incantations could also be part of the shepherd's repertoire. Incantations mirror an ancient belief in the magical powers of words, which are able to influence natural objects and people's actions.

Shepherds' songs represent a peculiar and very specific kind of song in the Estonian archaic work and customary song tradition. It is distinctive as a type by both lyrics and musical arrangement. There are calls, hoots and songs. The existence of these three types was functionally justified when herding sheep. As a result, the more advanced form failed to replace the more primitive one, but they rather complemented each other. The primitive form has even outlasted the lifecycle of songs. Thus, calls can even now be encountered, while shepherds' songs are not known in places other than Setomaa. Throughout the times, shepherds' songs have come to be sung mainly by children and are used to entertain children.

Shepherds' songs are not uniformly spread throughout Estonia, and their quality also varies. Three different areas of shepherds' songs can be distinguished in Estonia: Kuusalu, Setomaa and other parts of Southern Estonia, where Mulgimaa is especially notable. Kuusalu is the only area with a dense occurrence of shepherds' songs in Northern Estonia. When herding, many songs were sung, mostly lyrical in style. The "*karjatoon*" ("shepherd's tone") of Kuusalu is actually a general form of lyric and lyro-epic songs, of which similar songs can be

found in other parts of Northern Estonia. There is no equivalent to the singing style of a Seto shepherd in other Seto songs or in other parts of Estonia.

The form of herding in Southern Estonia has somewhat contributed to the especially diverse forms of shepherd's song. Farm-based herding occurred even during feudalism, especially in hill country. Shepherds who herded close to each other communicated with each other via calls and hoots. The shepherds' songs there mostly used recitative tunes with called-out choruses. Mulgimaa is notable for the especially large amount of hoots.

The equipment of village shepherds included several long wooden trumpets (*pasun, luik, piibar*). There were no holes to adjust sound, so it was only possible to make natural sounds, mostly signals, with them. They were typically used to bring the herd together. Another instrument that shepherds had was a goat horn. Some holes were also cut into it, so tunes could also be played.

Calls – different calls have been used to call sheep.

In Northern Estonia: Uti-uti-uti-uti bää, uti-uti-uti uti bää! Udu-udu-udu! Ut, ut, ut, utu! Uu, ut, ut, ut, utu!

In Mulgimaa: Til-la, til-la, til-la, til-la! Uti, uti, ute, ute, ute!

In Võru and Tartu County: uti-uti-uti-ute-ute-ute-utu-utu-utu!

In Kihelkonna:

Tirr – tir – väikene tall-e

Ütte pisins tir-tal-tir

Tallest pisim

Tir-tir, tirru-tirru

In Helme: Tilla – a pet name for a lamb

In Jaani: Vut vutt; Tsiri-tsiri-tsiri; Basa-basa-basa

In Karksi: Utt! Utt! Ute-ute! Utu-utu; uti-uti! Tilla, dilla

Leisure time of shepherds. In spring, the herd went to the forest without a shepherd until May, because the grain was not yet sown. When herding, children used to play games to entertain themselves. Often, there were many children herding, because common pastures were used or the borders of pastures overlapped. The most common shepherd games were: the

game of sheep and wolves; pull-stick; “*küla lööma*”; *katskimäng*; *krapatsimäng*; card games, *liisuviskamine*, *kaelkoogu vedamine*. For the game “*Küla lööma*”, an open area was chosen, where a so-called master hole was selected, as was a hole for every village. Everybody held a club in their hole and the beater had to get the egg of the village in the master hole, while others tried to stop him with clubs cut from bushes. Role playing games were also common – for example weddings or the imitation of various animals. A common pastime was swinging birches – two birches that grew near each other were tied together and a swing was made out of it. There were also games resembling blind man’s buff, where one player’s eyes were covered; walking on crutches; making animals from cones or twigs. Instruments were also made and played. Instruments were made from willow, alder or straws. Shepherd’s horns were made of alder – alder logs were cut in half, hollowed out, put together and tied up with twigs. Girls made flower wreaths to pass time. Shepherds often constructed a language so that other children would not understand them.

Today

Today, some customs of St. George’s Day are in rare cases performed when the sheep herd is brought to pastures in spring. Still, the day when sheep are sent to farther pastures is important for sheep owners. Helpers are summoned to help lead the sheep and they are offered drink and food afterwards. It is also an old custom for sheep owners to offer bread to sheep on Christmas Eve.

St. Catherine’s Day is also a holiday that is connected with sheep and celebrated even today. Children act as *kadrisandid*, also known as *kadrit jooksmas*, the day before. It is commonly believed that *kadrisandid* need to be in white or light-coloured clothes. Often, boys also act as *kadrisandid*. The connection with sheep and wool is usually not made.

Several proverbs that are related to sheep and come from oral tradition are used nowadays, although usually their connection with old customs is not realised. For example, if something goes bad for somebody, it is said that *igal oinal oma mihklipäev* (each buck has its Michaelmas). If many people have to fit in a small room, it is said that *häid lambaid mahub palju ühte lauta* (a single barn accommodates many good sheep). If somebody is different from others, he is often called a black sheep. The expression *palju kisa vähe villa* (lots of noise, not much wool) is also used when somebody talks about his work more than he actually does it or more than there are results to be shown for it. If a result that satisfies both

parties is achieved in a debate, then even nowadays it is said that *hundid söönud, lambad terved* (the wolves have eaten, but the sheep are well).

Old shepherds' songs are sung along with other folk songs by folk groups at concerts and music nights. Shepherds' songs have also been used by several ethno-rock groups to make folklore-based contemporary music.

The craft of making willow whistles, leisure instruments for shepherds, is known even nowadays. The craft has usually been taught by fathers and grandfathers to the next generations. Even these days, the whistles are made as toys for children and grandchildren.

From older games, *lambamäng* (sheep game) is known today: one side includes players who play the role of sheep and the other side a player who plays a farmer's wife, and between them stand one or several players who play the role of wolves. The farmer's wife calls the sheep home and they try to reach her, while the wolves try to catch them. Those caught by a wolf have to leave the game. This game is played in kindergartens and elementary schools at various events, for example.

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