



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

**Theme 5: Pastoral life in art**

**Report of Hungary**

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## 1. Introduction

Beyond the concrete and realistic depiction a symbolic value is attached to the lamb too, therefore lamb's depictions spread fast. The sheep plays an important role in different religions in Europe and in the whole world. The project's expansion in this direction, the presentation of research in this field and of its results may contribute to the dialogue and reconciliation between religions, since the sheep/lamb are important parts of the Christian, Jewish and Islamic cultures too.

Carving sheep bones and depicting animals as art-works and decorating everyday objects with them was a general practice already in ancient times. Moreover, further to its concrete and realistic depiction, the lamb has become a symbol, therefore its depictions spread fast.

Due to the vast quantity of available material and the limits of size of my essay, my work is restricted to the presentation of the main types of depiction, where the lamb or the shepherd is painted on canvas, carved in stone or shaped in clay. The core of my study focuses on the works of fine arts; however, it seems to be necessary to cast a glance at popular works of shepherds' art too, since it has produced many excellent objects. Further, some relics made by guilds should be presented, as well as folklore and popular products and the visual world of contemporary mass culture deserve to be mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Depictions of Lamb and shepherd in the Christian iconography

No doubt, we identify the most important area of depictions in the Christian iconography with the figures of both, the lamb and the shepherd: they appear in both a concrete, realistic way, playing a completing role, as well as in an allegoric, symbolic form with deeper meaning. For millenniums the Christian idea offered a relatively stable and permanent base of comparison showing a homogenous and general use of images in thought content as well as in symbolic and metaphoric expression. In the arts representing religious ideas, Jesus, the saints and Biblical scenes have been depicted according to strict regulations and respecting the rules of iconography in the arts, often considering the text of the Old and New Testament and the comments on them.<sup>2</sup> The animal (the lamb or the ram) appear in different ways: it can be in the centre of an image, on itself, or it may be an important symbol of a Biblical scene, or be a participant in the scene, but sheep were pictured even without any symbolic value in some Christian iconographic art-works.

The lamb (Greek. *amnos*, Latin *agnus*) is the symbol of innocence, of submissiveness, of an attitude to endure defencelessness with resignation. The lamb is the most important sacrificial animal in the Exodus (*Exodus 12,1-20*). It is the symbol of kindness in Hosea (*4,16*), in Jeremiah "the gentle lamb led to the slaughter" (*11,19*), it stands for patience in Isaiah (*53,7*), and for joy in the Psalms and in the Book of Wisdom (*113,4*).<sup>3</sup>

In the Jewish practice before Christianity the lamb was not only known as a symbol but rather as a real sacrificial animal. It is mentioned first in the Old Testament

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<sup>1</sup> My thanks to the architects and art historian colleagues László Bartosiewicz, Anikó Bózsa, Árpád Mikó, Gábor Szöllősy, György Szűcs and Ferenc Zsákovics for their valuable help and good advices during my research of this subject.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Verebélyi 1984. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Vanyó 1988. 202-208. and Magyar Katolikus Lexikon (Hungarian Catholic Lexikon, MKL) „lamb“ <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/B/B%C3%A1r%C3%A1ny.html>

(Genesis 4,1-4) as the sacrifice of Abel. His, the first shepherd's offering was appealing to God. By the time of the New Testament the hostility between nomadic shepherds and settled peasants lost importance and the divergence between Cain and Abel got an ethicoreligious accent. Abel has become the prototype of Christian martyrs (*Matthew 23,35; Luk 11,50*) and a pre-figuration of Christ (*Hebrews 12,24*)<sup>4</sup>. His sacrifice and death were frequent subjects of depictions; Cain and Abel were painted on Hungary's oldest medieval fresco on the crypt's vault of the 12<sup>th</sup> century church in Feldebrő. Abel's body is half destroyed, only the lower part of his face can be seen. He wears a blue cloak and red undergarment. In his right hand – covered by a cloth, as it was the habit in the Middle-Ages – is a lamb.<sup>5</sup>

A ram as well as sheep are often depicted in presentations of the sacrifice by Abraham<sup>6</sup> and of other scenes of his life. The ram - whose horns are caught in a bush - to be sacrificed by Abraham instead of his son, Isaac is the pre-figuration of Christ who died on the cross wearing a crown of thorns on his head (*Genesis 22,13*)<sup>7</sup> following the interpretation of St August. Abraham's attributes in cathedral sculptures are the child Isaac, the sacrificial knife and the ram.<sup>8</sup>

The ram's presentation in paintings or sculptures cannot be considered as usual. The focus is on Isaac, on Abraham and on the angel who stops Abraham's hand: Károly Ferenczy's famous painting depicts only these three figures. József Molnár however painted sheep as well on his picture with the title *Abraham's Departure*.<sup>9</sup>

The New Testament refers to those Christians as lambs, who know Jesus' voice (*John 10*). In the Revelation the Lamb acts already on its own: sitting on a throne (*22,1*), it opens the book (*6,1; 8,1*), leads the flock as its shepherd (*7,14*) and invites to a wedding. Its iconography is mainly based on the visions in the Revelation: thus it was depicted as sitting on a throne, standing on the mountain in the Garden of Eden surrounded by the aureole of the Cross or with the monogram of Christ; further with the rivers of Eden springing under his feet, as the Lord of the new world (with stars in the background referring to the new Creation).<sup>10</sup>

The Lamb as *symbol of Christ* cannot be identified with the sheep represented in other pictures. The Lamb is always the symbol of Christ the Victorious; therefore it is depicted with horns, symbol of strength and power. Its head is usually turned back, probably to give the impression that the Lamb looks back to his followers.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Based on the article 'Abel' in MKL. <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/A/%C3%81bel.html>

<sup>5</sup> Henszlmann 1876. fig. 136-137. and 251

<sup>6</sup> To the presentation of the subject from the point of view of art history, see Dombrovsky 2008. 4-11.

<sup>7</sup> cf. MKL about ram and Isaac <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/K/Ram.html>

<http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/I/Izs%C3%A1k.html>

<sup>8</sup> Abraham's statues are completed with above mentioned attributes in some cathedrals in France (Chartres, Reims, Amiens, Senlis) and in the bell-tower of the Florence cathedral (Donatello and Nanni di Banco, 1421). cf. MKL Abraham

<http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/A/%C3%81brah%C3%A1m.html>

<sup>9</sup> József Molnár: Abraham's Departure. 1850. Oil, canvas. 112 x 130 cm. in the Hungarian National Gallery

<sup>10</sup> MKL see Lamb <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/B/B%C3%A1r%C3%A1ny.html>

<sup>11</sup> Based on the article 'lamb' in MKL <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/B/B%C3%A1r%C3%A1ny.html>

## 2.1. The Lamb of God

Focusing on Christ's life, we have to treat first the most popular and well-known portrayal, the *Lamb of God* (in Latin: *Agnus Dei*). This name of our Lord Jesus refers to the sacrifice on the Cross. St. John the Baptist calls Jesus by this name, predicting his fate that he should shed blood for the salvation of his believers like his pre-figuration, the Easter Lamb (*John 1,29*).<sup>12</sup>

The Lamb as Messiah was depicted already in the Early Christian art.<sup>13</sup> By the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the symbol absorbed the spirit of Apocalypse: the Lamb has become the symbol of Christ as he appears in the heavenly glory, having defeated his enemies, in fact the *Maiestas Domini*. The independent framework of this symbol, being separated from the environment made it suitable to be inserted anywhere in unchanged form.<sup>14</sup>

The composition is simple: the Lamb with aureole, drawn from the side, lifts one leg and holds a cross or a victory banner decorated with the Cross. The representation has become very popular among the Reformed and its importance was definitely increased by the fact that the puritanism of Luther's followers had a limitative effect standing against the picture cult in the Baroque era.<sup>15</sup> From the 16<sup>th</sup> century on *Agnus Dei* has its place also in the arms of the Reformed Church.

The main entrances of medieval churches show the richest figural decorations among external ornaments. This part of the church has to prepare the visitor to enter God's house. Due to its meaning, the Lamb of God is predestined to be placed in the representative decoration of Roman church gates fulfilling a missionary function.<sup>16</sup> Beside the numerous examples abroad, numbers of Hungarian ones can be enumerated; however their dating is almost impossible due to their simpler forms.

We know the earliest *Agnus Dei* tympanums in Szentmihályfa and Szeged, both from the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>17</sup> The southern gate of the abbey-church in Ják shows a victorious Lamb with Cross in a three lobbed arch. Hidden in rich foliage a pair of dragons biting in their wings fills the span.<sup>18</sup> The tympanums above the southern gate of the church in Ják served as a popular pattern for the local art: the spans of the graveyard chapel of Ják, of the church in Csempezkopács and the relief in Nagysitke are more or less exact copies.<sup>19</sup> A special Hungarian provincial variety of the Lamb of God tympanum developed in the time before the Mongolian invasion: a lion appears in the place of the lamb on the relief of the walled up span in the parish church in Zalaháshágy. This depiction is not unique: the tympanum of the walled up Romanesque gate of the church of Domonkosfa in Vas-county is also decorated by an animal with tasselled tail, thus by a lion.<sup>20</sup> We can thus sum up as follows: the tympanum with the Lamb of God emerges in Hungary at the very beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century as a decoration on small churches in the countryside. The locations of the motif confirm that this type was implemented only in the local practice and cannot be

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<sup>12</sup> MKL see Lamb <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/I/Isten%20B%C3%A1r%C3%A1nya.html>

<sup>13</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> century, frescoes of the catacomb Domitilla. Vanyó 1988. fig. 26

<sup>14</sup> Bogyay 1940-41. 100.

<sup>15</sup> Verebélyi 1984. 13.

<sup>16</sup> Bogyay 1940-41. 94, 102.

<sup>17</sup> Bogyay 1940-41. 112.

<sup>18</sup> Bogyay 1940-41. 112.

<sup>19</sup> Henszlmann 1876. 143. and fig. 265; Bogyay 1940-41. 112-13.

<sup>20</sup> Bogyay 1940-41. 113. Explanation of the phenomenon: 117-119.

The lamb-lion metamorphose can be seen in a silver cup from Székesfehérvár from the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century: a lamb holding a sceptre with a Cross is carved in the inside. The lamb has a heraldic character and is deformed into the shape of a lion. Mikó-Takács 1994. 213., II-39.

traced back to the influence of any known Hungarian art centre. The victorious lamb can be seen also on the headstone of the Giselle chapel in Veszprém, where its left foreleg holds a banner with Cross.<sup>21</sup>

Agnus Dei is depicted on very different surfaces beside stone tympanums. The collection of the Museum of Applied Arts has a tablecloth for the Communion table from the Protestant church in Oltszem, dating from 1592. In the middle of the cloth in natural colour, the octagonal medallion shows the Holy Lamb with an inscription around it: „E[CCE] AGNUS DEI QUI TOLIS P[E]C [CATA] M[UN]D[I]“.<sup>22</sup> In the same collection another communion cloth from Besztercebánya made in 1683 shows Christ's symbol in the middle of a crown of leaves, decorated with two four-petalled flowers.<sup>23</sup>

Beside the religion even other media might have contributed to the popularization of the image of Agnus Dei. The Lamb of God appears in pattern books in the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century as one of the rare figural depictions. A cloth from a Spanish church shows almost the same lamb as the tablecloth made in 1646 for the communion table of the church of Sajókaza or the filet-lace works embroidered by Orphan Kata Bethlen in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as concluded by Kincső Verebélyi.<sup>24</sup>

It is necessary to discuss here those coats of arms, which bear Agnus Dei as heraldic figure. After an overview of the heraldic depictions of the lamb we conclude that it is quite a rare heraldic figure. Even Bárczay does not tell much about it: „Lamb (agnus, agneau, Lamm), easy to recognise because it is presented in a naturalistic way. The lamb shown with a cross is called Easter Lamb (agnus dei, agneau pascal, Osterlamm).“<sup>25</sup> He mentions here one example, the coat of arms of Szalaházy, where a lamb, stepping forward with its right foreleg is placed in the lower part of the triangular shield, divided by fess.<sup>26</sup>

The lamb's picture in coats of arms is limited in fact to two types: one is the mentioned Agnus Dei, the other one is a more or less realistic depiction of a lamb.<sup>27</sup>

Let us study first the depictions of Agnus Dei in the coats of arms of families. We find beautiful examples among the letters patent of nobility with coats of arms in the National Archives of Hungary. A beautifully blazoned work in Gothic style presents the coat of arms of the family Bachvai Dempse, given by king Sigmund to Márton Bachvai Dempse to reward his services in Germany and in Basle. The coat of arms was donated to him and through him to his father, Balázs and his brother, Gergely on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1434. The diploma does not contain the blazonry.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Henszlmann 1876. 144. fig. 268

<sup>22</sup> Mikó-Verő 2008. 185. VI-22.

<sup>23</sup> The letters „I.C.“ are written above the crown, the letters „MF“ below the lamb and the year of the donation „1683“ is written under the crown. Mikó-Verő 2008. 163-164. V-12.

<sup>24</sup> Verebélyi 1984. 13.

<sup>25</sup> Bárczay 1897. 135.

<sup>26</sup> Bárczay 1897. fig. 209

<sup>27</sup> The coats of arms of Újfalusy (György, 26 April 1655, Pozsony), Csongrádi (Kristóf from Gyulaféhevár 21 November 1669, Ebesfalva), Petes (Péter, 20 August 1681, Sopron), Benedek (Mihály, 19 January 1699, Vienna), Freind (Henrik, 30 November 1721, Vienna), Heiss (8 March 1726, Vienna) and Polimberger (József, 26 July 1792, Vienna) include the Lamb. See Nyulásziné 1993. Depictions of coats of arms no. 678., 793., 861., 937., 1033., 1050. and 1051.

<sup>28</sup> Blazonry: in the blue field of the shield, on a round base, inclined to the left, in a red base stands a realistic lamb, growing out from two rows of blue clouds, turning to the heraldic left, having a red cross on its head, holding a ribbon of parchment in its forelegs with the wording: „Ecce Agnus Dei“. On the helm turning to left, the blue and silver mantling is plaited. The crest repeats the picture of the shield, growing out of one row of clouds. Nyulásziné 1999. 42.

Nyulásziné points out that the shaping of the mantling is faulty from heraldic point of view and considering the strict requirements, the realistic depiction of the lamb is also criticisable. “But we have to remark that the realistic depiction of the lamb, being the symbol of submissiveness to the Christian religion, as well as of human purity and honesty can disregard the rule of stylization for a better recognition, similar to the rare heraldic motif of the magpie in the coat of arms of the family Nagymihályi or the rooster in the coat of arms of the family Holy.”<sup>29</sup> No stylized form of depiction has evolved for rare heraldic figures unlike to regular heraldic animals (lion, griffin, eagle, pelican, crane, etc.).<sup>30</sup>

Another example is the beautifully blazoned coat of arms on a letter patent of nobility written in Vienna on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 1574, belonging to the family Nemesapáthi Zalay, otherwise called Tutor. The lamb turning to right stands on green soil in the red field in the lower part of the triangular quarter. The lamb holds in its raised foreleg a golden cross, and each of both upper corners has a lily.<sup>31</sup>

Among the coats of arms described by Károly Tagányi, the royal free boroughs Debrecen, Korpona and Kostajnica and the market towns of Bánffyhunyad, Bodrogeresztúr, Dernis, Újlak and Királydaróc have Agnus Dei as heraldic figure.<sup>32</sup> Agnus Dei figures in the chief of the arms of Vizsoly and also in the arms of the town of Nagyrosvány.

Beside the coats of arms, a coin of king Béla IV (1235-1270) has to be mentioned: an Agnus Dei is depicted on the obverse with the circular inscription „+REX · BELA · QVARTVS“ in a double circle.<sup>33</sup>

## 2.2. The Good Shepherd and the Good Shepherdess

The metaphoric depiction of Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd.<sup>34</sup> His forerunners in the Old Testament are Moses, David and the true prophets; furthermore, Jehovah himself cares for his people as a good shepherd.<sup>35</sup> Following Jesus the Good Shepherd „lays down his life for the sheep” and gives his life’s blood for them; he is the Good Shepherd of the extreme times.<sup>36</sup> The role of the Good Shepherd was taken over by Peter and the twelve apostles and the function was handed over to the bishops. That is why the bishop’s crook serves as their emblem. The lamb depicted together with the Good Shepherd may have different meanings: it can stand for the penitent, for the recovered lamb and for the saved soul.

The Good Shepherd carrying the recovered lamb on his shoulder is one of the most important Christ symbols in the Early Christian art. This motif borrowed from the shepherd’s life serves as a symbol of the Garden of Eden too; the lambs grazing next to their shepherd evoke the souls who find peace next to Christ after their dead.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Nyulásziné 1999. 142.

<sup>30</sup> Nyulásziné 1999. note 56

<sup>31</sup> A red pelican is turning to the right in its green nest while feeding its three young with its own blood depicted in the upper, blue part of the shield. The helm on the shield has an open torse turned to right; the crest repeats the picture of the pelican with its young but without nest. The mantling is blue-gold and red-silver. Nyulásziné 1999. 88.

<sup>32</sup> Tagányi 1880. I. 31, I.36, II. 2, II.3 (stamp), II. 6 (stamp), II.13, II.15.

<sup>33</sup> Réthy 1898. 229., Huszár 1979. 63. 294., and Domanovszky 1940. 235.

<sup>34</sup> After *Luk (15,3) and John (10,1-11)*

<sup>35</sup> cf. *Psalms 23; Jer 23,1-4; Ez 34; Zak 11,4-17*

and MKL the Good Shepherd <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/J/J%C3%B3%20P%C3%A1stor.html>

<sup>36</sup> cf. *John 10. f. and. Rev. 2,27; 7,17; 12,5; 19,15* and the article „Good shepherd“ in the MKL <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/J/J%C3%B3%20P%C3%A1stor.html>

<sup>37</sup> The Good Shepherd has been depicted in this sense on the sarcophagi and in the tombs (Rome, catacomb of Domitilla, beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; Ravenna, mausoleum of Galla Placidia, 450)

The Good Shepherd is a frequent motif to be found in baptisteries, it decorates fonts, being a symbol of Christ who welcomes in his Church the child to be baptised. The first example of the motif is identified in Dura-Europos. The motif is often depicted on confessionals, where it stands for Christ remitting sins - He who is looking for the lost lamb, recovering and carrying it home - or on pulpits as symbol of Christ, the teacher, holding a roll in his hand. A very popular subject of devotional pictures in the late Middle Ages (*Luk 15,4-6*): the Good Shepherd happily carries on his shoulders the recovered lamb and saves him from peril.<sup>38</sup> We see this figure on the altar of Good Shepherd in the St. Jacob church in Lőcse, commissioned by the parish priest of Lőcse, István Györfy in 1696.<sup>39</sup>

Excellent sculptures of the Good Shepherd have been made up to the present. A beautiful example is the bronze sculpture of Jenő Kerényi, a master of small plastic art and of sculptures in public places. He finished his Good Shepherd (Peace) in 1974, the year before his death.<sup>40</sup> The work of István Madarassy merits mention as well. He exhibited his sculpture of the Good Shepherd (sculpture in red copper) in the IV. Contemporary Christian iconographic biennale in 2008. The subject of the exhibition was Christ's parables.<sup>41</sup>

The archaic type of the Christ iconography is Jesus the Good Shepherd, but the version with Mary – a product of the Rococo taste<sup>42</sup> - is also known: the apologetic spirit of the Tridentium (the Council of Trent) inspires this rare type of the Virgin in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Good Shepherdess takes again into her graces her lost but repentant lamb. The threatening, bloodthirsty wolf also appears often on the pictures – the Virgin keeps him away with her shepherd's crook. There is another extraordinary, very rare variety of the subject: the Virgin Mary – in the guise of a hunter - protects her sheep from the enemy. Similarly to the function of the guardian angel, Mary, the divine shepherdess protects her devotees thrown in the way of temptations. The idea is not new: the patriarch of Constantinople, St. Germanos told in one of his speeches: „Hail Mary, God's fruitful hill! You graze the Lamb of God who took upon himself the world's sins and frailties.“<sup>43</sup>

The spirit of the Franciscan and Piarist orders played an important role in the propagation of the new type of function attributed to Mary – as several relics remained in Hungary witness to it. The copperplate engraving of Joseph Jäger made in Nagyszombat follows faithfully the painting in the summer refectory of the Piarist College of the church Maria Treu in Vienna. (The copperplate is in a private collection). Except for the angels playing above Mary's shepherd hat and for the Eye of Providence, this painting could have served as a model for the painting of the Good Shepherdess in the Mirbach palace. Johann Christoph Winkler's painting (in a private collection) and two pictures of the Procopius collection in the Museum for Applied Arts in Budapest have a different composition: one is a painting on parchment with the inscription „Protectrix Bona“, the other one is a coloured copperplate with the inscription „Pastor Bona“.

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furthermore, MKL Good Shepherd <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/J/J%C3%B3%20P%C3%A1sztor.html> and Vanyó 1988. 178-188.

<sup>38</sup> MKL Good Shepherd <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/J/J%C3%B3%20P%C3%A1sztor.html>

<sup>39</sup> Description of the altar: <http://www.chramsvjakuba.sk/hu.html#odpastiera>

<sup>40</sup> Tóth 2004. 108. 125; cf. Csák 2006.

<sup>41</sup> Gyergyádesz 2008. 25.

<sup>42</sup> I made use of the excellent treatment of the subject by Dr. Zoltán Szilárdfy– Szilárdfy 2003.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted by Szilárdfy 2003. 25.



We see the Good Shepherdess in a gold cartouche on the altarpiece of Nativity in the Piarist church in Kecskemét: she is holding a shepherd's crook in her right hand and hugs the recovered lamb with her left. A sitting Bona Pastrix is depicted on the balustrade of the pulpit in the former Franciscan church in Simontornya. Her most representative depiction is in the St. Nicolas church in Szliácsfürdő: the gilded, painted wooden relief shows the Good Shepherdess in intermediary function, while she is protecting three of her lambs and crushing the head of the beast with her left foot.<sup>44</sup>

### 2.3. The lamb as an attribute of saints

The lamb is often met as attribute of holy persons. It is well known in the company of the prophets Abel and Amos, of St. John the Baptist, of St. Agnes of Rome and Montepulciano, of St. Andrew Corsini, of St. Colette, of St. Joachim, of the pope St. Colman and of St. Wendelin. Hereafter follow some well known depictions from the territory of historic Hungary. The list is of course not complete.

Following the legend, *St. Agnes* was twelve years old when Rome's Governor's son asked her for marriage. Since she made a promise to become Jesus' spouse, she refused the young man who accused her of being a Christian and brought her to his father, the Governor. First he sent her to a place of sin, then she was condemned to the stake and when the fire did not harm her, she was beheaded. After her death she appeared in front of her parents in the company of saints and held a lamb in her arms. Her attribute, the lamb – called agnus in Latin - refers to her name. We read about her legend in the Érdy-codex and in medieval calendars in Hungary.<sup>45</sup>

She is depicted in the fine arts as a young, noble girl with long hair, accompanied by a lamb, together with a sword, a crown and the stake. Her pictures on Gothic panels are still to be seen on the triptychs in the churches in *Alsóbajom* (Boian 1490), *Arnótfalva* (Emaus, Arnutovce 1485), *Bártfa* (two versions 1450, 1460), *Csikcsatószeg* (Četatuia 1530), *Dubrava* (Dubrava Liptovská 1510), *Hervartó* (Hervartov 1460), *Héthárs* (Lipany 1520), *Kassa* (1470), *Késmárk* (1493), *Nagyjeszen* (Horne Jaseno), *Nagylomnic* (Lomnica 1495), *Palocsa* (Plavec 1500), *Szentjakabfalu* (Jakub 1480) and *Sztankahermány* (Hermanovce 1510). The statue of St. Agnes from *Szentjakabfalu* (1490) is kept in the museum of Besztercebánya.<sup>46</sup> Her wooden sculpture is among the *Virgines Captales in Kisszeben* (Sabinov) on the altar of the Annunciation (1510).<sup>47</sup> The panel in the Christian Museum in Esztergom is the work of a master from Cologne made at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The infant Jesus slips a ring on Agnes' finger; the saint can be identified thanks to the lamb at her side. Angels play festive music above their heads. The origin of the painting is open to doubt: it might have been part of the Ipolyi collection in Nagyvárad – at least its catalogue refers to this. The person of the painter is uncertain, earlier he was supposed to be a painter from Utrecht.<sup>48</sup> The picture painted by the circle of Karel Škréta (1610-1674) shows a young woman as St. Agnes, with a lamb in her arms. This painting can be visited in the permanent exhibition of the Hungarian National Gallery.

Jesus' forerunner is *St. John the Baptist*, the son of the priest Zacharias and of Elisabeth. Portraits normally show him clad in furry garments with leather belt typical

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<sup>44</sup> Szilárdfy 2003. 26-27.

<sup>45</sup> MKL St. Agnes <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/A/%C3%81gnes.html>

<sup>46</sup> MKL St. Agnes <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/A/%C3%81gnes.html>

<sup>47</sup> Bálint 2004. <http://mek.oszk.hu/04600/04656/html/unnepiki0029/unnepiki0029.html>

<sup>48</sup> Dragon 2008. <http://ujember.katolikus.hu/Archivum/2008.01.20/1602.html>

for the prophet Elias. His attribute is the cross with a banner, the lamb often lying or standing on a book or lying at his feet.

He is seldom the subject of medieval frescoes; we know some fragments from Trencsén and Vizsoly. He is more often depicted on panels. Well known examples are in the churches in following towns and villages: *Bakabánya* (Altar of Mary, 1480), *Bártfa* (Altar of St. Andrew, 1440), *Felsőerdőfalva* (1490, today in the church of Our Lady in Buda), *Frics* (1500), *Kassa* (Altar of the Visitation, 1516), *Liptószentmiklós* (Altar of Mary, 1470), *Lőcse* (Altar of Vir dolorum, 1476), *Ludrófalva* (1510), *Muzsna* (1521), *Nagydisznód* (1525), *Rádós* (1520), *Szászbogács* (1518), *Szepeshely* (1470), *Szepesszombat* (1516), *Turdossin* (1450), *Zsidve* (1508).<sup>49</sup> We see him in cycles on Gothic triptychs: one of them is on the main altar of St. John the Baptist from Kisszeben (1500, in the Hungarian National Gallery).<sup>50</sup> We know an exceptionally beautiful painting on the altar of the four St. Johns (the Baptist, the Evangelist, the Merciful, and the Chrysostom) dating from 1520 in the St. Jacob church of Lőcse in Renaissance style. The altar's painting cycle is the work of Master Paul of Lőcse.<sup>51</sup>

Gothic wooden sculptures are known in churches in *Bakabánya* (1484), *Kisóc* (1380), *Lándok* (1500), *Lőcse* (Altar of Catherin, 1420), *Szepeshely* (1478) and *Szlatvin* (1500). Outstanding Baroque frescoes represent St. John the Baptist in the church of the Premonstrant order in *Jászó*, painted by Lukács Kracker (1763). We see his pictures on the ceiling paintings in *Heves* and on the frescos in the Pauline order in *Felsőelefánti* (1775, Johann Bergl). A sculpture of St. John the Baptist – in the scene when baptising Christ - decorates normally the Baroque baptismal fonts.<sup>52</sup>

A frequent type of depiction is the group consisting of Mary with the infant Jesus and of St. John the Baptist with a lamp at his side. Furthermore, the work of an unknown Middle-European sculptor from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century is exhibited in the permanent exhibition of the Hungarian National Gallery, as well as the remarkable painting of Gábor Melegh with the title: *Mary with the infant Jesus and John* (1827)<sup>53</sup>.

St. Wendelin, God's most beloved shepherd,<sup>54</sup> was an Irish prince according to his legend. In his youth he retired from wealth and rank into solitude. Later he settled down in the environs of Trier and lived as hermit in penance, making a living as swineherd.

From the 14<sup>th</sup> century he was depicted as abbe. At the height of his veneration, around 1500, and later, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the paintings showed him as the patron of

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<sup>49</sup> Based on the article „John the Baptist“ in MKL <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/J/J%C3%A1nos.html>

<sup>50</sup> The main altar to the honour of St. John the Baptist in Kisszeben is one of the biggest and most decorated triptychs in medieval Hungary. Inscriptions and emblems from different times fixed on the altar inform about the time and history of its building, dating it between 1490 and 1520. 24 panels compose the altar. The legend of St. John the Baptist is illustrated on the side of festive days, and pictures from the life of Virgin Mary decorate the side of weekdays. Over life-size sculptures of the Virgin Mary, St. Peter and St. John the Baptist decorate the tabernacle. They were modernised in the 17th century according to the requirements of those days: the paintings and sculptures were completely over painted following the original iconography. More about the subject:

[http://www.mng.hu/kiallitasok/idoszaki/restaurator\\_kisszeben](http://www.mng.hu/kiallitasok/idoszaki/restaurator_kisszeben)

<sup>51</sup> presented by Chalupecký-Wolf-Majerech 1994.

<sup>52</sup> based on the article “St. John the Baptist” in MKL. <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/J/J%C3%A1nos.html>

<sup>53</sup> Tóth 2004. 26. 19.

<sup>54</sup> Data from Cserszegtomaj Quoted by Bálint 2004.

<http://mek.oszk.hu/04600/04657/html/unnepikii0075/unnepikii0075.html>

domestic animals, clad in the usual garment of medieval or Baroque shepherds: knee-breeches, short cloak, broad-brimmed hat, outfitted with shepherd's pouch and crook. Animals are lying at his feet: frequently a lamb, or a pig, a cow, a horse or a dog. From the 16<sup>th</sup> century on he is holding a rosary because he used to pray while he tended to his flock.<sup>55</sup>

German settlers from the regions of the Danube and the Rhine came to deserted areas in historic Hungary after the Turkish occupation. In this period the saint's veneration flourished the second time there. At the same time, after 1773, the merino sheep spread in Hungary: this sheep needed different care, and mainly German, to less extent Moravian shepherds came with the sheep to Hungary and brought along the cult of their popular saint. This is an indirect proof that in Hungary, wherever we meet traces of St. Wendelin's veneration, sheep husbandry was also present in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the region Csallóköz, however, this is proved thanks to the research of József Liszka.<sup>56</sup> The Catholic Church also propagated the cult of the saint, mainly the bishop of Veszprém, Márton Padányi Bíró (1696-1763).<sup>57</sup> A remarkably big number of churches are consecrated to St. Wendelin in the diocese of Veszprém.<sup>58</sup>

The oldest relics of the cult of Wendelin are in Western Hungary, in Transdanubia. His Rococo statue was erected in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the church of Újkér. Another old relic, a votive painting, where he is depicted together with St. Lenard, was offered by the catholic inhabitants of Kőszeg to the miraculous Virgin of Rőjt during the cattle plague in 1746.<sup>59</sup> Éva Gulyás collected information about 67 sculptures of the saint in public places in Hungary. József Liszka proved the unique popularity of the saint in the Kisalföld region in Slovakia, counting 53 statues on public places.<sup>60</sup>

It is typical for the depictions found in Transdanubia that the saint appears in company of other saints fulfilling a similar function: he is escorted by St. Lenard, the patron saint of animals, by St. Sebastian (patron saint of plague), by St. Donate and St. Florian. The villages with German inhabitants around Buda and in the Pilis liked erecting the saint's Rococo and Baroque statues on their altars (Budakeszi, Budaörs, Törökbálint, Zsámbék, Solymár, Űröm etc.). The saint is also venerated in the villages with German inhabitants in the Southern Transdanubia: Wendelin is the patron saint in Attala, his statue decorates the altar in the church. The villages Döbrököz and Csikóstöttös erected a statue of St. Wendelin at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as did the German inhabitants of Bátaszék, Várdomb and Villány.<sup>61</sup>

It is remarkable that the figure of St. Wendelin is clad as a peasant typical for the region near the river Rhine and his statues show the characteristics of Baroque and Rococo style in Transdanubia, while in Eastern Hungary he appears rather as a Hungarian shepherd clad in typical garments, wearing a shepherd's hat, a Hungarian shepherd's fur, a calabash, a wooden canteen covered with horse-skin and a satchel slung over his shoulder, a shepherd's crook in his hand – typical outfits of the Hungarian shepherd – and his sheep lying at his feet. We find vast amounts of

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<sup>55</sup> based on the article on Wendelin in MKL. <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/V/Vendel.html>

<sup>56</sup> Liszka 1998.

<sup>57</sup> Based on Liszka 1998. 952-954..

<sup>58</sup> A list of churches consecrated to St. Wendelin: article on Wendelin in MKL. The statue of the saint was honoured in a procession after the high mess in these villages.

<http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/V/Vendel.html>

<sup>59</sup> based on the article on Wendelin in MKL. <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/V/Vendel.html>

<sup>60</sup> Gulyás 1986. and Liszka 1998.

<sup>61</sup> Gulyás 1986. 10-13.

examples of such “folkloric” representation among the Palots population of the counties Heves and Nógrád and in the great regions of Jászság and Kiskunság of the Great Hungarian Plain. The most striking relics are preserved in the region of Jászság. His exceptionally beautiful statue stands in Nagykáta, and people used to say here: “St. Wendelin guards the fields, a little lamb is at his side”.<sup>62</sup>

Beside the sculptures in churches and on the roadsides, St. Wendelin’s figure is the subject of some folk paintings on glass known from the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Transdanubia (the area of Sopron, Zala County), in Vác and among the Palots population (North-eastern Hungary).<sup>63</sup> Endre Csatkai mentions that according to the catalogue of the Museum of Vác there was a glass painting of St. Wendelin but he means that this painting depicts St. Lenard, since the veneration of St. Wendelin had not spread widely in Hungary before the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>64</sup>

#### **2.4. Lamb as a symbol or accessory figure in Catholic iconography**

After we have described the different depiction types of the saints, it is necessary to go over – although not extensively – to some other types where lambs appear either as symbol or as accessory figure.

The Nativity depictions show – however seldom – sheep and lambs. Especially those paintings, where beside the Holy Family the Angel appears in the distance to bring the shepherds the good news of great joy: the birth of the Messiah. We mention as an example the panel of the triptych from Szepeshely, dated from the years 1480-1490 in the collection of the Hungarian National Gallery.<sup>65</sup>

The Baroque pillar of the Virgin in Sopron, which had been carved in 1745 by the sculptors Jakob Schletterer from Vienna and Tóbiás Hauch and Lőrinc Eisenkölbl from Sopron, depicts scenes from Mary’s life, and one of them is the Adoration of the Shepherds.<sup>66</sup>

We see on the epitaph of extraordinary beauty of Petronella Gelethfy (†1600), wife of Jób Zmeskál in the catholic church of Berzevice the triumph of the resurrected Christ: the triumphal car is pulled by two lambs, the name of the four Evangelists is written on its wheels.<sup>67</sup>

The Bible concordance by Péter Perényi has an illustration, which depicts the blessed ones standing among lambs. The Graphic Department of the Museum of Fine Arts houses a copperplate by Hirschvogel with the title: *Resurrection, the Righteous ones*. Opposite to them are the damned in company of he-goats.<sup>68</sup>

### **3. Depictions of sheep and shepherd outside the sacral art**

#### **3.1. Prehistory and the Roman period**

Another field has to be added to the study: the depictions of sheep and lamb or of their shepherd without any symbolic contents, outside the sacral art. These pictures show an idyllic, realistic atmosphere. The sheep are normally no more than accessory figures, mere illustrations of the landscape and contributions to the idyllic scenery. However, there are cases when the animal is the artist’s main inspirer and being the main subject, he is in the focus of the art work.

We have learned that about 8000 years ago, during the time of the Körös culture a great number of sheep was reared for unknown reasons in the marshlands of the Great

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<sup>62</sup> Gulyás 1986. 15-17.

<sup>63</sup> Gulyás 1986. 22-23.

<sup>64</sup> Quoted by Gulyás 1986. 23.

<sup>65</sup> Tóth 2004. 18. 8. tétel

<sup>66</sup> <http://sopron.utisugo.hu/latnivalok/maria-oszlop-sopron-45870.html>

<sup>67</sup> Mikó – Verő 2008. 172. V-24.

<sup>68</sup> Mikó – Verő 2008. 165-167. V-15p. Archive no. p.3298

Hungarian Plain, which environment did not suit at all the needs of these animals. The population made most of its tools out of sheep-bones and it is remarkable that they did not even make use of the always utilized, cast deer-antlers.<sup>69</sup> Let us mention here some examples: Neolithic animal sculptures were found in the site of Mezőkövesd-Mocsolyás and Copper Age animal figures made of clay were preserved in the archaeological site of Pilismarót-Basaharc.<sup>70</sup>

The late imperial period of the Roman Empire liked bucolic subjects, mainly shepherds' scenes. A frequent topic of the frescoes was the shepherd grazing his flock in the peaceful landscape. The shepherd's work became the symbol of the peaceful, worryless country life. Calmness and imperturbability were Epicure's motto and that is the reason why the figure of the shepherd evoked hedonic ideas. The figure of shepherd carrying his lamb on his shoulders was often carved on sarcophagi, following older depictions of Hermes Kriophoros.

Hermes carried the souls of the deceased to the underworld; the lamb on his shoulder symbolizes the soul – and both together depict the idea of philanthropy. The lamb on these reliefs and sculptures is not the sacrificial animal but the saved creature. The bucolic scenes might have referred to the „felicitas temporum“, the happy Golden Age and symbolically to the happiness after death.<sup>71</sup> As far as I know, neither such subjects nor the depiction of the suovetaurilia ceremony are known in the territory of Pannonia. A lion holding one paw on the head of a sheep has been found in a tomb in Dunaújváros-Intercisa. The object is carved of limestone and is in a much damaged state. It is kept in the Hungarian National Museum.<sup>72</sup>

### 3.2. Middle Ages

In the Middle-Ages lambs were carved on capitals, although sacral themes were not neglected neither. The corner fragment of a capital has been found in Óbuda: the sheep and the leaf ornament are dated between 1150 and 1200. It is a fine, homogenous work. The body of the sheep is smooth, only his mouth is marked by a notch and his eye by two notches in almond shape. An older version of the motif is known from a capital in Pécs. A piece almost identical to the fragment from Óbuda had been used once in Esztergom, where a similar ornament in bigger size is present also in the so-called St. Stephan room.<sup>73</sup>

### 3.3. Depicting activities of sheep-breeding in art works of the 18-19<sup>th</sup> century

The presentation of activities of sheep-breeding is exceptionally rare in art works, therefore the faïence plate from Holics from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, showing sheep shearing, is very special.<sup>74</sup>

A painting by Franz Neuhauser (1763-1836), made in 1805 with the title: *Saxon peasant women milking in the stable*, illustrates work with animals. The painting is part of the permanent Baroque exhibition in the Hungarian National Gallery.

### 4.4. The 19-20<sup>th</sup> century

Lambs and flock of sheep are frequently subjects of landscape painting. Italian landscapes by Károly Markó show as regular staffage figures not only harvesting and

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<sup>69</sup> Information given by László Bartosiewicz.

<sup>70</sup> Jerem-Mester 2008. 181. ill 36.

<sup>71</sup> Vanyó 1988. 178-179.

<sup>72</sup> Inventory no. 27.1903.3 based on [www.ubi-erat-lupa.org](http://www.ubi-erat-lupa.org)

<sup>73</sup> Mikó – Takács 1994. 110. I-55. Hungarian National Museum, inventory no. 34/1924.

<sup>74</sup> Stemler 2000. 388.

grape-gathering peasants but also peasants clad in national costume while grazing their sheep. Some of them: *Italian mountain landscape* (1836, Thorvaldsens Museum, Copenhagen), *Landscape from Appoggi* (1848, Hungarian National Gallery) and the *Landscape with woman and shepherd boy* (1852, Hungarian National Gallery). His son, András Markó treated the world of shepherds and charcoal-burners in the region of Carrara with a realistic perception; his paintings depicting lambs are: *Returning home from the fair of Seravezza* (1871, private property), and the *Ruins of aqueduct near Rome* (1860, Hungarian National Gallery).<sup>75</sup>

When we study landscape depictions of the Great Hungarian Plain, we find that numerous ideas and topoi are attached to the scenery as well as to the shepherd people. The topoi related to the Hungarian “puszta” are composed of poetic and picturesque images and commonplaces. The puszta emanating a positive atmosphere appears in the fine arts by the years 1850. Most puszta subjects in paintings were preceded by some literary reference: Sándor Petőfi’s poem *The shepherd on the donkey* can be compared to Ferenc Markó’s painting with similar subject.<sup>76</sup>

Katalin Sinkó writes: “According to the theory of that period, the folkloric genre painting belongs to the concept of picturesque. This artistic approach is slowly changing in Europe by the middle of the century. The genre painting breaks through the century old frames of its forms and the folkloric subjects keep on borrowing more and more from the means of the historic painting representing a higher level. (...) The dramatic or tragic view of life was a novelty in the history of the Hungarian peasant genre”.<sup>77</sup> The small sculpture of Miklós Izsó, the *Grieving Shepherd* belongs to this genre of dramatic life. The artist exhibited this sculpture with the name *Shepherd* or *Hungarian shepherd* and referred to it in his letters by that name. It seems that the public began calling it the *Grieving Shepherd*.<sup>78</sup>

The famous art work had several copies made of plaster; it was re-made in smaller as well as in more folkloric versions. The differences in size resulted in differences in the composition too: the original form was often completed with a lovely dog or lamb at his feet. The elegantly idealized original is hardly recognizable in the colourful folkloric figures. The porcelain manufacture of Herend produces from 1938 on the 28 cm tall, painted *Grieving Shepherd* newly conceived by Kata Gácsér designer artist.<sup>79</sup> Coming back to the subject of folkloric genre painting, let us mention the painter István Csók, who belonged to the friends of the artist colony’s painters in Nagybánya. His art expressed a basic admiration for the sensually perceptible world. He was a passionate searcher of the colourful and picturesque. At the turn of the century, when he passed through a crisis, he returned to the folkloric genre painting of the nineties

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<sup>75</sup> Károly Markó and his circle – From myth to picture. Temporary exhibition in the Hungarian National Gallery, 2011.

<sup>76</sup> Sinkó 1989. pictures 137. and 13.: Ferenc Markó: *The shepherd on the donkey*, 1854. Oil. Private property

<sup>77</sup> Sinkó 1989. 137.

<sup>78</sup> The circumstances of the carving of the work are treated in detail by Soós 1957.

<sup>79</sup> Goda 1993. 24.

The porcelains of Meissen, Sevres and Alt-Wien familiarized every social stratum in Middle-Europe with the profane scenes - favoured by public taste - borrowed from pastoral-idyllic works of ancient literature and art. These scenes were popular in every artistic form, among them the bucolic genre painting. The style of “bucolic genre” remained popular, as later works even from the Herend and Zsolnay manufactures confirm it. The “*Grieving shepherd*” from Herend and the “*Lard eating shepherd*” from the Zsolnay manufacture were very popular in the 1960s. These examples belong to the category of china figurines.

but applied in his way of seeing whatever Nagybánya stood for: his painting *In the Sheepfold* (1900)<sup>80</sup> was one of the results.

We have to highlight the work of the artist Béla Pállik (1845-1908), who called himself “sheep painter”, and for whom the sheep is not only staffage but the inspirer, the centre of the pictures. Pállik was an opera singer too. The art historian Károly Lyka’s words: „He knew the sheep, the rams, the lambs so well that he was rather a painter of animal portraits and not an animal painter.”<sup>81</sup> His sheep portraits were praised as the nonplus ultra of realistic painting and he was overwhelmed with honours. For some sheep portraits he made not only a series of sketches and studies but worked out completely a smaller version, which was merely a pre-study for the definitive, bigger sized painting. Some of his works depicting sheep: *Mother-sheep*, *Sheepfold*, *Flock of sheep*, *Feeding*, *Rams in the sheepfold*, *Sheep in the pen*, *Ram*, *Spring joy of lambs*, *Sheep head*, *Resting lambs*. After his death a commemorative exhibition presented his works in 1908.<sup>82</sup>

The artists’ colony in Szolnok cannot be omitted. The painters depart from the detailing, descriptive genre painting plenty of actions as it was typical for the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and after having implementing the novelties of the plein air painting in their artistic concept, they arrive to a realistic depiction of landscape and man, however with a basically picturesque approach.<sup>83</sup> An outstanding painting showing sheep and shepherds is the work of one of the colony’s founders, Ferenc Olgyay (1872-1939), who is at the same time an important representative of the plein air landscape painting. The title of the referred picture is *Landscape with sheep*.<sup>84</sup> The sculptor István Nagy (1920-) works in the colony from 1957. His sculpture *Head shepherd*<sup>85</sup> is important for our subject.

Regarding the period of the socialist realism, there is no consensus in art history about the judgement of the era. “The socialist realism is considered as an all-pervasive totalitarian style, which left its traces even in the smallest details of private life, on the other hand, regarded from another aspect, it can be interpreted as an epoch surprisingly multicoloured in its elements having organic contacts with the previous decades” and within this framework, the division into periods cannot be applied equally for the history of the different genres (fine arts, literature, etc.).<sup>86</sup> It is an extraordinarily short period considering its rooting and running its course, in a strict sense, it refers to the 1950s (lasting between 1948 till the end of the fifties.) Stylistic and thematic guiding principles were drafted and made applicable to all by the highest level of politics, and artists were called upon to account for these principles.

„Personal cult, the accent on the revolutionary fight of the working class, the dominance of political and party propaganda, and above all, the following of soviet examples without any criticism“ were typical.<sup>87</sup> Up to now I am not aware of any socialist realistic works in Hungary depicting sheep and shepherds.

After the period of the socialist realist style modernism has a revival in the architecture and in the environment culture. One of the examples is the group of

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<sup>80</sup> Székely 1977. 10.

<sup>81</sup> Lyka 1908.

<sup>82</sup> Lyka 1908.

<sup>83</sup> Egri 1977. 30

<sup>84</sup> Zsolnay 1997. 57.

<sup>85</sup> Egri 1977. 217.

<sup>86</sup> Prakfalvi – Szűcs 2010. 10.

<sup>87</sup> Prakfalvi – Szűcs 2010. back cover

sculptures “Three shepherds” made by Árpád Somogyi in 1983 and set up in Kecskemét in 1985.<sup>88</sup>

#### **4. Depicting sheep and shepherd in the works of applied art**

Coming back to the works of applied art, we can study our subject based on following two aspects: like above, we can look for works of art depicting sheep and shepherds, or we can focus on such works, which are made of wool.

Both aspects are united in the woven tapestry made by Sarolta Kovalszky in 1899 using the secessionist design “Shepherd” of János Vaszary. The central composition shows a young shepherd standing with his back to the spectator. He is wearing a cloak with red embroidery, holding a shepherds crook and driving in front of him the white cloud of his flock. Low houses make the background; at both sides of the picture separate horizontal bands show shepherds’ requisites: pipe and tobacco-pouch, wooden canteen covered with horse-skin.<sup>89</sup>

Similarly to above example, some works of one of the best Hungarian tapestry artists, Noémi Ferenczy (1890-1957) unify above mentioned two aspects. Noémi Ferenczy’s „works, her carpets constructed on the basis of fine harmony of forms and colours, as well as her aquarelle drafts made for these tapestries, further, her study drawings have rather fine art character and less the characteristics of applied art. Her simple, monumental and at the same time tender art, avoiding pathos has the same effect as a plain song about work, about the beauty of a shepherd girl, of women hoeing in the vineyard or of a woman carrying a jug.“<sup>90</sup>

Her client decided about the subjects of her tapestries with lamb (Woman with lamb). We see little difference between the two works with lambs: “beside the colour of the lamb, the biggest difference between the two depictions is the more animated environment of the version with black lamb”, which is due to the more lively contrast of colours.<sup>91</sup>

For a certain time, geometric composition is the main organising principle applied on the tapestries of Noémi Ferenczy. This structure is especially emphasized in some works of her series presenting the crafts. The tapestry with the title “Shepherd with lambs” belongs to this series: the picture is almost quadratic and the sheep are organised in a strict order around the shepherd.<sup>92</sup>

A contemporary tapestry artist with excellent talent is Zsuzsa Péreli. She doesn’t depict sheep or shepherds in her works but she is using wool as raw material. Her exhibitions are well known from 1977 in Hungary and two collections in New York exhibit her tapestries. The titles of some of her outstanding tapestries: National anthem, Looking out of the credible, 1989, Christmas, The poor angel, The opposite bank.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> [http://www.szoborlap.hu/5925\\_harom\\_pasztor\\_kecskemmet\\_somogyi\\_arpad\\_1985.html](http://www.szoborlap.hu/5925_harom_pasztor_kecskemmet_somogyi_arpad_1985.html)

<sup>89</sup> Museum Rippl-Rónai, Collection of Applied Art, Kaposvár. Inv.no. 83.36.1, described by: Kárpáti – Kostyál – Veres 2005. 146-147.

<sup>90</sup> Pataky 1960. 48.

<sup>91</sup> Pálosi 1998. 17. According to the description of Judit Pálosi, Noémi Ferenczy’s work had many admirers. But she had the impression that the public and the professionals misunderstood her work: „The tapestry with the black lamb has too much of success. But still, it is beautiful.” Quoted by Pálosi 1998. 17.

<sup>92</sup> Pálosi 1998. 21.

<sup>93</sup> Sári 2010.



## 5. Depictions of sheep nowadays

In above section we dealt with sheep and shepherds depicted in fine arts; but the sheep is present on the palette of today's designers of mass culture, of bloggers too. Let us mention the Internet cartoon "Super sheep" consisting of a few strips,<sup>94</sup> the T-shirt with the dog "puli", the typical Hungarian shepherd dog, depicted in the shape of Hungary,<sup>95</sup> T-shirts,<sup>96</sup> posters,<sup>97</sup> referring to proverbs with political contents; or the poster<sup>98</sup> popularizing a national event, the Agriculture and Food Industry Exhibition in 2011. Briefly, sheep keep on being present on popular art work, permeating everyday life.

## 6. Brief introduction of several phenomena of folk art

It is not really the subject of this study to deal with folk art, but it is unavoidable to have a glance at the objects of shepherds' art resp. at those linked to shepherds' guilds.

Shepherds' art is closely attached to our subject for the sake of the creative, carving shepherds, and of the sheep and shepherds depicted on their works. These works represent generally a very high level of art, and the person of the 'artist' is often known too.

In fact, shepherds' art is a branch of folk art linked to shepherds; it appears mainly in the artistic creation of the necessities and objects of daily use of shepherds' life, or of the objects carved and similarly decorated by shepherds, which they used to give as gifts.<sup>99</sup> Shepherds' tools were made and used equally by peasants; therefore, a detachment of the shepherds' art is only possible, when referring to the other inhabitants of the villages and market towns and of a defined period.<sup>100</sup> Shepherds' art can be distinguished following big regions, such as shepherds' art on the Great Hungarian Plain, in Upper Hungary, in Transdanubia and in Transylvania. Corn and leatherwork are characteristic on the Great Hungarian Plain, wood carving and inlaid metal work were popular in Upper Hungary. In this region the bagpipe remained as a shepherds' instrument and was decorated with carved heads of ram and goat. The biggest variety in objects, techniques and themes is however met in Transdanubia, while the shepherds' art in Transylvania has the least independent character, when compared to the other regions.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> <http://parkocka.hu/szuperhos-palyazat/szuper-birka/> and <http://cyrusmagus.hu/portal2/index.php?action=blog&reaction=read&tid=12&bid=147>

<sup>95</sup> [http://bbpolo.hu/shop/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=163&artWorx=746af6e5ea2ce75e5fa7e40de2cd2c1e](http://bbpolo.hu/shop/product_info.php?products_id=163&artWorx=746af6e5ea2ce75e5fa7e40de2cd2c1e) and

[http://bbpolo.hu/shop/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=164&artWorx=fbbe5c25d26a9e192686a7b36a308a1c](http://bbpolo.hu/shop/product_info.php?products_id=164&artWorx=fbbe5c25d26a9e192686a7b36a308a1c)

<sup>96</sup> [http://szilagyipal.blog.hu/2008/03/10/fiatalos\\_nepszavazasi\\_kampany\\_kiskunhalason\\_motoros\\_bemutaval](http://szilagyipal.blog.hu/2008/03/10/fiatalos_nepszavazasi_kampany_kiskunhalason_motoros_bemutaval)

<sup>97</sup> <http://m.blog.hu/sz/szilagyipal/image/birkak.jpg> or <http://csepel.info/wp-content/uploads/a-baranyok-hallgatnak.jpg>

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.omek2011.hu/>

<sup>99</sup> MNL (Hungarian Ethnographic Lexicon) based on the article 'Shepherds' art'.

<http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02115/html/4-522.html>

and Madarassy 1934. in: Bellon-Fügedi-Szilágyi 1998. 405-408.

<sup>100</sup> Based on the article 'Shepherds' art' in MNL. <http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02115/html/4-522.html>

<sup>101</sup> Based on the article 'Shepherds' art' in MNL of the Great Hungarian Plain (<http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02115/html/1-154.html>), shepherds' art in Upper Hungary

„The shepherd had a hard life but he was more independent compared to a serf of the estate or to a poor peasant in the village; beside his work with the animals he had time to contemplate the world, to observe nature and if he was talented and the necessary material – wood and horn – was available, he carved and decorated his objects of daily life.“<sup>102</sup>

Not every shepherd was able to carve and even carving shepherds produced little of the valuable, decorated objects, which required a lot of time and great attention. The inscriptions on the objects inform that they were made as gifts to a lover or to friends.<sup>103</sup>

The way of ornamenting informs in many ways about the time of creating the work. There were different methods to apply ornaments: incising and engraving, etching, and applying inlaid wax<sup>104</sup>, furthermore, using metal, horn and bone intarsia, tinning, coppering, and woodcarving of reliefs.<sup>105</sup>

The themes have three sources. One group consists of motifs, which the shepherd has seen on objects made by older carving shepherds. The other group includes depictions, which were not made by shepherds, and the third, the richest source of inspiration is the shepherd's environment, his daily life. “His activity reflects his behaviour, his emotions, which determined his relationship to the community and to the artistic creation.“<sup>106</sup> At the same time, his possibilities and limits were fixed by the examples seen by him, the characteristics and nature of the material and his own talents in depiction.<sup>107</sup>

„The fact that ornaments on the tools and objects of herdsman represented their trade, and even more, the separate trade of horse-herder, cowherd, shepherd, swineherd, encouraged largely the application of ornaments. This development towards the existence of a more or less individual shepherds' art was first achieved in Transdanubia, and produced the most spectacular results.“<sup>108</sup>

Shepherds' art includes a „multitude of strong individuals, shaping their own style.“<sup>109</sup> Several of them are known by name. Due to the limited size of this essay, we can introduce only a few shepherds with outstanding talent.

By its theme and technique, the shepherd Zsiga Király's mangling board made in 1839 represents the peak of the special carving style of shepherds in Transdanubia. We know the name of Mihály Hodó (second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) from the reports of Károly Visi. The shepherd in the regions of Somogy and Baranya depicted mainly outlaws, shepherds playing flute, gracious dears and birds on the back of mirrors and mangling boards, on salt-box and razor-cases.<sup>110</sup>

Antal Kapoli senior used to see some carving shepherds when he was a shepherd boy and he tried his skills too. At the beginning he carved floral ornaments, later he depicted human and animal figures too. By the end of the 1880s he achieved his individual style, characterized by the multiple applications of floral ornaments: they

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(<http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02115/html/2-211.html>), shepherds' art in Transdanubia

(<http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02115/html/1-1688.html>) shepherds' art in Transylvania

(<http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02115/html/1-1953.html>).

<sup>102</sup> Lengyel 1961. 5.

<sup>103</sup> Based on the article 'Shepherds' art' in MNL, <http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02115/html/4-522.html>

<sup>104</sup> The shepherd melts wax with the help of a hot metal tool and inserts it into the carved ornament.

<sup>105</sup> Manga 1972. 58-61.

<sup>106</sup> Manga 1972. 69-75. Idézi Bellon-Fügedi-Szilágyi 1998. 412.

<sup>107</sup> Manga 1972. 69-75. Idézi Bellon-Fügedi-Szilágyi 1998. 412.

<sup>108</sup> Based on the article 'Shepherds' art' in MNL, <http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02115/html/4-522.html>

<sup>109</sup> Based on the article 'Shepherds' art' in MNL, <http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02115/html/4-522.html>

<sup>110</sup> Based on the article „Hodó Mihály” in MNL <http://mek.niif.hu/02100/02115/html/2-1338.html>

served as frame, joined different elements and filled in blank space. In 1954 he was honoured for his carving skills with the state award Master of Folk Art – and in 1955 he received the Kossuth-Prize.<sup>111</sup>

Mihály Tóth has learned carving from his father in his childhood. He etched and carved reliefs on horns and staffs evoking different scenes from the life of herdsmen and outlaws. „He was one of the first artists who used the symbols of the socialist system as motifs in his art, but presentation of the new village life was also important for him.“ He was honoured for his carving skills with the state award Master of Folk Art in 1958.<sup>112</sup>

Some more masters have to be mentioned, of course the list is not complete: the carver herdsmen János Szilágyi from Nógrád, István Nagy (Master of Folk Art), Kálmán Breglovics (Master of Folk Art) and István Kálmán (Master of Folk Art) from Zala and János Pálházi, József Kovács and Lajos Fehér (Master of Folk Art) from Somogy.<sup>113</sup>

When discussing arts, it is justified to present the relics of guilds as well due to their extraordinary value as source and to their high artistic level.

Balázs Gémes describes four shepherd chests, and shares Klára Csilléry's opinion expressed about fishermen chests: “unlike peasant chests, those of servants and seasonal harvesters, the chest of a guild member bears the owner's trade sign.”<sup>114</sup>

The first chest presented comes from Vajta in Fejér County. It is like bride chests on the turning of the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century, equipped with a drawer and a cover that opens up and having wrought-iron handles on both sides. A side-drawer and a secret drawer are hidden inside. The chest is painted brown and a name and a date of year are written on it: Czetli István, 1882. „A shepherd and his dog are painted in the middle under the inscription: the shepherd is clad in wide trousers, in a waistcoat with metal buttons and in an embroidered felt coat, he wears boots and holds a huge crooked staff in his hand, while leaning on a donkey sporting a set of adorned harness; on his right and left, a group of sheep are grazing and resting on the green meadow, as well as some suckling lambs.”<sup>115</sup> The present owner inherited the chest from his father. Family tradition says that the great-grandfather of the owner came from Alsace-Lorraine to Hungary at the time when the counts Apponyi imported “sheep with silky fleece”.<sup>116</sup>

The second chest is also private property. It is equipped with a drawer and a cover that opens up and it has wrought-iron handles on both sides. Inside the chest there is a small side-drawer on the right side. On the front-side, a name and a date of year are painted with red letters in the middle of a green field in red frame: MENYHARD PÁL 1893.

Tulips are painted in the corners of the frame. We see two small Agnus Dei turning towards the date of year between the date and the tulips on each side of the lower part. A shepherd wearing a broad-brimmed hat, a fur cloak and boots is depicted between the ciphers.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Article about Antal Kapoli by Orsolya Kapitány in the database about the winners of the award Master of Folk Art, <http://www.studiolum.com/nm/hu/kapoliantalid.htm>, further: Domanovszky 1952., 1983. and Kapitány 2007.

<sup>112</sup> Article about Mihály Tóth by Orsolya Kapitány in the database about the winners of the award Master of Folk Art, <http://www.studiolum.com/nm/hu/tothmihaly.htm>, further: Manga 1654.

<sup>113</sup> Lengyel 1961. 14. 16. 17. 19. 24. 26.

<sup>114</sup> Csilléry 1973. quoted by Gémes 1976. 178.

<sup>115</sup> Gémes 1977. 174.

<sup>116</sup> Balázs Gémes quotes his informant. Gémes 1977. 174.

<sup>117</sup> Gémes 1977. 174. 176.

The third chest belongs to the Museum István Türr in Baja. Ede Solymos collected it in 1973 in Madaras in Bács-Kiskun County. The chest has no feet and no drawer, it is a joiner's work made of walnut wood, completed with wrought-iron handles on both sides and its surface is decorated with inlaid ornaments. In its inside we discover the traces of small drawers and of a secret drawer, which probably disappeared when an opening was cut in the back of the chest with the purpose of stealing the contents. The front of the chest shows two cassettes with inlay, each depicting an Agnus Dei, which turn towards each other, holding a banner in their forelegs. Under the lambs we read the date of year 1818 and the monogram SA, referring to the name of Saller Antal according to the results of research.<sup>118</sup>

Balázs Gémes reports about a fourth chest too, which looks similar to the two first chests but it is much smaller. Unfortunately, it has been repainted, and we have only indirect information about its motifs. "We can conclude that its basic colour was brown. According to all informants, a shepherd with dog and sheep were depicted on its front-side."<sup>119</sup>

Following a long analysis, Gémes concludes that there was no shepherd guild in Székesfehérvár. Therefore the existence of the above mentioned chests can be explained by the fact that the guild customs imported from Germany had survived and affected for a long time the life of the shepherd families after they have settled down in Hungary. These families have been in close relationship with each other still in the 1970s.<sup>120</sup>

Further to the guilds' relics, a chair with trade sign is remarkable in the Hanság Museum in Mosonmagyaróvár, described by Eszter Szendrei.<sup>121</sup> We see an Agnus Dei under the cut out shape of a heart on the back of the chair. Under the lamb is the picture of a peasant following the plough pulled by a horse. The date of year 1753 is written on the upper part. On the broader part of the back is the picture of grassland with a figure sharpening his scythe. According to Anna Ács the picture of Agnus Dei refers to religion and the scenes depicting work refer to an independent farmer organisation. She determines the chair as a piece of furniture in private property, furnished with signs of trade.<sup>122</sup>

Eszter Szendrei presents a pair of chair, kept in the Museum of Mosonmagyaróvár. A carved lamb is under the cut out shape of a heart on the back of both chairs.<sup>123</sup> Beside the lamb there is no other decoration or any date. The lamb does not hold a banner, „so we can only guess what a function was intended to be given to the lamb.“ In case of the first chair, the peasants depicted on the back refer to some kind of agricultural organisation, while in case of the pair of chairs nothing refers to any trade and the lamb does not bear the symbol of its religious function. As Eszter Szendrei states, „The depiction of the lamb without banner (...) confirms the possibility that the chairs have some links to sheep breeding but we don't find any reference to the purpose of the chair, whether it was made upon the request of an organisation or of the shepherds guild of Moson.“<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> „Antal Saller Antal was a head shepherd, who moved after 1848 from Tata to (Bács-) Borsod, to the estate of Lajos Latinovics, and he became here head shepherd.“ Inventory no. of the chest: 73.15.1 Gémes 1977. 176-177.

<sup>119</sup> Gémes 1977. 177-178.

<sup>120</sup> Gémes 1977. 191.

<sup>121</sup> Inventory no. 56.59.1. The chair is made of ash-tree; its height is 97 cm, its width 41 cm. Szendrei 2005. 212. 24. note

<sup>122</sup> Szendrei 2005. 212-213. resp. Ács 1983.

<sup>123</sup> Inventory no: 56.60.1. and 56.60.2. Szendrei 2005. 213.

<sup>124</sup> Szendrei 2005. 213.

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