

„ ... and the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them...“
(Luk.2,20)

Herder is one of oldest human professions. It is mostly unknown his central paper in world-history. Not only being the first in visiting the newborn Christ also being crucial in both the christian reconquist of the Iberian Peninsula and the financing of Christopher Columbus' journey to the West Indies (<http://www.weide.info/weihnachten>).

Shepherds and transhumant sheep husbandry contributed in European species diversity. Several milleniums of transhumant sheep grazing formed one of world most important hot spots of herb diversity on Iberian Peninsula.

Sheep are carrying up to 10.000 propagules and much micro-fauna for several hundreds of km in their fleece. Moreover sheep are ingesting up to 4.000 seeds, of whose several germinate after being digested and defecated with dung like first fertilizer.

During one season a flock of 500 sheep carries more than 5 million seeds to another habitat in a distant site.

Thus sheep are best *seed-taxis* !

Climate change concerns us all!

IPCC-scientist estimate the aspired limit of 2,0°C warming. 2,4°C might be more realistic, but does require a supreme effort worldwide.

The severity of threat of biodiversity loss can not be calculated, and together with the species diversity will get extincted most ecosystems: environment as well as agricultural supply of alimentation might collapse.

And the herders?

What have herders to do with this?

Shepherds are the monitors of transhumant sheep husbandry, and all indicates their new central duties in the history of our planet: The saving of biodiversity!
Bringing back the environment to our society...

Impressum

This flyer was created in the frame of the TRUNPA- Project - Transhumant Rangeland Use and Networking of Protected Areas - being designed by

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Herder a profession as a milestone of world-history



Herder in Andalusia
all pics by H. Beckmann



The Past

In the Middle East about 10.000 years ago sheep and goat is domesticated serving as human protein source: the *Neolithic Revolution*. The herders are following with their flocks the seasonally changing forage over copying natural foraging and co-evolutionary principles.



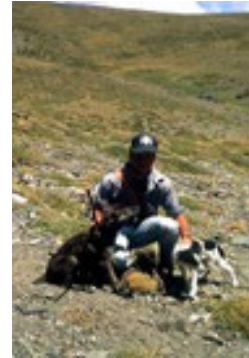
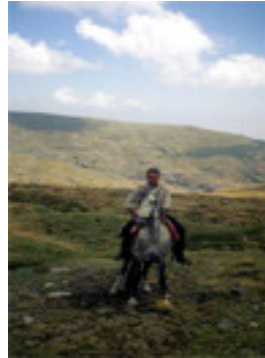
Phoenician herders have bred woolen sheep from the hairy forebears. 3.100 years ago they bring it along to Tartessos (close to Cádiz, Spain) exchanging wool for precious metals.

Over 2.200 years later Spanish herders adopt the advanced breeding of the moors. Wool becomes the most important natural resource of the Spanish history. The customs of the wool-exports finances the Reconquista against the moors. And on Epiphany of 1492, only 4 days after war's end, there are funded the 3 ships and the crew of Christopher Columbus. The costs of the war are remaining.

If moors would have known patents, maybe ...

Shepherd's Life ...

A herder has got two very personal friends in his work: his horse and his sheepdog. The horse is carrying him all the long ways, and



the sheepdog keeps the biggest flock with a never ending enthusiasm: they are both in one best friend and best assistance.



Herder's working day is hard. Loneliness, rain, freezing all are afflicting him on one day being with his animals. Nowadays drover roads are coped with sheep carriers. The prices of wool and mutton are on the bottom. The options of future are not be seen clearly. The profession is losing his appeal for the next generation.

Is herders profession coming to an end?

Shepherd's Future ...



Is this most oldest profession in danger of extinction ?

... or maybe not yet ?

A central new duty of herders is helping in preserve biodiversity in times of global warming. At the end of the 21st century up to 70% of species diversity might be threatened by extinction. Only migration to climatically more adapted region will save many plant species. We do need herders and drover roads in Europe!



TRUNPA* initiates preservation of biodiversity by herders as the driver of a „seed-taxi“. New tasks will re-introduce herders to human society, and society's estimation will increase. **Thus herder's profession will be preserved!**