Bed sheet - with the scene of Isaac's sacrifice file inset

Textile and Costume Collection

Accession Nr.:	62.1368.1
Date of production:	second half of the 17th cent.
Place of production:	Sáros County (presumably); Gömör County (presumably)
Materials:	linen; pillow (bobbin) lace
Techniques:	filet
Dimensions:	length: 280 cm width: 182 cm

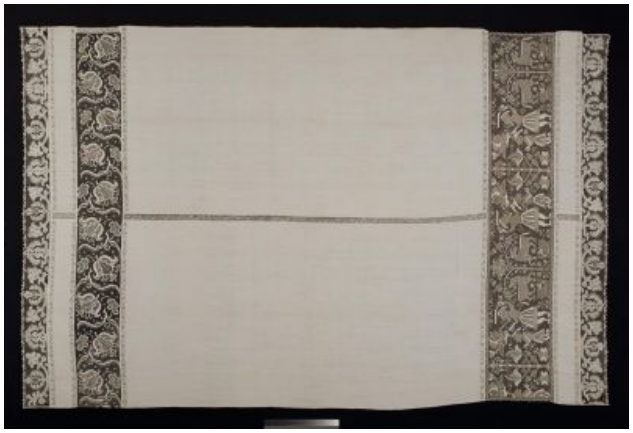
It is made lengthwise from two parts, with a narrow pillow-lace strip in the middle. The two narrow edges are bordered with pillow-lace of net base, with a pattern of tulips and stylized pomegranates. Further in from the sides are two networks bordered with narrow pillow-lace strips, with different patterns on each side: one with elongated bending foliage and scrolls with alternately standing tulips among them, the other with the representation of Abraham and Isaac. There is a sword in the raised hand of Abraham, who is about to strike down his son kneeling before him. Above Isaac is an angel with raised hand, and in front of him an oak-tree. Behind Abraham is a tree of life with acorns and tulips below on the two sides are sheep. The scene is repeated on the two sides of the tree of life. This is the explanation for the inscriptions above the figures: ABRAHAM IZAK / KAZI MAHARBA. A similar pattern appears on damasks, which is why Emoke László supposes that this composition may have damask model. (László 1984 pp. 80–81.)

The sacrifice of Abraham was often represented in the middle ages as the symbol of Christian self-sacrifice. It had probably lost its original meaning by the 17th century and is mentioned among the favourite ornamental motifs of network trousseaus. In the inventory of the dowry of Kata Károlyi (1595) for example is a "Egy vékony Giolch Lepede az Abraham historiaiaval..." (narrow linen sheet with the history of Abraham) (Radvánszky 1986 vol. 2. p. 79). Similar networks are mainly from the territory of Upper-Hungary, but the pattern lives on in the Transylvanian cross-stitched embroideries. According to Janos Szendrei, the motif is of haban origin, and its popularisation can be explained by the settling of Habans in Transylvania around 1621 (Szendrei 1890. pp. 169-174.). Similar pieces are: the network in the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts (IM Inv. No. 12782) and the tablecloth from the church of Verbőc (Takács 1983. fig. 64.).

Literature

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- Szendrei János: Anabaptista eredetű régi alakos hímzések. *Művészi Ipar*, 5. (1890). 1890. - 169-174.

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