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Preservation of Primitive
Aboriginal Dogs***

From the Publisher...

Dear members of PADS and readers of our Journal,

We continue publishing articles of participants in the Second International Conference of PADS, held in September, 2014. In this issue, Ming-Nan Chen (Taiwan) tells us about the Mountain Dog of Formosa, which has developed by natural selection in a harsh mountain environment over thousands of years and has survived to this day. Now, it is under threat of extinction.

Professor Emeritus of South Florida University, Gertrude Hinsch offers a review of Dingo-like aboriginal dogs of the Southeast Asian and Pacific regions. Describing these dogs, she mentions that there is little direct contact between adult people and these dogs, which are without any value in their everyday life, except as scavengers. Such so-called “useless”, because of their primitiveness, dogs are very numerous in this region. However, we pay special attention to certain places in this vast region, where Dingo-like dogs have

evolved further and have become very useful as assistants to hunters, guardians and close companions, and as such are valued by people. Examples of this are the Santal Hound of India, the dogs of the Punan people of Borneo and, as we now know, the Mountain Dog of Formosa. Certainly, there are other places in this region, where Dingo-like aboriginal dogs have evolved to a degree of great usefulness to humans and they await researchers into the origins and evolution of the domesticated dog.

Sincerely yours,

Vladimír Beregovoy and Tatyana Desiatova

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Formosan Mountain Dogs: An Alive and Vital Historical Relic from Mountainous Island

Ming-Nan Chen

Taiwan



Photo provided by Ming-Nan Chen

Taiwan is a mountainous island. Although relatively small with just 36,000 square kilometers of total land area (400 km length, 150 kms width), 70% of it is covered by mountains, 286 of which reach over 3,000 meters (9,800 ft.) above sea level. Taiwan's climate is heavily influenced by the surrounding ocean, and the annual East Asian monsoon brings with it high humidity and significant amounts of rainfall. These characteristics all combine to make Taiwan an island of extremes, with deep valleys of lush, subtropical forest on the one hand, and cold, oxygen-deprived, precipitous, craggy high-

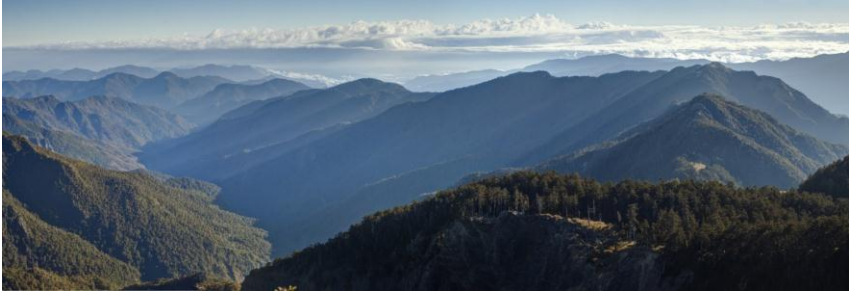
elevation peaks on the other. The Formosan mountain dog (abbreviated here as FMD, has also been called Taiwan dog or Taiwan mountain dog) has inhabited this challenging mountain environment for thousands of years, thriving and adapting over time, only the fittest surviving these difficult ecological conditions--nature selects, the fittest survives.



The area of Taiwan like the Belgium, but the altitude form 0 to almost 4,000 meters above sea level within 50 km short distance. This fact leads to very steep and craggy terrain. For example, in the Eastern Taiwan, the altitude can rose to 2,000 meters within just 5km from coast and can rose to 3,000 meters within 20km from coast. The highest peak is 3,952 meters (12,966 ft.) above sea level in the island.

**Right) Photo by Ksiom. CC-BY-SA-3.0-migrated
Left) Photo by Cacahuete, adapted by Peter Fitzgerald, Globe-trotter, Joelf, Texugo, Piet-c and Bennylin. CC-BY-SA-4.0,3.0,2.5,2.0,1.0**

**More pictures can link to <http://goo.gl/7rC3gp>
<http://goo.gl/uME8Hs> <http://goo.gl/UpPHnh> <http://goo.gl/s2T8jT>**



The native land of FMDs, a great stretch of medium- and high-elevation mountain range in Taiwan. The landscape is hunting territories (fields) of Formosan aborigines over the past thousands years. (Those trees at lower right are about 20 meters height) Photo by Si-Yi Liu.



Formosan aborigines prepared to hunt wild animals with FMDs in Taiwanese high mountains at 1933. In the past traditional aborigines' concept, FMDs are the important property, and are thought a member of the family at the same time. Photo from a literature of Japanese colonial rule.

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FMDs also lived in the coastal plains region for thousands of years. In fact Taiwan's aboriginal dogs are traditionally divided into those adapted to the flat, coastal areas--the 'plains dog'--and those adapted to the mountain regions--the 'mountain dog'. Each of these categories is further subdivided into different types according to slight differences in morphology, body structure and distribution (for example the 'mountain dog' can be further subdivided into the Atayal type and the Bunun type). Unfortunately, the 'plains dog' is now extinct, and only the 'mountain dog' has endured. Therefore the Formosan 'mountain dog' is today the sole representative of Taiwan's aboriginal dog.



Plain type



Atayal type



Bunun type

The classification of Taiwan aboriginal dog. According to morphology and body structure, they can subdivide into one plain dog and two mountain dogs (Atayal type and Bunun type). Photo provided by Ming-Nan Chen.

Taiwan is considered to be the Austronesian homeland and origin. According to anthropology, archaeology and genetics, Austronesian ancestors migrated to Taiwan about 6,000 years ago, settling, and diversifying into distinct aboriginal tribes. In the past, hunting was central to Taiwanese aboriginal culture, and the dog was an excellent and essential hunting partner that enhanced the human diet with protein-rich resources. To better survive the extremes of Taiwan's environment, aboriginals living in mountain areas relied on the dog to track and hunt wild mammals such as Formosan wild boar, Formosan sambar deer, Formosan serow and Formosan Reeve's muntjac. The dog also acted as an important guard dog, for example when conflict arose in areas where hunting territories overlapped, or alerting villagers when outsiders or strangers invaded. The FMD thus possesses not only sensitive scent, vision, hearing and a strong hunting drive, but is also a vigilant and courageous companion eager to protect, guard, and attack if necessary.

In 1980, an international cooperative project was carried out by scholars from the Nagoya and Gifu universities of Japan, and the National Taiwan University. They traveled throughout the mountains and aboriginal villages of Taiwan for two months, searching for native dogs that still retained these traits. Based on both morphology and blood protein analysis, the team concluded that FMD's were extremely rare and in danger of extinction, with only 46 individuals remaining.

In general, the Formosan mountain dog is a medium-sized dog, with a shoulder height of about 50 cm for the male, and about 45 cm for the female. These are not strict, standardized measurements, and can vary within a range of plus or minus five centimeters. Typically, the FMD body is streamlined, with a deep chest and shrunken waist. The head is triangular, with a well-defined stop, moderate snout-length, erect ears, and orange, yellow, or dark brown almond-shaped

keen eyes. Claws on the forelimbs point downwards creating a powerful grip and maximized digging ability. The hock is well-developed and slightly curved, allowing for strong and agile jumping. The tail is carried high (but not curled over the hock) enabling a good sense of balance and stability. FMD's are very comfortable running freely through difficult, cliffy terrain, and their climbing and jumping abilities are formidable. For example they are known to climb trees in order to hunt animals, and are easily able to scale nearly vertical cliff faces. Coat color can vary between black, yellow, white-black, white, brindle, red, sesame and chocolate. It is a double coat, with downy inner hairs that are warming and waterproof, and coarse outer hairs that create a protective barrier against thick forest and thorny bush. These morphological traits are well-suited to Taiwan's mountainous environment, and reflect the dog's long evolutionary history of mountain life.



Semi-wild Formosan mountain dog have a pair of feral and keen eyes.
Photo provided by Ming-Nan Chen



Photo provided by Ming-Nan Chen



Photo provided by Ming-Nan Chen

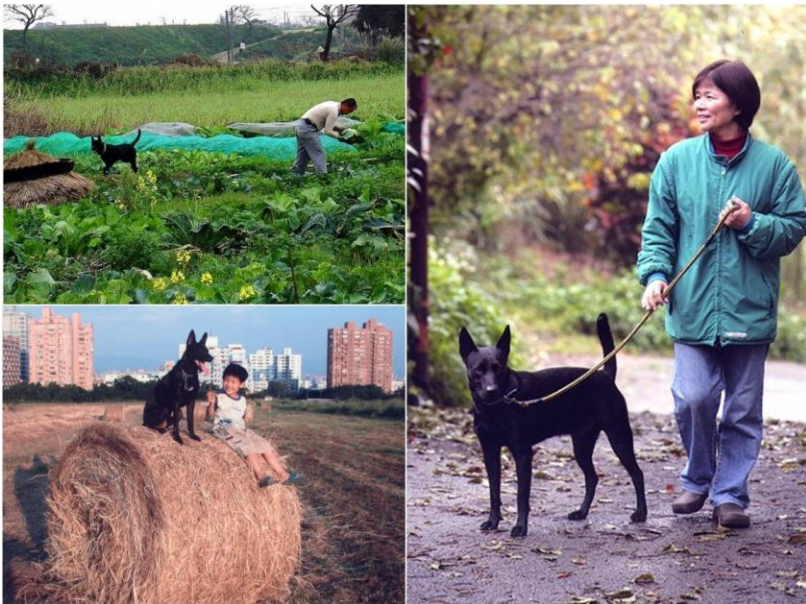
Formosan mountain dogs are aboriginal dogs that are semi-wild and retain many of the characteristics that wild canids do. For example, females will dig a hole in the ground to create a den for birthing and raising pups. Although females come into estrus 2x's per year, first litters are usually small (1-3 pups), and eventually increase over time, but do not usually exceed 5 pups. In the past, litter sizes did not tend to increase over time but rather remained small. They mature in intelligence early, and have excellent disease resistance. The dogs also have no body odor, much like wolves and other wild canids. They have a powerful bite force, and their digestive systems can easily handle bones (from large leg bones to fish bones), starches (sweet potato), vegetables and fruits. FMD's do not bark randomly. They are very alert and well tuned to their surroundings, for example they will howl a few days before an earthquake or other impending natural disaster. They have a strong territorial instinct, and can easily orient themselves in space and time.

Over the course of several millennia, the close-knit cooperation between hunter and dog has also created an animal with the keen ability to read his owner's mind. The need to work together with little or no sound when hunting (so as not to scare off prey), often with great distances between hunter and dog, has resulted in the FMD's uncanny capacity for understanding and foretelling what his human partner is thinking. Neither words nor barks need be exchanged. This ability, honed over at least several millennia, is a key characteristic of FMDs, and shows that they are highly intelligent and intuitive dogs. The dog is not trend single sense; it is using scent, vision, and hearing at the same time for hunting or tracking animals. They also have excellent memory skills, are quick learners, and obey commands and leadership very well. They possess a spirit and tenacity that is unique and adaptable to many situations. They are fearless, audacious, and

extremely independent. They are strong-willed and suspicious of strangers, but they are also very loyal and affectionate companions to family, and work enthusiastically in teams with great team spirit. All of these qualities together make for an excellent hunting dog, guard dog, or specialized working dog. Overall, the extrinsic performance, work ability and natural ability, and special intrinsic qualities are the essence of this 'primitive' dog.



FMD's claws are point downwards and tightly between toes. It makes dogs more suits to survive in steep mountain area. Photo provided by Ming-Nan Chen



In modern, the FMDs not only have traditional hunt and guard function, but also have a function of partner and companion. Photo provided by Ming-Nan Chen

Recent DNA studies have revealed that the Formosan mountain dog has a unique, basal lineage, which is rooted at the base of the phylogenetic tree for Southeast Asian dogs. These results suggest that the FMD reflects an ancient lineage, little altered over the last several thousand years of its presence on the isolated mountainous island of Taiwan. In all of its morphological and behavioral traits, the FMD is thus a living representative of Taiwan's natural and human history. It links us to our past, and carries on the legacy of its ancestors' hunting and guarding functions. Despite this brilliant achievement, of having endured thousands of years of difficult and perilous environmental conditions and challenges, the FMD is now in danger of extinction. The dog is extremely rare inside its native island, and the population size and maintain is cause for

worrying. Since the last field study was conducted just thirty years ago, Taiwan's aboriginal dogs have disappeared from mountaintop villages, and today only a small controlled breeding population survives. It is our sincere hope that these FMD's will be able to continue the great cycle of history, and that their ancient lineage will be conserved and handed down to future descendants for many years to come.

More Formosan Mountain Dog photographs at PADS website <http://padsociety.org/breed-profiles/formosan-mountain-dog> and more information at Formosan Mountain Dog Conservation Center/ Hsiao Wu Fong Kennel <http://www.dogs.com.tw/indexch.htm>

(The English version and Japanese version are still in translating, working and synchronizing, the traditional Chinese version has the most complete information now)

Dogs from Papua New Guinea to Southeast Asia and India

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The development of human populations and their migrations have been studied for years. As the results of this research are published, the history of modern man is being rewritten. The first humans to inhabit the area included in this study left Africa approximately 70,000 years ago and reached Australia/Papua New Guinea approximately 50,000 years ago. Over the succeeding millennia, they were often displaced by newer waves of migrants. The early humans inhabiting these lands did not have dogs.

In contrast, the appearance of dogs has been relatively recent on the world scene. Generally, it has been believed that the domestic dog was derived from wolves in southeastern Asia. The question of location(s) of their origin(s) is not resolved and the manner/means of their domestication is controversial. In this presentation we will consider the dogs from the southeastern Pacific area starting with those of Australia and New Guinea and moving westward through Indonesia, Southeast Asia, and India. The information is based on observations of dogs in these various countries visited over a period of several years.

The dingo is the native dog of the Australian continent. Historically it was assumed that the aborigines brought the dingo with them when they migrated to the continent. We now know they were the sole human inhabitants of the land for millennia. There are several times (12,000 -2500 yrs BP) suggested for the arrival of dogs but no general consensus of an

actual time. Evidence based on mitochondrial DNA suggests that the breed arose from a small population perhaps a single female dingo that perhaps was pregnant. In time, the aboriginal humans and dingoes became associated with each other. They lived and hunted together. The aboriginal people prized their dingoes and drawings of them can be found in northern Australian rock-art.

At the time of the first human migration, Australia and Papua New Guinea formed a single land mass which later separated as the oceans rose. The ancient people devastated the large animals over the millennia following their migration to both areas resulting in diminished protein resources. Each area has a very different type of topography, habitat and climate.

New Guinea has two primarily different areas- the highlands and the lowlands. The highland areas are above one thousand feet, have roads which connect many of the towns and quantities of arable land. It was here that the New Guinea Singing Dog (NGSD), a primitive dog resembling the dingoes were found. Less than 100 yrs. ago the first westerners arriving in New Guinea were more likely to live in the highlands. Larger numbers survived in the highlands because of rich farm lands and the lack of causing malaria mosquitos. Some of the early settlers brought dogs with them. Some of the dog seen in the highlands appear to be the result of breedings between the local and imported dogs.

The lowlands involves those areas usually associated with the coastal valleys separated from each other by bits of land forming high hills and cliffs about a thousand foot high. Transportation between communities living near the water even today is primarily by outrigger on the sea as walking up and then down over the steep hills was (is) time-consuming. In the lowlands, dogs resembling the dingoes and NGSD can be found in the villages, walking with the villagers on trails and moving

around on the beaches and meeting the small planes which fly in tourists. These dogs in general appear to survive as scavengers akin to a symbiotic relationship with humans.

The dogs are of many colors, generally have prick ears and rarely bark. They roam freely in village areas and follow the villagers into the jungle when they go out to provide for their food or to hunt. One rarely sees any adult handling any of the dogs. Children seem to play with and handle the small puppies. On occasions when picnics and dance demonstrations are performed for the tourists, the dogs can be seen lying in shadows of palm trees or roaming under the tables scavenging for any food which might have fallen

Pics 1-5. Dogs of New Guinea Dogs



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

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Picture 4



Picture 5

INDONESIA- As one travels westward through the numerous islands that form the nation of Indonesia, one
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continues to see dogs which resemble the dingo. Indeed, as far to the west as Bali they are called dingoes. In Bali, a second type of dog which is somewhat taller with a longer coat can be seen in towns. On the island of Flores villages are often separated from each other by a volcano. It is not uncommon to find that each village has its own language or dialect (there are 16-17) on the island itself. Indeed, the long arduous trip up and down to get around the volcanoes from village to village has only become easier for humans in recent times with the development of roads. Thus the people from village to village often differ in appearance, religion and language. But the dogs on the island appear the same in all villages. They appear to have territories, to know which woman will throw stones at them, etc. In the bigger villages women sometimes prepare nests near their homes where a bitch has her puppies. Again, children seem to play with the young pups but one rarely sees contact between adult humans and the dogs

Pics 6-9. Dogs of Indonesia



Picture 6



Picture 7



Picture 8



Picture 9

Pics 10-11. Dogs of Flores and Bali Islands



Picture 10



Picture 11

MYANMAR-After years of political isolation this country has been opened to tourists recently. There are thousands of dogs scattered over the countryside. In general, they appear much like the dogs described in the countries above. They are seen in numbers in the cities, around the Buddhist temples and in the vicinity of eating places. They are a medium-sized dog of many colors with generally pricked ear or those slightly flopped. They seem particularly active in the early mornings and evenings moving around in search of food. During most daytime hours one can find them curled up on the ground adjacent to the temples, stores and restaurants. They even sleep on the roads. In this Buddhist country, the drivers of motor vehicles take care to not hit them. One rarely sees any signs of “roadkill”. As in other countries visited, the dogs may be provided with water and food but one rarely sees actual contact between dog and human. The only dogs seen with collars and leash looked like a member of the Toy group

recognized by registries. They were small with long hair. One was even dyed pink.

Pics 12-28. Dogs of Myanmar



Picture 12



Picture 13



Picture 14



Picture 15



Picture 16



Picture 17

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Picture 18



Picture 19



Picture 20



Picture 21



Picture 22



Picture 23



Picture 24



Picture 25



Picture 26



Picture 27



Picture 28

CAMBODIA- Dogs seen in this region again fit into the general framework outlined in previous countries.

Pics 29-30. Dogs of Cambodia



Picture 29



Picture 30

SOUTHWEST CHINA- Southwestern China, the area above Vietnam, has traditionally been a part of China that is remote and is infrequently visited because of its mountainous terrain and time consuming drives from place to place. Indeed, it is only recently with the building of the railroad and super highway systems that it has become easily accessible. Even today 95% of the tourists are Han Chinese from more northern areas of China.

Historically, over the many millennia, new waves of migrants have pushed earlier settlers out and into other more remote and uninhabited areas. SW China is one such area. Because of its topography, it has become the home to many of these refugees which include several minority (ethnic) population groups. The dogs associated with these groups in general resemble the dingo type with some variation in hair length, colors and ear posture. They freely roam the villages and countryside though seems to have their own territories. They are scavengers, finding food in many places. In one town at the site of preparation of the feast associated with a funeral, a dog was seen standing near a man butchering a pig. When pieces of meat or bone dropped down the dog took them. In another “new” village developed by the Chinese government for one of the ethnic groups, wastes are now relegated to dumpsters instead of street sides. The dogs have found a means of raiding the dumpsters. Additionally in the same town, they wander in and out of shops as well as enter restaurants where they sit and wait for the people eating to leave at which time they remove all food droppings from the floors.

Pics 31-38. Dogs of Southwest China



Picture 31



Picture 32

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Picture 33



Picture 34



Picture 35



Picture 36

To preserve through education..... 37



Picture 37



Picture 38

INDIA- India of today has approximately 20 million dogs living freely throughout the country. Some of these are pariah dogs. Dogs that resemble the dingo. These are found primarily in more remote areas of the land living in proximity to small villages or associated with ethnic minorities. The majority of the dogs found in the big cities are crowded among the populations of humans. Many of these cities were sites of occupation by the British during their colonization of India. In these cities one sees the results of years of interbreeding between the native dogs and those brought over from Europe. One can snatch glimpses of recognizable breeds as these dogs move around. In general many are somewhat larger than the pariah dogs. There is no uniformity of ear postures, colors vary widely with body forms running the gambit. In some areas these dogs seen more likely to approach and respond to humans than do the pariah dogs. In both instances, they seem to have developed definite patterns of behavior, to have specific territories and to get along with other dogs in the same territory. Both types are primarily scavengers though their activities vary depending on their location.

Pics 39-43. Dogs of India



Picture 39



Picture 40



Picture 41

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Picture 42



Picture 43

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DISCUSSION

Our Society involves the study of aboriginal canines which might be described as prototypes, feral, wild or domesticated. Just what do these several words often used to describe these dogs mean?

Aboriginal-indigenous, primitive

Prototype- original model

Wild- a natural or undomesticated state or existence

Domestication- living near or about human habitations

Feral- having escaped from domestication and become wild

Aboriginal dogs are generally indigenous and primitive. As such we consider them to be domesticated as they live near or around human habitations. The true wild dogs are the spotted dogs of the African plane and the dhole of India. They are not domesticated and do not live around human. Just how did the dog become domesticated? Most theories put forward the notion that wolves in southeastern China were the progenitors of the domestic dog. These wolves were attracted to human settlements and their middens were their source of food. Over time wolves drawn to such middens changed in their flight or fight responses. Those less likely to run were candidates for domestication. Other suggestions included capturing wolf puppies in early life and keeping them as a source of food. Indeed all the suggestions lead to the premise "And Man Created Dog".

When the origin of the cat was published, the suggestion was made that the cat played a role in its domestication. Such a possibly in dog evolution seems to have been overlooked or even dismissed. World-wide at the time of the calculated appearance of the dog, the world was still populated with large numbers of big mammals. The human population was very sparse in comparison to of present time. Archeological and paleontological records suggest that those humans were

hunters-gathers. These were people who used everything from their kills that they could....bones-scrapers, bowls, needles etc., tendons became threads, hides became clothing, tents, and internal organs became storage containers and water containers. How large could their middens have been?

Experiments with foxes years ago demonstrated that through controlled breedings foxes began to act and behave like dogs in a very short time. They still looked like foxes however and likely would not have survived in the wild given the coat colors which appeared. The evolution of the dog is said to have happened rapidly. There were several bitches and dogs involved in the process. What had to change to produce the wolves into the prototype of the dogs which we see?

Are the domestic dog and the wolf truly of the same species or are they different species? Those on one side of the question state that they can only be one species because they share over 99% of the same DNA, can interbreed and produce viable fertile offspring. True, but wolves can also mate with coyotes and jackals. The coyote and jackal separated from a primitive wolf a very long time ago and have been designated as separate species. On the paleontological calendar, the domestic is a relative newcomer.

In human evolution, the last few decades have been producing new evidence about the human family tree. The tree has changed a great deal in recent years. We have learned that early hominids interbred with each other and more recently with modern hominids. Indeed, modern humans, carry some small quantities of the genes from those early humans. Neanderthals and modern man share 99% of the same DNA. The genes for limb development are the same in both hominids although the actual limbs differs in each of them. With the reemergence of epigenetics, it is possible to explain how this occurs. In Neanderthals, parts of the genes are masked by methyl bodies which block expression of that portion. Perhaps,

it is time for the molecular scientists to look into the epigenetics of the wolf and dog. Why does the domestic dog that becomes feral not revert to the wolf? Is it time to consider speciation of the dog?

Most of the dogs mentioned in this study are likely to be considered as village dogs. Clumping the dingo/prototype dogs in the same group as those that arose from the interbreeding of modern breeds. They are all domesticated dogs by definition because they live near or around human habitation.

Most of the dingo/prototype dogs like the wild dogs and many ancient breeds do not become sexually mature until 2-3 years of age. They have but one breeding season per year. Their breedings are usually not controlled by humans. In small villages, during the breeding season one can see almost all of the mature bitches at some stage of reproduction from mating season to seeking food for their young pups. These dogs are basically scavengers cleaning the living areas of the humans. There are not generally large numbers of pups that survive to adulthood. If they reach adulthood, they follow in their ancestors footsteps. Most of these dogs have little or no actual physical contact with humans.

Dogs originated somewhere in southeastern China. They spread throughout the world. In many cases, we are able to trace the migration of dogs as they followed their human companions from Asia to the Americas through Beringia, from the north of Africa to its southernmost point, and from Asia to Europe. How and when dogs reached the lands of Australia, New Guinea and Indonesia is still in question. These all were settled by that wave of humans that left Africa about 70,000 BP, followed the coast line down to India and on into the islands about 40,000 BP. It has been suggested that perhaps dogs arrived in these places with later human migrants following the same route as earlier humans. We need archeological and paleontological evidence to determine

timing. A secondary migration from Taiwan about 2500 BP which ultimately resulted in populating the Polynesian islands might have provided a source of dogs as well.

In the future, more archeological and paleontological work needs to be recognized and acknowledged when studying canine evolution and origins. Domestication itself needs to be separated from the origin. The relationship between human and dog changes with situations, time, and certainly the cost of living. Humans on bare subsistence living do not have dogs. As they acquire better living conditions their relationships with dogs change. Working dogs are provided with food so they can continue to work. At the extreme level, we have the pet dog which is considered almost a child of the human that provides with all of its needs. As living conditions improve for humans beyond the subsistence level and people become more affluent, they may acquire a dog(s). If they live in countries with the dingo/prototype village dogs, they tend to shun them and seek the pedigree dogs of the West. Elsewhere in places where the village dogs or aboriginal working lose their functional purpose of hunting or herding, the owners are no longer breeding them. They can't afford to feed a non-working dog. We are losing them.

Primitive Aboriginal Dogs Society

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