

JOURNAL



of the International Society for Preservation of Primitive Aboriginal Dogs

From the Publisher...

Dear members of PADS and readers of our Journal,

In issue #45 of the PADS International Journal, we present an article by Sir Terence Clark about modern developments and growth in popularity of the Saluki in Arabia, opening a new future for this type of aboriginal hunting hound in the Arab way of life.

Elena Potseluyeva continues her story about the environment of the formation of the Chukotka Sled Dog.

We also publish the foreword to the recently published book by Isik Guvener entitled *The Sheep Dogs of Anatolia*. This book contains a detailed description of the way of life, purpose and place of Anatolian sheep dogs in the life of chobans (shepherds), as well as the dangers to the very existence of this wonderful world of aboriginal dogs in Turkey.

Sincerely yours,

Vladímír Beregovoy

In This Issue...

WHERE TRADITION AND CHANGE MEET	.4
HISTORICAL AND CLIMATIC PREREQUISITES OF THE	
APPEARANCE OF THE POPULATION OF SLED DOGS OF THE	
SHORELINE OF THE CHUKOTKA PENINSULA (PART 2)	16
FOREWORD TO THE SHEEPDOGS OF ANATOLIA BY GUVENE	R
SIK	31
LIST OF MEMBERS	37
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION	45

Where tradition and change meet by Sir Terence Clark

In the last decade or so, leaders in the United Arab Emirates have acknowledged the phenomenal rate of change in their society and have been making strenuous efforts to preserve for the younger generation the traditions of the past before it is too late. At the forefront of these efforts today are the sons of the late Ruler of Abu Dhabi, His Highness Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who set the example himself by successfully employing the hydrocarbon riches of an obscure desert shaikhdom to transform it into an ultramodern state, while continuing to hold fast to his natural heritage.



The Ruler's fort in Abu Dhabi in the late 1940s, after an original photograph by Wilfred Thesiger

I was fortunate enough to have known Shaikh Zayed when he was the Governor of the inland oasis of al-Ain in the mid-1960s and a renowned hunter with Saluki and falcon and 4 *To preserve through education.....* to have been present at the time when he succeeded his brother as Ruler in 1966. I have also visited the area many times in the interval since then, including a memorable tour of his large Saluki kennels in the early 1990s. So, when the Emirates Heritage Club invited me to return in February 2014, I had no hesitation in accepting.

The occasion was the annual Heritage Festival of His Highness Shaikh Sultan bin Zayed in a desert setting at Sweihan in Abu Dhabi. For most of the year, Sweihan is a desolate place with little to suggest that it might be a centre of attraction. In February, however, it comes alive as thousands of people congregate there to enjoy a series of spectacles to remind them of the recent past, when they lived a largely nomadic way of life. At the centre of it all is the camel, which once was the mainstay of their life, but the Saluki is also there as another essential provider. My role in the Festival, with two British colleagues, was to judge the quality of the contemporary Salukis.

First, as an introduction for my colleagues to the area and its recent past, we were taken to Fort Jahili, which houses a permanent exhibition of some of the superb photographs taken in the area by the British explorer Wilfred Thesiger in the late 1940s, when, after his second crossing of the Empty Quarter by camel, he spent some time hunting in the desert around al-Ain with Shaikh Zayed and his Salukis and falcons, as he retails so evocatively in his book *Arabian Sands*. Those fabulous exploits of sixty-odd years ago still resonate in the area today.

However, as I knew from past experience of judging in Abu Dhabi, ours would be no straightforward task, for a variety of reasons. First, these would not be show Salukis in the conventional sense. The Salukis of the area are bred exclusively for hunting in all its forms. Moreover, we were told that many of the best would be excluded from the show, as they were incomplete with cropped ears, which is a common practice in the Kurdish parts of Turkey and Syria, from where many of the local hounds are imported. It is only in recent times that shows have started to be organised for the purpose of judging Salukis for their beauty and the hunters have not yet become accustomed to them.



Shaikh Zayed's hunting party as recorded by Wilfred Thesiger and shown in the exhibition

Furthermore, there is no central registry for Salukis and no written standard to which to judge their conformation. There is none of the show culture as it is known in the West and neither the hounds nor their handlers are practised in being on show in the unusual surroundings of something like a fairground. My colleagues and I are all experienced in coursing hounds and we decided we should try to bring that experience to apply to the evaluation of these hounds, while recognizing that it would be impractical to give them the ultimate test of coursing.

To make things easier for us, the organisers of the "Beauty Contest", as it was described, had prepared copies of a template, bearing the details of the hound and its owner and a series of criteria which we should score on a scale up to 10, ranging from its behaviour to its general appearance and its hunting skills (though we obviously could not assess these!) to make a total out of a maximum of 100 points. We were told that about 60 hounds had been entered and they would be divided between males and females and between feathered and smooth, but would not be grouped according to age. We started with the feathered females, from which, after discussion between us, we selected those that merited detailed evaluation, which we then scored individually for the organisers to tally. Next we worked through the feathered males, followed by the smooth females and finally the smooth males, the largest entry. At the end, the organisers identified from their individual scores the first three hounds as the winners in each group, but there was no further selection of the Best in Show.

My colleagues and I were unanimous in admiring the good standard of health and fitness of the hounds, though few of them would have gone far in a western show ring. They were for the most part moderate and well balanced and their movement was light, without any overreaching or crabbing. However, they looked different from the average show Saluki in their smaller size, the sparseness of their feathering, the amount of rib showing and their general muscularity, as becomes active hunting hounds. There was a considerable range of types from the lightly built, smooth hounds from the Arabian Peninsula to the slightly larger, more heavily built, often lightly feathered hounds imported from Syria and Turkey. Where they were nearly all less than satisfactory was in their ring behaviour. They were clearly unused to be walked or trotted on the lead and were inclined to shy away from their handlers. They were also somewhat nervous of being handled

by strangers, but not aggressively so, and we judges had no problem with laying hands on them or examining their dentition. Considering all the distractions outside the ring of an adjacent camel beauty competition and inside it of pushy television journalists and cameramen and photographers, with loud music blaring in the background, the hounds stood up remarkably well to the test.



A smooth male contestant of the Arabian Peninsula type



A hopeful feathered female of the northern type



Camel and Saluki contestants waiting their turn

As the afternoon drew on, the top three Salukis in each group queued up with their handlers to receive from HH Shaikh Sultan an engraved glass plaque marking their participation, but first the winners of the camel beauty competition were announced to loud applause from the crowd of spectators gathered under a vast tent. Their owners and supporters had every reason to be delighted as the prizes were very generous.



A lucky winner wearing camel bling

Part of the Festival which attracted a much larger participation of Salukis was the racing. Ten heats of roughly ten entrants each, divided between males and females, competed over a 2.5 km (roughly 1 ½ miles) straight sand track. The Salukis were held by their handlers along a chalked line. A blindfolded gazelle was produced from behind a sacking screen and shown to the hounds, close enough for them to smell it. The gazelle was then returned behind the screen, wherefrom a stuffed gazelle appeared over the track, suspended from a boom mounted on a pickup, which set off driving parallel to the

fenced track. The race marshal lowered his flag and the hounds were released to a cacaphony of hooting and shouting as the hounds' owners drove alongside the track urging their hounds on. In each heat, the first three hounds were selected to run a week later at the same Festival.



Eager runners



Leading the field

We were interested to see where these hounds were coming from and one of our hosts took us around some of the large kennels near al-Ain. Each one held up to 20-30 Salukis, housed in spacious sandy pens with individual wooden kennels, set around a large open sandy exercise square. One even had a large air-conditioned shed divided up into kennels for especially hot weather! Many of the hounds had the typically cropped ear or ears of the Kurdish hounds. The owners said that they liked to buy in hounds already about a year old and used to hunting, as they took easily to the sport of gazelle chasing. However increasingly they were breeding on from these imports, especially since conditions in Syria had deteriorated. We certainly saw plenty of evidence of home-bred puppies.



Puppies bred from an import

Our general impression was of the considerable care and attention given to raising and exercising the hounds for hunting. Owners would take a number of hounds out into the desert for them to run behind the vehicle for about 5-7 miles at a time and some of them would be trained on live gazelle, but wearing muzzles to prevent them from harming it, as live hunting is banned in the Emirates. With so many hounds to care for, it was not surprising that they are fed mainly on dry food, but they are kept in very good condition from all their exercise and we saw no signs of hounds being under- or overweight.



A well-proportioned hound from Turkey

We could not leave Abu Dhabi without a visit to the Arabian Saluki Center, where the hounds lead a much more cosseted existence in their spacious rooms, with outside runs and a special diet of home-cooked food. We saw some beautiful mature hounds there and puppies, all destined in due course to join the hunting kennels of the local shaikhs.



Inside the Arabian Saluki Center



Training a puppy on a live rabbit] *To preserve through education......*

We were all agreed that it was most encouraging to see the enthusiastic response of young and old to the Festival's practical demonstration of the relevance of the old traditions of their desert forebears to contemporary life. As a direct link with the past, some of the greybeards regaled anyone who cared to drop in at their hospitality tents with stories of their youth - and their Salukis. However, the sheer number of actively working Salukis in the area today is in itself an eloquent statement of the renaissance of the breed in the Gulf region, enthusiastically promoted mainly by members of the younger generation.



The author around the camp fire

Historical and Climatic Prerequisites of the Appearance of the Population of Sled Dogs of the Shoreline of the Chukotka Peninsula (Part 2)

Elena Potselueva

Russia

«Monotonous, harsh and inhospitable country. Nevertheless, in good weather, it is easy to see on the snow a narrow strip outlining the Chukotka shore. The strip runs zigzagging, arching on the ground or across sea ice, crossing gulfs and sometimes land bridges and sometimes turns deep inside the country. This is a sled track, connecting villages along the entire shore line of the Chukotka Peninsula, starting from near Chaun Gulf to Holly Cross Gulf."

Harald Sverdrup, Science leader of Amundsen's expedition, 1918-1925.

From the beginning, the sleddogs of the Chukotka Peninsula shores served as a form of transportation for families of hunters, whose sustenance consisted of hunting whales and walruses in the summer and seals and fishing in winter. However, in the 17th century there are records of travels to the continental limits of the peninsula for trading. As is clear at the present time, the people of Chukotka traded with the people of Alaska. Local people brought trading goods from Ostrovnoy to Dezhnev Cape (Vostohny on English maps). From here, in summer, local people shipped trading goods in boats (baydara) to Alaska for trading. When the winter road became ready, goods were delivered to Ostrovnoy by sleddogs over a distance of more than 1500 km.



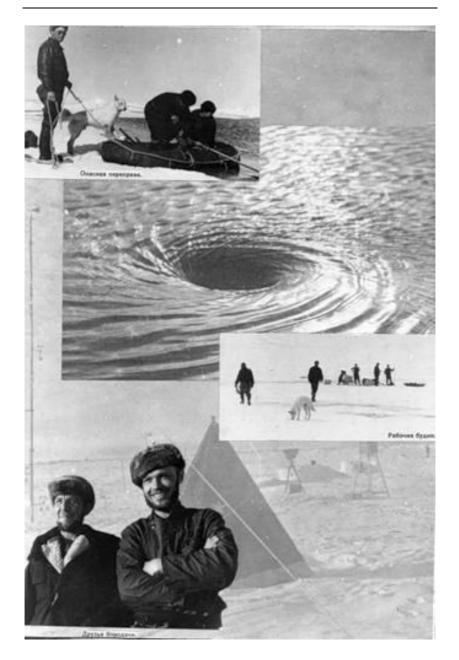
At a later time, travel to the Anadyr River at a distance over 1000 km from Dezhnev Cape became common. Even longer routes, including one to Nizhnekolymsk were used. In the late 19th century, trading relationships changed in the opposite direction. Goods from whaling ships from Nome were coming to Chukotka shores. Then, merchants on shore delivered them further into the continent, including Nizhnekolymsk for exchanging for fur. Thus, it becomes clear that the working qualities of the Chukotka shoreline dogs were maintained over decades for performing long journeys.

During the first ten years of Soviet power in Chukotka trading life did not change and long journeys carried on when Amundsen overwintered there. During his overwintering in Ayon, 1919-1920, he wrote in his diary: "The only mean of transportation of this people is sleds and dogs. However, they are extremely experienced in using them and it is a real pleasure to watch how they approach without noise, shouting or forcing the dogs. They do not even use a whip. They control the dogs with calm short words. The animals are so well trained that they move easily, where we, with all cursing, whistling and whipping, could not move them forward. In other words, when it comes to dog sledding, these Russians and Chukchi are ahead of everyone I could see". This citation is taken from the book "North-eastern passage. Expedition to Mod along the northern shores of Asia, 1918-1920" by R. Amundsen, published in Russia, Glavsevmorput in 1936.

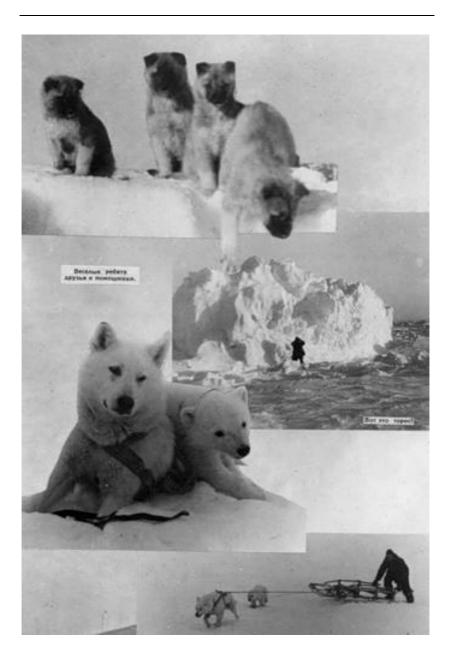
I should add some words of the traveler of that time, when he was writing in his diary he saw very many sleddogs from different sides of the Arctic, because until the completion of his circumpolar travel with numerous overwinterings along the way, only the Chukotka shores and Bering Straits were left to investigate. This citation is linked to the name of some Chukotka merchants, the Karaevs. It was the last time that this name was mentioned in Soviet literature. The Karaev family possessed several trading posts in Chukotka, major of them were in Dezhnev Cape (Eastern) and Schmidt (Northern). This family was well respected by local people. When Soviet authorities came to Chukotka, the Karaev family was forced to leave and then, their name was never mentioned again. In the book by Captain Bartlett, the Karaevs became the "Karavaevs", and in a brochure about the peoples of the north by Arsenyev they became "Karasevs". Nevertheless, Arsenvev took a risk and inserted in his book a photo of Alexander Karaev with his personal signature. Undoubtedly, it was a sign of deep gratitude. Edmund Iosifovich, Shereshevsky, in his book, offered a full citation from Amundsen (this is exactly where from it is taken and used in cynological literature), but the Karaevs were never mentioned and the overwintering site of Amundsen was "moved" by 200 km, to the Kolyma River mouth. Undoubtedly, this was done to meet the requirements of political censorship of the time. However, in our time these lies caused much confusion in publications on the Internet, including "Yakuts" instead of Chukchi, as it would be "more correct", when speaking of the Kolyma River. Actually, in the dairy of the traveler his comment is tied to one of the visits of the Karaevs and Chukchi people who accompanied them. On one of the pictures from the family archive this event is shown.

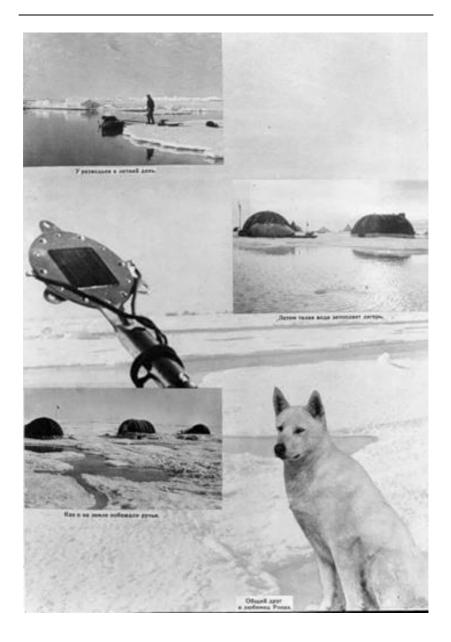
The diaries of travelers, merchants and airplane pilots of 20s and 30s of the last century tell us about the working qualities of the Chukotka dogs. The American merchant, Olaf Swanson brought dogs from Chukotka, which became a foundation stock for developing the Siberian Husky. He made a long trip in sleds pulled by these dogs. In 1928 he was forced to leave Schmidt Cape, when his ship got frozen in ice. In sleds pulled by dogs Swanson reached a community he mentioned as Solgutter, slightly further from Srednekolymsk.





To preserve through education...... 21





Even when planes appeared on the shore, they could fly only because they were serviced with the help of sleddogs. The first time cooperation of this sort happened in winter, 1929-1930. Then, ice forced the steamer "Stavropol", returning from the Kolyma River, to stop for overwintering at 6 km from Schmidt Cape. The place was dangerous for getting out of the ice and the lives of the steamer's sailors and about 30 passengers, including three children, were in jeopardy. Two airplanes from Yakutian air lines were appointed for a rescue mission with M. Slepnev and V. Galyshev as pilots, each with his team. The icebreaker "Litke" delivered them to Emma Bay in the Cross Gulf, on the eastern shore of the Chukotka Peninsula. To create a temporary base on the Kolyuchinckaya River Mouth required 200 dogs, 20 mushers and the organization of a1500 km track devoid of any possibility for finding food for the dogs along the way. Airplane flights were postponed until January 17, when Polar nights ended. However, by this time the rescue mission became doubled.

It happened that not far from the "Stavropol", but at a safer place, another ship, "Nanuk" of Swanson, was overwintering again. There was nothing unusual about this overwintering, because during that time someone routinely got stuck in ice near the shores of Chukotka. However, this ship was loaded with the entire season's harvest of traded fur and Swanson wanted to arrive with it by the beginning of the auction in Alaska. The loss of money would be very big and Swanson was ready to pay for delivering the fur with American planes. The first trip was successful. During the second trip, the most experienced polar pilot, Carl Ben Eielson, who had accomplished a non- stop flight from Barrow Cape to Spitzbergen and worked in the Antarctic, got lost.

The Soviet Government was cooperative over this and gave permission to conduct an aerial search for the lost plane. Nobody believed he was dead until his remains were found near Amguema. The Chukotka climate showed its character. M. Slepnev, who helped his American colleagues, described in his memoirs his attempts for hours to start the engine under windy freezing weather conditions as a "hellish job". Now, Russian pilots had to deal with a double task. They participated in the search for the dead Americans and evacuated the passengers from the "Stavropol". Sleddog teams supported the work of the airplanes and the people and they carried away the people, who were afraid of flying under Arctic conditions. Telling his story about these events, Slepnev used particularly warm words for two features of the region: the absence of thievery and the care to feed the dogs, belonging to guest people.

In 1930, the last group of sleddogs was taken from Schmidt Cape, which would be used for the creation of the Siberian Husky. In the literature, this group of dogs is called the "Ricker import" - Elizabeth Ricker, 1930, Ryrkaypiy, North Cape, 8 dogs. However, only three dogs arrived safely with their new owner, two of them still can be found in pedigrees of almost all now existing Huskies. They were Tserko and blue eyed Kreevanka.

In 1936, the rescue by the Cheluskin team operation went well, using the already worked out model with the participation of Slepnev and Galyshev. The scale of events was larger and situation was perilous. The steamer 'Cheluskin" sank and people survived on the ice for two months. The scale of the rescue operation was amazing. According to the memoirs of Andrey Nebolsin, who was Chief of the Border Post at Lavrenia Bay, sleddogs shipped to Vankarem about six tons of fuel and one and a half tons of oil.

There was no a suitable for landing planes on the ice close to the disaster site. Therefore, with the first flight, the best sleddog team was brought there. The dogs were used for transporting sick people to the airplane. The total number of dogs used for the evacuation was about 1000. Some of them ran a total distance of 13 000 km, for example, the dogs of the brothers Tynano and Tynale from Heart Rock Cape, the dog teams of Vasetegin from the communities at Tunytlin, Atyka, Uelen and others. Even the dogs that ran less made average trips of about 3000 km distance. Nebolsin wrote: "Undoubtedly, such work had a serious impact on the dogs' health. Traditional races on May 1 for winning a prize, were postponed. By the way, I was a contender with my own dog team. However, the event was cancelled! ..."

During the Great Patriotic War, sleddog teams from Chukotka supported the shipment of American airplanes to USSR (ALSIB). After 1948, the USSR broke relations with the USA. Family ties between the Eskimo people and the Chukchi people on both sides of the Bering Straits were disrupted.

By 1950, a population census was conducted, as a result of which tables with detailed data of sleddogs travels were put together. Long distance trading journeys ceased. Instead, mechanized transportation was used to deliver supplies to communities. Movement along the border line became restricted and strictly controlled. Sleddog teams were used for short journeys and for traditional hunting on sea ice. Here are some data from the Anadyr archive I could access with the assistance of the Chukotka administration.

Chukotka District, Vankarem

Husbandry and type of	Season periods		Distance in km	
land use	perious		To the nearest point	To the furthest point
Reindeer pastures				
Winter	15.11- 15.04	Reindeer and dogs	70	200
Spring	15.04- 01.06	Reindeer and dogs	90	165
Commercial hunting regions	15.09- 15.03	Dogs	70	100
Winter commercial hunting marine mammals	01.11- 15.05	Dogs	10	60
Transportation works	01.09- 15.05	Dogs	85	600

Chukotka District, Akkani

Husbandry and land use	Season	Form of transportation	Distar	nce, km
		transportation	To the nearest point	To the furthest point
Reindeer pastures				
Winter		Reindeer and dogs	60	120
Spring		Reindeer and dogs	120	180
Summer		Walking	80	100
Fall		Walking and reindeer	40	80
Winter marine mammals commercial hunting	15.12- 01.05	Dogs	2	20
Transportation work	10.11- 01.05	Dogs	12	300

Chukotka District, Nutepelmen

Husbandry and land	Season	Form of transportation	Distance, km	
use			To the nearest point	To the furthest point
Reindeer pastures				
Winter	01.11- 01.04	Reindeer and dogs	60	120
Spring	01.04- 01.06	Reindeer and dogs	120	180
Fur commercial hunting	01.11- 15.03	Sleddogs	20	60
Winter commercial hunting marine mammals	10.09- 01.06	Walking and sleddogs	5	15

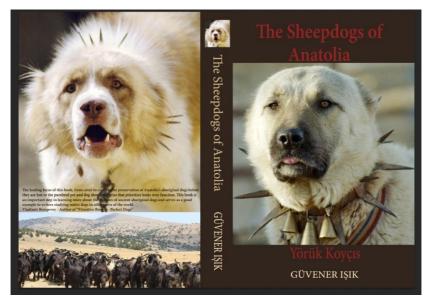
Chukotka District, Kivak

Location	Summer		Winter		
	Distance, km	Form of transportation	Form of transportation	Distance, km	
District center	230	Boat	Sleddogs	260	
Hospital	50	Boat	Sleddogs	40	
Post office, radio	50	Boat	Sleddogs	40	
Gas Station	40	Boat	Sleddogs	48	
Providenie Port	50	Boat	Sleddogs	40	

Foreword To The Sheepdogs of Anatolia By Guvener Isik

Vladimir Beregovoy

USA



Guvener Isik, author of The Sheepdogs of Anatolia, was born in 1964, in Izmir, Turkey. Due to his father's job, he grew up, living in various parts of the country, including Aegean Coast, Northwestern, Central and Eastern Anatolia. Being an observant and nature loving boy, he got his first impressions of Turkish shepherd dogs at an early age, watching them at work and witnessing the many hardships they face, like being shot or abandoned. He developed sympathy and pride for them as the dogs of his home country, and eventually came to think of them as his dogs. Over the years, his interest to them grew into a passion. Today, Isik works in the dairy industry, a business that requires travel in different parts of the world, including remote

corners of Anatolia. As a result, he has made friends among local livestock owners in many places, learning from them about the animals, methods of industry and about their guarding dogs in particular. The people, whose opinions he values most are sustenance shepherds and the breeders of dogs and goats, who depend on good guard dogs for their livelihood. The shepherds carry on a long tradition of transhumance livestock management, with knowledge and experience accomplished since the dawn of civilization. They have passed their knowledge from one generation to next generation without writing, in an oral history, a pure folkloristic cultural phenomenon. The ubiquitous presence of guard dogs living among sheep flocks in Anatolia is as natural as the presence of big predators, living in numerous forests of the same region. Despite the conflicts that arise between these predators and livestock owners, the reader will not find evidence of hatred towards wolves in this book. Wolves and other predators, as all wildlife in general, are disappearing in Anatolia, along with the ancient traditions of transhumance livestock management. Although natural adversaries, they both share the same plight, and without wolves there would be no good dogs to protect the sheep. The book is, therefore not just about the dogs. It is also about the people, their traditions, and the wildlife of Turkey.

The book is composed of a series of articles written by the author at different times and different places, encompassing all aspects of the use of livestock guarding dogs. The style of the book is polemical, full of unexpected comparisons and occasional parables, but they are all appropriate and help to clarify the major theme, specifically, the function of the Anatolian shepherd dog. Function is the one important trait of real livestock guarding dog and a criterion of its purity. Everything else can be allowed to vary, such as body size, coat color, and shape of head and tail, but the one feature that should always meet the highest standard is the dog's effectiveness to

protect sheep from wolves day or night. The leading focus of the book, from cover to cover, is the preservation of Anatolia's aboriginal dogs before they are lost to the purebred and dogs show industries that prioritize look over function. For this reason, the book offers a striking contrast to the majority of popular publications about these dogs.

The book is remarkable that it discusses the livestock guarding dogs of Anatolia as one complex population, not as separate standardized breeds defined by appearance. Different subpopulations are presented as natural variants, not isolated groups with specific, fixed traits. Moreover, physical diversity is valued as part of an adaptation process that always selects for the primary function – to protect livestock from predators. Indeed, variation itself is an adaptation needed to perform this function. Differences in body size, for example, are important in a team work environment, where dogs must possess necessary courage and strength both individually and as complementary members of a group, in order to wand off predators successfully - this would be impossible to achieve as a fixed "optimal" combination in dogs of one "standard" size. Therefore, the author int3entionally does not use standardized body measurements or descriptions; he does not use a typical urbanite tourist-style method, describing and categorizing dogs into breeds, nor does he try to find that golden ideal of the "best typical" dog, which might then become the most likely founder of the "new unspoiled" breed. Instead, he looks at them through eyes of local shepherds, who value the dogs for their suitability to live with the herd and their ability to protect it under any adverse circumstance of bad weather or predation. Function is the one overarching criterion that a dog's quality and this criterion is truly a biological one. Everything else is of secondary importance and may be acceptable as long as it does not impede function. This is why the author does not hide his contempt for the very concept of a purebred dog. Dividing the

dogs of Anatolia into "purebreds" would spell an irreversible end to this wonderful world of aboriginal dogs. One of his strongest statements is this: It would be a good start if the people who are interested in these dogs of Anatolia come forward and explain themselves and the reasons for their choice of ASDs. The first question should be, "Why do we like these Turkish dogs?" The other question would be: "Who bred these dogs in the first place and how did they breed them?" Do we only want to collect the civilized and refined end result of this product, or do we want to breed them as they have always been bred? Is there any reason to bastardize these dogs?

A professional zoologist may disagree with some of the author's statements regarding the breed, subspecies or species But the author is correct in considering and concepts. describing Anatolian shepherd dogs as one large living population with several subpopulations within its extended range. As we know, the very concept of subspecies (geographic race) evolved during late XIX to early XX centuries, from a rigid, frozen-in time typological concept, to a dynamic, evolutionary biological concept. This change in the views of zoologists was inspired by new discoveries made in the field of Remarkably, the idea of the purebred dog also genetics. emerged and grew in popularity during exactly the same time period. Unlike the species concept, however, the same idea of a purebred that was in circulation among dog show fanciers 100 years ago remained essentially unchanged to this day. First, it emphasizes primarily the dog's appearance, which is described in the breed standard and deliberately maintained by selective breeding in isolation. This practice made all 400 plus purebreds recognized by dog registries, into something like a collection of used postage stamps - every purebred has a brief description of its origins and purpose (usually in the past tense fro reading by the announcer at a dog show). In contrast, aboriginal dogs represent living natural populations with many

of the same characteristics known in populations of wild animals, including free mating preceded by sexual selection, the survival of the fittest at all stages of life, fluctuations in population density, high mortality among young puppies and a range of individual and geographic variation. Some 'land races' of dogs are large (some researchers use the term 'land race' to denote a population or subpopulation of dogs), within which some smaller 'land races' may also occur, which is likewise a common phenomenon in wild animals. However, there is one crucial ingredient that differs the fittest dog is the same that meets the requirements of the shepherd. In the case of Anatolian guarding dogs, the ability to protect livestock and home efficiently is the deciding factor in the 'survival of the fittest'. The livestock is a habitat and ecological niche necessary for the dog's survival and its natural ability to protect the herd the herd is just like that of a wild predator and its natural ability to hunt the herd. Both are shaped by their natural functional criterion. The author considers shepherd dogs of Anatolia as one large complex geographic population, which he further subdivides into smaller, but still variable subpopulations with more or less blurred borders. This is also similar to borders between populations of wild species with contiguous ranges. Although Isik uses the term breed throughout the book, he is clearly doing so as a biological concept, not a typological one.

The author was driven by a genuine love of his country, its people and their wonderful dogs. This book is an important step in learning more about the complex of ancient aboriginal dogs and serves as a good example to writers studying native dogs in other parts of the world. There is a hope that future researchers will follow Guvener Isik's footsteps by using a biological rather then a purebred perspective, by treating aboriginal dogs with due diligence, and by cautioning and helping the people of Anatolia to preserve these dogs and their environment for the enjoinment of future generations of nature lovers.

After reading this book, I feel I missed something important in my life, because I never had my own shepherd dog of Anatolia.

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