

DILMUN – this island located in the Arabian or Persian Gulf is steeped in legend as the “Pearl of Immortality”. Even 5000 years ago, there was a thriving culture there whose existence is documented by a whole number of archaeological sites. An Arabian civilization is unthinkable without the tradition of horse breeding. Today, there are more than 5,000 horses living on that small island, with more than 2,000 of them being WAHO registered Arabian purebreds who are loved and promoted by their island’s inhabitants. Today, this small island is called **BAHRAIN**.



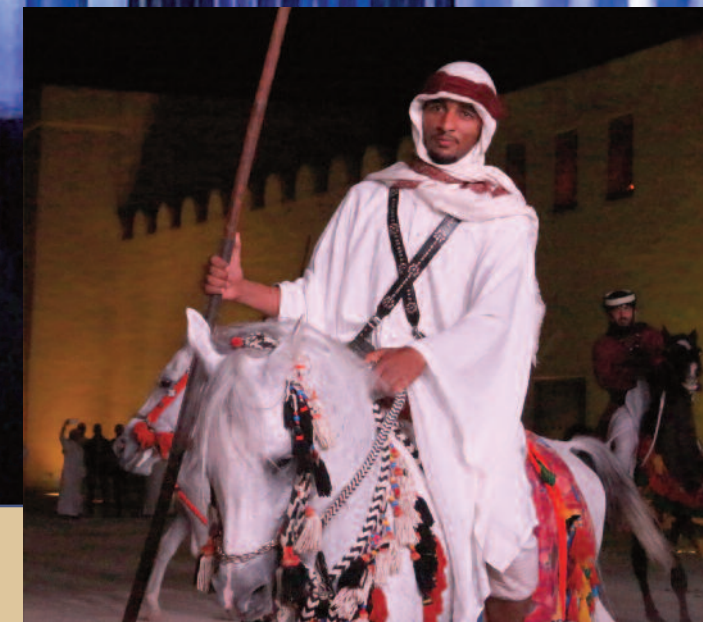
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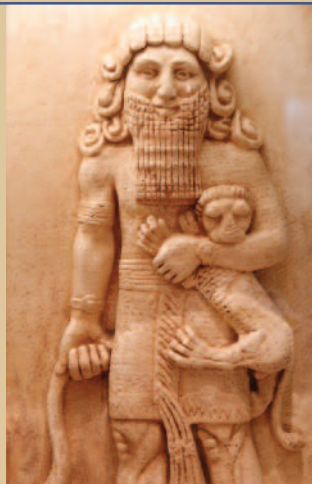
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The 2017 WAHO Conference, Hosted by the **Kingdom of Bahrain**

Part One: From Historic Times to the Present of the Arabian Horse World in Bahrain





The legendary WAHO World Conferences take place every two years. Meanwhile, they are of an almost historic importance and have become much more than just an international exchange between the Executive Committee, the Delegates who are the representatives of the more than 80 studbooks of Purebred Arabian Horses in the member states, and the Observers who are individual WAHO members. The conferences stand for international and multicultural exchange of information, for a complex as well as functioning management of the studbooks, and for keeping the breed of the Arabian horse pure, and they also stand for an analogous, meaning real, world of friendship between breeders and friends of Arabian horses all over the world – no matter what their religion or language may be.

In his opening address, **Mr. Peter Pond**, the Australian President of WAHO, emphasized the part of the interpersonal level, of the multicultural spirit of cohesion, of being a team, that is promoted with the Conferences and which is getting to be ever more rare in our world of digital communication: *“We live in a very fast-moving internet age of social media, instant communication and sometimes unrealistic expectations of instant answers and instant results. Most of us cannot imagine modern life without these useful tools. But any involvement with horses requires time and patience, whether that is in the handling or training or riding of them, or in planning your breeding programs for the years ahead. Sometimes we need to take a breath, sit back and return to older values, to appreciate the importance of real face to face communication, of taking the time to listen to each other, of allowing something to hold our attention for longer than it takes to read a tweet or to send off a quick text. In some ways it is perhaps an anachronism for us all to fly half way round the world just to get together for a few days, but I hope that by socializing together, meeting new people from every corner of the globe who all share one common passion – the Arabian horse – you will leave here feeling enriched and invigorated by new friendships and with a greater understanding of what WAHO is all about.(...) Unfortunately we also live in an age of instability, political unrest and turmoil, and it is unfortunately clear that several of our Member countries have been very badly affected. This of course has not only caused much human suffering, but has also had a detrimental effect on the Arabian horses in those countries. Yet it is very apparent to me, looking round the room, how very highly our Delegates from some of those affected countries value their Arabian horses, so much so that they have taken the*

time and trouble to be here with us today. (...)We are here, all of us, not for ourselves, and in many respects not for our individual countries, we are here for the purebred Arabian horse. We are all here to represent their best interests, and this is the best possible forum to allow the horses - this ancient, precious and unique breed, now so widespread around the world - to carry us forward, building bridges of friendship and understanding across our many languages and across our diverse cultures. It is the Arabian horse which brings us closer together, helping us to learn more about each other and our respective cultures, so we can keep this unique international ‘family of WAHO’ together as a cohesive and cooperative group.”



Mr. Peter Pond, President of WAHO



From February 6 to 15, the world conference with a total of almost 200 participants met in Manama, the capital on the island of BAHRAIN. Thanks to the generous hosts, the Royal House of Bahrain with His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and His Highness Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, the international conference as well as the pre and post-conference tours surrounding it could be transacted most successfully. Even the gates of the Royal private studs were opened for the participants, as well as the racetrack of the Rashid Equestrian & Horse Racing Club. The event was carried into effect by Dr. Khalid Hassan, Director of the Royal Stables, and Mr. Jehangir Rustomjee, registrar of the Arabian studbook of Bahrain. Assisted by their teams and by Katrina Murray, WAHO's Executive Secretary, they made this conference into a total success.



ALIM EDITRICE of Milan, Italy, who are the publishers of the two international Arabian horse magazines **TUTTO ARABI MAGAZINE** and **DESERT HERITAGE MAGAZINE**, devote two comprehensive reports to the WAHO Conference. “Part One: From Historic Times to the Present of the Arabian Horse World in Bahrain”. “Part Two: The WAHO Conference in Bahrain, Results and Speeches for the Arabian Horses Associations and Breeders from all Over the World”, is going to be published in the upcoming issue of the TUTTO ARABI MAGAZINE.



Dr. Khalid Hassan



Mr. Jehangir Rustomjee

Photo: Ali Alawadhi



Photo: Ali Alawadhi



Photo: Ali Alawadhi



Photo: Ali Alawadhi



RITZ CARLTON HOTEL - FEBRUARY 8TH	
1.	D. SAADAH BHRSP 1022, Grey Mare, Born 12 March 2014 By Royal Colours out of HJ Roraming Fame
2.	KUNOOZ ALA BHRSP 1362, Grey Mare, Born 07 February 2013 By Sourur Al Rayyan out of Lala El Julien
3.	TAJ AL ANOOD BHRSP 1127, Chestnut Stallion, Born 24 April 2010 By Adnan Al Shaqab out of LTF Eka
4.	WAKEN AL KHAWALED BHRSP 1330, Bay Mare, Born 30 October 2012, By B Fajr out of Oslah
5.	HAGAR GUASIMO BHRSP 1464, Chestnut Mare, Born 25 July 2010 By Maruk Guasimo out of Birt Najma Guasimo
6.	SHIRB AL SHAKHOURA BHRSP 032, Grey Stallion, Born 02 January 2009, By Nat Al Rayyan out of Tahir Al Shahees
7.	ADWAN AL SHAKAB BHRSP 1637, Chestnut Stallion, Born 27 January 2001, By Al Aded Al Shaqab out of Tabah
8.	NOOR AL RASHEDAH BHRSP 1499, Bay Stallion, Born 29 January 2014, By ZT Fajr out of Sallamah Ezzan
9.	D. JALLAB BHRSP 1620, Grey Stallion, Born 01 November 2013 By Miraj out of Rasada

Dr. Ali Follad: “A Brief History of the Kingdom of Bahrain” (condensed Version)

“The Land is silver and the Sea is pearl” - this is an ancient Bahraini description of their sea-surrounded homelands. Modern Bahrain encompasses two groups of 33 islands in total, with one group of six being located just 24 kilometers off the coast of Saudi Arabia. These islands are joined by bridges and causeways, the two most heavily populated ones being Bahrain Island and Muharraq Island. The land is largely flat and arid, so at 122 metres above sea level, the highest point of Bahrain is Jabal Ad Dukhan. In the North of Bahrain, underground springs emerge to form natural oases, and it was this supply of fresh water that allowed people to settle on the island. 5,000 years ago the inhabitants of Bahrain worshipped Enki, the god of sweet waters under the earth. Today the blessing of this second sea of fresh water is referenced in the name of the nation El Bahrain, which means “The Two Seas.”

The period from circa 3000BC until 500AD is known as the Dilmun period. Because of its location along the sea trade routes linking Mesopotamia with the

The Dilmun king Hundaru paid annual tribute. On this relief from the palace of Nineveh the Assyrian ruler is seen receiving booty from a captured city, including finest horses.



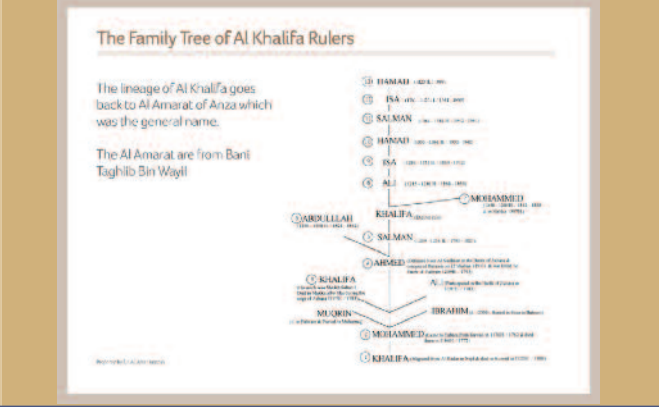
Indus Valley civilization, Dilmun developed into one of the greatest centers of trade of the ancient world. After Dilmun, from 323 BC to 628 AD, there followed the Greek Tylos Period. Of the numerous archaeological sites, Qal’at al-Bahrain gives an

exceptional example of the unbroken continuity of occupation over a period of almost 4,500 years, from about 2300 BC to the present, on the island of Bahrain. The Tylos Period was ended by the Islamic Era. During the early Islamic period the Prophet Muhammad sent his first envoy, the people of Bahrain then converted to Islam and built the first mosque in Bahrain, called Al Khamis Mosque. Today’s reigning family, the Al Khalifa, formed part of the Utoob tribe, and the Utoob represented an alliance of several Arab tribes from the plains of the Nejd area in today’s Saudi Arabia. In the years subsequent to their migration (1671-1680 AD), they settled along the Arab coastlines of the Gulf.

The family tree of the Al Khalifa rulers started with Sheikh Khalifa bin Mohammed who was the first to migrate from the Nejd and settle down in Kuwait. In 1762, the tribal group under Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa moved to Zubara in Qatar where they erected Sabah fort. His son Sheikh Khalifa imposed no tax on commercial merchandise, so the country attracted trade and business. Its proximity to the pearl fishing sites made it rich and important. It registered great cultural progress because of the migration to Zubara of a great number of scholars from Basra in Iraq and from Al-Hasa in today’s Saudi Arabia. Zubara’s wealth, peace and prosperity evoked the jealousy of others, who besieged the city.

Sheikh Khalifa’s son, Sheikh Ahmed, was able to drive away the aggressors, proceeding into Bahrain in the process. He conquered Bahrain in 1783 and was titled ‘Al Fateh’, the Conqueror. During the rule of his son Sheikh Salman, Bahrain faced a difficult period because of the local and foreign attacks on its lands. So in 1820, along with his brother and successor Sheikh Abdullah, he signed a treaty of peace with the other Gulf Sheikhs. During the reign of this brother’s grandson, Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa, Bahrain saw the conclusion of agreements with Britain. Sheikh Isa Bin Ali, among the most famous Al Khalifa rulers, was born in 1849. His achievements included the first hospital built in Bahrain in 1900 and the opening of the first school in 1919. He opened social clubs and theaters, developed the administrative system during the 1920’s, developed the police and the security. He died in 1932.

The first discovery of oil in the whole region was in Bahrain, also in 1932. That brought prosperity to the country and led to its rehabilitation. The then ruler, Sheikh Hamad, again reformed the administrative sections including customs, judiciary, and police, and carried out pearl diving and land reforms. The Hamad Bridge, which is between the Island of Bahrain and the Island of Muharraq, was built in 1941. During the 1940ies and 1950ies, with Bahrain ruled by Sheikh Salman bin Hamad for nearly two decades, Bahrain progressed immensely. There was another administration reform with a ‘Bahrainisation’ enabling Bahrainis to assume a position of



leadership within the administration of country. There was an educational renaissance with new schools built and existing ones expanded. Clean water and also electricity were prioritized. And as for sports activities, he started biannual horseracing events in 1943.

Sheik Hamad’s eldest son, Sheikh Isa Bin Salman, was the first Emir of Bahrain from 1961 until his death. In his era Bahrain gained its independence from the United Kingdom on August 14th, 1972. At all levels of social, cultural and political life, many facilities were reformed.

In 1990, he was succeeded by his son His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa. In 2001, a National Action Charter was adopted with the consent of 98.4% of Bahrainis, declaring Bahrain a Constitutional Monarchy that calls for freedom of religions and speech, for forming of NGOs and trade unions, and for equality between citizens.

There are five Bahraini associations for the protection of human rights. The Kingdom of Bahrain ensures the freedom to practice the rituals and beliefs of different religions and sects without any government restrictions, there are several churches and synagogues and a number of temples and other communities. There is also the Supreme Council for Women, established in 2001 and aimed at developing women’s affairs and constitutional and civil communities, taking into account non-discrimination against them. Presided by Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, the king’s wife, the Council has encouraged the expansion of women’s political rights in Bahrain, encouraging women to vote in elections.

And the horses? Since time immemorial the Arab tribes have protected the purity and the beauty of the Arabian horse, by careful selective breeding. The family strains were known and no impure blood from outside breeding was allowed to contaminate these strains. In this respect the Arabian horse families of Bahrain were fortunate as they received the added attention of the country’s rulers who are renowned for their love of and loyalty to their horses. In 1999, King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa succeeded his late father as the Ruler and the Head of State of Bahrain, and also as a man who truly loves horses and takes great care of them, devoting much of his time and energies to maintaining the family strains



handed to him by his father, and preserving the purity of their blood and improving it. To this end King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa gave orders for Amiri Stables to be built to modern specifications, and to re-locate them with the objective of maintaining a natural environment in which to breed and preserve the living treasure that is the Bahrain horse. His Majesty must be credited with registering Bahraini pure Arabian horses with the World Arabian Horse Organisation, WAHO, and is considered one of the major Arabian horse breeders in the world, in respect of the Asil which is pure desert horses. He inherited this exceptional collection of rare horses from his ancestors who were famed for preserving the purity of their horses, and it is his intention to continue with what his forefathers have handed down to him.

The rulers of Bahrain treasure their Asil, the pure horses, and have maintained their purity in all circumstances. Thus over the centuries Bahrain has become a mecca for lovers of purity. The Al Khalifa dynasty is unique in their way of preserving the purity of the bloodlines of their Arabian horses and improving their security. This positive attitude is carried from generation to generation, as an appreciation of an esteem for their horses. The Al Khalifa have never bred their horses for commercial purposes, rather they have taken great care of them and honored them to preserve history, not for material gain. The aim was to perpetuate their purity. Over the centuries, the Al Khalifa family have often presented horses to those they observe will appreciate the precious gift of a purebred Bahraini Arabian horse, and aptly this has created a means of sharing and allowing the spread of Asil blood.

The text has been condensed into a short version for this publication.

“Enjoy our Horses but don’t Steal them with your Eyes” (Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Al Khalifa)

The Royal breeding program of Bahrain is a unique matter. It is the most closely guarded collection of Arabian horses and the very rarest of the breed in the world. The Royal Stud of Bahrain was established in 1783, meaning that these horses have been bred selectively for more than 200 years by now, and visiting them is like being able to steal a glance into the venerable past of the Asil horses of the desert. They have not been changed or subjected to influences to change them, so neither temporary fashion, nor commercial strategies, nor changes in climate or geology have been allowed to impact them. Still, some horses from that Royal breeding have found their way into studs elsewhere as presents for honored guests and have gone into history there, such as the famous mares Bint El Bahreyn, Jellabiet Feysul, Nuhra, Sawannah, or Thorayyah, and the stallion Kuhailan Afas.

With her short presentation on “Bahrain's Arabian Horses”, **Jenny Lees** attuned us for our visit to the Royal studs.

Throughout the centuries, the Arabian horse has been a formidable war horse, while from the number of countries represented in this room today, it seems that the Arabian horse is now a creator of lasting friendships and a universal peacemaker.

I saw my first Arabian Horse here in the Kingdom of Bahrain in 1960. It was a magnificent stallion, a deep mahogany bay, he was called Dahman. I accepted the offer to ride the stallion and from that moment the horses of Bahrain became a lifetime’s passion. I often refer to these unique horses as 'history on the hoof', and when you visit the studs of his Majesty King Hamad and his Royal Highness the late Prince Mohammed, you will have the opportunity to look back in time. The horses in these studs are a window to the past, today looking much as they did centuries ago, as the criteria for breeding within the studs have not changed: conformation, temperament, soundness, speed.

When His Highness Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Bin Hamad explained his preservation program to me, he said: “Jenny, throughout the centuries the war horse was needed for our families' very survival, and



now they need us for their survival. They took care of us, and now it is our turn to take care of them.”

There are some time-honored strains here that have always been in the family: Obeyah; Kray; Mlolesh; Ma’anaghieh; Kuheila’t Afas and Shuwaimeh. In the Royal Studs, it is the mares that are treasured most. Every foal will carry its dam’s name, an example would be the Obeya, if she has a colt he is Obeyan, if it’s a filly she is Obeya, and then a given name is added. Other strains have been introduced through the centuries, usually by gifts exchanged between rulers and Kings, so they were horses fit for a King, Asil horses from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait and Syria. However, since the late 1960ies very few imported horses have been accepted into the breeding program. It is a tradition that the care of the Royal Stud is passed from Father to Son. This responsibility is now in the hands of our host His Highness Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, he personally selects which stallions go to which mares, and, Your Royal Highness Prince Salman, may I say your son has inherited a remarkable eye for that. I wish to thank His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa for inviting the WAHO family to Bahrain, his Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa for accepting the invitation to attend today, and I would like to finish with something his Highness the late Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Al Khalifa said to me, “Jenny, enjoy our horses but don’t steal them with your eyes”.

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THE ROYAL STUD
of HH King Hamad Bin Isa al Khalifa in Al Roudha





THE ROYAL STUD
of the King's late uncle, HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Khalifa in Umm Jidr



Emma Maxwell:
“Precious Pearls: The Importance
of Bahraini Foundation Horses in Breeding
Programmes Worldwide.”

Probably the most well-known foundation horse from Bahrain is the stallion Kuhailan Afas, who went to Poland to have tremendous influence there. But there were also three mares: Jellabiet Feysul and Bint El Bahreyn went to Egypt in 1846 and 1898, while Nuhra left to the UK in 1940. The total number of around 80 exports by now from the unique Bahrain programme makes them actually a fascinating study of the Arabian horse.

Jellabiet Feysul: The Jellabi strain that I think most of us associate with Bahrain was established during the rule of Sheikh Abdullah, between 1796 and 1843. It is a member of this family who first created an international legacy. Imported in approximately 1846 to Egypt, Jellabiet Feysul became a member of the legendary collection of Abbas Pasha I, Viceroy of Egypt. Her blood does appear in Egyptian pedigrees with frequency via two of the Crabbet exchanges, as Lady Anne Blunt bought no less than 7 members of the Jellabiet Feysul family, one of them famous Khatila, her favourite riding horse, who left daughters as well known as Kasida and Kibla.The first connection back to Egypt comes through the stallion Feysul, whose Crabbet-bred son Ibn Yashmak was the sire of famous Bint Rissala. You will find Feysul’s pedigree repeated many times at the end of modern

Emma Maxwell
Photo: Sharon Meyers

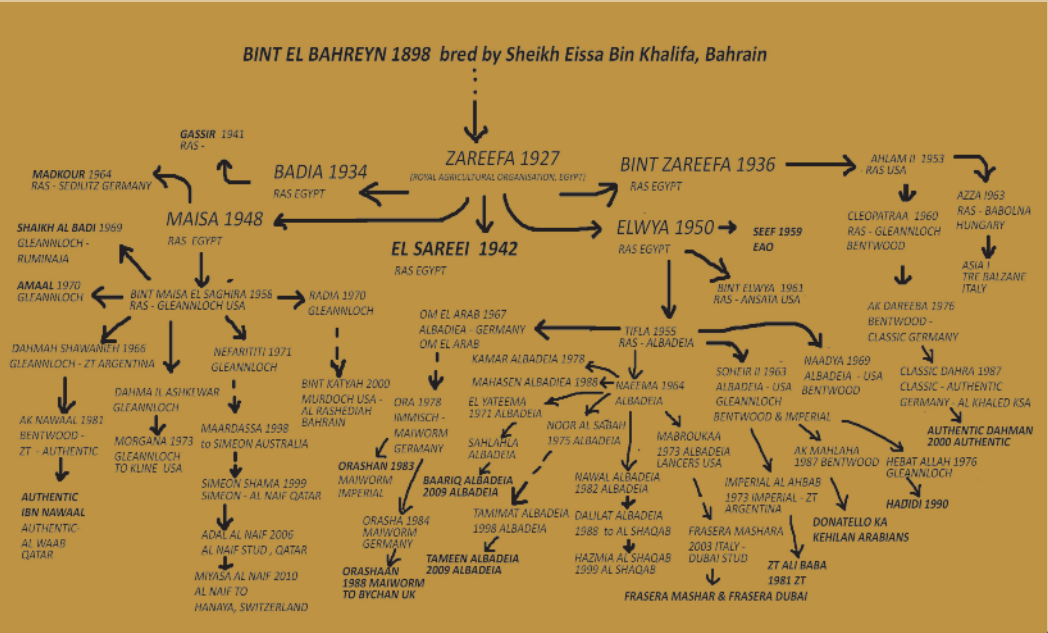
pedigrees. In particular, the Feysul heritage lives on in Kazmeen/Kasmeyn (RAS), who sired Bint Sabah who was dam of famous Sheikh El Arab, and also in incomparable Nazeer via his dam Bint Samiha. Numerous offspring of the tail line live in the USA today, with one of the most prestigious breeders being Daniel Gainey. His description of a perfect Arabian seems to me a perfect inversion of the order in which we list these characteristics today: “... a *delightful disposition, an excellent walk, lots of action at the trot, a light-footed gallop and must also have refinement, dry bone, perfect legs, an exciting overall desert type and a superbly small dry head and ears*”. He explained that he watched the horse in pasture and how they looked at walk trot and gallop, and then got the feel of them under saddle, looking at, their surefootedness and their spirit and gaiety. All useful tools for a master breeder to employ! - From Gayney’s, prestigious horses of the Feysul line have gone to Canada, South America, and Germany, and almost full circle back to Saudi Arabia.

Bint El Bahreyn / Dahmeh: Lady Anne Blunt, who bought her in Egypt where she had been in the herd of Abbas Pasha II, described her only defect as having ‘ears like bats’. The big ears sometimes pop up in her descendants - as all breeders know, appearing to lose something in the first generation does not necessarily mean it is



Musgrave Clark’s Courthouse Stud, was a very successful English breeders’ recipe. It was a very small family in comparison to those which had already been in the country for several generations but the family produced an extraordinary sweep of National Champions starting in 1959, with Rajjella, Darjeel and Zehraa/Kazra some of the most well-known representatives carrying on the line. For quite some years, linebreeding to Nuhra became the fashion, which produced a very recognisable sort of successful horse. They were often very dark chestnut and very elegant, and while not particularly big, they were suitable for any of the show ring pursuits of the UK. A branch in Spain produced Spanish and International Champions, and members of the Kazra family in particular have been exported into 18 countries and filtered back into the Middle East. Quite a few other horses of Bahraini origin are most noteworthy for their successes in the world of Arabian riding and breeding. I hope this talk has left you keen to see the Royal Stables and the original Arabians of Bahrain as much as I am. It will be a great pleasure to experience this breeding program in real life, after so many years spent with horses descended from here.

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Anna Stojanowska
Jerzy Bialobok:
“The Kuhailan Afas Story: His influence on the Arabian horses of Poland and worldwide”

There is a direct connection between Polish and Bahraini Arabian horse breeding, which is Kuhailan Afas. Poland as the most Eastern European country used to be an everlasting battlefield and was in need of brilliant war horses. In 1931, Gumniska Stud bought four stallions and four mares in Arabia, one of them the yearling Kuhailan Afas from Bahrain. Poland won many World Championships with the line this stallion founded together with Kuhailan Haifi, one of the descendants being famous Ekstern. Renowned Ofir, also of that line, helped continue the Kuhailan lines through some of his sons - three of the most famous Polish stallions namely Wielki Szlem, Witraż, and Witeź II. Kuhailan Afas himself was lost in 1939 when World War II started. Now in August 2014 we had a very special celebration in Poland, as we received a present from His Highness Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain, a stallion named Kuhailan Aafas Maidaan. One hundred years after the original Kuhailan Afas, this stallion from exactly the same mare line was brought to us to continue the Kuhailan Afas sire line! I would like to thank, among others, “matchmakers” Jenny Lees and Katrina Murray for making this situation possible. This brilliant performance horse now has a very happy life at Janow Podlaski, enjoying the grass and being much loved. His first crop of foals, born in 2016, shares the attributes of the father: strong body, correct legs, and definitely looking like desert Arabian horses. The main criteria of Polish breeding have always been the same: beauty and stamina, proven through shows and races. The number of mares in the State studs has been and is about 250 broodmares, while with the political changes, the number of privately owned broodmares is now more than 1,000. I believe that the Polish breeding program will continue its most important points with all of them in the future.

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Anna Stojanowska



Jerzy Bialobok



Kuhailan Afas

Pauline Du Plessis:
“The history of the Tuwaisan sire line in South Africa”

Tuwaisan, bred by the Royal Amiri Stables of Bahrain in 1955, was the first Bahraini stallion to be exported to South Africa in 1968, when he was 13 years old. He is named after the strain of his dam Tuwaisah bred by the Anezah tribe. Jellaby Al Wazmia, his sire, was the son of Jellabieh Safqa tailing to the original Kehaileh Jellabieh mare which came to Bahrain as a legendary war mare known far and wide for her speed and courage. On Tuwaisan’s pedigree, signed by the Stud Master, is written: “(...)This is one of the superior Arabian Horses known in the Al Khalifa property. (...) Tuwaisan started to race as a three-year-old against many older horses and kept on racing for ten years and won over 50 times. Frequently he proved himself successful against different horses every day of the week. At no time, did he suffer from leg trouble or any other illness.” In 1968 on a visit to Bahrain, Dr. Noli-Marais from South Africa was looking for the original qualities that she thought were lost in the western-bred Arabians. In Tuwaisan, she noted them immediately: tremendous vitality and presence, extremely fine and silky skin, and great toughness. She was overwhelmed when she received Tuwaisan as a gift from the Emir of Bahrain, His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa. Tuwaisan had only seven pure-bred offspring in South Africa, one of them Sahiby Bint Baraka. The Sahiby Stud demonstrated the breed’s versatility by letting children ride them as well as by participating in a variety of events, mainly endurance. Three of Tuwaisan’s offspring, often competing together, were nicknamed “The Three Ferraris”. Saruk Tuwaisan became the catalyst for more Bahraini stallions to be exported to South-Africa to Saruk Arabians of the Du Plessis family. In 1998 the first Endurance World Championships led to a visit to Bahrain and subsequently, Tuwaisan 406 bred by the Amiri Royal Stables, and Mlolshaan Mutab bred by Umm Jidr, came to South Africa in exchange for Saruk Tuwaisan who was then exported to Bahrain. It was my privilege to meet 92- year old Hassan bin Saleh Al Rowaie, who looked after and rode the original Tuwaisan in Bahrain all those years ago



Pauline Du Pless

Photo: Sharon Meyers



Tuwaisan

and it really brought home to me the importance of that unbroken thread of history that connects people and horses all over the world. On behalf of all South Africans we would like to thank the Al Khalifas for their contribution to our incredible Arabian horse gene pool.

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Edouard Al-Dahdah:
“Arabian Strains: Origins, Meanings and
Relevance Today”

Today, I am going to state a number of facts about strains, then I will ask a number of questions about them and try to answer them. Just for the duration of this talk simply forget everything you knew and try to look at it with a fresh mind.

#1: All Arabian horses actually have strains. There are some well-known ones such as Kuhaylan, Saklawi, Ubeyyan etc. Very simply put, Arabian horse strains are the equivalent of family names in humans.

#2: Strains matter. Basically every pure Arabian horse has a strain, and if we don’t know it, it means it was lost, not that it doesn’t have one. For the Bedouins, strains were the horse’s ID, at a time when IDs and passports for horses and registration numbers did not exist, in a society where culture and information were transmitted orally. A system of family names, coupled with a reference to the owner (the *marbat*), was the most convenient and efficient way for Bedouins to keep track of the Arabian horse populations in their tribes, just like at the level of a village, sheiks used to keep track of people through family names.

#3: Strains are transmitted by the dam. In most human societies, including Bedouin Arabia, family names are patrilineal, meaning that names are transmitted from father to son. In Arabian horses family names are transmitted from mother to daughter. Why? In nomadic populations such as the Bedouins, the horses moved with the people, and a foal is born of course by its mother’s side while the stallion might be somewhere else by then. So the foal’s origin would be ascertained by linking it to the parent that it was born to. A second reason is that a tribe would have one or two hundred broodmares and only two or three breeding stallions at a time. So using sire lines in those cases would greatly limit the number of lines within a tribe. And thirdly, ownership laws stipulate that the owner of the dam is the owner of the foal at birth. So naturally the Bedouin owner would attach the



generic family name of the dam to the foal, not the family name of the stallion, who would be owned by another person.

There are also the sub-strains, called *marabit* in Arabic. The assumption is that sub-strains of the same strain are more related to each other than they are related to sub-strains of other strains. As horses changed ownership frequently among the Bedouins, new *marabit* or sub-strains were created and old ones either survived or disappeared. And some sub-strains are derived from each other. For example, the Bedouin Ibn Jarshan of the Hejazi tribe owned a particular mare who was called Kuhayla Ibn Jarshan after her owner’s name and sub-strain. This mare of Ibn Jarshan was “leased” to a man called Ibn Jellab, but did not produce any foals for him. She came back to Ibn Jarshan and then was sold to Bahrain, where she was known by Ibn Jellab’s name even though originally, that mare was of the strain of Kuhaylan Ibn Jarshan. Another one

of Ibn Jarshan’s mares made her way to the Anazeh tribe where she produced a long line of famous horses, with the strain known as Kuhaylan Jreishan. And again over time the Kuhaylan Jreishan went to a man named Wati in the tribe of Sbaa Anazeh, so the mare’s sub-strain changed from Kuhaylan Ibn

Jreishan to Kuhaylan Wati. That means that two strains, one of them now famous in Syria called Kuhaylan Wati, and the other strain famous in Bahrain called Kuhaylan Jellabi, both trace back to the same original mares, the Kuhaylan Jreishan, who were the mares of Ibn Jarshan.

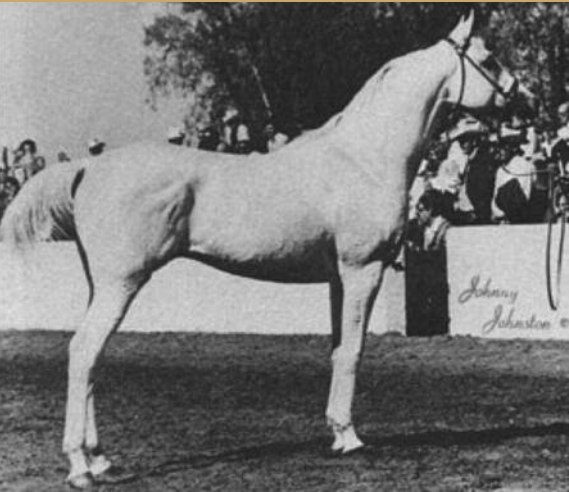
Fact #4: Some strains are derived from others. Was there a single, original strain? Does it mean that all Arabian horses trace to one, or maybe five mares? Kuhaylan appears to have been the original strain and all strains trace back to it. In addition, there is a consensus that Kuhaylan Ajuz is older than other strains, so some other strains derived from it. Does that mean that all horses of the Kuhaylan strain trace to one mare? No, mitochondrial DNA tells you it doesn’t, and that fact is actually in accordance with the Kuhaylan Ajuz legend.

That legend has it that there was a warrior who had a mare with a foal. Running from foes, the warrior had to leave the foal behind and an old lady rescued it. This woman was ‘Al-Ajuz’ (Arabic: ‘the elderly’). All Kuhaylan Ajuz are the descendants of that mare, named after that old lady.

But it does not make sense that all Kuhaylan were derived from that single mare. And if they do not all trace to one mare, is it possible they trace to five mares, according to the myth of the Khamsa which says that just five of the prophet’s mares, when very thirsty and turned out to drink, were the only ones who heeded his call to return?

Now at the time of the Prophet the strains were traced from father to son, so that story is a much later appropriation of this myth, made by people living in cities. Bedouins aligned this myth - that all mares traced to the five mares of the Prophet - with their own stories. And each tribe, and sometimes each person, included in the list of these 5 mares whichever strains they wanted to include, their criteria often being personal preference or the presence of the strain within the tribe. Everyone agreed that among these 5 strains you had Kuhaylan, Saklawi and Ubeyyan, but then people would add two other strain combinations.

#5. How old are the current strains? History may provide an answer: Transition by patrilineal lines is more of a feature of settled societies, and transmission by matrilineal lines, of nomadic societies. After the Islamic conquests, the horses



went out helping to conquer parts of the world. During that time, central Arabia became closed back on itself. A few centuries later the country returned to the Bedouin way of life, a situation which I call ‘re-bedouinisation’ of Arabia, while at the same time, an increasingly settled way of life was taking place in the big cities such as Damascus, Baghdad, etc. At about that time, around 1000 AD, strains switched to female names.

So, how old are current strains? There is some hard evidence. In about 1670 AD the Sharif of Mecca at the time offered six mares to the Governor of Egypt. Of these six mares, three are mentioned by strain: Al-Kuhaylah, Al-Hadba and Al-Bughaylah. Al-Bughaylah as a strain died out but Al-Kuhaylah and Al-Hadba remain.

As for Bahraini strains, a French traveller in about 1685 mentions the strain of Tuwaisan which is very popular in Bahrain today.

I have some very fresh information on the Dahman strain, which is very much valued in Bahrain. This famous strain is known to go back to Shahwan, so everybody says Dahman Shahwan. A medieval manuscript, a chronicle of historical events in Yemen, tells that in 1279 AD, the Hadramaut area of Yemen was invaded by a force that was “... split in three armies and one of the three armies, ...was (led by) Sheikh Shahwan ibn Mansur al-Abidi and he had with him 200 horsemen of the Arab nomads. ...” If the Dahman Shahwan is indeed this Sheikh’s strain and was named after him, this strain is 850 years old.

There is also some oral evidence on the age of strains. Ibrahim Ibn Saadi, the *Aarifa* (tribal judge also dealing with laws applied to horses) of the Shammar, owned a particular strain called Kuhaylan al-Sharif, that is the ‘Kuhaylan of the Sharif’. He told me that this strain is not a branch of Kuhaylan Ajuz as we would have expected it to be, but it was actually the opposite, his strain was called Kuhaylan Al Sharif Al Ajuz. That means the Kuhayla of the elderly Sharif. Not just any Sharif of Mecca but the elderly one, which places him to about 1726. So Kuhaylan al-Ajuz and Kuhaylan al-Sharif are the same, because later on, from the Kuhaylat al-Sharif al-Ajuz the name of al-Sharif was dropped and it became Kuhaylat al-Ajuz. And that, in turn, may mean that these Kuhaylat of the Sharif traced to a pool of unrelated mares owned by that single person at around that single time. That explains many things, first of all that all these Kuhaylat mares do not come from a single mare. The different mares of this broodmare band spread out to the tribes, so the Kuhaylan al-Dhabi, Kuhaylan Harqan, Kuhaylan al-Jalala, Kuhaylan al-Nkhayshan, Kuhaylan al-Shnaynan, Ubayya al-Sharif which later became Ubayya Suhayli, Kuhaylan al-Sharif, Kuhaylan ibn Jlaidan and also the Kuhaylan Ajuz strain of the Jordanian Royal Studs, they all go back to that pool of mares.

Are some strains “better” than others?

This is not about facts, but about discussions and issues, so in my opinion, the answer is No. They are all equally good and it is a matter of preference, taste, and personal choice. Historically, within a tribe, stallions were always chosen from a few homebred strains, well known to everyone in the tribe. My opinion is that there is also no relationship between the strain and the type. You can actually create a type by line-breeding horses from the same strain that look like each other, and then you fix that certain type which is associated with that strain. Are some strains closer to the “classic” Arabian type than others? My answer is No, because there is no single classic Arabian type, there are several hundred Arabian types. In the West, we have converged too fast towards one type of Arabian horse and so they all end up looking like each other, which is pretty much the show standard. There are horses who are

extremely coarse by Western standards, from certain strains such as Kray or Shawafan in Bahrain - yet they are some of the purest and oldest ones and have been preserved for hundreds of years here in Bahrain, constituting a valuable part of the gene pool of the Arabian breed as a whole.

**The Golden Thread:
Connecting Our Arabian Horse Heritage from the Past to the Future.**

Trying to preserve our time-honoured Arabian bloodlines means fighting against time. If you are interested in a particular strain and you want to only breed from that strain it means you are preserving that strain. The notion is that we will be fighting against the introduction of horses from other bloodlines into that group and protecting that group from within. In the desert there was a tradition of preserving horses within the same (human) family for ten generations and more, which is one way of protecting a group of horses. The horses were attached to peoples’ histories. People would marry each other and would give each other horses who were reminiscent of important moments in peoples’ lives and people would hold onto them. They would also preserve the characteristic traits of these horses: their conformation and their disposition. In these societies and for many of us, horses are heirlooms that are transmitted from father to son and they are deeply linked to intimate events of your life. It is a matter of honour to preserve them - owning a horse of an old bloodline is history, is heritage, is culture.

My final message for you is this. Go out and find the strains of your horses. If you do not know them already, look for the ancestral mare, try to find as much as possible about her. These horses have been transmitted to us generation after generation by people who have fought for them, battled for them, owned them, risked their lives for them. There is something about the relationships between Arabian horses and humans that goes beyond just owning a horse, it just goes beyond the price or the value of a horse. It’s about a relationship between an animal and a man that goes over generations. And this is what preservation is about.

The text has been condensed into a short version for this publication.



**Al Rashediah Stud:
“The Journey is Only Beginning”**

Of Bahrain breeding, it’s not only the historic maintenance breeding of Asil Arabians in the Royal studs that’s famous the world over. There are also today’s private breeders, many of whom took their initial bearings from their neighbors in Qatar and Kuwait and are breeding Straight Egyptians, well known in the international breeders’ community and via shows. Quite in the foreground, there are the horses of Al Rashediah stud owned by Abdulrahman Al Jassmi who draw everybody’s attention on international shows. So expectations were running high when the WAHO guests entered the stud on the evening of the presentation offered to them.

Al Rashediah Stud was founded no earlier than 2008, but nevertheless, for insiders it’s among the Top Ten of the most beautiful studs in the Gulf area. Mr Al Jasmi has loved horses since he was a small boy, so today, as a successful businessman, he combines his joy of horses with a well-founded strategy and a clear-cut goal. He wishes to breed Straight Egyptians who will be able to win important international shows. The stud premises, located along the beach of Janabiayah, made a most imposing frame for the presentation of the many excellent horses. Handler Giacomo Capacci with an assistant had come all the way from Italy in order to present the horses. As a competent speaker, there was Klaus Beste who was able to provide the spectators with a lot of interesting information on Al Jasmi’s breeding program. Of the 65 horses of the stud, about 35 were presented this evening. The famous foundation



Desha Nile Queen (Amaar Al Rayyan X Ansata Nile Silk) with filly at side by Jamil Al Rayyan



Mr. Peter Pond, President of WAHO and Mr. Abdul Rahman Al Jasmi

Photo: Ali Alawadhi

mares Desha Nile Queen, NK Nadine, NK Hebbattolah, Kareymah Ezzain, Sherifa El Gabry and many others were shown together with their foals. The first foal crop of the pride of the stud, stallion Jamil Al Rayyan, was most impressive throughout, in type as well as in quality. The stud’s most successful showhorse internationally, colt Naseem Al Rashediah by Al Adeed Al Shaqab out of Nabaweyah Ezzain, 2016 Gold Champion in the European Championships as well as in the World Championships for Straight Egyptians, regretfully was abroad in Italy for show training. To compensate, star stallion Jamil Al Rayyan presented himself to the WAHO visitors cheerfully and in top condition, just as did his bay stablemate ZT Faa’iq. To round the evening off, the beautiful and well-designed stable buildings were open for the visitors to have a close look at, and last not least, host Al-Jasmi provided a splendid and delicious buffet, meeting ground for breeders to engage in shop talk.

AL RASHEDIAH STUD



Nadirah Al Rashediah (ZT Faa'iq X NK Naeema)



Hala Al Rashediah (NK Qaswarah X NK Hebbattolah)



Nashwah Ezzain (Suror Ezzain X NK Nada)



Joud Al Rashediah (Rashdan Al Rashediah X NK Jamilla)



NK Nadine (NK Nader X NK Nabeelah) Colt at side by Jamil Al Rayyan



Sherifa El Gabry (Amil Al Rayyan X Al Muntaha Shareefa)



Zaki Al Rashediah (Shahd Elkuwait X Desha Payton)



Deem Al Rashediah (Ansata Nile Echo X Farid Nile Dream)



ZT Faa'iq (Anaza El Farid x ZT Jamdusah) and Jamil Al Rayyan (Ansata Hejazi x Dana Al Rayyan)



Colt by Jamil Al Rayyan out of Bint Kayta



Jamil Al Rayyan (Ansata Hejazi x Dana Al Rayyan)



Photo: Ali Alawadhi

BREEDING ARABIAN HORSES IN BAHRAIN

About 2,000 purebred Arabian horses registered by WAHO live in Bahrain. Except for those living in the big Royal studs, they are distributed all over the country with lots of small breeders and owners. Every year, more than 200 foals are born and registered in the studbook. According to the WAHO report, an average of 4 national Arabian shows, 26 Arabian races and 12 endurance races take place in Bahrain every year. Due to the extensive information and working agenda of the WAHO Conference, and as the pre and post conference tours („The Pearls of Bahrain Days“) were mainly dedicated to the most important historic and cultural highlights of the island nation, most of the studs that had kindly offered to present their wonderful Arabian horses had the opportunity to do so during the evening gala dinners held at the hotels.

The following studs and owners have been involved into the presentations:

Mr. Alaa Abduljabbar Hammad
 Mr. Sami Hasan Al Rayes
 Mr. Ali Abdulla Al Aali
 Mr. Fadhel Abbas Al Jamri
 Dr. Bashar Mustafa Al Sayed
 Mr. Mahmood Abdulqader Ali Dawood Salman
 Sh Salman Bin Ahmed Al Khalifa
 Mr. Sherafuddin Abdulla Al Qaoud
 Mr. Khail Ebrahim Al Sendi
 Mr. Abdulameer Aljaboori
 Mr. Ali Jaffar Al Maheshi
 Mr. Mohammed Al Tamimi



Photo: Ali Alawadhi



AL SHAKHOURA STUD

By individual invitation from my friend Mr. Waheed Al Aali, I visited his Al Shakhoura Stud, the oldest breeding stable of Straight Egyptians in Bahrain, with an international lineage present. Taking advantage of the opportunity, I held a short interview with him.

Monika: What were your reasons to start breeding Arabian horses in Bahrain?

Waheed: I started to get interested in horses in the 1970ies, but with WAHO horses, I only started around 2001 when my daughter asked me to buy her a horse if she were to improve her school records. She did, and I kept my promise, and of course, company for that first horse was required and we acquired three mares and one stallion. After a short time, I knew I wanted to concentrate on straight Egyptians, so I asked Sheikh Aziz, who had collected so many good Egyptians, to start me off, helping me to choose suitable horses. After two years he presented seven horses to me to choose from, and that was really helpful. I acquired some Halim Shah and Hanan and Ali-daar lineage that way, and I was very happy.

Monika: What was the situation in Bahrain at that time?

Waheed: There were no quality Egyptian breeders in Bahrain then, and many people did not differentiate between Egyptians and the rest of the Arabian breed. But the Egyptians have that special look, their eyes, their conformation, and I had fallen in love with them. Today, we even have a Straight Egyptian Show and about ten breeders in Bahrain. There are many more owners, of course.

Monika: Is there, in your opinion, somebody in Bahrain who takes things somewhat into his hands in breeding Egyptians?

Waheed: We keep in close touch with the Kuwaiti and Qatari breeders, with Kuwait perhaps more important, as they have a great number of breeders and are very cooperative, exchanging stallions and information among each other. In Qatar there is one big breeder, who has excellent stock, but as we say here, one hand doesn't clap. It would take more breeders in Qatar, to be able to help each other.

If you did not like the look of one of your horses, would you use him in your program? No, you would not. If your neighbor had a stallion and you did not like the offspring he produced, would you use him in your program? No, you would not. This is selection. Some breeders in this part of the world won't use certain horses in their programs, so they engage in a kind



of negative selection. In my opinion, selection adds to the mystery and fascination that surrounds this noble creature.

Monika: What do you like to see in a horse?

Waheed: I don't like long backs and short legs. Once such horses get to be eight or nine years old, the back starts to sag. So I try not to use lines that have that problem. But I am not bashing anybody, I just try to get away from certain traits I don't want in my program.

Monika: How did you develop your idea of what you would like to see in your horses?

Waheed: Actually, Sheikh Abdul Aziz had a lot of influence on my and other people's breeding in the initial stage. But in the course of time, everyone develops an individual look, his own idea of what he wants. Many breeders like what Abdul Aziz produces at Al Rayyan, but they still want to have a different look. Me, I definitely want to develop a look of my own with my horses. I like a well-arched neck, for example, a clean throatlatch, a good shoulder. I don't want the short legs that many Egyptians have and which many breeders don't mind if the horse just has a nice head with beautiful eyes. I think long legs are also part of the beauty of the horse, of his elegance, just as is a long neck.

Monika: Do you aim at producing show champions?

Waheed: I am not much for shows, as judges often have their own view of horses, and I don't always agree with them. They also change their opinions on



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1. Dana Alshaqab
2. Amal AlShakhoura
3. Yasmeen AlShakhoura
4. Jasser AlShakhoura
5. Rayyana AlShakhoura
6. Tafani AlShakhoura
7. Salem AlShakhoura
8. Salama and Salem AlShakhoura
9. Nawara AlShakhoura
10. Dalal AlShakhoura
11. Arsan AlShakhoura
12. Anwar AlShakhoura
13. Adham AlShakhoura
14. Malika AlShakhoura
15. Najdi AlShakhoura
16. Naif Alrayyan

the desirable look every few years. I have a certain look in mind and I try to achieve it - never mind what's the current fad in the show business.

Monika: How do you keep contact with other breeders, then?

Waheed: I keep in touch with other breeders, they know what I am producing, and I go and see what they are producing. Sometimes I need their advice, sometimes they need my advice, and we also try to exchange stallions. It's not been done yet in Bahrain. I was the first Egyptian breeder here - when I started, there was nobody to cooperate with.

Monika: Do you test the functionality of your horses in some way, by breaking them to riding, for example?

Waheed: We ride all the stallions, but with the mares, we sometimes miss out on that, because we breed them at three years old.

Monika: This is good training and education for the stallions, they also learn to respect people that way.

Waheed: We at Al Shakhoura are lucky to have stallions and mares with a very nice character, they are really like pets, they come and ask for a pat or a carrot. They want to be part of the group with their humans. Some lines - outside of our stud - are more aggressive, and we avoid using them. Some of our horses here are from Nagel lines, and these lines are known for their sweet, friendly character. I also love them for their type, they are almost like something from outside of this world.

Monika: What are your plans for the future?

Waheed: I strongly wish to consolidate that distinctive look I want for my horses, which means I will consider a certain degree of inbreeding. I will pursue that path as long as I see improvements in the looks, the conformation, and the movements. Many people don't like inbreeding, but with good foundation stock, there is little risk of bringing out any negative traits. The problem is not with the horses, but with



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the breeder, who needs to know what he is doing when mating horses with certain traits. He needs to concentrate on the good traits, not the bad ones.

Monika: Thank you for that interesting interview! And don't forget: we breeders in Europe look forward to you visiting our studs! We, too, are in need of a mutual exchange of strategies, views, and ideas – topics we can work on together.