

# MEETING THE THREE CS IN TUSCANY

By MONIKA SAVIER

Photographies: Monika Savier

Graphic project: Mario Brunetti



*2. from right  
Valentina Parodi and friends*



## "PROUD TO RIDE AN ARABIAN HORSE" – THIS IS THE NAME OF AN ITALIAN GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO FIRST MET ON FACEBOOK AND WHOSE COMMON DENOMINATOR IS ARABIAN RIDING HORSES.

The initiators are Leonardo Dori, a breeder and the owner of Monteviale Stud which is famed for its successful Trans Appenin Horse Treks that enthrall lots of riders from all over Italy every year. His fellow initiator Valentina Parodi, a young lady breeder and

enthusiastic rider, is also located in Tuscany. Unflaggingly, she motivated riding friends to take part in the group, and she was among those who made the three-day Tuscany Horse Trek possible ([www.transappenninica.com](http://www.transappenninica.com)). More than 50 riders with their horses showed up for this first national meeting that was under the motto "3 x C". When we asked Leonardo Dori what the three Cs stand for, he said: "The first C is for CAVALLI ARABI (Arabian horses), the second one is for the CUCINA (Tuscany kitchen), and the third one is for CULTURA (culture)".

I then asked him what is his interpretation of culture in this context, and he replied: "That's why you Nawal Media people are here now, presenting Hans Nagel's new book to us. We riders ought to know much more about the background of our riding so we can be really proud of what we do." This answer was added on by Valentina Parodi saying: "In our everyday living with horses, it's much too exclusively that we are busy doing all those trivial things around the horses such as feeding, calling the farrier, organizing money, arranging for riding with friends, and so on. However, particularly in dealing with Arabian horses, it is so important to keep the cultural background in mind. Because of our horses, we have made a lot of friends all over Europe, and at the same time, we came into closer contact with Arabian culture, so all the differences appear almost familiar to us by now, at least for certain areas, as the horses bring all of us together. Which other cultural asset has the power to do this?"

On the second day of the trek, in Badia Tedala (Arezzo, Tuscany, Italy), a presentation had been arranged, with Dr. Hans Nagel (WAHO president) speaking on the origin and role of Arabian rid-



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NEL MONDO

**21 GIUGNO 2014**  
Soc. Circolo a Badia Tedala  
AREZZO, Italy

**PRIMO RADUNO NAZIONALE DEL GRUPPO  
ORGOGGIOSI  
DI MONTARE UN  
PUROSANGUE ARABO**

**DIBATTITO - PRESENTAZIONE**

<b>Dott. HANS JOACHIM NAGEL</b> (presidente WAHO)	<b>Vincenzo Pellegri</b> (ex presidente ANCA, allevamento Soc. Agr. Asia)
<b>Viti Fogarín</b> (allevamento Guasimo)	<b>Mauro Ranieri</b> (Victor Arabians)
<b>Leonardo Dori</b> (allevamento Monteviale)	

Per tutti gli appassionati, cavalieri ed allevatori del purosangue arabo, da fedele compagnia di fondo del bardo a modello di morfologia negli attuali show e al tempo stesso instancabile atleta nelle varie discipline equestri.

L'ingresso al dibattito è libero e gratuito. L'orario di inizio è previsto per le ore 17.30 e sarà possibile acquistare il NUOVO LIBRO scritto ed autografato dal dott. Nagel.

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ing horses. Following this, organizer Leonardo Dori talked about plans for the future, and after him, Vincenzo Pellegrini, a breeder and former ANICA president, spoke about trouble with institutions and how to overcome that in the course of running initiatives for riding Arabian horses and for breeding them as partners for leisure time activities. The evening was concluded by Mauro Ranieri, a successful breeder from Bolzano. Ranieri analyzed the present situation in breeding, em-

phasizing that there is no real alternative to doing dedicated breeding work of your own and trusting in what you are doing. Breeders will always make mistakes, but if they have a sound concept of their own and believe in it, mistakes are the way to learn how to do it right. Subsequently, the listeners attended to the third C: a fantastic five-course meal featuring local produce was served. Highly recommendable and also suitable for non-riders.

*Monika Savier*



*Leonardo Dori and friends*  
**[www.transappenninica.com](http://www.transappenninica.com)**





EXTRACT FROM DR. HANS NAGEL'S SPEECH:

## THE ARABIAN HORSE

### WHERE DOES IT COME FROM AND WHAT WILL ITS FUTURE LOOK LIKE?

The main purpose for the domestication of horses in early history was riding only. Horses were used as war horses or for the migrations of nomadic societies. All other purposes followed later, such as carriage driving, land cultivation, and in our days, sport such as show jumping, dressage and endurance.

In the course of time and in the Western societies, the Arabian horse became a typical pleasure horse, again with riding abilities in the first place. However, it acquired a further, very important position in horse breeding: it became the improver of all country breeds, so all warmblood horses of today are somehow related to Arabian stallions. In order to understand Arabians properly, the following basic knowledge is very helpful.

#### The most ancient horse:

The Arabian horse is in fact the oldest historical breed. Its ancestors came from nomadic tribes in Middle Asia (Kazakhstan) and entered the Arabian Peninsula via Mesopotamia at about 1500 B.C. Before that time, no horses lived on the Peninsula. During the ca. 2.000



*Hans Nagel  
and Vincezo Pellegrini*



years in the hands of the Bedouin tribes and under the influence of the harsh, remote desert environment, it developed typical features that are unique and can be found only in Arabians. Among the worldwide horse population, these features make them recognizable as Arabians and are : concave heads, a high tail carriage, black skin.

Rock drawings of horses with these features, in a district near Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, date from 500 B.C. However, later on just a few remarks about these horses and their importance in the Arab society can be found in the Koran and in certain poetry. Finally in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, European horse people came in contact with these nomadic tribes and their horses. From then on, the Arabian horse became known and appreciated worldwide, due to its exceptional qualities.

### Speed and performance:

A few stallions imported from Syria and Turkey in the 19<sup>th</sup> century made the Arabian famous, among them the Darley Arabian and the Byerley Turk. They became the foundation sires of the English Thoroughbred. Arabians were the fastest horses at that time, and when crossed with selected English country mares, the English Thoroughbred came to life. This breed is now the fastest one on earth; the pure-bred Arabians cannot compete with this breed any more on regular race courses. Still the Arabian is unbeaten in endurance competitions. It can run up to 120 km at a speed of 25 km/h and will be mostly the winner. Only the Arabian cross breeds, like the Anglo-Arabs or the Shagya Arabians, became serious competitors.

### The most beautiful horse:

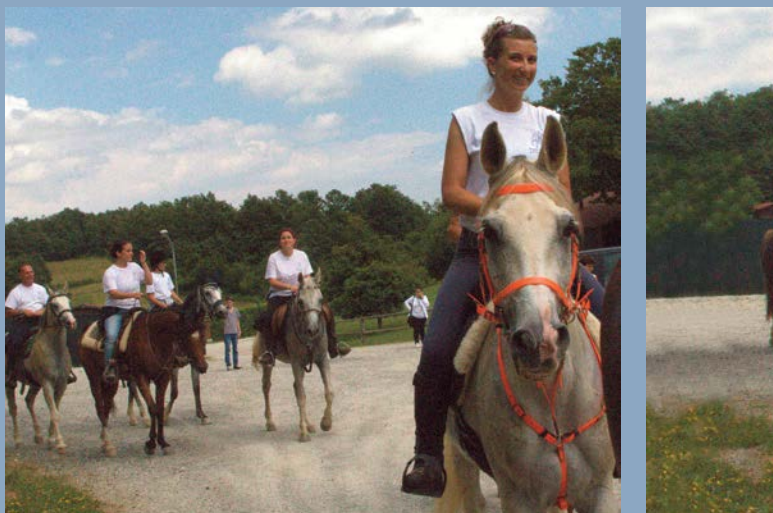
The most beautiful horse breed is without doubt the Arabian. Due to that, it was used as an improver horse in the past, to give the European horse breeds more elegance and nobility. Its other abilities, such as speed and hardiness, were also searched for. At that time, horses for riding and for coach driving carried a lot of Arabian blood and were highly prized. The so-called “warmblood horses” originate from that time.

### The friendliest horse:

The Arabian horse was known for its good reliable temperament. They are awake and alert, intelligent and trustworthy horses, and at all times ladies of the upper class in England and on the continent liked the Arabians for their inherent abilities. Persons of reputation and high social status were also keen on choosing Arabians as their riding horses. It was the close relation of man and horse since historical times in the nomadic Bedouin society that created such a strong bond, and the characteristics that make this bond possible are still existing when breeders are searching and selecting for them.

### The Status of the Breed Today

At all times, there never existed just one type of Arabians. There were always many types, for the following reasons:



#### 1. Environment (historically)

Arabia was a great territory, extending from Syria down to Yemen, and therefore featuring different environments. The Southern Arabian Peninsula was desert-like and poor. Survival was most difficult here.

Consequently, one finds a stronger and bigger type of Arabian in the North, and in the South a smaller and finer one. Due to the frequent migrations of the nomadic population, both types got mixed quite often, so there existed a medium type breed, as well, which means there were three distinctly different types.

#### 2. Selection (human contribution)

Besides the environmental influence, breeders of Arabians had their personal preferences at all times, selecting their Arabians according to their tastes. In Bedouin times, so many strains developed. They are known as Koheilans, Siglawys, Hadbans etc. even today, and still have their sub strains, each one expressing the idea of a certain breeder at that time. The old Arabian names of strains do not matter anymore and were just seen as a relic of history, and in fact they were usually used as a way of establishing genealogy in a certain type of horse. In addition, every bigger stud in history selected for its own type, like the Polish, Russian and English.





*Hans Nagel  
and Leonardo Dori*



All these different types are mixtures of the two original types, the Northern type and the Southern type. The heavier one of the two types was later on called the Koheilan type, and the more refined and elegant one the Siglawy type. In principle, all existing Arabians of today are combinations of the Siglawy and Koheilan types. The most important breeding studs in the past were using these two definitions in order to create their own breeds. The Russians, for example, preferred a horse which should look 40 % Koheilan and 60 % Siglawy, and they even created families with different percentages. Typical Koheilan type horses do not exist anymore, except in some Arab countries, and typical Siglawy horses or horses close to this type still form a great majority of the Egyptian breed. The Russians tried to breed show horses and race and performance horses by combining the types. A special selection for riding purposes was not on their list. But better riding horses appeared among those selected for racing and performance, as they became taller and their type of movement was well fitted for riding purposes.

All the show horses of today are also such combinations of Koheilans and Siglawys and adhere to a certain standard and description, which was created by the Arabian horse show community. This standard type of Arabians is at present time in the minds of most Arabian horse breeders.



*Ellen Pay (translator), Hans Nagel,  
Mauro Ranieri and Vincezo Pellegrini*

No European stud ever selected pure-bred Arabians specifically for riding purposes. They chose other methods and decided for outcross breeding. The best example is the Arabian horse breeding in Hungary/Babolna, which in the 19<sup>th</sup> century developed a part-bred Arabian called Shagya. These horses were designed as perfect cavalry horses for driving and riding. For this purpose, the Hungarians bred selected country mares to imported Arabian stallions, aiming for the perfect combination in type and movement. The first Arabian stallion imported of this quality was "Shagya" in 1830. The offspring of this cross was bred to imported Arabian stallions again for a certain time, paying much attention to riding qualities, and then they bred these horses to each other. They never introduced Hungarian country horses again, but used them as root mares just once. In this way, the Hungarian Shagya became a unique type of horse uniquely suited for riding purposes.

What the Hungarians did in developing this riding horse could easily be done with pure-bred Arabian horses. Success is determined by selecting the proper root mares and choosing the respectively suited stallions for the intended purpose.

Arabian breeders in the last thirty years have, mainly for economical reasons, strongly concentrated on show horse-breeding - a standard show horse concept is the ultimo ratio in breeding today. Riding points are not considered or are even neglected in this respect. It is an interesting open question: where is the difference between both, can they be combined in a positive manner, or do they need two different programs to reach the one or the other goal?

*Hans Nagel*