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# FEMALE CHOICE

## THE LOST KEY TO SUCCESSFUL BREEDING ABOUT THE EFFECT OF GLOBALIZATION ON THE LIFE OF STALLIONS AND MARES

◆ by Monika Savier ◆

Good mares have always been the basis of successful breeding, but is it possible that today we take the role of the stallions too seriously?

In our horses' lives today, reproductive technologies tell us which way to go. Oddly enough, horse breeding is not necessarily more successful today, as progress

does have some disadvantageous side effects; and there have not been more "horses of the century" born in recent years either, no matter how much science and research went into breeding, and no matter how broad the range of modern technologies for the improvement of breeding has become.

The industry around horses, at least, has been flourishing around the globe.

What falls by the wayside, to name one important thing, is the natural contact between stallions and mares, their communication, and their libido. For today, there are hardly any sires who need to compete for being allowed to cover a mare, and



Arabian Broodmares of the Royal Stud Weil. Oil painting Friedrichshafen Castel

there are hardly any mares who come to personally know the stallion who gets them in foal.

How do the stallions and mares react to that? After all, what we take away from them with our artificial interventions in their reproduction is the most important aspect: The passion, and the joy in sexual communication. They cannot even "fall in love" anymore. Somebody laughing at that?

Of course, even horses will sometimes fall in love. Who never encountered that in practical breeding, mares sometimes not displaying heat with certain stallions even though the vet measured them with a 40 mm follicle? Or on the other hand, stallions preferring to whinny after that elderly fat warmblood lady instead of concentrating on the young champion mare right in front of their noses?

Meanwhile we encounter lots of problems with unnatural reproduction. There is lowered fertility in stallions and mares; declining motivation in some mares, and different ways to refuse maternity. In veterinary medicine, only rarely will somebody reflect on the background behind these problems, as there is always the next and most modern intervention at hand, such as giving artificial hormones.

All of this makes breeding ever more expensive and risky because of the side effects these therapies have. Anybody who has been breeding



France: The brood mares at the state stud of Pompadour



"In Polish breeding, the dam lines have an overwhelming importance" (H.J. Nagel)

for many years can see the changes very clearly. For some part, they are due to the formal health legislation regarding the prevention of infectious diseases in the context of shipping semen around - a price one has to pay for globalizing reproduction. Quite a lot of the change for our horses is in the field of behavioral psychology,

with today's reality in the studs reflecting that it's not just breeders suffering from skyrocketing costs, but also stallions and mares enormously restructuring and adapting their lives.

Just as a reminder: basically, what it is all about has always been just one thing, at least as far as the stallions





are concerned: Display yourself, court the mare, convince her - in order to finally cover her. And contrary to reputation, that is also what makes a stallion charming and peaceful: He who is nice will be allowed to mate. He will basically try to get along well with everybody - after all, you never know when a chance will open.

In biology, based on scientific evidence, there is a corresponding term which is "Female Choice". This concept sums up a mating system in which the most important characteristic is the fact that the male needs to work hard for the mating. He needs to perform: He can sing a particularly nice song, display

the most catching colors, perform dances, or bring presents. For every species, the male displays a specific courtship behavior for keeping competitors at bay and for impressing the female and convincing her that he is "the only one". Stallions will display their charisma and present their athletic bodies, accompanying

An experienced stallion is cautious, always approaching the mare first on the head and flirting until he finally nibbles on the hindquarters, but with great care and patience





Munir (NK Mudeer x Sulifah), the bay-brown young stallion is lucky enough to be able to walk in the pasture with the mares of his stud. When one is in heat, she is successfully mated. Small studs in Europe, such as SD-Arabians of Regina Schweikert in southern Germany still occasionally practice this original way of keeping horses.

the presentation with lots of clamor to make the mare hear and answer them. So, they need to advertise themselves in order to be able to have sex, as in nature, it is the females who chose, by imposing requirements and setting the conditions. The competition for the male is the other males, those who need to be fended off.

Female Choice implies that the reproductive strategies of the two sexes are completely different. Put simply: "The males bet on quantity, trying to mate with as many females as possible. The females, by contrast, bet on quality, only mating with one



...for the females, reproduction is much more complex, time-consuming, and long-term...

The stallion circles his mares every day in nature, smells their dung and urine on the pastures, stretches his neck towards the sky, contorts his whole face as if he wanted to laugh... So he knows exactly when it is possible to approach the mare without danger. Today the ultrasound scanner of the veterinarian takes over this job

male -- the best one. That's because for the females, reproduction is much more complex, time-consuming, and long-term. So the male needs to make lots of contact, while the female needs to do lots of fending off. One of the most important elements in that is that the majority of the males will not find a female partner, or very rarely so." (1)

It took a long time for horse breeding to reach today's state, which is extensive de-naturalization of the reproduction process. Before the globalization of semen in the Arabian horse industry, almost every European country had their own distinctive type of Arabian horse, formed by selection via the natural environment, climate, or food, or also formed by more specific selection criteria of their respective region or country.

As a result, we had Egyptian, Spanish, Russian, Polish, or Weil-

Marbach Arabians, to name a few. The state studs would coordinate for stallion selection, specifying the criteria to be used. Functionality was more important with the stallions than breed type, as ideally, the horses were also meant to be ridden and otherwise used. The breeze of the legendary cavalries of old still blew through the barn aisles and the training centers of riders and breeders. Private studs were able to use the stallion stations, freeing them from the responsibilities of getting a stallion of their own.

Today however, almost a hundred years after riding horses have vanished from public spaces as a means of transport, a lot has changed. State studs were closed or were, with a few exceptions, assigned a kind of museum function.

Small private breeding operations came into existence. Riding became a hobby devoid of the necessity to get

somewhere. Advanced reproductive technologies were developed and took hold even for the private market of small breeders which now featured stallions just as much as the mares that had been the foundation of rural breeding for so long. Stallions and geldings had been for riding during that time, while most of the mares had been for reproduction, their task to guarantee the next generation on the farm.

Today, Arabian horse breeding is highly specialized due to a completely different kind of different selection - depending on what exactly is the breeding goal for the reproductive efforts. There are Arabians bred for speed on the racetrack, bred for performance in endurance sports, bred for showing and beauty - with just one single branch of worldwide breeding remaining that concentrates on horses from just one historical geographic background: these are





the Straight Egyptians, their origin being the Desert Bred.

While on the racetrack and in endurance sports, selection for breeding purposes is mainly based on the racing performance of mares and stallions, selection among the Straight Egyptians and the show horses is left to their particular markets and to buyers' demand.

Heavily dominating the media coverage for that is the body language, often spectacular, of the stallions during shows and stud presentations. It is these on-line pictures of our horses, particularly of the show stallions, that served to catapult the analogous world of horse breeding from its former reality into the digital world of business.

For some of the horse owners involved, horses tend to be fabulous creatures turned real, projections of their own selves dreamed into reality

– as indicated by the fact that the most beautiful Arabians in the world are usually just owned and admired, but not used in any way. Stallions represent the other Self, the hidden personality, the esthetical part or the athletic one, or the gentle or the wild one ... So the stallion is the projection of his owner's unfulfilled ideals, and with that comes the need for control, which has resulted in humans' almost complete mastership over the reproduction of horses.

Globalizing frozen semen, by way of Instagram, Facebook, or show streaming services, makes stallions famous the world over and, occasionally, their owners rich. Simultaneously, stallions that are not present in this world of media are losing their value. Breeders used to buy good colts by the well-known champions in order to go on breeding with them. As frozen semen of the champions themselves is now for

sale all over the world and breeders can use that for breeding, most of them lost their interest in good colts to continue breeding in generations.

The market for them has collapsed, and in countries without a tradition of using geldings in sports and for leisure time riding, breeding has generally become a financial risk: what to do with all those colts?

Only a very few of the very best of them stand a chance, as on the Arabian show catwalks, we see beauty in perfection, quite often closely bordering on unacceptability, as the horses' functionality is regarded secondary to beauty. And it's these winner types who divide the market of good mares among them, as their breeding fees are too high for making experiments possible. So again, it's the mares and the fillies who are there to save the situation. They are the financial basis of the studs today. At the same time,





If the mare is not yet in heat, or the heat is over, she will refuse the stallion and he will accept it calmly



the role of the mares has shifted into the background, disregarding them, even though it is they who play the key role in reproduction.

As artificial insemination using the genes of the champion stallions is widespread and normal, the gene pool for horse breeding today has narrowed down considerably. In a modern pedigree, we often find a high degree of inbreeding,

however that's far too rarely backed by a strategically sound breeding concept.

The sires will usually be from the show world, and the dams from wherever. Even though the mare makes a greater contribution towards the foal's quality than does the sire, she will usually be considered second when planning for the future. She is already there, right there in

her box stall, and she needs to be covered.

However, it's not only that she contributes her half of the genetics, just as does the sire, but she also shapes and influences her foal by epi-genetic factors during pregnancy and after birth. As every experienced breeder knows, a timid dam will produce timid foals, while on the other hand, a dominant lead mare will transfer just this kind of character to her foals, to be passed on to the next generations and to make, for example, the very best conditions for a future racehorse.

Racetrack trainers keep their eyes open for horses whose character makes them want to be "rather dead than second", as these are the ones who will not allow others to overtake them and who will always fight their way to the front, even when the situation is far from easy. Even Darwin wrote in his time that "the winner will mate", and that winner did not only have to be strong but also intelligent so as to be able to tackle the evolutionary challenges. Darwin called this principle "sexual selection". (2)

If a mare is meant to produce a good stallion, she needs to occupy a dominant role in the herd and have intelligence, pride, and composure, so as to educate her offspring into a self-confident colt. A normal foal, grown up with a mother whose goal is to fit in, will probably not feel inclined to try and win the position of a lead mare or a sire.



Although some behavioral scientists still assume that the stallion is the leading member of the mare band, observations with feral horses have shown time and again that at the onset of the mares' heat season, the stallion will have to fight for his admittance into the herd as well as for his leading role – until the lead mare accepts him. Only then you might say that he is the boss as far as reproduction is concerned, while the lead mare keeps attending to the important decisions of herd life in general. Among these are the vitally important search for food, as well as the early-warning system that mares with foals have: alerting about a predator seen on the horizon. When stallions escape from their paddocks, they won't run away – you will just find them in the mare barn. When the mare band escapes, it's easily possible they will start to wander around looking for better pasture – a valiant goal in their minds if their own pasture does not yield good fodder anymore.

There is a delicate balance, so to speak, between the behavioral roles of the sexes; and even if the stallion will finally, after lots of fuss and long courtship, be allowed to mate with the mares, he had to contest for every single one of them. And he had to be careful and resourceful while he was at it, for every mare is different and for the act of mating proper, the stallion needs to be able to recognize if the mare is actually hormonally ready to let him mount without kicking him. A mare's kick might injure him gravely, as during

### **Female Choice at Al-Andalus Arabian stud near Aleppo in Syria.**

In 2009, two years before the outbreak of the war in Syria, Al-Andalus was one of the most successful breeding studs in the country with many show champions, also at ECAHO shows. At that time, in an interview (Tutto Arabi 2009), Omar Anbargi told me about the traditional breeding methods in his family's stud, which is again starting to breed.

### **You say that you breed your horses exclusively in the tradition of Bedouin breeding.**

*Omar Anbargi: "It is one of our aims to have the origins of our stud 100% pure, from the pure desert breeding of the Anazeh Bedouins, which is why we invest all of our passion and effort into this stud. There is a very important thing in our breeding: with us, the mares are allowed to choose the stallion. I respect their choice. I really do. I have a very good system for that. I will bring the stallions out and tie them there. Then the mare gets to walk among them, free. It's almost always that I accept her decision. Up to now, we have produced 5 generations using this system. You can see the results here in our farm."*

### **Since when have you been breeding Arabian horses?**

*Omar Anbargi: "My father founded this stud. His first mare was Dheem, a mare from the Hamdanian Al-Semri Al-Ofri strain, a 100% pure Anazeh Bedouin mare whom he was able to purchase from Sheikh Njhem Bin Mouhed, then leader of the Anazeh Bedouins. It was during the early 1960ies. The town of Aleppo is famous for her Arabian horse breeding."*







mounting, his reproductive organs are wide open and unprotected from the mare's hindlegs. This "biological weakness" forces the stallion to court the mare using intelligence and charm, to woo her, to convince her, so as to finally reach success. This experience will form and stamp his social behavior and become part of his behavioral resources and codes.

Today, a stallion no longer needs to be charming to be allowed to mate, and a mare has no power of decision making towards the stallions. Female Choice in today's horse breeding is no longer. The breeder decides, and the vet does his job, inseminating the mare without asking her please. Actually, today's stallions are more often difficult, even dangerous, as



At El Zahraa State Stud in Cairo, the large spacious stables and paddocks for large groups of mares with their foals are famous. The natural herd management in the middle of the city of Cairo deserves all respect and has been for many decades the model of mare management for breeders from all over the world



they don't know about natural limits anymore, lacking the education the mares used to give them, and lacking the insight that they need to adapt to certain conditions.

The principle of Female Choice had, up to now, defined their everyday lives. Stallions had to invest almost all of their energies into finding and convincing a female partner, and there had hardly been enough time left to find enough to eat. Today, the stallions are stabled in their box stalls, standing around and needing to compensate, eating too much, with many of them suffering and some of them dying from laminitis. Instead of being able to take action, promoting themselves, all they do is wait for the vet with the artificial vagina. No self-display, no competitors, just delivering the semen. The stallion may be famous in the social media, ok, however he never gets something to laugh about. There are no more mares waiting for him.



The mares, in their turn, also suffered from a loss of power and image within the herd. Some of them display low libido and won't stay pregnant after artificial insemination. Some will miscarry, or if a foal is born anyway, a few won't give milk or simply refuse to rear their offspring.

Today, after millions of years of horses' natural reproduction system in action, this same system has mutated into an insolvable conflict with profit-oriented reproduction technologies. After all, sexual selection by choosy females is at

the same time the tool and the origin of evolutionary adaptations; it's the adjusting screw that serves to decide about success, health, and survival of individuals as well as species.

However, all across the globe there are occasional breeders to be found, breeders for whom the stallions are just as close to their hearts, as parts of their herds, as are the mares. There are profits to be made with these stallions only if you are very lucky, there is hardly one among them who recovers his cost by covering outside mares. Instead, these stallions are

quite easy to handle, they can be ridden and they are athletically active. With his great attachment to humans, such a stallion will thank his people for his freedom of being allowed to be a stallion, and sometimes, you can even hear him laugh, across the pasture fences, with his mares. ♦

#### *Bibliography*

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(2) Darwin, Charles, "The Origin of Species, by Means of Natural Selection" London, 1859





Based on the example of the breeding history at Katharinenhof Stud, Dr Nagel explains about the secrets of his success with his long-time experiment. A lot of world-famous stallions such as Salaa El Dine, Adnan, Asfour, Safir, NK HafidJamil, and NK Nadeer were born there. Some others, such as Madkour I, Mohafez, and Ansata Halim Shah only came to fame after they had been used as sires with a group of carefully selected mares whose offspring, in their turn, would then lay the foundations for the success of their respective sire lines all over the world. What were Dr Nagel's criteria for selecting his stallions? Who were these dams in the background, and what influence did they have on the whole?

## “TO BREED SUCCESSFUL STALLIONS, THE BREEDERS NEED TO TAKE THE MARES MORE SERIOUSLY”

◆ by Dr. Hans J. Nagel - photos by Joanna Jonientz ◆

How to produce a good stallion? It's a highly important question.

Most breeders of Arabian horses won't think much about that topic. They are more interested in having mostly fillies anyway – obviously assuming that some when later, when that filly has grown, they are going to find a stallion that is well suited to this mare. The question is getting increasingly more important, however, as the number of good sires is getting ever smaller. Artificial insemination and the show scene are responsible for that, as only show champions will receive enough mares to cover - mostly done by artificial insemination - while other

stallions are hardly in demand. Our initial question, however, keeps being up to date, and is even crucial in the case of a bigger stud and particularly in the case of one that depends on home-bred stallions: mostly because they will want to breed horses of a type of their own, or with a certain performance capability in mind. The closer such a stud has come to its goals, the more difficult using external stallions will become, as they run the risk of introducing or re-introducing not only the traits they were looking and wishing for, but also unwanted characteristics, or even detrimental drawbacks that had been bred out already.

Successful experienced stud managers in the past were interesting partners for discussing this topic, such as Dr Rudolfski who headed the big Czech stud of Hostau and in whose hands as a director, for some time, the fate of the Vienna Spanish Riding School rested. Later he was one of the foundation members of the German Association for Arabian Horse Breeding (VZAP). Another important contributor when discussing this topic was Dr Krysztalowicz, who headed the Polish State Stud for 30 years, leading this stud to its top-of-the-world position. Basically, there was general agreement on the following points:

The first guideline: "Mate same with same", or to put that more specifically: "Don't breed small mares to very big stallions" but do, if necessary, "breed small stallions to big mares".

The second guideline: There ought to be a certain degree of kinship between the horses to be mated. So they should have some common ancestors, they should "nick" with their bloodlines. For example, the sire of the stallion and the grandsire of the mare should be identical, or the grandsire of the stallion and the grandsire of the mare should be siblings, etc.

Both of these guidelines are easy to meet.

*It's no problem if the stallions are smaller than the mares. I prefer the stallions to deliver type, not size. Those highly influential stallions for the last eighty years: Nazeer, and then Skowronck for the Polish lines, and Amurath for the Russian lines - all three of these influential sires did not reach 148 cm. That idea that a stallion needs to be a big guy to get something going, that's macho thinking and absolutely wrong. In breeding, the smaller and more refined stallions have always been those who were far more influential. The size of the foal is determined by the dam, not the sire..*

Hans J. Nagel, 2009



NK Larissa (NK Hafid Jamil x NK Lateefa) with filly NK Leilah, sired by NK Nizam



## The next question, now, is: how to recognize the quality of the stallion?

A sire needs to have developed correctly and according to his age, and may additionally have a special, much desired trait in his outer appearance, such as a typical shape of the head, an elegant neckline, or particularly well conformed hind quarters.

To put that in technical terms: the stallion needs to have a good, correct phenotype. In Arabian breeding, there are many stallions today who won shows and embody that phenotype, with some of them even distinguishing themselves by some much desired trait. However, will stallions like these be good

transmitters at the same time, animals to be recommended as sires? Yes and no. „Yes“ if the stallion's genotype is known as well, and „no“ if there is no data available.

It's logical and consistent to consider the genotype of the same importance as the phenotype, as the genes are what determines the prepotency of a stallion: his power of transmission or heredity. Experienced breeders are able to guess the genotype from a stallion's pedigree. However, to correctly evaluate a sire, both sets of data need to be known, the phenotype as well as the genotype. The only way to really determine

the genotype is by progeny testing. An ancient saying from the bible, “Ye shall know them by their fruits”, expresses this time-proven wisdom. The genotype is expressed in the quality of the offspring.

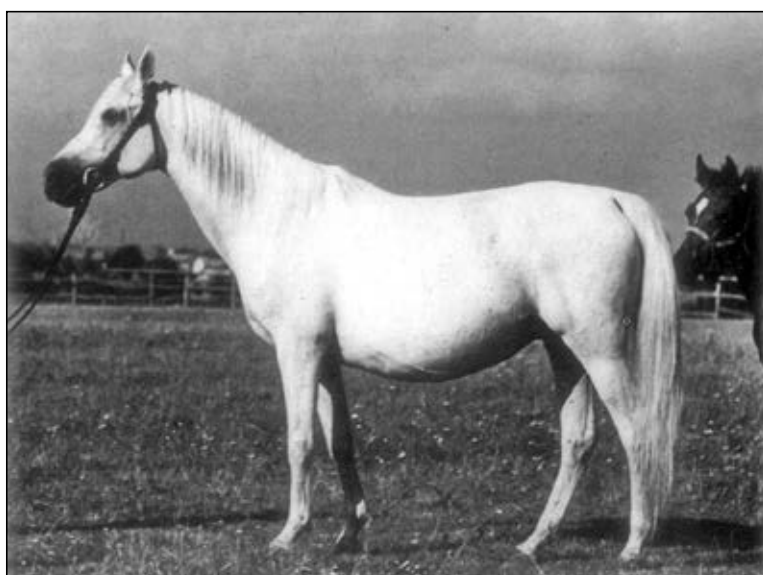
A stallion ought to have produced at least 10 to 15 foals from different dams to make it sufficiently possible to assess his quality. In private breeding, many smaller stallion owners don't have the opportunity to do this testing, as their stallions don't receive enough mares for serving, or else it will take several years to produce a pool of



The Polish broodmares at Janow Podlaski state stud are famous in the world



Bandola



Batatajka  
(Amurath Sahib x Iwonka) and her daughter Bandola by Witraz were  
cornerstones in Arabian breeding in Poland

offspring big enough to provide reliable information on the stallion's transmission qualities. During that time, it's all up in the air, and the mare owners who decided to use such a stallion are those who bear the risk of whether progeny testing will prove successful.

That period of testing is different for big breeders or state studs. They are in a position to present their sire-to-be with a great number of mares within one year, or even more safely, within two breeding periods, and can get the desired information within the shortest time possible.

So the following has been substantiated:

A good sire needs to be exemplary in his outer appearance as well as in his transmitting potency. Without these data, achieving good breeding results is highly unlikely.

It's not uncommon to find that certain stallions will produce very good female offspring while their male get is of inferior quality, or that they will produce good stallions as well as good mares.

Both sexes will profit from carrying out reliable progeny testing.

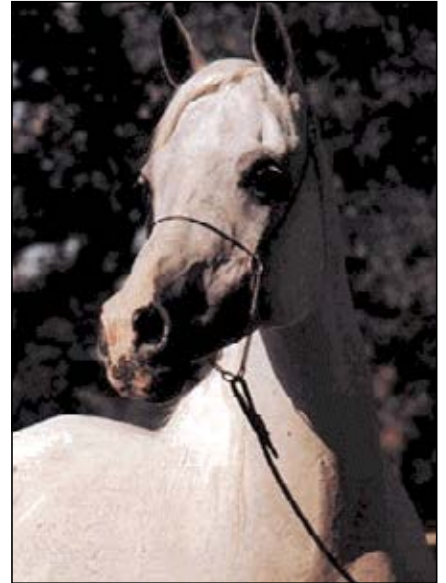
During the 1980ies and goes in Germany, the Association for Arabian Horse Breeding (VZAP) was obliged to conduct stallion approval events on a yearly basis – as decreed by state authorities. However, this supplied a great amount of data with interesting contents. At my suggestion, out of my position as chairman at that time, a study was carried out to estimate the transmitting abilities of the successfully approved stallions. For a period of about 20 years of mandatory stallion approval, the results were as follows. Every year,

about a hundred stallions aged 3 to 4 were presented to an approval committee. About a third of them, so about 30 stallions, were officially approved/licensed, meaning they received an award that was based on their outward appearance and characteristics. The winner of the event received a gold ribbon, the second a silver ribbon as the reserve winner. What the study investigated was how many male offspring of approval event winners - produced during the lifespan of that winner or at least during the period when stallion approval was mandatory - were approved in their turn. The astonishing result: in all those years, there were just eight approved stallions who produced one or two stallions who were approved in turn. Just two more of the placed sires had some approved stallions among their progeny, four and five of them, respectively.





The famous Russian mare Tactica (Taki Pan x Krona) with her outstanding race and show records, was the dam of famous stallions such as Derby winner Topol and Pietuszok, both sired by Priboj



Bint Magidaa had a brilliant career as a stallion producer. Her world-famous three sons Ruminaja Ali, Ruminaja Bahjat and Alidaar, were all sired by Sheikh Al Badi

This disappointing result is based upon the fact that in a stallion approval, it's only the phenotype that can be assessed, while the genotype is not considered at all. By the way, another fact that's not involved in stallion assessment is the quality of their dams, which would be of high value and significance. As a consequence of this study and the results of long years of stallion approval routines, the breeding association decided to introduce today's system of „elite mares" which assessed and awarded the outwardly apparent qualities of mares.

There is a special feature which is highly uncommon, and if it is found, it's a real stroke of luck. This feature is for a mare to be able to consistently produce outstanding offspring, fillies as well as colts, from matings with different stallions. Unfortunately,

mares like this are not easily recognized in everyday breeding in small studs. In the big studs in the East, such as JanoszPodlaski in Poland and Tersk in Russia, these mares were placed first when assessments were carried out. In these vast studs, a few such mares became the cornerstones of whole breeding populations. In Tersk Stud in particular, they had a scale for mare quality which put special emphasis on this feature, elevating dams with these qualities to „stallion producer" status.

In the U.S.A., the mare Bint Magidaa had a brilliant career as a stallion producer. She was born in the Egyptian stud El Zahraa and was a member of the Obayan strain. Later exported to the US, she achieved fame world-wide via her three sons. All three of these stallions were



Messaouda-M is the dam of well-known stallions such as Maydan-Madheen, Madheen El Shah and Mishaal HP. Photo by Paufler

sired by the powerful Morafic son Sheikh El Badi. The most well-known among them was to be Ruminaja Ali, whose name is found in the pedigrees of many famous show horses even today. Second in fame was RuminajaBajat, who produced numerous offspring in the US and later in Argentina, in Zichy Thyssen stud. The third of her sons, Alidaar, was initially active in breeding in Europe and later made his home in Al Rayyan Stud in Qatar, where he was used extensively. His most successful offspring were the females. A lot more of these important foundation mares might be listed, not only among the straight Egyptian lines, but also in show lines as well as in performance breeding lines.



The famous broodmares at El Zahraa State Stud in Cairo



*Already within the herd of foals 1968 in El-Zahraa the little bay Hanan appealed as the most brave and elegant one and she remained like this for all her life of 28 years. Her majestic look and her great role as a mother of 11 wonderful foals made her the queen of the stud*

Hans J. Nagel

Hanan





## Research results confirm the practical experience from breeding for several generations

As the final outcome of the above considerations, including the VZAP study on the results of long years of stallion approval events, VZAP officials are not the first ones to come to the following conclusion: In order to increase the probability of breeding good stallions – horses that are able to influence a breeding population on a long-term basis – the sire and dam of the stallion need to be as similar as possible. Sire and dam of a potential stallion need to nick to a certain degree, to have a certain part of their bloodlines in common. The potential stallion's sire needs to have produced a sufficient number of foals for his transmitting potency to be assessed.

These prerequisites are easier to achieve, for sure, when there is a stud with a breeding population composed of a few families only, whose quality and traits are sufficiently well known from long years of breeding with them. In this case, the prerequisite of a bloodline nick - be it more close or more wide - is easiest and most conveniently met.

It is also known that a top sire is able to influence breeding positively for three generations. After that, his influence is more or less completed; younger stallions have out-competed him and taken over his role. If this is not the case, there was no progress in breeding! In all horse breeding operations, no matter

whether for sports horses, racing horses, or Arabian horse breeding, this is a well-known fact.

The great influence of the dams on the quality of the stallions can also be read from the following results achieved on Katharinenhof Stud.

Among the sires who successfully served on Katharinenhof Stud, there was a bay purchased in the USA, the young stallion Mohafez by Ibn Moniet El Nefous out of Ahroufa. The mares to be served by him were selected according to the breeding criteria mentioned before. As a result, Mohafez was the one who had four approved male offspring under his belt in the VZAP study – so he was found to be one of the best transmitters, a prepotent sire.

And then there was USA-born Ansata Halim Shah, a stallion who just blew the statistics. His performance was totally out of the ordinary. Licensed with a very pleasing phenotype, he was leased to Katharinenhof Stud for two years by Ansata Stud of Arkansas, USA. At that time, he was just three years old and had a famous sire and a dam of equal value. He did not yet have any offspring – nevertheless, Katharinenhof Stud choose this hitherto unknown stallion who, in the course of these two years, served 30 mares, with 19 fillies and 11 colts born. One of these sons became a sire for Babolna State Stud. Two

others were successfully approved as sires in Marbach State Stud, seven others received stallion awards during the VZAP stallion approvals in Kranichstein. Among these, there were Salaa el Dine, Maysoun, and El Thay Ibn Halim Shah. Just a single one of the eleven colts was not presented for approval. Never before and never afterwards did a stallion achieve this outstanding result. How was this kind of success even possible?

The answer: both of these successful stallions had only been presented selected mares, females chosen with the greatest care, with a quality similar to that of Ansata Halim Shah, and with more or less of the bloodline nick that is so desirable. His daughters were gorgeously beautiful and correctly built Arabian horses who were sought after worldwide later on. So 95% of the offspring produced during his stay in Germany were of top quality.

On his return into the USA, this success in Germany meant high demand for the stallion. Lots of mares were served by him, mares of all levels of quality. Later analysis showed that just 25% of the foals born succeeded in reaching the quality that had been achieved in Germany.

Later on, Ansata Halim Shah was sold to Qatar and served the mares

Several Ansata Halim Shah daughters  
out of Katharinenhof mares



Malaka  
(Ansata Halim Shah x Kis Mahiba)



Ken Bint Bint Mahiba  
(Ansata Halim Shah x Kis Mahiba)



Aisha (Ansata Halim Shah x Ghazala)





of Al Shaqab Stud. Unfortunately, he died in an accident only a short time later, only leaving 15 to 20 offspring on the Gulf – and among all of them, just one achieved world-wide fame: Al Adeed Al Shaqab out of Sundar Alisayyah. This one was a wonderful stallion and sire, a true son of Ansata Halim Shah. Of all the other offspring produced there, nothing special has been heard. Obviously, nobody paid attention to finding the right mares that would have been the most suitable ones for Ansata Halim Shah.

Bint Amal  
(Ansta Halim Shah x Ken Amal)







Everything said above clearly outlines how important and influential mares are when it comes to breeding horses. It's an amazing fact that historically, the Bedouins cast their lot with the mares, basing their breeding strategy and recording on the dam lines. In Bedouin genealogy, the stallions were not even mentioned. Today we know that the influence of the dam on the progeny is 60% and more. A number to be kept in mind. ♦

Amar  
(Ansata Halim Shah x Ameera)



Asfoura  
(Ansata Halim Hah x Ameera)

