

The eurasian mountain dogs

- and a clarification of the legends about the " large Dog of Tibet "



The eurasian high mountain landscape from the Atlantic to the south Chinese sea developed - like the American Kordillen - before 130 million to 500,000 year during so-called alpid folding. These mountains are thus the youngest mountains of the world, not yet sanded off of wind and weather of world history, high and rugged, with summits, which rise up the far over timber line inside in the eternal ice.

The Alpid folding chain in Eurasia extends from Western Europe until Eastern Asia. It pulls from the Pyreneeses over the alps and in the northern elbow over the Karpaten, the Caucasus and the Elbus mountains to the Hindukusch. The southern elbow leads across the alps across the Balkans, the Ponti mountains and the Taurus mountains to the Zagros mountains and across Pamir and the high country of Afghanistan likewise up to the Hindukusch. From there three mountain chains continue to pull to the east. The most impressing is the southern chain of the Himalaya, which drags on over behind India into the Southeast Asiatic island world. The northern chain, the Tien-schan mountains, makes the connection to the age-old mountain landscapes of Southsibiria, to the Altai, to the Kentej mountains. The middle chain covers the entire highland of Tibet.

Kailasch, aus der Hochebene gesehen
Mount Kailash, seen from the tableland



In the lee of the mountains, where the clouds do not rain any longer, have themselves far dry regions developed: the grass steppes in Kazakhstan, in the Ukraine, in Anatolian and the drying-savannes of the Mediterranean area.

And enormous, life-hostile half and sand deserts developed: the Kara Kum and Kisil Kum in south Russia, the large salt desert and the desert Wu Lut in Iran, the Tarim basin and the desert Gobi in China and that Mongolia.

The entire eurasian high mountain landscape is a landscape of the most glaring contrasts: There are deserts and moisten wet forests, high mountain pastures and subtropical hard leaves wood. There are areas with eternal spring, eternal high summer, eternal winter. There are areas, there is it times high summers, times ice winters. And the daytime temperatures vary frequently between +30 °C over noon and 0 °C at the night.

No miracle thus that the high mountain landscape was only thinly settled. The high mountains with its stored deserts and steppes are not paradies scenery, in which humans settle gladly. It was therefore used frequently only as place of refuge of pressed peoples, who there - in large, natural fortresses - which survived time runs and the wars by the more valuable settlement country. No miracle thus also that the population of this elongated high mountain strip is just as mixed as in completely Eurasia: At the north slopes and in the adjacent wintery cold drying steppes we find the most diverse so-called Turkpeople, which developed in the large people migration times from mixtures of europide and mongolide trunks: the Hungary, Turk, act arene, Kirgisians, Kasachen, Usbeken, Turkmenen, Uiguren. In the west and southwest the " white " Europoide settles: the Europeans, Kurdians, Iranians, Afghanen, Tadschiken, Pakistanians, Indians. And in the east up to the Hindukusch the " yellow " Mongoloidian lives ": the Tibetians, the Mongols, Burjaegen, Chinese and the Khmer.

In the entire area of the eurasian high mountain strip we find today thus a multicolored mixture of the most diverse peoples. Each people has its own history, language and culture, its own traded survival strategies. Cattle breeders and hirten remained them however to the majority. They live, depending upon climate and altitude, on the breed of sheep, goats, horses, camels or Yaks. The agriculture plays in the mountains and in the drying steppes to today only a supporting part.



Tibetische Nomaden beim Melken der Schafe
Tibetan nomads when milking that sheep

Humans and cultures in the high country and in the mountains also are so different, dog owners are them all. And their dogs are among themselves - from the Pyrenees in the Tibetan high country - everything rather similar: There is well boned and deliberate medium sized to very large dogs. But they are cross-country like chamois and also so undemanding in attitude and care. They are more or less shaggy haired, provided with a natural coat-tank all. They have short triangular hanging ears and very communicative bushy tails, which roll them in excitation highly over the backs. They are black or white, red-brown, grey or golden or everything together. From a character they are lively, independent and compatible, but provide with a substantial pig-headed and a certain natural sharpness. All show still much original behavior and no fear of powerful opponents, of large cats, wolves, bears. These characteristics were it probably, on which their relationship with humans developed itself. Everywhere of the Pyrenees until Tibet meet we it as protection and awake dogs of the residents hirten and cattle breeders. And it is not to be accepted reliably exaggerated that only with the help of this strengthen a surviving of humans in these " wild " areas, self-willed dog in the long term was possible

**Blue & tan - coloured Do Khyi -a nomad-
and mountaindog**

source:, Kynos Atlas, Kynos publishing house



One aimed breed never operated the hirten. Until today each area has its " regional race ", which differs from other areas: The colder the climate, the more largely the natural predacious animals, the more longhaired, more largely the dogs are. Also the old-established dogs from the high mountain belt were subject to the " natural selection " and had to get along with the climate and their with competitor.

From where now these " original " dogs came and among them ranks which modern races, about it one argues, since it cynologists (= dog researcher) gives oneself. Were the first " mountain dogs " - as we want to call them here once completely carefully and all controversy avoiding - particularly for the wolf defense bred " shepherd dogs "? Or were they carriage dogs, which along-brought humans from the north and whom in the mountains all carriage dog characteristics lost? Was the first mountain dog the Albanian " white " Molosser? Or do they all of the black large dog of Tibet (= Do Khyi) descend?

From to today as dogs recognized early and to before-historical bone finds no answer can be derived. As the oldest finds those, which one found in Roman soldier camps, are considered to a " large wolf-similar (!) dog race of the antiquityt ". One found these dogs always at the rear loss gate, porta decimana and gave in such a way its discoverer to these dogs to the name " camp dog ". Large dogs of " mountain dogs ", which are older than the Roman camp dogs are until today officially do not admit become. If one may trust the excavators and their zoo-logical advisors, it gave up to the Roman

time (approx. 300 v.u.Z. - 300 n. and Z.) world-wide only small dogs and large wolves.

But one may doubt such statements confidently:



Abb. 12: Molosser-Terracotte Niniveh, ca. 650 v. Chr.

Niniveh loam-figure 650 B.C.

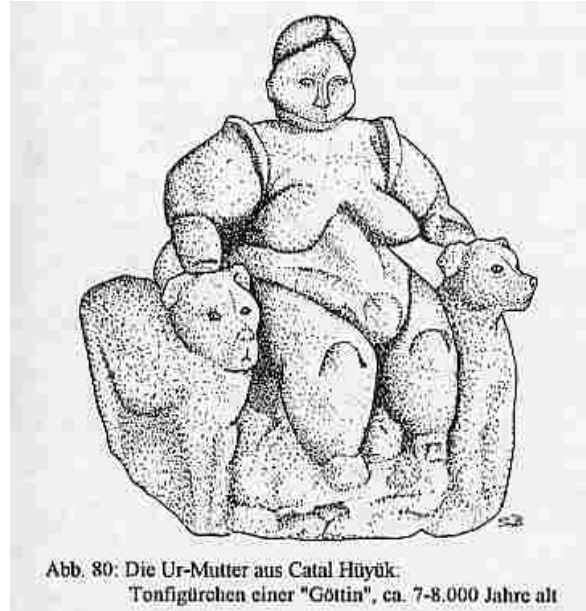


Abb. 80: Die Ur-Mutter aus Catal Hüyük: Tonfigürchen einer "Göttin", ca. 7-8.000 Jahre alt

In the approx. 8500 years old Jarmo in the Iraq one found small Terracotta: shaggy dogs with short, broad lip, with pendulous ear and highly curled-up tail, in which one can recognize easily small, primitive images of longhaired mountain dogs. And in the 8000 years old south Turkish Catal Hueyuek one excavated the Statuette of a mother divinity: It sits on a throne and beside it, on the right of and left, sits - in typical guard float - two enormous dogs, like bears - no wolves. The Sumerer (2800 - 2360 B.C.) designated in their cuneiform script the lion with the word " large dog " (we think note Author, once of the Tibetan term of " lion dogs"). And that is a reference to it, " that the dog an animal of approximately similar size " - or impositive strength -, available for comparing " must have been ", as Strebel (1904/05) means.

In Ninive (704 - 612 B.C.) and Babylon (1700-539 B.C.) between Euphrates and Tigris one found small tone pictures, in which strengthened, shaggy mountain dogs is explained. They belonged to ritual disease driving. The represented dogs are far more finely representative than the dogs of Jarmo (s.o.), but it are just as similar to them as modern flock guardian.



Assyrian wall-relief Palace v. Ashurbanipul
700 B.C. -heavy Hunt-/ Staghounds

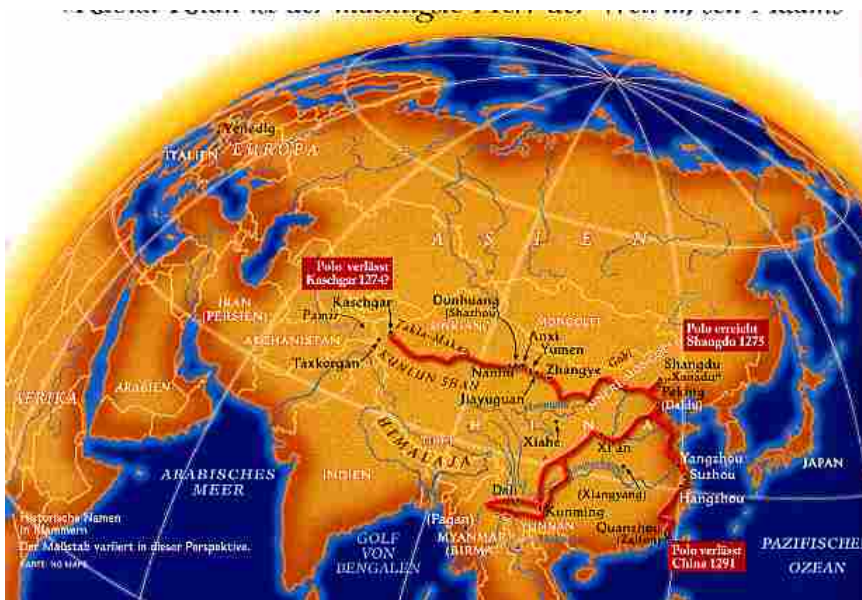
In Ninive and in Babylon we find then however also beside the old, shaggy for the first time shorthaired mountain dogs, which one probably as hunt combat or War dogs and from those the ancestors of our modern Great Dane, Boxer, Mastiffs, Rottweiler bred surely developed.

**Assyrian Relief 640 B.C.
shorthaired War Dog- or Hunting Dog**



Abb. 3: Assyrischer Kampfhund, ca. 640 v. Chr.

The first written reference to a large mountain dog originates however from China: In the year 1121 B.C. the people of the Liu is to have given a dog to the " large tread of the kingdom ", that was 4 foot high (= approx. 47 inches !).



Route from Marco Polo 1273 to 1290 A.C. he went around the high plateau of Tibet and the Transhimalya, Tibet even never seen.....

Whether its description of the Tibet "dogge" originates from " hearing legends " from narrations of the Mongols and the Chinese ?

some of its descriptions are seen today of scientists as rendition of legends from the natives...

source:National Geographic 6/2001

Marco Polo, globe-trotter made of Venice (1254-1324), reported on it and says even: " the people of the Tibetans is a badly constituted race, it holds dogs, as largely as donkeys, which are excellent for the hunt of savages animals, in particular the wild oxen (Yaks). Marco Polo exaggerated surely. With approx.. 25/26 inches high at shoulders is the Tibetdog not (DO Khyi) a giant under the mountain dogs, even if their approx. 133 pounds (note: male) already impression make. It spread here simply only the first rumor, which climbs around the mountain dogs and which says:

- the mountain dogs are terrible, dangerous giants

The second rumor says:

- The mountain dog is a " griffin "

ein Greif ? oder die Entmystifizierte Zeichnung eines Greifes - eine der wohl besten bildlichen Darstellungen des 18. Jahrhundert

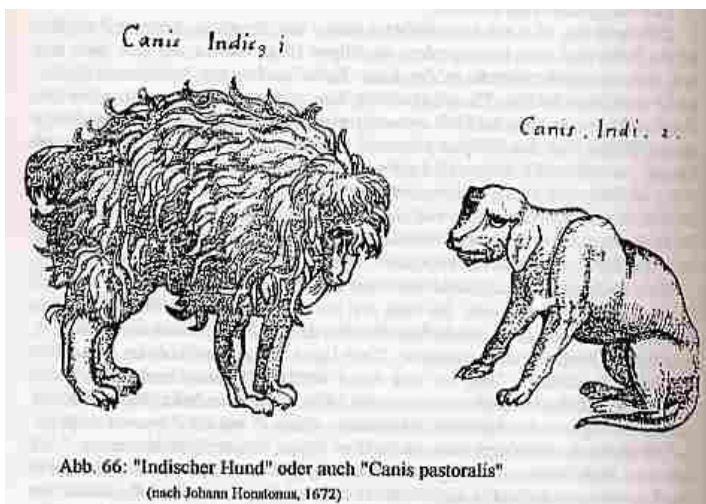
A griffin ? or the de-mystification design on a griffin - one of the probably best figurative representations 18. century



405 vB.C. an age-old frontasiatic legend described and said Ktesias, Greek historian and physician at the Persian yard as secured knowledge: In the high mountains live so-called " griffin ". They are large winged dogs, like wolves (note: Grey wolf height at shoulder of 27 - 31 inches), with claws such as lions, and at the whole body covers with black feathers, which are red-yellow colored only at the chest (note: probably black & tan color in the shaggy-hair). Due to the watchfulness of these animals it falls heavily to mount these mountains. From the furious mountain guard giants thus magic eagle lions became with the time. And thus the reason was put to the third rumor, that already meant:

- The mountain dog is a tiger half-breed

This rumor comes from Aristoteles (384-322 B.C.), which knew the dogs only of hearing legends. Aelian (170-235 B.C.) then the following copied of it:



Canis Indica, Canis pastoralis, Indian Dogs after Johann Honstons, 1672 A.C.

Those sucked. " are bound Indian dog ", the Tibetans, by their gentlemen to trees and left alone. " pushing now tigers on these dogs and they are hungry straight, then they tear the dogs up. If they come however satisfied, then they leave themselves with the dogs.....

The next brood however of this tiger and a dog follows the mother... and becomes a dog. Such dogs now, which may praise themselves the birth of a tiger, defame it the deer to hunt or with a pig tie up. The lion however they result and give thereby their earlier birth to recognize " and then follow the long-known, sadism, bloody history of a dog a lion " choked " and also not released than one it successively tail, all four legs and the head finally disjointed.

The fourth rumor is less bloody, it announces:

- The mountain dogs are dragons.

Columnella (approx. 50 A.D.), Roman Agrarien of the emperor era, writes: " as guardians of the yard one must select a large, powerful dog, which has a loud and deep voice, so that it already strikes his sight the malefactor by its bark and into the escape. It is to be in-colored white, if it at the herd, black, if it becomes related in the yard... The head is so powerfully that it appears as the largest part of the body, the ears is folded down and will overhang in front, the eyes is stinging black or grey-iridescent and; the chest is broad and shaggy, the front spar and strongly... such calls the Greeks Dragoi, dragons ". About breed and attitude of these " dragons " nothing is said. It means only, one is to buy it with the hirten, and one is to crop them 14 days after the birth the tail.

Field- or Staghound
Germanic Bear Dog



Over breed and attitude stands then however somewhat in the old-Persian Avesta, which for holy books of the Parsen, which were only laid down in writing before 1500 years, however with security likewise are enough for those, if not longer, verbal excessive quantity precedes: ", " the dog " says the creator to its prophet Zarathustra, " let I be garb and his own footwear own naturally have; I made it eagerly are awake, sharp-biting, get its food of the men, thus he pay attention on the messuages " wolf dog of half-breeds however, then it is called further, must be killed. " on the side dogs are thrown: deadly as it were for house and yard; and now become more harmful and perishable and for house and yard more dangerously than otherwise the dog it is, on the other side wolves is thrown: deadly for house and yard, and those become more harmful and perishable and for house and yard than otherwise wolves are more dangerous." One sees, humans obviously already very early negative experiences with wolf a crossings made and to have such " hybrides " rather killed. The fifth rumor, which means:

- All mountain dogs, flock guard, are " wolfblood shepherd dogs "

One may refer that confidently in the realm of the fables - just how as all other rumors specified above also.

What now however real are the mountain dogs and as lived and live them?

Over it there are, although meager reports: In old Germanic " wisdom " these dogs of " sheep dogs ", " sheephound ", " Fieldhound ", " Indian dogs " or " Hirtenhound " are called. " sheep dogs " (Russian Owtscharka) are however no shepherd dogs. They guard not on arrangement and go-eat the shepherd. They are

awake only, independently and without instructions. They do not take sheep, cows, Yaks anywhere, they remain in their proximity " changing " along and fit up. They are the dogs, " those the wolf bite, to it the cattle from the muzzle take and on the shouting, which is raised from the land people with the appearance of the wolf, immediately hurry on far distance to assistance.

In this country belonged these dogs to the standard equipment of the moving hirten and the established farmer on the lonely yard. With the disappearing of the wolves and bears, with the fall of the free hirten and the farmers, with the penetration of the princely power monopoly in the absolutism, these guards of personal liberties disappeared more and more. Their role at the herds took over the lighter, tractabler shepherd dogs and on the yards the smaller " farm dog " and " ratting pintcher ".



Tibetan dog, design after William Youatt, in the year 1850.

But in other countries they and their functions remained. The English world traveler Youatt reports 1845: " the dog is bred on the plateau of the Tibet limiting Himalayamountains. " the men come down at different seasons into the valleys, in order to sell boraxes Moschus and such. The women remain at home, and they and their herds must be defended sometimes energetically by these dogs. They are the protector of nearly each larger rural possession."

Samuel Turner describes its experiences with the Tibetan dogs around 1800: It " met a heap of tatarian hirten, who always live in tents and to do nothing, when to feast... in one of the miserable villages I painted its cattle out of curiosity between the houses around, and there I found everything calm, I

went into a stony verge... as I occurred, jumped up to my astonishment a large dog, which came if its courage equal its size, enough were strong to fence with a lion. It held back me with its raving barking at the gate, and I was frightened very much at the beginning, since I remembered and knew however the cowardice (!) of the dogs that they are courageous only if they notice that one is afraid of them, stood I quietly....

The Hungarian count Bela Szechenyi in Tibet made similar experiences:

" on a Exkursion in a valley I saw against evening a light and heard dogs barking.... hardly was I unite one hundred step forward gone, there surrounded me suddenly five Tibetan dogs. I believed my last instant come..."

One sees like the rumors over the enormous, tiger-same dragon-seizes with wolf blood probably developed. Count Szechenyi did not let itself be discouraged nevertheless. He bought three of this " Beasts " and wanted her to Europe to introduce. It had however no large success thereby.

And like its dogs, then it also all other imported Tibet-Mastiff was issued: They died again and again early - at wrong attitude and too much wet-cold weather. Or they landed behind lattice bars in zoo-logical gardens. The Europeans had forgotten obviously handling these independent, resistanceful dogs.

That however these dogs are not " dragons " and that one can come with them also as stranger by right, other globetrotter describes that. Schlatter e.g. reports to an only medium sized, but nevertheless quite penetrationable local race of the nogaian dogs at the Asow sea. It recommends the following:

- One carries oneself a Nomad forward in the national costume as a companion That gets along with the dogs and with it the dogs, too
- One goes as stranger, slowly and holds a long stick behind itself. The dogs usually pack from the rear and bite then into the stick.
- One probably does, if one throws something meal to them, with which they are occupied until one reached a house

- One may never strike it, otherwise all dogs of the village meet on the howling of the met dog, and the thing becomes more serious than before.
- One puts oneself simply. Sitting humans... excited only its curiosity. They formed a circle around it, watched it surprised and ran then without excitement apart.

We see: the " dragons " are completely gentle, if one treats them gently. They answer only - to aggression with aggression, to indifference with indifference, to friendship with calm tolerance. One can find such " gentle dragons ", which guard only their message, today as holiday-makers in the eurasian high mountain strip still everywhere.

We ourselves met in such a way one in the Pyrenees: It had surely no internationally recognized geneological table, and each breeder would have segregated him as " mismarked ". But it was a Pyrenees mountain dog, as it surely already for thousands of years gives. It guarded the camping site, the hotel and its " patronne " with calm attention. He picked up with nobody, bore even strange dog and was all day long kilometres away on the way, from prospect place to prospect place, in order to control its realm. It however never lost sight of its patronne thereby. If one had to talk something over with it, then he - as grown from the soil - was, completely calmly, completely suddenly there gently. But unmistakably. Large Swiss mountain dog are to have set up a rule, which says: " it is to be danced forbidden with the Alpine dairymaid " The mountain dog in the Pyrenees seemed to have something similar in the head

In this function - as independent guards and protectors - we today still find the mountain dogs in the Pyrenees, in the alps, in the Tatra, in the Caucasus, in Anatolien, Kurdistan and Tibet. Everywhere they are held as awake and protection dogs. And thus they this job also well fulfill, them are supplied properly. Already in the old-Persian Avesta a caring is set up: " one get out milk and fat including meat, one it the dog as meal bring, then is its due meal." And " again a well feasible act " is not it, these dogs to give " not reduced bones or to hot meals ". Because " if the

bones it between the teeth to put remain settling or in the neck, or if it to hot meals the muzzle or tongue burns, then the perpetrator become thereby incurred the loss body."

The Roman poet Vergil writes in his Hirtenpoem:

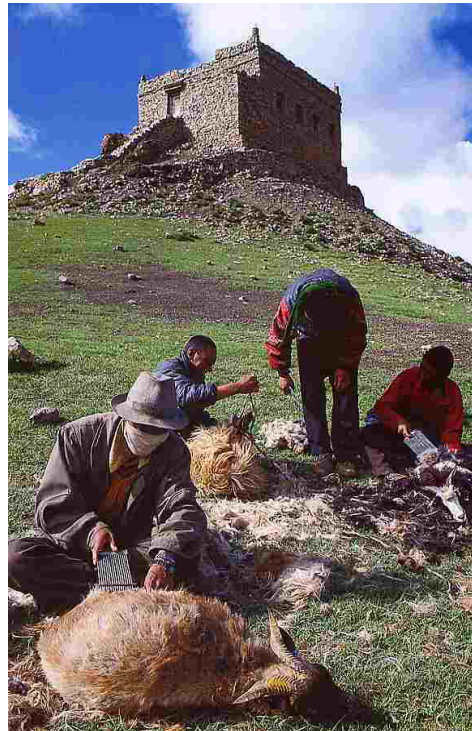
" over everything do not forget to me the care of the sheepdogs.

Feed with wheys and bread. If those guard your stables,

You are afraid neither the wolf nor nocturnal curving thieves,

Still the bold assault of iberian robbers."

Tibetan nomads with the "shearing" means comb out of sheepwool.



And also the dogs of the rather poor hirten in Tibet are well fed according to reports - with flat cake, corn flour and goat or sheep milk.



Thangka representation hero King Gesar of Ling
 " the Kings of Tibet"
 Trailer representation cattle of the nomads and
 predators under the protection of the Do Khyi.

Goods with the Dingos, Parias the well held, well nourished dogs the exception, then it seems to have turned around with the mountain dogs exactly: Nearly everywhere the mountain dogs are probably supplied and maintained. This fact and the respected guard position of the dogs, which stand in the clear contrast to the otherwise usual role of the four-legged nameless " garbage disposal ", relationship between humans and dogs appears at first sight as not straight " primitve ". Here such a thing seems to be present like a contract with contents: You watches out for my things and defends her, and I give you for it your food and my confidence. But as the present treaty, seen from the dog he also looks as again fashionable does not have to be not so absolutely again fashionable. One cannot coin/shape dogs like grey geese, it learn and forget their life long, like all modern animals. But young mountain dogs (and their modern descendants, the hirten -, alpin herds-, cattle dogs and mastiff-like dogs) become acquainted with usually in the first four life months " it " herds completely personally. And they differentiate then " it " herds from all different: They love " their " cat and hunt the others, them love " their " people and are strangers opposite distrustfully to rejecting. This characteristic - " good-naturedly against its fellow tenants ", but " against foreigner rejecting " that is own all to still ancient mountain dogs until today. Humans say this characteristic to them after, since they know mountain dogs, and humans at their mountain dogs have this characteristic always estimated.

Inferred out: " from upright humans to the dog owner" 500,000 years Ko-evolution and culture history of humans and dog

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