

Varieties of Mankind

Terry Perk & Julian Rowe

- ***The Origin of Dogs***

Mitochondrial DNA evidence suggests that *Canis familiaris*, the domestic dog, was originally domesticated from wolves in Southern China 11,000-14,000 years ago. According to a 2002 paper in *Science** it would seem that this happened only once and that all dogs alive today are descended from that single event. More controversially, archaeological finds of cut marks on Neolithic dog bones suggest that the original role of man's best friend may not have been as a companion, but as a source of meat.

**Genetic Evidence for an East Asian Origin of Domestic Dogs*, P Savolainen et al, *Science* 22nd November 2002, Vol. 298, Issue 5598, pp. 1610-1613

- ***Patient 492602***

Psychiatric History:

Male, 22-25 years old. Examined at the Serbsky Institute with a recommendation for committal. Vagrant, social parasite and petty criminal with slow progressive schizophrenia and paranoid delusions. Is reported to have criticised Party institutions, made false accusations of corruption against local Party officials and publicly slandered First Secretary Khrushchev.

Case officers:

V I Dudnik; Y R Pavlyuk

Symptoms/psychoses:

1. *Delusional Troglodytism*. Patient believes he was born and raised underground and expresses an overwhelming and continuing desire to live in a burrow. He attempts to enter cellars and manholes when not actively restrained from doing so. Criminal records show that he has been arrested in subterranean locations in Moscow and elsewhere on several occasions.
2. *Lycanthropism*. Morbidly obsessed with dogs and exhibits certain canine traits. Fantasises that he was brought up by feral dogs. There is no evidence for this.
3. *Partial Amnesia*. Sometimes answers to the names Lek or Alexei, but does not appear to know his full name. Is unable to give a clear and non-contradictory account of past events in his life.
4. Holds views and attitudes antipathetic to society and its institutions.

Behaviour:

Not generally violent. Uncooperative and so far unresponsive to treatment. His occasional dog-like behaviours (for instance walking on all-fours) disturb his fellow patients and must be curbed.

Recommended regime:

600mg Aminazin i/m daily; 1000mg Sulfazine i/m daily; restraints and discipline as appropriate. After one month assess suitability for treatment in Unit 7.

Extract from clinical record for Patient 492602, Yeleninskoye Special Psychiatric Hospital, dated 10th January 1962.

- **Wolf Hunt**

When Alexei is more cooperative, he sometimes speaks of his grandfather, Zhenka, who was steward of the estate at Turgan in the years before the Revolution. One of his stories goes thus (his use of Russian is idiosyncratic so I have paraphrased his account):

“In the winter, when the packs ventured to the edge of the forest in search of food, the Colonel would instruct Zhenka to organise a wolf hunt. All the able-bodied men at Turgan, or all for whom horses could be found, were expected to present themselves for this task, whilst the Colonel would invite gentry from neighbouring estates and sometimes smart friends from Moscow to join in. They would set out as soon as the earliest glimmer could be seen in the eastern sky: the horsemen would form up in a column, several grasping the long leashes of a pair or trio of wolfhounds, the eager dogs up to their bellies in snow despite their long legs; behind would follow the fur-wrapped ladies and old men in the troikas, the entire cavalcade kicking up a blizzard of powdery white.

A favourite hunting territory was up by the lake, and the ideal quarry would be a solitary wolf that had been separated from its pack. The estate peasants would drive the shaggy beast out of the forest margin, then the dogs would encircle it, forcing it out onto the frozen lake where it was easy for the horsemen to give chase. When the hounds went in for the kill, the wolf, realising the game was up, would sometimes turn and charge them in an act of hopeless heroism, before they dragged it to the ground, tearing at its shaggy, sinewy body [at this point Alexei became distressed and made several attempts to articulate something but in words that I could not understand].

One of the huntsmen, often my grandfather, would then dismount to dispatch the creature with his hunting knife. He told me what it was like to look into the dying wolf’s eyes, so unlike a man’s eyes, or even those of a dog. In their other-ness he said he saw an ancient compassion, beyond human comprehension.”

Notes of Interview by Psychiatrist V I Dudnik with Patient 492602 (“Alexei”), Yeleninskoye Special Psychiatric Hospital, 12th April 1962.

- ***Underground***

Whenever I try to piece together with Alexei the events of his life he always returns to his bizarre “dog” story. Sometimes he describes it as though it were a real memory; at other times he admits it is a recurring dream. Although it is surely a fantasy, he is so insistent that I feel I can no longer ignore the story, but must try to work through it in the hope that we can find the origin of his neurosis somewhere within. In the story, Alexei is a small boy, perhaps four years old. He witnesses some terrible and violent event in a domestic kitchen involving his mother and a vaguely defined creature that he usually characterises as a bear. His mother is hurt and, fearing the bear will attack him next, Alexei runs out into the street. Outside there is a terrifying storm with thunder and lightning and in the confusion the little boy is unable to find his way home again. A huge black dog appears from the shadows of a burning building. The dog is injured; one of its eye sockets is empty and a bloody slick of jelly stains its face. At first Alexei is afraid, but the dog tells the boy to follow him, and together they clamber down some steep steps into a cellar. Alexei cannot see anything in the darkness, but becomes aware that other dogs are also sheltering there.

With the big black dog as his protector, Alexei is soon accepted amongst the dogs, sharing their food and their warmth. Sometimes if the storm has died down they venture outside in search of food. The weather becomes very cold. White snowflakes fall, but the snow on the ground is black. The cellar connects to other cellars, passageways and sewers which extend for miles and offer protection from the storm that continues to rage above ground. Often men and women, all dressed in similar clothing, come down into the cellars with guns and lamps. They run and shout and fire guns. The dogs are afraid of the people and move on, descending deeper into ever narrower tunnels and crevices in search of safety. On a couple of occasions the interlopers spot Alexei and attempt to catch him by offering him food, but he is too nimble for them and escapes. This is all that Alexei remembers of his life underground before he is taken away from the dogs to a big house with many of other children.

I have tried without success to discover where or when Alexei was committed to the orphanage. In the 1940s many records were lost. His account, if it has any factual basis, is consistent with wartime experience in many cities. He has traces of a Volga accent and I suspect he may have been one of the children who survived Stalingrad.

Notes of Interview by Psychiatrist V I Dudnik with Patient 492602 (“Alexei”), Yeleninskoye Special Psychiatric Hospital, 15th May 1962.

- ***Lycanthrope***

Attn. Com. Director Katyushin concerning Patient 492602

Further to our conversation yesterday I have made further enquiries into the alleged breach of hospital security reported on 25th inst. and involving Patient 492602, whom for brevity I shall refer to as Patient A. Attendant Tsyganov is adamant that he observed Patient A three times during the night of 24th/25th on his 9.30pm, 11.45pm and 2.15am ward rounds and, moreover, that the correct security protocols were followed throughout. His account is supported by Supervisor Uspensky who was on the same shift as Tsyganov and accompanied on two of the rounds, those at 11.45am and 2.15am. After the incident had been reported, Com. Uspensky immediately and correctly carried out an inspection of all doors and windows to ensure that no locks had been tampered with. On the surface of things it would appear that Patient A achieved the impossible feat of being both present on a locked ward and at exactly the same time was wandering in the forest.

I spoke to the Sergeant of Militia, and personally interviewed both Private Osokin who arrested Patient A, and a local woodsman, Alexander Shubkin. It was the latter who was driving his truck along one of the forest roads at about 1.00am when he spotted Patient A in the trees, dressed in his hospital gown, and allegedly in the company of three or more wolves. Shubkin was afraid to approach for obvious reasons, but further down the road he encountered Osokin on patrol and together they returned to apprehend Patient A. This would have been at about 1.30am, and by this time there was no sign of the wolves. Shubkin is well-known in the district for being somewhat eccentric, and in Osokin's opinion was not entirely sober on the night in question either so he is sceptical on the matter of the wolves. It was obvious to Osokin that Patient A must have absconded from the local *psikhushka*, and in order to avoid the form-filling that would have arisen from arresting him he drove him directly here, arriving at 2.25am. The night duty attendant, L Nazarov, recognised him and locked him in an isolation cell while he went in search of a staff member from Ward 8. On hearing that Patient A had escaped, Tsyganov checked the ward and found him there, asleep. The mystified attendants both then went down to the isolation cell and were shocked to discover it empty, though still locked. Nazarov is adamant that the patient returned by Osokin was Patient A, and both Osokin and his driver have subsequently identified Patient A as the man they found in the forest. Nazarov and Tsyganov swear that they had not been drinking, and I believe them as they are of good character.

Report by Psychiatrist V I Dudnik to Director Katyushin, Yeleninskoye Special Psychiatric Hospital, 29th May 1962.

- **Sea Dog**

Lifeboat Rescues Dog Man

Whitby lifeboat was called out in the early hours of Wednesday morning to rescue a man in a small rowing boat who was spotted by fishermen drifting two miles off Runswick Bay. The fishermen said they had been reluctant to approach the man themselves, despite the calm sea, as he was "standing up in the boat and howling at the moon like a dog". They were afraid that he might be dangerous so they returned to Whitby Harbour where they reported him to the Coastguard. According to a police spokesman, the man, who has not been identified, did not offer the lifeboat crew any resistance. He was suffering from exhaustion and exposure and has been detained for medical assessment.

Whitby Gazette, Friday 19th March 1965

MYSTERY DOG MAN

The mystery man who was picked up by Whitby Lifeboat last week has still not been identified according to a police spokesman. He was rescued from a small boat six miles off the Yorkshire coast after fishermen reported that he had been "howling like a dog" at last Wednesday's full moon. The man, who has been nicknamed Alec and may be suffering from memory loss, speaks little English, carries no identification, and has been unable to tell police who he is or where he comes from. It is thought that he could be of Russian or Eastern European origin but interpreters have so far failed to recognise his mother tongue. "Alec" is being treated in hospital in Scarborough and police have launched a missing persons inquiry in the hope that he can be identified.

Daily Sketch, Monday 22nd March 1965

- ***A Person of Interest***

Dear Markwell

Reference your PF 42032/C.3. of 13.4.65 regarding subject "Alec". The case file has been scrutinised by one of my desk officers and based on his findings, he and I are both of the opinion that he is not a person of interest to us for the following reasons:

- 1 I agree with you that it seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he could have rowed across the North Sea in March in so small a boat, but your suggestion that he was delivered by a submarine, Soviet or otherwise, or even a trawler, is more than a little fanciful, as an inflatable dinghy would be the more likely modus operandi in such a scenario. Might he not have launched the boat from further along the coast, and have you established whether there have been any thefts of boats within reasonable rowing distance of the position from which he was picked up?;
- 2 In my experience agents attempting a covert infiltration rarely seek to draw attention to themselves by howling at the moon or similar;
- 3 As I understand it, the subject has not been uncooperative within his limited capacity to communicate, and has not made any attempt to abscond from the remarkably lenient regime under which he is detained;
- 4 Whilst he appears to be of foreign origin, there is no firm evidence that he is currently an alien, or has illegally entered the country. He was, after all, within the three mile limit when found. I note that the psychiatric report accompanying your file allows for the possibility that his apparent foreign-ness, coupled with a tendency to talk gibberish, may be symptomatic of a psychological condition or even a brain lesion, and not an indication of his origins. In short, there is nothing to prove that he is not a British citizen, albeit a somewhat deranged one.

If you have any further concerns regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Otherwise I suggest that Branch hand the case back to your uniformed colleagues who should perhaps consider letting this poor fellow go.

Yours etc.

FCD
Section 4f,
Leconfield House

Letter from F C Dowling, Ministry of Defence to DI Colin Markwell, Special Branch, North Riding of Yorkshire Constabulary, 6th May 1965