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Capítulo II: Trata de las colores, y blancos de los Cavallos

Chapter II: On the colours [of horses] and white horses

Escrive en esta materia Hernan Calvo largamente, y primero que todos Pedro Crecentino, y Federico Grison' y aunque se podia escusar, aviendolo escrito tantos, con todo esso lo trataré aqui tambien.

Hernan Calvo wrote extensively on this subject, and Pedro Crecentino and Federico Grison above all and although it could be excused, with so many already having been written on the subject, nevertheless I will discuss it here as well.

Digo, pues, que el Cavallo procede de los quatro elementos, y de los quatro humores, y con aquel elemento, y humor que participa, se conforma de manera, que si toma tierra, es melancolico; y este es el melado, ò bellorio. Si toma de agua, sera flematico, tardo, y malo; y este es blanco. Si toma de ayre, será sanguineo, alegre, y agil; y este es castaño. Si toma fuego, es colerico, fogos, y saltador, y su color alazan. El que proporcionadamente tomare de todas, es mucho mejor.

I say therefore, that the horse comes from the four elements and the four humours, and with each element and humour that plays a part, it is so formed, so that if it is dominated by earth it is melancholic; and this is a yellow horse the colour of honey or yellow-brown.¹ If it is dominated by water, it will be phlegmatic, slow, and bad; and this is a white horse. If it is dominated by air, it will be sanguine, happy, and agile; and this is a chestnut horse. If it is dominated by fire, it is choleric, high-spirited, a jumper, and it is a sorrel horse. The one that has a proportional amount of all [the elements and humours] is much better.

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De las colores, la mas perfecta de todas es el castaño obscuro, ò claro, que la diferencia es poca; y si lo obscuro entrepelare con blanco, es mucho mejor, particularmente si fuere rabricano, porque promete lealtad, y buena rienda, fortaleza, alegria, y ligereza, segun Virgilio [lib. 3].

Of all the colours, the most perfect of all of them is the dark chestnut, or the light one, because the difference between them is little; and if the dark hair is mixed with white hair, it is much better, especially if it has a white hairs in its tail (*rabricano*) because this promises loyalty, good on the rein, fortitude, happiness, and lightness, according to Virgil [Georgics book 3].

El rucio rodado, es galàn, fuerte, y ligero, y los que mas participaren este color, gozarà estas virtudes con mas ventaja, como dize Plinio en el lugar citado.

¹ Both refer to what we call a dun horse in English

RENAISSANCE SKIN

The dappled² horse is gallant, strong, and light, and those that have this colour the most [i.e. most amount of dappling] will enjoy these virtues the more, as Pliny says in the cited text.

El bayo cabos negros, es galàn, fuerte, y ligero muy poco, mas lo que corriere serà muy largo, y el que sale con alguna perfeccion es de estimar.

The bay with black hair is gallant, strong, with a little lightness, can run for long, and a perfect specimen should be valued.

De los alazanes, el tostado es el mejor, por ser fuerte, y ligero, mas es colerico, y aun de mala boca.

Regarding sorrel horses, the brownish sort is the best, for being strong and light. However, it is choleric and has a bad mouth.

El morcillo es galàn, y ligero, suelen ser mal enfrenados, colericos, y cortos de vista, por cuya causa son expandadizos.

One that is black with a reddish colour tends to be bad at the rein [i.e. bad at stopping], choleric, and short-sighted, for which reason they frighten easily.

El obero, galàn pellejo, mas desvaido, floxo, y mal sano.

The piebald, beautiful skin, but gaunt, lazy, and of ill health.

El tordillo es galàn, y ligero, suelen ser muy recios de boca.

The dapple grey is beautiful and light, they tend to be very hard in the mouth (with reins).

El melado es dexativo, y para poco trabajo.

The dun [i.e. honey-coloured] is lazy and good for little work.

El zayno en España tiene mal concepto, porque prueba mal.

The dark chestnut in Spain has a bad reputation, because it is shown to be a bad horse.

Blancos ay muy pocos buenos, la causa es la poca fortaleza de los baxos, mas en todos ellos se debe considerar mas, y menos.

Of the white ones there are very few good ones, on account of the poor strength in the legs but taking into account everything they should be considered so-so.

Y porque los demás colores se reducen à estos que he referido por la dependencia que tienen de ellos; advierto se entiende en lo general, porque en algunos puede aver lo contrario, por la participacion de humores, y elementos, como en el principio està dicho: y assi dirè de los blanco, que denotan buena, ò mala señal en los pies, y manos.

And because the other colours are based on these, which I referred to the dependence they have on them; I warn that these are general remarks, as in some [horses] it might signal the opposite due to the action of humours and elements, as was said at the start. And thus, I will talk about white hairs which can signify either good or evil on the forelegs or hindlegs.

² 'Rodado' is a dappled horse, 'rucio' usually refers to a light brown horse or one with lots of white hairs. I believe here it can also refer to a dappled grey.

RENAISSANCE SKIN

El Cavallo calzado de pie de cavalgar, es de mucho valor, buen corazon, y ligero.

The horse that has white on its left back foot is of great value, good heart, and light.

El Cavallo calzado del pie derecho, se llama Argèl, es desastrado, de malos pensamientos, mortal, facil de caer: y assi se guardará qualquiera Cavallero de entrar en èl batalla, ni otro riesgo.

A horse that has white on its right back foot is called an *Argeß*, is unlucky, has bad thoughts, mortal, and falls easily, and thus it will save any knight from entering battle, or any other risk.

El Cavallo calzado de las dos manos, serà desastrado, es la razon, porque ha de aver mas blancos atrás, que adelante.

The horse with white on the two forefeet, will be unlucky, because it should have more white behind than in the front [i.e. back feet rather than forefeet].

El Cavallo de los dos pies blancos, es bien señalado, y mejor si tiene estrella en la frente.

The horse with two white [back] feet is well marked, and it is even better if it has a star on the forehead.

El Cavallo quatralbo, es noble: suelen ser ligeros, mas de poca fuerza.

The horse that has white on all four feet is noble, they tend to be light, but with little strength.

El Cavallo calzado de pie, y mano derecha, se llama trabado: es de poca estimacion.

The horse with white on the right back foot and right front foot is called 'tethered', and is little valued.

El Calzado de pie, y mano de cavalgar, es trabado tambien, mas no es tan malo como el otro.

The horse with white on the left foreleg and back leg is also 'tethered' but it is not as bad as the other one.

El Cavallo calzado de la mano de la rienda, y del pie derecho, se llama trabado: es de natural Argèl, y peor.

The horse with white on the front left leg and the right back leg, is called 'tethered', it is an Argel by nature, and is worse.

El de pie de cavalgar, y mano de la lanza, es trastrabado, y Cavallo de mucho passo, por donde se estima en mucho.

The one [with white] on the left back leg, and the front right leg, is called a 'trastrabado'⁴, good to ride, and highly esteemed.

El que toda la verga sin blanco, no escapará de traydor.

The one who has no white on the legs at all, will have unpredictable reactions.

³ From the Arabic, 'arġal'. It is a sign of bad luck in a horse.

⁴ This is a specific Spanish term for this colour combination.

RENAISSANCE SKIN

Serà de buena compostura el Cavallo con las partes siguientes.

A horse will be of good composition with the following parts:

Cascos anchos, y bien formados: corto de quartillas, y no izquierdo: las cañas gruesas: los nervios por sí descarnados: ancho de cinchas, y de pechos: salido en los meollos: buenos morcillos de brazos: el pescuezo no muy largo, y descarnado: abierto de quijadas, y levantado de adelante, cogido el rostro, y no destapado: la cabeza chica, y descarnada: las narizes anchas: la boca rasgada: los ojos grandes: las orejas en buena proporcion, y no pandas: la frente anche: las caderas partidas: salido en los quijotes: buen nacimiento de cola, y sin palomilla: ancho de lomos: corto de sillar: la Cruz descarnada: hondo de barriga, y de hijar: corto de verga, y salido de sieso.

Wide and well-formed hooves, short quarters, not left, thick hairs, open nerves, wide girth and chest, exit in the marrows, good shoulders, neck not too long and wide, open jaw and frontward facing, small face and uncovered, small fleshless head, wide nostrils, big mouth, big eyes, well-proportioned ears and not too long, wide front, good hips, wide in back, good head of tail and without too many hairs, wide loins, short saddle, fleshless cross, deep belly and haunch, short penis, prominent anus.

Puedieranse poner otras muchas señales, mas bastarán las dichas, por ser de autoridad del Filosofo Xenophon, y se hará tambien capitulo de otras muy particulares: y concurriendo en el Cavallo las sobredichas, será perfecto; y debaxo de todas ellas sujeto à graves enfermedades, por done se infiere ser corruptible, por ser compuesto de quatro humores, come de quatro elementos.

Many other signs could be discussed but the aforementioned are enough, as they come from the authority of the philosopher Xenophon, and there will be a chapter of the very particular ones; and if a horse has all of the above, it will be perfect, and above of all these it can be subject to grave illnesses, due to being corruptible, as it is composed of four humours and elements.