

ITALO-BYZANTINE ETYMOLOGIES IV

Not the least of the many fine accomplishments of Professor Koukoules are his contributions to the topic of Greek nautical terminology. He is, indeed, almost the only scholar who has discussed Byzantine nautical terms. His main studies in this field are: the two chapters 'Ο ναυτικός βίος and 'Ο ἀλευτικός βίος of his study on Eustathius (Θεσσαλονίκης Εὐσταθίου τὰ λαογραφικά 1, 289 - 324 [Athens 1950]); his investigation Ἐκ τοῦ ναυτικοῦ βίου τῶν Βυζαντινῶν, in the twenty-first volume of this journal; and, a few years earlier, in the eighteenth volume, the discussion Ἐκ τοῦ ἀλευτικοῦ βίου τῶν Βυζαντινῶν. The material of all these investigations with their wealth of terms, records, etymological interpretations, modern parallels, and cultural implications, provides a solid basis for further research. In addition to constituting, of course, a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Byzantine Greek, the words discussed increase the range of Mediterranean linguistics: each Byzantine term, unearthed and brought to the attention of Mediterranean etymologists, is a potential lead to new interpretations of Western nautical terms. To show what we mean by this, we present in the following, as a modest symbol of our gratitude toward Professor Koukoules, and in the form of a further contribution in our series of Italo-Byzantine Etymologies¹, a discussion of three Byzantine terms that have spread from Greece to the West, which we have come to know through the writings of Phaidon Koukoules.

1. Venetian *colomba* 'keel'.

There is a Venetian nautical term *colomba* 'chiglia', which has

¹ The previous articles of the series are: Italo-Byzantinische Etymologien: *scala*, Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher, 16, 33 - 58 (1939 - 1940); Italo-Byzantine Etymologies II: Middle Greek **τρικάνθιν* 'wing transom', Byzantion, 16, 339 - 356 (1942 - 1943); Italo-Byzantine Etymologies III: *palamarium* 'cable', Italica, 23, 178 - 188 (1946); furthermore, in collaboration with Herbert D. Austin, Byzantine *Ἰνδανικός σίδηρος*, Frankish *andanicum* 'Indian steel', Byzantina Metabyzantina, 1, 181 - 187 (1946); and, finally, Mediterranean words, Romance Philology, 5, 174 - 180 (1951 - 1952).

been explained in various ways. P. Skok, in a lengthy discussion¹, tries to show (without being too convinced himself) that the Venetian term is based, perhaps through an intermediate stage of Dalmatian, on Lat. *colūmna* 'column'. Prati² suggests a connection with *κόλυμβος* 'marangone palombaro', *κολυμβάς* 'che s'immerge', *κολυμβάω* 'm'immergo, nuoto'; later³, he considers the origin of the term as unsolved. Battisti and Alessio⁴ suggest a derivation from late Lat. *cōlūmbāre* 'submerge', from Gr. *κολυμβάω* (surviving in Asturian *columbare* 'submerge'⁵, Provençal *couloumē* 'précipiter'⁶). We think that the Venetian term simply continues a Byzantine word. Koukoules⁷ mentions a Greek word *κόλυμβος*, which he found in the Greek martyrology of Saint Artemius, of the 7th c. The passage, dealing with an ailing shipwright, runs as follows: *ἦν δὲ πρὸ ὀλίγον τὸ πλοῖον, ἐν ᾧ ἔπλεεν, ὑπομεινάν τι κατὰ τὴν τροπὴν, καὶ ἔτυχεν κατελθεῖν αὐτὸν τὸν νοσοῦντα κολύμβῳ καὶ ποιῆσαι ὅπερ ἔχρηξεν τὸ πλοῖον*⁸. The context indicates that the Byzantine term *κόλυμβος* designates the 'lowest part of the hold, immediately at the keel'. It belongs, etymologically, to *κολυμβάω*. This Greek term is borrowed by Venetian. The oldest Venetian record is found in the 13th c., in a contract, of 1268, between the Republic of Venice and King Louis IX of France⁹: *Navis, quæ vocatur Sancta Maria, est longa pedibus centum et octo, quæ longitudo est de pedibus septuaginta in columna*. The meaning here is 'keel'. The Venetian word spreads in Italy then back again to

¹ P. Skok, *Finiges Neue aus dem Altdalmatischen und dem Serbo-Kroatischen*, *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 57, 462-472 (1937): also 54, 192, 210 (1934). Cf. G. Mavér, *Vox Romanica*, 5, 221-222 (1940).

² Ap. *Dizionario di marina medievale e moderno*, 178 (Rome 1937).

³ A. Prati, *Vocabolario etimologico italiano*, 301 (Milan 1951).

⁴ C. Battisti and G. Alessio, *Dizionario etimologico italiano*, 1018 (Florence 1950 ff.).

⁵ H. Schuchardt, *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 25, 496 (1901). *Diccionario histórico de la lengua española* [Academia Española], 2, 537 (Madrid 1936).

⁶ W. v. Wartburg, *Französisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 2, 935 (Basel 1946).

⁷ *Ἐκ τοῦ ναυτικοῦ βίου τῶν Βυζαντινῶν, Ἑπετηρίς τῆς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν*, 21, 9 (1951).

⁸ A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Varia græca sacra*, *Zapiski*, 95, 39 (1909).

⁹ A. Jal, *Archéologie navale*, 2, 355 (Paris 1840). A. Jal, *Glossaire nautique*, 491, s.v. *columba* (Paris 1848).

the eastern Mediterranean. In the West it is found in 13th c. Genoese as *columba* 'keel'¹ and in the standard language as *colomba*, which shows, at least in the 17th c., the meaning 'upper false keel': *Colomba è un legno, che va dalla poppa alla prora sopra il primo*². In the East, the word covers a wide area: East Venetian *colomba*³; Dalmatian *kòlumba* in Ragusa, and *kolumba* on the Isola Lunga⁴; and Greek *κολόμπα*, which we found in the dialect of Cephalonia.

2. Venetian *nombolo* 'strand of a rope'.

The Venetian nautical term *nombolo* 'strand of a rope', first appears during the 14th to 15th c., in the treatise *Fabbrica delle galere: posal* ['filin à quatre torons'] *da proda, de passa* 32, *de nomboli* 4⁵. The term survives in the modern Venetian dialect⁶. The Venetian term spreads to standard Italian: it is listed in the Italian-French dictionary by Duez, of 1671-1673⁷, and it is found, in the form *nomblu*, in the Arabic of Malta⁸. Prati⁹ derives the Venetian term from Venet. *nómbolo* 'loin'.

We would suggest a Byzantine basis. There is a Greek nautical term, synonymous with the Italian, which is recorded in the variants *ἐμπουλο*¹⁰, *ἐμπολο*, in the dialect of Kyme¹¹, and *ἄμπος*, in Eastern Mani¹². The Greek word, as shown by Koukoules¹³, is a variant of AncGr. *πόλος* 'pivot, axis': the first strand is seen as the axis around

¹ G. Rossi, *Glossario medioevale ligure: Appendice, Miscellanea di storia italiana*, 44, 156 (1909).

² Pantero Pantera, *L'armata navale... con un vocabolario nel quale si dichiarono i nomi, e le voci marinaresche* (Roma 1614), ap. Jal, *Glossaire nautique*, 489, s.v. *colomba*.

³ P. E. Dabovich, *Nautisch-Technisches Wörterbuch der Marine*, 244, s.v. *chiglia* (Pola 1883).

⁴ H. & R. Kahane and O. Koshansky, *Venetian Nautical Terms in Dalmatia*, no. 104, *Romance Philology*, 7, 168 (1953-1954).

⁵ Jal, *Glossaire nautique*, s.v. *nombolo* 1.

⁶ *Dizionario di marina*, 524, s.v. *nombolo*.

⁷ Jal, *Glossaire nautique*, s.v. *nombolo* 2.

⁸ Jal, *Glossaire nautique*, s.v. *toron*.

⁹ Ap. *Dizionario di marina*, 524, s.v. *nombolo*.

¹⁰ Α. Παλάσκα-Μ. Γούδα, *Γαλλοελληνικὸν λεξικὸν τῶν ναυτικῶν ὄρων*, 664, s.v. *toron* (Athens 1898-1908).

¹¹ Α. Ἡπίτη, *Λεξικὸν ἑλληνογαλλικὸν τῆς λαλουμένης ἑλληνικῆς γλώσσης*, s.v. (Athens 1908-1910).

¹² Koukoules, *Ἀθηνᾶ*, 49, 124 (1939).

¹³ *Ibidem*.

which the rest of the rope is twisted. The Greek nautical term leads to various compounds whose first element indicates the number of strands of which the rope is twisted: *δίμπουλο* 'two-stranded rope'¹, *τριμπουλο*², *τετραμπουλο*³. In reference to textiles, the *πόλος* - compounds *εξάπολον* and *οκτάπολον* are found as early as the 10th c., in the *Ἐπαρχικὸν βιβλίον* of Leo the Wise⁴. The initial of the Venetian variant, finally, may be due to a blending of Byzantine *ἔμπουλο* with the indigenous Venetian *nómbolo* 'loin'.

3. Italian *calaverna* 'battens nailed to an oar at the point where it rubs against the rowlock'.

The Dizionario di marina gives for Ital. *calaverna* the following definition⁵: «*Sulle galee si designavano con questa voce alcune tavolette che fasciavano il ginocchio del remo per preservarlo dallo sfregamento contro i baccalari. Il termine è stato conservato per designare la fasciatura di cuoio che si fa intorno al ginocchio del remo per proteggerlo dall'attrito con la scalmiera o lo scalmò.*» Vidos⁶ suggests interpreting the nautical term as a metaphorical use of Northern Italian *calaverna* 'doccione di neve congelata che d'inverno copre la parte superiore ai rami degli alberi'. This hypothesis, which indeed seems somewhat artificial, was not accepted by Prati⁷ or Battisti - Alessio⁸.

We think, in spite of certain difficulties, that the term goes back to Greek. Its history seems to have been the following. There is a late Latin word *calabrica* 'a type of surgical bandage', recorded in the 5th c. (Cassius Felix, 53) and in the 6th c. (Plinius Valerianus, 3, 13)⁹. The word is derived from the name of the Italic region Calabria¹⁰. Rare in Latin, it was borrowed by Greek where, as

¹ Koukoules, Ἀθηνᾶ, 49, 126 (1939).

² Μεγάλη Ἑλληνική Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία [Πυρσός], s.v. ἔντριον σχοινίον (Athens 1926 ff.).

³ Op. cit., s.v. ἐντίτριον σχοινίον.

⁴ Koukoules, Ἀθηνᾶ, 49, 126 (1939).

⁵ Dizionario di marina, 120 - 121.

⁶ B. E. Vidos, Storia delle parole marinaresche italiane passate in francese, 419 (Florence 1939).

⁷ Ap. Dizionario di marina, 121, s.v. calaverna.

⁸ Op. cit., I, 670 - 671, where *calaverna* 'brina' is completely separated from the nautical term *calaverna*.

⁹ A. Souter, A Glossary of Later Latin, 35 (Oxford 1949).

¹⁰ A. Ernout and A. Meillet, Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine, 153 (Paris 1951).

καλαβρικά, it developed a certain vitality in the terminologies of hippiatry and the circus. Although, as mentioned by Koukoules¹, its meaning is debatable, it is probably most accurately interpreted as the bandage around the pastern of a horse. Byzantine records of the term are found in the Pelagonius passage 38, 10 of the 9th c. Codex Berolinensis of the hippiatrici græci: ἀναπατοῦντος αὐτοῦ [i.e., τοῦ ἵππου] καλαβρικοῖς τὰ σκέλη ποίει καταδεσμεῖσθαι²; and in the 10th c. Book of Ceremonies by Constantin Porphyrogenetus: Εἰ δὲ καὶ πληροφορηθῶσιν ὅτι τελείαν ἀπέλυσεν [i.e., ὁ ἵππος], λύοντες τὴν οὐρὰν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ καλάβρικα ἐκ τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ, ἐκβάλλουσιν αὐτὸν τὴν Νεκράν³. Various Mediterranean expressions belonging to the hippic jargon were taken over into the slang of seamen; this term, too, must have been transferred jocularly from the horse's leg to the oar, considered as leg of the ship. The nautical term is borrowed by the west where it is found in a wide area: Venetian *galaverna*, Italian *calaverna galaverna*, French *galeverne galaverne*, Catalan *galaverna*, Spanish *galaberna*⁴. The western area of the term shows a change of suffix. The earliest record, found in the beginning of the 15th c., in 1406, in Catalan, indicates the existence of the word in Venice not later than the 14th century. It must have reached the west through Venice as one of the numerous nautical terms borrowed by the seamen of the Dominante in the period of the Frankocracy.

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¹ Βυζαντινῶν βίος καὶ πολιτισμός, 3, 38 (Athens 1949).

² Corpus hippiatricorum græcorum, ed. E. ODER-C. HOPPE, 1, 202 - 203 (Leipzig 1924).

³ Constantin VII Porphyrogénète, Le livre des cérémonies, ed. A. VOGT, 2, 142 (Paris 1939).

⁴ Vidos, op.cit., 417 - 419.