

CLXVII. I have adopted it because I do not wish to invent a spelling of my own; but, taking into account the various readings, my own feeling would be in favour of an original spelling like « Bracmain ». On *brāhmaṇa*, « brahman », and its various forms in Western languages, cf. *Hobson-Jobson*², 111.

80. BRAZIL

beçi F
berci TA¹, TA³, Z; R
berçi F, L, Z
berer (*de mastica*) LT

berty G
berzi VA
birci, *lurci* P
oro dimesticho TA¹

orzi V
verçi L
verzi L, V, VB
verzin, *verzino* R

Brazil, or brazil-wood, *Caesalpinia sappan*, was much used as a dye-wood in the Middle Ages; the oldest known mention is of 1140 (HEYD, *Hist. du commerce*, II, 587-590). The oft-told story that Brazil in America owed its name to the dye-woods discovered there is discounted by the earlier legend of an Isle of Brazil which was supposed to exist in the Atlantic (cf. Y, II, 380-381¹⁴; *Hobson-Jobson*², s. v. « Brazil-wood »; DALGADO, *Glossário Luso-Asiático*, I, 149-150). LOKOTSCH (*Etym. Wörterbuch*, No. 190) says that the word « brazil » is still unexplained, and at the same time, No. 2157, agrees with MEYER-LÜBKE in deriving the Italian name of the brazil-wood, *verzino*, from Arab. *wars*, *Memecylon tinctorium*, a well-known saffron-like plant yielding a yellow dye (cf. LAUFER, *Sino-Iranica*, 315-316). But brazil-wood and *Memecylon tinctorium* have nothing in common; moreover, French *brésil*, *brasil*, and Ital. *berçi* (in F) or *verzino* cannot be distinguished. The old explanation of *brésil* from Fr. *braise*, « glowing coal », on account of the red colour of the dye, still doubted by MURRAY, is adopted in BLOCH's *Dict. étymol.*, s. v. « braise », and finds strong support in the dialectical forms of « braise » collected by VON WARTBURG, *Franz. Etym. Wörterbuch*, I, 506.

The ordinary Arabic name of brazil-wood is *baqam*, *baqqam* (< Pers. *bakam*, VULLERS, II, 254), also used in Persian and in Turkish (cf. Fe, 246; KUUN, *Codex Cumanicus*, 92, where Lat. « braçile » is rendered in Persian « bachā » [= « bacham »] and in Turkish « bachan » [for « bacham »]); forms borrowed from *baqqam* exist in Armenian (*Hist. des Crois.*, Arm., I, 750 « bayyam »), in Roumanian and in Russian (LOKOTSCH, No. 190). In Polo's inventory (cf. Vol. I, 557), mention is made of « chamocha bachami clapo. i. grando », « a big bundle of chamocha bachami ». The « chamocha » is a damask (see « Camocas »), and « bachami » must be an epithet, in the same way as the « chamocha blava » mentioned in the text is « blue camocas ». Now, among the names of colours of the *Codex Cumanicus* (KUUN, 108), there is in Latin a word « bachami », rendered identically in Persian and in Turkish; it is evidently a Persian adjectival form **baqamī*, which means « of the colour of *baqam* », i. e. of reddish colour. I have no doubt that the « Latin » form of the *Codex Cumanicus* is a form which was actually used in Venetian Italian, and that we have