

Dictionnaire Étymologique Roman ‘Romance Etymological Dictionary’

→ **Slideshow**: <http://www.atilf.fr/DERom>, “English presentation”, “News and chronicle”

***/mol'ton-e/ m.n. “adult male sheep that can breed; adult male castrated sheep”**

I. Meaning “ram”

***/mol'ton-e/ > N. It.** *ˈmoltòn* m.n. “adult male sheep that can breed, ram” (since 1176/1200 [*com<o> lo mout<o> qe vien per le corne trainato*], TLIOCorpus = Tobler,ZrP 9, 319 [Lomb. Emil.-Romagn. Ven.]; DEI s.v. *montóne* [Piedm. Lomb. Ven.]; PratiEtimologie 106 [Ven.]; Pellegrini,AAA 86, 238-239, 242-243 [Lig. Lomb. Ven.]; LSI [Lomb.]; REP [Piedm.]; AIS 1069 [Lig. Piedm. Lomb. Ven.]^{1,2}, **Friul.** *ˈmolton* (since 1423 [*char di molton chun char di chastron*], DSF; PironaN2; Pellegrini,AAA 86, 238-239; DDF s.v. *monton*; AIS 1069 p 337, 359; ASLEF 317 n° 1090, 329; ALD-II 625 p 209, 213)³, **Fasc.** *muton* (since 1914, Kramer/Thybussek in EWD; Pellegrini,AAA 86, 239; AIS 1069 p 313; ALD-II 625 p 97-101)⁴ [...].

II. Meaning “wether”

***/mol'ton-e/ > N. It.** *ˈmolton* m.n. “adult male castrated sheep, wether” (LSI [Lomb.]; AIS 1069* p 170, 193, 290 [Lig. Lomb.]), **Fasc.** *muton* (since 1879, EWD; ElwertFassa 60, 182, 215), **O. Fr.** *mouton* (end 12th c. – ca. 1480/1500, DEAFPré s.v. *mouton*; GdfC [“bélier châtré que l'on engraisse”]; Martin in DMF2012 [“mouton (animal); en partic. bélier châtré”]; Matsumura) [...].

Commentary. – (1.) The Romance languages spoken in the former Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul (Northern Italian dialects [Ligurian, Piedmontese, Lombard, dialect of Emilia-Romagna, Venetian], Friulian, Ladin, French, Francoprovençal, Occitan, and Gascon) as well as Catalan possess cognates that support the reconstruction of later and regional Proto-Rom. ***/mol'ton-e/ m.n. “adult male sheep that can breed, ram; adult male castrated sheep, wether”.** [...]

(5.1.) One finds lexemes that are phonologically and semantically close to Proto-Rom. ***/mol'ton-e/** in Celtic languages: O. Ir. Gael. *molt* m.n. “ram; wether; sheep” (PedersenKeltisch 1, 137; MacLennanGaelic; LEIA M-62; IEEDCeltic), O. Welsh *mollt* “ram; sheep” (PedersenKeltisch 1, 137; DelamarreDictionnaire2 227; IEEDCeltic), O. Bret. *mout* “ram” (DelamarreDictionnaire2 227; IEEDCeltic), Bret. *maout* “sheep” (HenryBreton; cf. PedersenKeltisch 1, 137), O. Corn. *mols* “wether” (PedersenKeltisch 1, 137; IEEDCeltic). These items have been identified by Celticists as cognates whose common ancestor is Proto-Celt. ***/molto-/ m.n. “ram; wether”** (Pokorny; IEEDCeltic; cf. Holder s.v. **molto-s*).

(5.2.) [...] In our opinion, the area covered by the Romance cognates incites, on the contrary, to postulate, with Gröber,ALL 4, 127¹⁰, that it is Proto-Rom. ***/mol'ton-e/** that is a borrowing from Gaulish¹¹. [...]

(6.) There is no correlate of ***/mol'ton-e/** in the written Latin of Antiquity¹⁵. This leads to the conclusion, from a diasystemic point of view, that it pertained to the (spoken) varieties of immediate communication of global Latin and did not have access to the (mostly written) varieties of language of distance, in which Lat. *aries* m.n. “ram” (cf. ***/ar'iet-e/**, section 5 of the commentary) and *ueruex* m.n. “wether; sheep” (since Plautus, IEEDLatin; cf. ***/βer'βek-e/**) dominated.

(7.) For further information cf. ***/ar'iet-e/**

Bibliography. – MeyerLübkeGRS 1, § 132-137, 306-307, 353, 404-405, 476-483; MeyerLübke,ZrP 29, 406-407; REW3 s.v. **mũlto, -ōne*; Bolelli, ID 18a, 56; Müller 1966 in FEW 6/3, 205b-210a, **MULTO*; LausbergSprachwissenschaft 1, § 230-235, 253, 264; 2, § 411-414, 564-565; Faré n° 5739; RohlfPanorama

179; DOLR 5 (1995), 62; Grzegorz Keltizismen 210-212; Baltrons/Bastardas in PatRom 3/1, 259-278 s.v. multō; LEIMatériaux; Chepurnykh Reconstruction.

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1. Many Italian dialects as well as standard Italian present *montone* m.n. “ram” (since 1268, TLIOCorpus; DELI2), whose /n/ has drawn scholarly attention. Most scholars explain this consonantal peculiarity by a blend with It. *montare* tr. v. “to copulate (with)”, rams being associated with studs (DEI; DELI1-DELI2), even if its origin could in theory also be strictly phonetic (nasalisation of */l/ before consonant, cf. RohlfsGrammStor 1, § 245). [...]

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