

The Language of Sailing



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出版者:Routledge

出版时间:

装帧:HRD

isbn:9781579582784

There have been many dictionaries explaining to laymen the technical terms of sailing. None of them, until now, has systematically set out to explore their etymology and evolution. "The Language of Sailing" demonstrates that many of the American and British words in question are derived-- often in complex and controversial ways--from other languages, mainly European. The diction of the sea, in fact, is a huge and hybrid skein, much of it traceable as far back as Sanskrit. It reveals that seafaring knitted Europeans together, sometimes in conflict and rivalry, often also in comradeship, when sailing crews could be as multinational as today's international conglomerates. "The Language of Sailing" is not intended simply for the entertainment of sailors and scholars. Anyone interested in the literature of the sea will find here an unusual and suggestive resource.

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