

The Toponymic Progeny of Latin Etyma

Castrum and *Castellum*

HENRI DIAMENT

FEW LATIN ROOTS are as abundantly represented, both in terms of absolute numbers and number of dialectal variants, as are *castrum* and its diminutive *castellum* in the toponymy of the Mediterranean world. Reasons for this prolificacy are not too difficult to fathom: the very semantics of these roots, i.e., “fortress, castle,” would seem to have predestined them to accompany Roman conquest and settlement. Feudalism normally represented a break with the Roman past in most domains, but it seems to have encouraged the preservation, proliferation and eventual toponymic survival of the Romance reflexes of these two roots in the European toponymic landscape. Vulgar Latin derivatives were similarly preserved. Many of these place-names would thence be transported to the Middle East by the Crusades and eventually to the New World.

Dauzat has maintained that, as a rule of thumb, reflexes of *castrum* could be dated as pre-fifth century A. D.: “. . . les représentants de *castrum*, camp, terme de stratégie disparu avec la chose, sont antérieurs au V^e siècle: Castres, Chastres, Châtres, La Châtre (l'article a été ajouté après coup), Chestres, en Angleterre Chester (antérieur à l'évacuation de la Grande-Bretagne par les Romains).”¹ Reflexes of *castellum* are considered as posterior to the fifth century: “Les composés de *castellum* sont postérieurs; moins isolé, le mot, qui a laissé Cassel et Kassel en pays flamand et néerlandais, est antérieur à la germanisation; ces deux toponymes sont d'ailleurs mentionnés par la Table de Peutinger et par Ammien Marcellin.”¹

Each modern place-name traceable to these two etyma must have started as a military camp, fortification or redoubt. Some of these would later be transformed into a medieval castle. The im-

¹ Albert Dauzat, *Les noms de lieux* (Paris, 1928), p. 120.

portant point, toponomastically speaking, is that the word *castrum*, or *castellum*, would originally have a single semantic referent, i.e., the camp itself. In other words, there would at first be no toponymic designation, although there would naturally be implications. It may be surmised that as the original military camp, fortification or castle grew into a substantial civilian settlement (which certainly did not happen with all such installations) the term, with or without a modifier, came to have a double semantic referent, the camp first and the settlement second. The toponymic component must have gradually edged out the military one, until the latter was forgotten, or at the very least not consciously bothered with by local speakers. For a while, presumably as long as the place-name still had ordinary lexical meaning (as opposed to a purely toponomastic one), the form seems to have changed in accordance with general phonological, morphological and lexical changes in the carrier language or dialect (at first Vulgar Latin, then its local Romance descendant in each area). Then a point is reached in the historical evolution of each place-name when it freezes, lexicologically speaking. Needless to say, place-names, in any language, cannot escape phonemic and phonetic restructurings of the language as a whole. But morphological and syntactic changes (e.g., compounding patterns) stop, and the toponymic item remains lexically invariable from that point onward *when compared with its purely lexical etymological cognate which carries no toponymic referent* (e.g., Fr. *Chastel* < *castellum* may survive as a toponym only in an area where the lexical item from the same etymon, meaning "castle," i.e., *château*, may have no toponymic representative). *Château*, morphologically and phonologically, is a historically later stage of development from *castellum* than *Chastel*. In this French example, the modern lexical item may also be represented toponomastically, as exemplified by the numerous French place-names in *Château*. But it is quite possible for a toponym to exist in the lexical corpus of a modern language while the non-toponymic lexical cognate no longer does, e.g., *castrum* yields a Spanish reflex *Castro*. This word, however, means nothing intrinsically to a native Spanish speaker; it only has toponymic and subsequent anthroponymic existence in modern Spanish (e.g., *Castro Urdiales* in Santander, or the famous writer Rosalía de Castro). The ordinary lexical item with the meaning of "castle" is, of course, *castillo*. The same fate has

befallen reflexes of *castrum* elsewhere, showing that as a lexical item *castellum* edged out *castrum*. No Frenchman understands what *Castres* means, or once meant, outside of its obvious toponymic referent. Neither does an Italian or a Portuguese know the former meaning of *Castro*, which is quite widespread in their toponymy (e.g., *Castroreale* or *Castro Marim*) unless he is a specialist, or at the very least has studied Latin. Even such people, in ordinary speech, will not bother with the etymology, but will use the form with its place-naming function unless specifically discussing its past history.

The toponymic progeny of *castellum* and *castrum* comes down to us by means of the following processes:

1. Artificial restoration or introduction of an original Latin form. This is extremely rare, and examples are found only in Romania: e.g., *Castranova* (Caracal Province).²

2. Straight reflexes of the Latin etyma in the various Romance dialectological areas. These nearly always reflect purely local phonology. When they do not, one must invoke administrative importations from the center of political power, or sheer military conquest and imposition of a place-name reflecting a formation alien to the particular area. An example of the former would be *Entrecasteaux*, located in southernmost France, in Provençal-speaking territory, yet a purely northern form of Picard appearance. An example of the latter would be *Qastel*, in Israel, a Romance place-name in a land of Hebrew and Arabic speech; it could be traced to either Roman or Byzantine conquest of the Holy Land, or more likely to the Crusades.

General examples of this category are *Castro*, *Châtel*, *Château*, *Castres*, *Chastres*, *Chester*, *Lancaster*, *Leicester*, *Kassel*, etc.

3. Derivatives, consisting of straight reflexes to which have been tacked on either one or several suffixes. More often than not, the derivation must have taken place within Vulgar Latin times, at least for the first suffix, e.g., *castellare* > Fr. *Châtelard*, or **castrineum* > Galician *Castrinho*. Monosuffixial derivatives then sometimes go on to act as new nuclei for further suffixation, e.g., Catalan *Castellonet*, which may be analyzed as Latin root *castell* -, V. L.

² Of such places, I. Iordan says, in his *Toponimia româneasca* (Bucharest, 1963), p. 306: "Desigur, numiri oficiale și recente," i.e., "of course, official and recent names."

suffix *-one* (m) and, presumably, Catalan diminutive suffix *-et* < V. L. *-ittum*. In each particular area, the relative position of these consecutive suffixes could serve as a rough gauge of the relative chronology of introduction of the various suffixes. In this respect place-names are invaluable, because of their inherent fixity in space and through very long periods of time. Multiple suffixation seems, however, to be restricted largely to the Iberian Peninsula.

4. Composition, in which the reflexes are modified by addition of another lexical element, which may be an anthroponym, an adjective or a substantive, e.g., Fr. *Château-Renaud*, It. *Castelli Romani*, Sp. *Castro del Rey*.

A special variant of such composition could be described as bilingual, e.g., Aragonese or Mozarabic *Castielfabib*, which exhibits both Romance and Arabic characteristics, unless *-fabib* < *Habib* be considered a proper name. Still another variant is *bilingual semantic reduplication*, shown by Fr. *Châteaudun* and British *Castleton*, which are of mixed Romance and Celtic etymology (cf. Sicilian *Lingua-glossa*, of mixed Romance and Greek provenience).

5. Outright borrowing of the Latin roots and adaptation of same to indigenous phonology in various non-Romance areas, e.g. *Kasr* < *castrum* in Arabic-speaking territory, or *Plougastel* in Brittany, until recently a non-Romance speech pocket on politically French soil.

6. Re-borrowing by Romance of borrowings from Romance for toponymic and general lexical purposes. In this circuitous way Spanish, for instance, borrows from Arabic the term *alcázar*, itself < Arabic article *al* + *cázar* < *kasr* < *castrum*, and then applies it to a series of place-names. Such toponyms, cognates whether directly or indirectly, may be referred to as "isotonymic," a convenient designation for "names that mean the same thing," or at least those that have a common etymology.

7. Hybrids, i.e., contamination of one toponymic form by another, e.g., Sp. *Castrillejo*, apparently a cross between *Castro* and *Castillejo*.

Following is a list of *castrum/castellum* toponymic form-classes, each of which is actualized in at least one real place-name, together with their Vulgar Latin etymology and the dialectal area in which samples were found. Brief explanatory notes will be added as required. Code numbers will be used for etymologies and areas, in accordance with the following key:

I. AREA CODE

1. *Langue d'oïl*
2. *Langue d'oc*
3. Catalan
4. Spanish (including Leonese and Aragonese)
5. Galician-Portuguese
6. Rhaeto-Romance
7. Italian
8. Sardinian
9. Romanian
10. Britain
11. Germany (includes all German-speaking areas)
12. Middle East
13. Greece
14. Franco-Provençal
15. Brittany

II. ETYMOLOGY CODE (i.e., the direct Vulgar Latin original form, whether attested or reconstructed, including Vulgar Latin suffixes, if any)

1. CASTELLUM (V. L. neuter or masculine)
2. CASTRUM
3. CASTELLUCIUM
4. CASTELLARE
5. CASTELLIONEM or CASTELLONEM
6. CASTELLA
7. CASTRA
8. CASTELLITUM
9. *CASTELLANTIA
10. CASTELLANA
11. CASTELLANUS, -ANUM
12. CASTELLACEUM, -ACTIUM
13. CASTELLINA
14. CASTELLOTTUM, -OTTAM
15. *CASTRAX, -ACIUS or -ICIUS
16. CASTRINUM
17. *CASTROSUM, -OSAM
18. *CASTELLICIUM or *CASTELLICULUM
19. *CASTELLUCULUM

TABLE OF FORM-CLASSES

No.	FORM-CLASS	AREA	ETYMOLOGY
1.	CAËSTRE	1	2
2.	CARLA	2 (Gascon)	4
3.	CARLARET	2	4 (diminutive of no. 2)
4.	CARLUCET	2	3 (dim. of no. 6)
5.	CARLUS	2	3
6.	CARLUX	2	3
7.	CASSARO	7	2
8.	CASSEL	Linguistically 11 Politically 1	1
9.	CASTALA	4	6
10.	CASTALLA	4	6
11.	CASTARAS	4	6
12.	—CASTER	10	2
13.	CASTEAU	1 (Walloon)	1
13a.	—CASTEAUX ³	1 and/or 2	1
14.	CASTEDDU	8	1
15.	CASTEGGIO	7	5
16.	CASTEIL	3	1
17.	CASTEJON	4	5
18.	CASTEL (isolated)	7	1
18a.	CASTEL— (combined)	2,3,7	1
18b.	CASTEL (separate, determined)	1,7,4	1
18c.	—CASTEL	6 (hybrid), 2	1
19.	CASTELAR	2	4
20.	CASTELHICCHIO (doubtful) ⁴	7	18
21.	CASTELL	3	1
21a.	CASTELL— (or CASTELL')	3,7	1
22.	CASTELLA	7	6
23.	CASTELLANA	3,4,5,7	10
24.	CASTELLANE	2	10
25.	CASTELLANOS	4	11
26.	CASTELLANZA	7	9
27.	CASTELLAR	2,3,4	4
27a.	CASTELLARD	2	4
28.	CASTELLARE	7	4
29.	CASTELLAS	2	12
30.	CASTELLAZO	4	12
31.	CASTELLAZZO	7	12

³ Phonologically an *oïl* form (Picard, or Picard-Francien hybrid) but actually located in Provence.

⁴ Found on one map, but not on others. Possibly a misprint.

TABLE OF FORM-CLASSES (continued)

No.	FORM-CLASS	AREA	ETYMOLOGY
32.	CASTELLET	2,3	8
33.	CASTELLETTO	7	8
34.	CASTELLI	7	1
35.	CASTELLINA	7	13
36.	CASTELLO (separate)	7	1
36a.	CASTELLO (part of compound)	7	1
37.	CASTELLÓ	3	5
38.	CASTELLON	4	5
39.	CASTELLONET	3	5 & 8 (hybrid, or diminutive of no. 37)
40.	CASTELLOTE	4	14
41.	CASTELLUCCIO	7	3
42.	CASTELLUCHIO	7	19
43.	CASTELLUZZO	7	3
44.	CASTELO	5	1
45.	CASTERA	2 (Gascon)	4
46.	CASTERAT	2 (Gascon)	4
47.	CASTERETS	2 (Gascon)	4 (dimin. of no. 46)
48.	CASTERON	2 (Gascon)	5
49.	CASTETIS	2 (Gascon)	1
50.	CASTEX	2 (Gascon)	1
51.	CASTI-	2,8	1
52.	CASTIEL-	4	1
53.	CASTIELLO	4	1
54.	CASTIELLÓ	3	5
55.	CASTIGLION- (combined)	7	5
55a.	CASTIGLION (separ., compound)	7	5
56.	CASTIGLIONE	7	5
57.	CASTIL or CASTIL-	4	1
58.	CASTILAZO	4	12
59.	CASTILLA (isolated or comp.)	4	6
60.	CASTILLEJA	4	1 + -ÍCULA
61.	CASTILLEJAR	4	(hybrid) 1 + -ICULA + 4
62.	CASTILLEJO	4	1 + -ICULU
63.	CASTILLEJOS	4	plural of no. 62
64.	CASTILLERIA	4	1 + -ARIA
65.	CASTILLON	2,3,5	5
66.	CASTILLONNÈS	2	5 (+ Pyren. suffix -ès?)
67.	CASTILLO or -CASTILLO	4	1
68.	CASTIONE	7	5
69.	CASTIONS	6	5
70.	CASTET-	2 (Gasc.)	1

TABLE OF FORM-CLASSES (continued)

No.	FORM-CLASS	AREA	ETYMOLOGY
71.	CASTETS	2 (Gasc.)	1
72.	CASTLE	10	1 (through Norman)
73.	CASTRA— (artificial)	9	7
74.	CASTRAZ	4	15
75.	CASTRE—	4	7
76.	CASTREJON	4	5 & 7 (hybrid)
77.	CASTRELE	9	7 + Roman. post-positioned article
78.	CASTRELO	5	7 & 1, or 2 & 1 (hybrid)
79.	CASTRES	2	7
80.	CASTRIES	2	7
81.	CASTRIL	4	2 & 1 (hybrid)
82.	CASTRILLEJO	4	2 & 1 (hybrid) + -ICULU(M) or contamin. of no. 81 & 62
83.	CASTRINÑO	5	15
84.	CASTRO (separate)	4,5,7	2
84a.	CASTRO (combined)	7	2
85.	CASTRON	4,5	2 & 5 (hybrid)
85a.	CASTRON—	5	2 & 5 (hybrid)
86.	CASTROZZA	7	16 (?)
87.	CASTRUCCIO	7	2 & 3 (hybrid)
88.	CATEAU	1 (Picard)	1
89.	CATELET (Le)	1 (Pic.)	8
90.	CATELIER (Le)	1 (Pic.)	4
91.	CATLLON	1 (Pic.)	5
92.	CATLLAR	3	4
93.	CAYLAR (Le) or CAILLAR	2	4
94.	CAYLUS	2	3
95.	CAZALLA	4	6
96.	—CESTER	10	2
97.	CHAILLON	1	5
98.	CHALARD (Le) ⁵	2	5
99.	CHÂLUS	1	3
100.	CHASTEAX	1 (linguistically) ⁶	1
101.	CHASTEL	14	1

⁵ Perhaps a *Limousin* form (Dauzat & Rostaing, *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms de lieux de la France* [Paris, 1963]).

⁶ Apparently *Francien* administrative penetration of *Corrèze*, situated in *Langue d'oc* territory. Cf. similar penetration of *-casteaux*.

TABLE OF FORM-CLASSES (continued)

No.	FORM-CLASS	AREA	ETYMOLOGY
102.	CHASTELLUX	1	3
103.	CHASTREIX ⁷	1	7 + -ENSEM
104.	CHASTRES	1	7
105.	CHASTRÈS	1	7 + -ENSEM
106.	CHÂTEAU or CHÂTEAU-	1	1
107.	CHÂTEL (isol. or combined)	1	1
108.	CHÂTELAILLON	1	1 & 5 (hybrid, doubtful)
109.	CHÂTELAIN	1	11
110.	CHÂTELAINÉ	14	11
111.	CHÂTELLAN	1	1 & 11 (hybrid)
112.	CHÂTELARD	14	4
113.	CHÂTELAIS ⁸	1	probably 8
114.	CHÂTELAY ⁸	14	probably 8
115.	CHÂTELET	1	8
116.	CHÂTELEY (Le) ⁸	1	probably 8
117.	CHÂTELINEAU	1	1 + 13 + 1 (triple hybrid)
118.	CHÂTELLENOT	1	5 + 14 (hybrid)
119.	CHÂTOILLENOT	1	5 + 14 (hybrid)
120.	CHÂTELLIER (Le) or Le CHÂTELLIER	1	4
120a.	CHÂTELLIERS (Les)	1	4
121.	CHÂTELUS	1	3
122.	CHÂTILLON	1	5
123.	CHÂTRE (La)	1	7
124.	CHÂTRES	1	7
125.	CHÂTRICES	1	15
126.	CHESSION	1	5
127.	CHESTION	1	5
128.	CHESTER or -CHESTER	10	2
129.	CHESTRES	1	7
130.	CHEYLARD (Le)	2	4
131.	CHEYLAS (Le)	2	12
132.	CHEYLAT	2	4
133.	-GASTEL	15	1
134.	GASTERN	11	2

⁷ According to Dauzat and Rostaing, "mauvaise orthographe pour *Chastrés* (graphie limousine et Ouest du Puy-de-Dôme)." This spelling is very similar to that of Walloon *Chastrès*.

⁸ According to Dauzat and Rostaing, *op. cit.* They suggest a substitution of suffixes with *-are* as a possible explanation.

TABLE OF FORM-CLASSES (continued)

No.	FORM-CLASS	AREA	ETYMOLOGY
135.	GÂTELLES	1	crossing of 1 + Old French <i>gast</i> , "lieu inculte" (Dauzat & Rostaing)
136.	KASSEL	11	1
137.	KASTEL or -KASTEL	11	1
138.	KASTELLI	13	1
139.	KASTELLION	13	either 1 + Greek suffix, or 5
140.	KASTELLOU (Akra)	13	1 (Greek genitive)
141.	-KASTRO or -CASTRO	13	2
141a.	-KASTRON	13	2
142.	QASTEL	12	1
143.	ZATÉ	14	1

The above Glossary allows one to conclude that one original Classical Latin root *castrum* gives rise within classical times to a diminutive *castellum*, and that both roots then go on to produce, by straight evolution and/or derivation, at least 19 Vulgar Latin roots, or forms, which go into toponomastic use. These 19 Vulgar Latin roots eventually yield a modern progeny of at least 143 phonologically distinct Romance form-classes in actual toponymic use. Many of these form-classes are oft-repeated (i.e., they are 100 per cent isotonymic or, in other words, the actual place-names are not merely etymologically related, but are also similar in phonetic form, e.g., the numerous French *Château*). The total number of *castrum/castellum* place-names, therefore, runs into several hundred, to which could be added those of Latin America and other former or present colonial Romance-speaking areas.

University of California at Irvine.