

Κατεπάνω — Capitano — Captain.

It is a general belief, sanctioned by Romanist philologists and adopted in this country by such authorities as Skeat's and Murray's English Dictionaries, that the word *capitano*, *captain* (as well as the modern Greek *καπετάν-ιος* and the Turkish *capudan*) — together with its former variety of by-forms: *capitan(e)*, *capitain(e)* etc. — comes through the Old French (14th century) *capitain(e)* from late Latin *capitanus*, *capitaneus*. But the question is: What is *capitanus*? is it a genuine Latin word? I believe not; for in that case it would be not exactly a substantive but rather an adjective denoting a person or thing pertaining to *caput*, or a follower of a *caput*, as: *humanus*, *paganus*, *Romanus*, *Troianus*, *Christianus*, *Arianus* etc.

As a matter of fact, the Latin word *capitanus* or *capitaneus* is a corrupt form of the Greek adverb *κατεπάνω*, which in its turn is a strengthened by-form of *ἐπάνω* (like *ὄπισθεν κατ-ὄπισθεν*, *ὑπερθεν καθ-*, *ἔμπροσθεν κατ-*, *ἔναντι κατ-*, *ἀντικρὺ κατ-*). In Byzantine times this adverb, especially with the article, *ὁ κατεπάνω*, was used as an administrative title in the sense of *praefectus*, a *governor* or *high-commissioner*. It was the title given to those governors or high-commissioners whom the Greek Emperors in Constantinople deputed to govern, in their name, certain Italian provinces. The term *ὁ κατεπάνω* soon assumed the popular form *ὁ κατεπάνος* by annexing the familiar ending *-ος* and then became, by what is called phonetic assimilation, *καταπάνος*, a *catapan*, as Gibbon correctly transliterates the term. The successive change of *κατεπάνω* to *κατεπάνος*, then of *ὁ κατεπάνος* to *ὁ καταπάνος* is witnessed in mediaeval Greek texts, as we shall presently see.

It is this administrative title then — *ὁ κατεπάνω κατεπάνος καταπάνος* — which at the outset passed into Latin in the forms *catepanus* and *catapanus*, whereas such other by-forms as *capitanus*, *capitaneus*, *capitanus* etc. are later developments and represent cases of phonetic corruption and paretymology suggested by the familiar (*caput*) *capit-*, *capit-alis*, *-ellum*, *-olium*, *-ulum* etc. Accordingly the term *capitano*, *capitain*, *captain* comes from the Byzantine title *κατεπάνω* — *κατεπάνος* — *καταπάνος* which appears in mediaeval Latin texts first as *catepanus*, then *catapanus*, then — since the eleventh

century — in the corrupt or paretymological forms *capitanus*, *capitaneus* etc.

These were the views I formed some years ago when I was working out the material to my *Historical Greek Grammar* (London 1890). Pressure of work then rendered it impossible for me to follow any further my research, and so I contented myself with the mere statement in my book § 1224 to the effect that sometimes „the adverb is turned to a substantive, as: ὁ (κατεπάνω) κατεπάνος or καταπάνος *captain*: FTrinch. V († 975). So XVII. XIX etc.“ With this remark I left the matter for some subsequent occasion.

I can now say that recent investigation bears out fully my previous views. Not only does the phenomenon find its natural explanation in the history of the Greek language, but the material available is ample to remove all doubt about it. We know that even in classical Greek the preposition ἐπὶ + gen., especially with the article, (ὁ) ἐπὶ . . ., was often used in the sense of ἐπιστάτης *superintendent*, as: ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ὄπλων, ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς διοικήσεως, ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων. Now when ἐπὶ began to make room for ἐπάνω (Jannaris §§ 1488, 1491, 1583), the title ὁ ἐπὶ . . . became ὁ ἐπάνω . . ., as: Leont. Neap. (ed. Gelzer) 34, 12 ὁ ἐπάνω τῆς ἀγορᾶς; id. 34, 18 ὁ ἐπάνω τῶν καπήλων; Chron. 697, 14 σακελλάριος τοῦ πατριάρχου καὶ ἐπάνω τῶν χειροτονιῶν; Theoph. 297, 17 ὁ ἐπάνω τοῦ ἀρμαμέντου. Again when ἐπάνω was felt to be weak and called for the strengthened form κατεπάνω (as explained above ὀπισθεν κατόπισθεν etc.), this ultimate substitute assumed the office of its two predecessors ἐπάνω and ἐπὶ. Accordingly just as ὁ ἐπὶ and ὁ ἐπάνω denoted in their respective time a *superintendent*, so ὁ κατεπάνω denotes in Byzantine times a *superintendent, governor* or *prefect*, as is shown by the following illustrations.

I. Literary form: ὁ κατεπάνω.

Porph. Adm. 121, 18 ἰστέον ὅτι μαστρομίλης (magister militum) ἐρμηνεύεται τῇ Ῥωμαίων διαλέκτῳ κατεπάνω τοῦ στρατοῦ. 228, 24 ἰστέον ὅτι τύπος ἐκράτησε καλαῖς τὸν κατεπάνω Μαρδαῖτῶν Ἀττάλας παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως δηλονότι προβάλλεσθαι· διὸ καὶ παρὰ Λέοντος τοῦ μακαριωτάτου βασιλέως κατεπάνω προεβλήθη Σταυράκιος ὁ Πλατὺς ἐπονομαζόμενος. Cer. 6, 4 οἱ δὲ ἐξερχόμενοι ὀρίζουσι πᾶσιν τοῖς τοῦ κουβουκλείου, ὁμοίως καὶ τῷ κατεπάνω καὶ τῷ δομεστικῷ τῶν βασιλικῶν. 9, 15 ὁ κατεπάνω τῶν βασιλικῶν. Attal. 11, 19 ὄν (Γεώργιον Μανιάκην) καὶ τῷ τῶν μαγίστρων τετιμηκῶς ἀξιώματι καὶ κατεπάνω Ἰταλίας προεχειρίσατο. 17, 2 ὁ τῆς μεγάλης Ἀντιοχείας κατεπάνω, Χατούριος ἐπονομαζόμενος, ἐξ Ἀρμενίων δ' ἔλκων τὸ γένος. Scyl.

494, 23 δν (*Μανιάκην*) ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ ἔργου ἀποδεξάμενος κατεπάνω τῆς κάτω Μηδίας ἀποδείκνυσιν. 519, 6 τῷ κατεπάνω Ἰβηρίας. 541, 21 Κωνσταντῖνον τὸν κατεπάνω. 702, 3 Παῦλος πρόεδρος ὁ τῆς Ἐδέσσης κατεπάνω. 727, 12 τὸν κατεπάνω τῆς αὐτῆς πόλεως. — F'Trinchera Syllabus Graecarum Membranarum (Neapoli, 1865) VII (A. D. 975) *Μιχαὴλ ἀνθύπατος καὶ κατεπάνω Ἰταλίας*, which is confirmed by the MS facsimile (Plate I) and correctly Latinized by *catapanus Italiae*. So further X (A. D. 999) *init.* XII (A. D. 1005). XIV (A. D. 1011) *Basiljus protospatharius et caterpano italie.* XIX (A. D. 1021) *basilj imperialj protospatharii et caterpano italie.*

II. Popular forms: κατεπάνος, καταπάνος.

F'Trinchera X (A. D. 999) *Γρηγόριος πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ κατεπάνος Ἰταλίας ὁ Τραχανιώτης.* XV (A. D. 1015) *Βασιλείου τοῦ πανευφήμου βασιλικῷ πρωτοσπαθαρίου καὶ κατεπάνου Ἰταλίας.* XVI (1016) *κατεπάνος Ἰταλίας* (twice). XIII *ἐπὶ Τορνικίου πρωτοσπαθαρίου καὶ κατεπάνου γενοῦτος Ἰταλίας τοῦ Κοντολέοντος.* *ib.* *Βασιλείου πρωτοσπαθαρίου κατεπάνου Ἰταλίας τοῦ Βοϊανοῦ.* XXIII (1032) *Βασιλείου πρωτοσπαθαρίου καὶ κατεπάνου (caterpani) χρηματίσαντος Ἰταλίας.* XXV (1032) *Κωνσταντῖνον πατρικίου καὶ κατεπάνου Ἰταλίας.* *ib.* *τοῖς ἐνδοξοτάτοις κατεπάνοις διοριζόμεθα etc.* CXLVII (1149) *Νικολάου καταπάνου* (twice). — The same collection contains six sigla (Plate VIII) of which the 1st (of 999) and 3^d (of 1071?) bear the abbreviated form KA for κατεπάν-ω(-ος). — Theophyl. (the exegete) *Epist.* 19 (ed. Migne T. 126) *νῦν μὲν ὁ καστροκτίστης καθήρει τὰ τῶν ἐλλειψῶν, νῦν δὲ ὁ κατεπάνος, καὶ τὸν χοῦν ἐλικμᾶτο.*

Mark further the derivatives *κατεπανίκιον* and *κατεπανικός*. Attal. 168 δν (*Παῦλον*) ἀπὸ τοῦ κατεπανικίου (*praefectura*) τῆς Ἐδέσσης μεταπεμφάμενος. Du Cange s. v. *κατεπάνω* τῆς δὲ *πρακτορικῆς καὶ κατεπανικῆς χρείας*. So too in Latin: *catapanatus, catipania*.

That the term *κατεπάνος-καταπάνος* has ever since been in unbroken use, appears from its continuous occurrence in late mediaeval texts and its survival to this day in South Italian Greek speech. Thus G. Morosi dealing with the subject in *Archivio Glottologico* XII (1891) — to which article Prof. Krumbacher kindly directed my attention — says on p. 94, 277: „*katapanu e stratigótu, due ufficiali del Comune, addetti al buon ordine del mercato; ma già alti magistrati del impero bizantino: κατεπ-, καταπάνος e στρατηγός*“ (see also below). Hence Gustav Meyer is wrong when, discussing Morosi's article (*ib.* 140), says of *katapanu* that it is „an error of transcription“.

But to remove the last possible doubt, I shall adduce an extract

from a lengthy article contained in Du Fresne's *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* (ed. 1883). In this very interesting article, which came to my notice only very recently, Du Fresne (Du Cange) insists upon the correct derivation of the word *catapanus* from *κατεπάνω*, and then proceeds to the enumeration of all *catapani* from the VIIIth to the XIth century.

Vol. II p. 219 f. „De vocis (*catapanus*) origine nugantur Guillelmus Apul. lib. 1. Glaber Rodolphus lib. 3. cap. 1. et Leo Ost. lib. 2. cap. 51, quorum sententias discussimus in Notis ad Alexiadem pag. 275. ubi ostendimus vocem hanc formasse Byzantinos ex *κατεπάνω*, quam quibusvis Capitaneis, seu cujuscunque ordinis viris primariis tribuere solent. *Hodie Neapoli* (see also above! the italics are mine) *Catapanus* vocatur publicus minister, annonae, ponderibus, mensurisque praefectus. Charta Veneta ann. 1346 apud Sansovinum et Springam in Venetia lib. 2. p. 111: *Mixier Marco Catapan.*

At cum frequens apud Byzantinos atque adeo Italicos aevi medii Scriptores Catapanorum Italiae mentio occurrat, haud absurdum forte videbitur, si ex historicis Graecis ac Latinis eorum seriem ad majorem Historiae lucem hocce loco inseramus. Notum autem expulsis Italiae finibus Gothicis, sub Justiniano demum missos praefectos, seu *στρατηγούς*, qui provincias et urbes regerent, et populos in officio continerent, quos inter primus exstitit *Belissarius*, qui exactis Gothicis Italiam aliquandiu gubernavit, ut et *Narses* Eunuchus et *Patricius*, qui in Italiam Longobardos evocavit, et alii, quos excepere postmodum Exarchi Ravennates, hosque *Catapani*, seu Praefecti Apuliae et Calabriae, postquam Longobardia, aliisque Italiae aliquot provinciis Graeci pulsi sunt. Horum primus mihi occurrit

Stephanus cognomento *Maxentius* Capadox missus ad gubernandam Longobardiam a Basilio Macedone, cui ob res male gestas abrogatum imperium (de quo idem Porphyrog. in eodem Basilio num. 71 Edit. Combefisii) eique suffectus

Nicephorus cognomento *Phocas* vir strenuus“, etc.

„Gregorius *Bajulus Imperialis Graecorum* ann. 875 apud Lupum Protosp. et Erchempertum cap. 38 et 41.“

Follow the names with short notes of 59 more *Catapani*, the last named being „Stephanus Patrianus ann. 1071. apud Anonym. Baren. qua ferme tempestate exacti Apulia et Calabria a Normannis Graeci. Adde Octav. Bertranrum in Descript. Regni Neapol. pag. 65 et seqq.“

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