

# **G** **OZO** **OBSERVER**

No. 27, December 2012



[www.um.edu.mt/ugc/publications](http://www.um.edu.mt/ugc/publications)

# Contents

	<i>Page</i>
<b>Editorial: Regulation or Education?</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Origin of the Name of Gozo</b> Horatio Caesar Roger Vella	<b>3</b>
<b>A Bill to Reform the Courts in Gozo and to Simplify Proceedings between the Courts in Malta and those in Gozo</b> Kevin Aquilina	<b>21</b>
<b>Spatial Preparedness for Green Criminology</b> Saviour Formosa	<b>28</b>
<b>Infectious Diseases During the First World War in Gozo</b> Mario Saliba	<b>32</b>
<b>The Xaghra Monumental Church</b> Julian Refalo Rapa	<b>38</b>
<b>Book Reviews:</b> <b>Stones of Faith. Tombstones, Funerary Rites, And Customs At the Gozo Matrice and</b> <b>Vitor Vella. L-Imghallem Bennej Tas-Santwarju Ta' Pinu</b> Geoffrey G. Attard	<b>46</b>
<b>Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus</b> Joseph Calleja	<b>49</b>

## The Gozo Observer

**The Journal of the University of Malta - Gozo Campus.**  
Published two times a year.

**Editorial Board:**  
Prof. Lino Briguglio, Mr Joseph Calleja,  
Prof. Maurice N. Cauchi, Ms Caroline Camilleri Rolls

**Editorial Office:**  
University of Malta - Gozo Campus,  
Mgarr Road, Xewkija, XWK 1311, Gozo  
Tel: (356) 21564559; Fax: (356) 21564550;  
e-mail: [ugc@um.edu.mt](mailto:ugc@um.edu.mt)  
Web: [www.um.edu.mt/ugc](http://www.um.edu.mt/ugc)

**Printing:**  
J.de Bono Printing Press Ltd, Xewkija, Gozo,  
Tel: (356) 2155 2219

© University of Malta Gozo Campus and individual contributors. 2012

The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the University of Malta.

The *Gozo Observer* is distributed without charge, upon request, to interested readers.

**Front Cover Photo:** Courtesy of Joseph Calleja.



# Editorial:

## Regulation or Education?

It is tragedies like the explosion of a fireworks factory that brings to our attention the need for regulation of all activities which present more than the average danger to the workers involved.

It is at times like these that we hear the clamour for introducing urgent regulations to ensure that people are protected against their own activities, even hobbies, which turn out to be lethal on several occasions, as has been shown over and over again over the past few years.

There are some activities which are essential, and which involve well-known risks, but we insist on being allowed to carry on indulging in such activities, and would certainly not accept prohibition by regulation by the state. Even driving a car to work constitutes such a activity.

On the other hand there are activities which are disproportionately dangerous, exposing a relatively small number of workers to extreme risk. Workers in fireworks factories belong to this category, and it is precisely this category of activities which currently there is such a clamour to restrict and to regulate.

It is generally accepted that the State should protect its citizens against activities which interfere with their rights, but not against activities which the

average person undertakes with his or her own free will and which do not normally constitute a risk to anybody else. It could be argued that climbing a cliff or stuffing explosives into canisters would fall into these categories.

But the real question is this: should we rely on regulation by the authorities to stop activities which a few members of the public insist in indulging in? Or should we perhaps take a lateral view and delve a bit deeper into the reasons why this problem exists at all within the community? I feel pretty certain that Malta would come up very high in the international listing of the incidence fireworks-related tragedies. And Gharb in particular seems to be a sitting duck.

It is really a question of supply and demand. For generations the majority of Maltese expected fireworks as a prominent and essential way of celebrating their annual 'festa'. What has certainly crept in is the inevitable rivalry which often exists between contiguous towns and villages, which ensures that every year there is an incremental increase in the profusion and maximal bang produced by these petards.

In other words, the average person has to shoulder some of the communal responsibility for the situation as it exists today. If there were enough people objecting to the practice, it is inevitable that the popularity and consequent risk would be reduced.

One would have thought that a dollop of education would not go astray. People should be made aware not only of the risks involved, but also about the fact that there are other ways of celebrating festas apart from the excessive consumption of fire-power.

There is no doubt also that one should insist on proper education of those involved in the actual factories, which, together with strict control, would hopefully reduce risks.



Local 'festa' firework display.  
(Source: <http://www.hotelsanandrea.com> - Nov 2012)

*Maurice Cauchi*

# The Origin of the Name of Gozo

HORATIO CAESAR ROGER VELLA

## The Name of Gozo

“Do you come from Ghawdex?” is a question that sounds as discordant as the other one, “*Intom minn Gozo?*”. To one not conversant with the Greek origin of the names of Gozo, such questions sound like being uttered by Maltese trying to speak English, and mix Maltese with English or, the other way round, like knowledgeable tourists trying to speak Maltese and, to our mind, mix it with “English”. This paper will show that none is the case.

We, in fact, can use “Ghawdex” liberally when speaking in English; likewise, we can use the name of “Gozo” when speaking in Maltese, for, as this



Location of Gaudos near Crete  
(Source: <http://www.greece-map.net/crete.htm> - Nov 2012)



Satellite image of the island of Gaudos  
(Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gavdos> - Nov 2012)

paper will show, Gozo is an ancient variant of Gaudos from which it is derived, as much as Ghawdex is. The irony is that Gozo, Ghawdex and Gaudos did not originally belong to us, as I explained in other publications of mine.<sup>1</sup>

Gaudos is the Greek name of a small island on the south-western side of Crete, with its smaller sister island of *Gaudapula*. Cretan Gaudos is half the size of our island of Gozo, roughly at 24° longitude and 35° latitude (1° southern than our Gozo), and less than 30 miles from Crete.

The pronunciation of Cretan Gaudos from Byzantine times has been not Gaudos, but Gavdos, for since those times, the Greeks developed the pronunciation of the diphthong *au* as “*av*”, as in *thauma*, pronounced as “*thavma*”, meaning “miracle”. Similarly, *eu* is pronounced as “*ev*” as in *Zeus* pronounced as “*Zevs*”, the chief god of the Greek pantheon. However, the diphthong *ou* continued to be pronounced as “*u*” as in “*ouranos*”, meaning “heaven”, and not as “*uvranos*”. It should be noted immediately that, the pronunciation of “*av*” and “*ev*” did not exist when Gaudos started to be referred to our Gozo during the times of Augustus, for if it did, we would still be calling Gozo as “Ghavdex”, and not “Ghawdex”. This seemingly minor point is of an *enormous* importance in confirming the date when exactly Gaudos came to be attributed, albeit wrongly, to our archipelago.

Greek	Classical Pronunciation	Byzantine Pronunciation	English
θαῦμα	thauma	thavma	wonder
Ζεύς	Zeus	Zevs	Zeus
οὐρανός	uranos	uranos	heaven
Γαῦδος	Gaudos	Gavdos	Ghawdex

## The Greeks and the Carthaginians in Malta and Gozo

If, as this paper will show, the name of Gaudos was attributed to Gozo by Greeks, then these Greeks understood that the island was to be recognized as

<sup>1</sup> Vella (1995a, 1995b, 2002, 2010).



Grand Harbour area  
(Source: <http://www.google.com> - Nov 2012)

Greek. The forthcoming excursus on the Greeks and the Phoenicians in Malta and Gozo, even if laboriously long, is essential for us to understand the origin of the name of Gaudos.

It is not news-breaking that I make in this article when I say that the inhabitants of Gozo once spoke Greek! The names themselves of Malta, Gozo and Ghawdex are Greek, as well as those of some towns like Qormi from *hormoi* meaning “anchorage” and Birgu from *Pyrgos* meaning “tower”. This goes against the traditional but mistaken interpretation, namely, that Qormi comes from Casal Curmi, and that Birgu comes from *Borgo*.

Greek	Classical Pronunciation	Byzantine Pronunciation	Maltese Pronunciation	English
πύργος	pyrgos	pirgos	Birgu	tower
ὄρμιοι	hormoi	ormi	Qormi	moorage

In the case of Qormi, if Qormi had been Curmi, it would not have changed into Qormi. The Maltese language invariably changes the final o into u, like “*Rocco*” turned into “*Rokku*”, but not the “o”s in the other syllables, apart from some dialectical changes. C, however, can turn into Q, as *Cala* became *Qala*. But the Byzantines did not pronounce *hormoi* as “*hormoi*”, but as “*ormi*”; for they no longer pronounced the “h”, and by then they were already pronouncing the diphthong “oi” as “i”. We Maltese, then, feel the “q” as a natural pronouncing aid in front of the vowel, and so we

do not say “*Ormi*”, but “*Qormi*”. Furthermore, archaeological investigation proves that waters of the Grand Harbour reached the outskirts of Qormi during Roman times, and Marsa Sports Ground during the Great Siege of Malta.

If Birgu had been *Borgo*, one would ask which place was it suburb of? If by Birgu we mean today’s Fort St Angelo, does it make sense to say that the fort is a suburb? If by it we mean today’s town of Victoriosa, does it make sense to say that the town is a suburb to the fort? Or to Mdina, as traditionally but mistakenly handed down? But here the same argument of above is applied, namely, that internal “o”s in other languages to not change into “u”, nor into “i”, in Maltese, but the word would have become “*Borgu*” instead, which is not what we have. Birgu, on the contrary, was Greek *Pyrgos*, meaning “tower”, which the Byzantines pronounced as “*Pirgos*”, for their “y” had changed into “i” in pronunciation. Regarding the change of “p” into “b”, one refers to similar changes in various languages, as in “*baba*” changed into “*papa*” or “*papà*”.

This discussion on Qormi and Birgu, although a slight digression, illustrating the fact that the pronunciation of Gaudos as “*Gaudos*” and not as “*Gavdos*” is pre-Byzantine, incidentally proves that, once upon a time, the Grand Harbour was once in the hands of the Byzantine power, from its entrance, the *Pyrgos*, to its innermost shelter, *Hormoi*. This means also that if the Grand Harbour was the sheltering place of the Byzantines, much of the fighting with the Arabs must have taken place there, in that part of Malta, which was claimed by other later foreign occupants, such as the Order of St John, the French and the British.

I wish here to refer to my earlier publications on the name of Malta.<sup>2</sup>

Latin	Source	Englsh	Greek	Source	English
Mélita	Greek	Malta	Μελίτη	Μελίτη	Melītē
Mel	mell	honey			

The traditional but, again, mistaken interpretation of *Melita*, to be pronounced as “*Mélita*”, not “*Melita*”, as derived from *mel*, meaning “honey”, is incorrect.

<sup>2</sup> Vella (2003), 165-166.





One appreciates the fact here that the influence of the name of *Sikelia* onto Maltese came directly from the Greeks in Sicily, who always have pronounced the *c* as *k*, never as *ċ* through influence from Rome after Augustan times. Also, the accent on the penultimate syllable has been retained ever since, unlike in the Latin or Italian pronunciation of *Sicília*. It is clear, therefore, that these Greeks, early settlers of our islands, seeing the island of Gozo frequented by several *gaûloi*, round-built ships commonly used by themselves and obviously by the Phoenicians as different from war-ships, called the island by the same name which the Phoenicians would have trasliterated into *Gwl*.

But what made these Greeks come to Malta and Gozo in the first place? These islands were too close to Sicily to be missed by both Greek and Phoenician traders. They both realised that these islands, with harbours and products that continued to be praised for centuries later, were ideal places for their emporia, which served double purpose of places of settlement and of “refuelling” stations for their fellow navigators. Even today, Malta and Gozo serve as a connection spot both for travelling and merchandize purposes.

But there was another reason why the Greeks as well as the Phoenicians came to Malta and Gozo. Sicily was roughly divided into two parts: western Phoenician Sicily and Eastern Greek. Eastern Sicily and southern Italy were closer to Greece, while western Sicily was closer to Carthage. The rivalry between these two peoples does not seem to have existed elsewhere in the Mediterranean, excluding Alexander’s invasion of Phoenician territory in the Near East. On the contrary, the alphabet itself remains a monument of how the Greeks, with more than a thousand years of prehistory and oral mythology behind them, could come to be influenced by the Phoenicians, not always described by Homer in bright colours, however. The cause for the rivalry between the Greeks and the Phoenicians in Sicily has to be sought elsewhere.

It was the time when farming and merchandize did not suffice for the upkeeping of the growing population in Sicily. Warfare provided another option, with various attractions that go with war: acquisition of land, career, adventure, military leadership. Bloodshed, however, did not attract the peaceful ones who, in

the unstable situation similar to a tug-of-war contest, decided to seek better pastures, as in Malta and Gozo. Phoenician and Greek refugees mixed in these two islands, leaving behind such animosities they were used to in Sicily to the more ambitious ones. Instead, the two communities dwelled together in both islands to such an extent that they either each took an island administratively, or both shared the administration in the two islands by a system of rotation. Prior to the Roman period, we only have three inscriptions, one bilingual in Malta, one in Punic from Gozo, and another in Greek from Malta, the last two referring to municipal governments. This last point, incidentally, throws light on the autonomous situations in the two islands, situations which show double independence: independence from outside, and independence of one island from the other. Never again was such independence experienced on these islands, for even today we have central government for both islands.

The situation in Malta and Gozo, accommodating both Phoenicians and Greeks, is comparable to that of Cyprus before the Turkish invasion. Turkish and Greek houses did not form ghettos, but alternated in the various towns and villages of the whole island.



Hamilcar did not resist the invasion of the Romans.  
(Source: <http://www.livius.org/ha-hd/hamilcar/> - Nov 2012)

Larnaca today still keeps the Turkish houses empty, in case the Turks decide to come back from the North!

The idea of bilingualism in Malta and Gozo is documented by the discovery of a bilingual stele in Malta. What would be the use of bilingualism had Greeks and Phoenicians excluded each other? Furthermore, the reference to divinities in Greek and Punic shows that both peoples honoured the same divinities with different names, such as Heracles and Melqart, Ashtarte and Aphrodite (rather than Hera).

The Greek and Phoenician presence was acknowledged by the Romans after 218 B.C. Livy (LIV. 21.51.1-2) mentions a force of about 2000 Carthaginian soldiers, not Greek, headed by their prefect, Hamilcar, who did not resist the invasion of the Romans. This invasion took place during the consulship of Tiberius Sempronius Longus and Publius Cornelius Scipio. The fortified town, together with the rest of the island, naturally assuming also its sister island of Gozo, were handed over to the Romans at the arrival of the consul, and no battles, therefore, were waged.<sup>6</sup>

#### LIV. 21.51.1-2.

*A Lilybaeo consul, Hierone cum classe regia dimisso relictoque praetore ad tuendam Siciliae oram, ipse in insulam **Melitam**, quae a Carthaginiensibus tenebatur, traiecit. Aduenienti Hamilcar, Gisconis filius, praefectus praesidii, cum paulo minus duobus milibus militum oppidumque cum insula traditur.*

When Hiero, with (his) royal fleet, had been dismissed and the praetor left behind to guard the coast of Sicily, the consul himself crossed from Lilybaeum to the Island of Malta, which was being held by the Carthaginians. Hamilcar, son of Gisco, prefect of the garrison, with little less than two thousand soldiers, and the town with the island were handed over to him as he was arriving.

The peaceful co-existence of Greeks and Phoenicians, mixed now with those from Carthage, for several centuries, effected two things: first, the Greeks understood that such small islands could not take two different armies, and so allowed themselves to be protected by the Carthaginians; secondly, both Greeks and Carthaginians in Malta and Gozo had long been accustomed to a peaceful settlement, and so they were culturally not prepared to resist the

Romans. Their forefathers knew of the outcome of the Roman occupation of western Sicily nearly a century earlier through the sea-battle off the Aegates Islands.

We know from Roman History that the Carthaginian settlements all over the Mediterranean were not wiped out. The exception was that of Carthage, when the inhabitants, apart from those who escaped, were sold into slavery before the city was destroyed. Recent D.N.A. investigations held in Malta and Lebanon confirm that ultimately the Maltese people are akin to the modern Lebanese through the ancient Phoenicians. These, it should be noted here, were for a long period governed by the Seleucid Greeks, and a mixture of the two peoples followed, a mixture not different from that of our islands. Also, simple linguistic analysis of the languages spoken by the two peoples show a kinship hardly represented by a comparison of the Maltese language with their southern neighbours.

A Punic inscription, unearthed in 1855 and stored at the Archaeological Museum in Valletta, was found in Gozo decades before 218 B.C. The inscription mentions two magistrates (*rabs*) of the Council by the names of Arish and Sapput. Furthermore, it mentions the names of the priest (Ba'alsillek), and the inspector of the quarry (Y'), and it mentions "the people" of Gozo twice. The presence of the Phoenicians and their descendants in Gozo does not rule out their presence in Malta for, as we said, Livy mentions a garrison of little less than 2000 Carthaginians in the bigger island when Titus Sempronius Longus invaded Malta, nor, as said above, does the Greek presence in Malta exclude their own presence in Gozo.

The Maltese farmers that gave hospitality to St Paul (*Acts* 28.2) were not necessarily ignorant of Greek, as has always been the interpretation of the word *barbaroi* attributed to them, made to mean "non-Greek speaking", but, as the forgotten Mikiel Anton Vassalli explained better, more than two centuries ago, to mean "*bar barr*", that is, "children of the countryside" in Semitic languages. We remind ourselves here of the Biblical *Bar Jonah*, that is, "son of Jonah", and *Hamiam il-bar*, that is, "Pigeons of the countryside", or "wild pigeons".

---

<sup>6</sup> *traditur* in Latin does not imply any betrayal, but surrender, that is, by the Carthaginians.



## Acts 28.2.

Οἱ τε βάρβαροι παρεῖχαν οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν φιланθρωπίαν ἡμῖν·

And the people of the countryside provided for us an uncommon kindness;

**Mikiel Anton Vassalli, *Mylsen Phoenico-Punicum sive Grammatica Melitensis* 48-49.**

Βάρβαροι, *Barbari Actor[um]* 28.5.1, et 3, *variam voci huic dedere significationem auctores. Sed magis naturalis ac genuina quoad hunc locum dari mihi posse videtur, si vocis originem inspiciamus; quippe quae specialem significatum in sua radice habeat. Barbarus est vox omnino Orientalis, ad Graecos et Latinos tractu temporis migrata. In eius origine nihil aliud significat nisi agrestis, agriculator, habitator deserti: componitur enim e duobus nominibus, nempe **Bar**, filius Syriace, et **Barr**, campus, ager; silva, quae vox **Barr** remansit quoque apud nos Melitenses, qui dicimus ex[empli] gratia, **ḍamym yl barr**, columbae silvestres et c[etera]. Ast quemadmodum apud Orientales in efformandis adjectivis usus saepe fuit adhibendae vocis **Bar**, filius, una cum re adjectivanda, et sic adjectivus indicatur; simili ratione ad indicandum agrestem seu habitatorem campi dicebant filius campi, filius agri, quod proprie significant Barbarus a **Barbarr**, nempe agrestis, agricola, ru- (.../49) sticus et c[etera]. Hinc est quod D[ivus] Lucas quum noluisset alios, nisi agrestes et ruricolos, scilicet Mellihenses et finitimos, qui rura et loca maritima, quo naufragus appulit, hiberno tempore colebant, indicare, voce Barbari proprie usus est. Et revera quosnam alios hiemis tempestate potuit D[ivus] Paulus in horridulis illis locis invenire, nisi filios ruris, scilicet] rusticos, qui arandi pascendique caussa loca illa inhabitabant?*

Barbaroi, Barbari of the Acts 28.5.1, et 3: authors have given various meanings to this word. But it seems to me that a more natural and genuine (meaning) can be given to this passage, if we were to look into the origin of the word, especially since it has a special meaning in its root. Barbarus is a completely Oriental word, having travelled to the Greeks and the Latin peoples by the passage of time. In its origin, it means nothing else except for “peasant”, “farmer”, “inhabitant of the desert”: for it is made up of two words, namely, Bar, “son” in Syrian, and Barr, “a plain, a field, a wood”, which word Barr has remained with us, Maltese, who say, by way of example, **ḍamym yl barr**, “ḥamiem il-barr”, pigeons of the wood, etc. But as with the Eastern peoples, in forming adjectives, there was often the use of the application of the word Bar, son, with the thing which was to be rendered as adjective, and so an adjective is indicated; in the same way, to indicate a peasant, or an inhabitant of a plain, they used to say “son of the plain”, “son of the field”, which exactly mean Barbarus from Bar Barr, that is, “peasant, farmer, countryside man” etc. This is why St Luke, since he



Monument of Mikiel Anton Vassalli at Żebbuġ.  
(Source: <http://website.lineone.net/> - Nov 2012)

knew no others except peasants and farmers, that is, people from Mellicha and (their) neighbours who, at the time of winter, used to inhabit the countryside and coastline places, which, having suffered shipwreck, he called to, he used exactly the word Barbari to indicate (what he meant). And indeed, what other people could St Paul find at the time of winter in those horrid places except for sons of the countryside, that is, countryside people, who used to inhabit those places for the purpose of ploughing and pasturing?

Similarly, there were Greek-speaking inhabitants in Malta before and at the Roman occupation of our islands in 218 B.C. as much as there remained Greek speaking ones right down into Norman and, to some extent, modern times. One here refers to a Greek inscription (Demetrius Inscription: C.I.G. 14.953.24) produced in Malta on a copper plate which refers to the Council and Assembly of the Maltese, and which has been dated 288 B.C. or 279 B.C. It was originally sent to a certain Demetrius, son of Diodotus, from Syracuse. To honour him for the friendship and generosity which he showed to the people of Malta, the Council and Assembly of Malta expressed their gratefulness by publishing two copies of the inscription, one of which was sent to him in Syracuse.

### Demetrius Inscription: C.I.G. 14.953.24.

ὕπερ προξενίας καὶ εὐεργεσίας Δημητρίῳ Διοδότῳ Συρακοσίῳ καὶ τοῖς ἐγγόνοις αὐτοῦ.  
ἐπὶ ἱεροθύτου Ἰκέτα Ἰκέτου, ἀρχόντων δὲ Ἡρέου καὶ Κόττης ἐδοξε τῇ συγκλήτῳ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ τῶν Μελιταίων· ἐπειδὴ Δημήτριος Διοδότῳ Συρακοσίῳ διὰ παντὸς εὖνους ὑπάρχων τοῖς τε δημοσίοις ἡμῶν πράγμασι καὶ ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ τῶν πολιτῶν παραίτιος ἀγαθοῦ πολλὰκι γεγένηται, ἀγαθὴ τύχη δεδόχθαι Δημήτριον Διοδότῳ Συρακοσίῳ πρόξενον εἶναι καὶ εὐεργέτην τοῦ δήμου τῶν Μελιταίων καὶ τοὺς ἐγγόνους αὐτοῦ

ἀρετῆς ἔνεκεν καὶ εὐνοίας ἧς ἔχων διατελεῖ εἰς τὸν ἡμέτερον δῆμον. τὴν δὲ προξενίαν ταύτην ἀναγράψαι εἰς χαλκῶματα δύο καὶ τὸ ἐν δοῦναι Δημητρίῳ Διοδότῳ Συρακοσίῳ.

To Demetrius, son of Diodotus, of Syracuse and his descendants, for (his) friendship and good services (done).

In the time of Hicetas, son of Hicetas, sacrificing priest, when Hereas and Cotetus were magistrates, the Council and the Assembly of the Maltese decided that since Demetrius, son of Diodotus, of Syracuse, being completely well-minded towards our public affairs, has often shared the well-being even of each of the citizens, they should welcome Demetrius, son of Diodotus, of Syracuse, in his position as protector and benefactor of the community of the Maltese, together with his descendants on account of the goodness and well-mindedness which he continues to bear towards our people. (It) also (decided) to register this friendship on two copper plates and to give one to Demetrius, son of Diodotus, of Syracuse.

The reference to dual magistracy in both the Punic and the Greek inscriptions of Gozo and Malta respectively point to the same epoch. This dual magistracy does not reflect any Roman system operative only in Rome during the Republican period, when they used the terms *consules* to their chief leaders. On the contrary, both the dual *rabs* in the Punic inscription of Gozo and the dual *archontes* in the Greek inscription of Malta reflect Carthaginian style of rule, both at Carthage and in its dependant states. This point also shows that the Greek settlers on Malta and Gozo adapted themselves to Punic style of rule.

At some time during Roman rule, as a result of the destruction of Carthage in 146 B.C. and the subsequent gradual decrease in Punic influence in matters of political systems no longer comparable to a mother-country, this dual system of government gave way to the single-rule system as shown by terms like the *πρῶτος Μελιταίων*, meaning, “President of the Maltese”, of a lost Greek inscription of Tiberius’ times, first recorded by Jean Quintin<sup>7</sup> and referring to a certain Lucius Castricius, a Roman Knight; *πρῶτος τῆς νῆσου*, meaning “President of the Island”, of the *Acts of the Apostles*, referring to a certain Publius of Malta, and to the *Patronus Municipii*, meaning,

“President of the Council”, as in the Vallius inscription from Gozo, already mentioned in a previous discussion.<sup>8</sup> One also comes across *Melitensium primus* in a Latin inscription from Malta,<sup>9</sup> all being examples of Roman departure from Punic style of government, that is, from dual Presidency to single Presidency.

#### Lucius Castricius: C.I.G. 14.601.

Λ[ΟΥΚΙΟΣ] ΚΑ[ΣΤΡΙΧΙΟΣ] ΥΙΟΣ ΚΥΡ[ΟΥ]  
ΠΡΟΥΔΗΝΣ ΙΠΠΕΥΣ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΟΣ  
ΜΕΛΙΤΑΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΤΡΩΝ ΑΡΞΑΣ ΚΑΙ  
ΑΜΦΙΠΟΛΕΥΣΑΣ ΘΕΩ ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΩ  
[ΑΝ]ΕΣ[ΤΗΣ]ΕΝ.

Lucius Castricius Prudens, son of Cyrus, Roman Knight, President of the Maltese and the senators, having ruled and been priest for the divine Augustus, set up (this inscription).

#### Acts 28.7.

ἐν δὲ τοῖς περὶ τὸν τόπον ἐκεῖνον ὑπῆρχεν χωρία τῷ  
πρώτῳ τῆς νήσου ὀνόματι Ποπλίῳ.

And in the neighbourhood of that locality, there were estates of the President of the Island called “Poplius”.

#### Vallius Inscription.

M[ARCO] VALLIO C[AI]I F[ILIO]  
QVI[NQVEVI]R[O] RVFO EQVO PVBLICO  
EXORNATO A DIVO ANTONINO AVG[VSTO]  
PIO PLEPS GAVLITANA E[X] AERE CONLATO  
OB MERITA ET I[N] SOLACIVM C[AI]I VALLI  
POSTVMI PATR[O]NI MVNICIPII PATRIS EIVS  
... TE.

The people of Gozo (dedicated this inscription) to Marcus Vallius Rufus, son of Caius, a member of the Council of Five, having been honoured with a public horse by the Divine Antoninus Augustus from money collected, on account of the merits and in compensation of Caius Vallius Postumus, President of the Council, his father.

#### Inscription of the Temple of Apollo.

MVNICIPI MELITENSIVM PRIMVS OMNI  
... FECIT. ITEM AEDEM MARMOREAM  
APOLLINIS CONSECRAVIT. ITEM POSVIT  
PRONAO COLVMNAS IIII, ET PARASCENIVM  
ET PODIVM ET PAVIMENTVM AEDIFICAVIT,  
IN QVOD OPVS VNIVERSVM EX LIBERALITATE

<sup>7</sup> H.C.R. Vella (1980), 26.

<sup>8</sup> H.C.R. Vella (1980), 47; (2002), 82-83.

<sup>9</sup> H.C.R. Vella (2002), 74-75.



Aerial photo of Gozo  
(Source: <http://www.maltavista.net/en/list/photo/948.html> - Nov 2012)

From 218 B.C., Malta and Gozo lost their independence, although they retained their autonomous government, ultimately depending on Syracuse. They remained politically under Sicily down to the take-over by the British after the Treaty of Paris in 1814. One can add here that even the Arabs in Malta and Gozo came from and were responsible to Sicily.

A number of Greek coins found in Malta show not only Greek script, but also representations from Greek deities, often related to the Underworld and fertility<sup>10</sup>.

SVA SESTERTIOS NVMMOS CENTOS DENOS  
MILLE SEPTINGENTOS NONAGINTA DVOS  
S[ENTENTIA] QVI[NQVEVI]R[ORVM] OB  
MELITENSIVM DESIDERIVM OB MERITA EIVS  
AERIS COLLATIONE DEDIT, DICAVIT.

The President of the Council of the Maltese ... completed everything. He also consecrated the marble temple of Apollo. He also placed four columns at the portico, and built a side-scene and a parapet and flooring, for which complete work he gave and bestowed from his own generosity, by the decision of the five Councillors on account of the desire of the Maltese, on account of his merits, having collected the money, 101, 792 sesterces.

The Lucius Castricius inscription, although from Malta, throws light on the political situation current in both islands. It was set up after the deification of Emperor Augustus and during the reign of Emperor Tiberius. Like Gaius Vallius in Gozo, he was a Roman Knight, a senator of the *municipium*, of which he was the President, but he was also priest in the propagation of the Cult of Augustus, which the emperor himself, during his lifetime, had instituted under the title of *Roma et Augustus*. It should be emphasized here that this inscription was produced in Greek, although about 200 years after the coming of the Romans to Malta and Gozo. This clearly shows what language the Maltese and Gozitans spoke at the time.

The presence of a tripod on most of the coins minted in Malta during the Roman period is very significant indeed. The tripod, which gave the name to the Island of Thrinacia, the island of Helius Odysseus visited last before coming to the island of Calypso, was a three-legged stool, with a hole or holes in the seat, that was placed over a particular hole in the earth commonly believed to be the *omphalos* of the world. In some of these coins, Persephone is represented as veiled. Some of them go back to the times of the first triumvirate in Rome, that is, 35 B.C. and 15 B.C., again, nearly 200 years after the coming of the Romans. If so, what was the population of Malta and Gozo like, if not Greek and Carthaginian?



Bronze Coins.

<sup>10</sup> J.C. Sammut (2001).



The Greek community in Malta and Gozo, by the time of the fall of the Roman Empire in A.D. 455 at the hands of the Vandals, must have survived since local government as well as Church administration passed on to the Eastern Roman Empire. We do not know of Vandals occupying or pillaging Malta and Gozo. This would not be surprising since their march was southwards *via* Spain and northwards from Africa *via* Italy. Procopius mentions Malta and Gozo only as a port of call of Belisarius when he was travelling from Sicily to Africa. The Vandals probably had not yet penetrated northwards from Africa when Procopius wrote on Malta, and so no clashes with them could have been reported. The catastrophe, if it existed, was to come a few years later. In my opinion, the destruction of the Byzantine church at Tas-Silġ on the premises of the former Temple of Juno could have been done at this period, rather than centuries later by the Arabs. Clashes with the Arabs in Malta, but not in Gozo, certainly took place, and Malta became an impoverished place, without a Diocesan See, though not quite uninhabited and converted into Muslim as often we hear!<sup>11</sup>

**Procopius *Bellorum historia* 3.14.16:**

ἀράμενοι τε κατὰ τάχος τὰ ἱστία, Γαύλῳ τε καὶ Μελίτῃ  
ταῖς νήσοις προσέσχον, αἱ τὸ τε Ἀδριατικὸν καὶ  
Τυρρηνικὸν πέλαγος διορίζουσιν.

And while they raised the sails quickly, they approached  
the islands of Gaulos and Melitē, which separate the  
Adriatic Sea and the Tyrrhenian.

The Arabs were allowed by Count Roger to stay on the islands and even control them for him. This means that now the islands had a population of Carthaginians, Greeks, both probably converted into Christians by Roman times, Jews, Sicilians representing Norman rule, and Arabs. It was in this scenario that the famous Greek poem was written sometime between A.D. 1135 and A.D. 1151,<sup>12</sup> revealing that Gozo remained Christian and Greek even during Muslim times, and that it was an independent Diocese. This poem was written by a Greek exile from Sicily, which, by the way, remained Greek-speaking also down to those days. The interesting thing for us in this poem for the purpose of our discussion is not what this

Sicilian poet said about Gozo, but who authenticated the manuscript. The manuscript was in fact authenticated in the thirteenth century by Deacon Philippos Gautis, which surname is probably the oldest attestation we have of the present surname of Gauci.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, a man from Gozo is said to be “*Ghawdxī*”, which is exactly what the surname implies. This Gozitan resident, judging from his role of deaconship, belonged to the Greek Orthodox rite, even almost three centuries since Count Roger and his son, Roger II, introduced the return of the local Church to Latin rite.

**Busuttil, Fiorini, Vella eds. (2010), 98-99 (50v. *supra*, marg.):**

Ἐγ[ώ] διάκονος Φί[λι]ππος Γαούτης μ[α]ρ[τυρῶ] καὶ  
στέ[ργω].

I, Deacon Philippos Gautēs, witness and concur.

Significantly, the Greek form of *Gauci* is not given in the modern Greek form of *Gavtis*, with the *av* as in Cretan *Gavdhos* of today, but in the Classical Greek form and pronunciation of *Gaoutis*, rendered as *Gautis*, where, as we have said, the diphthong *ou* has always remained since Classical times the representation of our *u*. This last point is, I repeat, of *fundamental* importance for our dating of the Greek presence in Malta and Gozo; for if the Greeks came to our islands during Byzantine times, *Gauci* would be pronounced as *Gavci*: instead, *Gauci* goes back to Roman times when the name of *Gaudos*, and not *Gavdhos*, was passed on from Crete to our Gozo.

The name of *Gaudos* appears once more in Byzantine times indicating the island among a list of others.

***Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae* (53.5)**

Εἰσὶ δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ νῆσοι ἐπικοινωνοῦντες αὐταῖς· Κόρσυρα, Ταυριαννίς, Ἀστυπάλαια, Κῶος, Λαμπαδοῦσα, Γαλάτη, Χίος, Κνίδος, Γαῦδος, Γόρσουνα, Λέσβος, Νίσυρος, Μελίτη, Κρήτη, Τένεδος, Μεγίστη, Κέρκινα, Γαυλορήτη, Ἰμβρος, Κύπρος, Μῆνιξ, Θήρα, Ἰάσος, Σαρδανίς, Κάρπαθος, Σάμος.

And there are in common with them even these islands:  
Corsyra, Tauriannis, Astypalaea, Coos, Lampadusa,

<sup>11</sup> Al-Himyari (Brincat {1991}, 7).  
<sup>12</sup> J. Busuttil, S. Fiorini and H.C.R. Vella (2010), xiii.  
<sup>13</sup> J. Busuttil, S. Fiorini and H.C.R. Vella (2010), xxvii, xciii, xcvi and 304, n.50v. *supra*.

Galate, Chios, Cnidos, Gaudos, Gorsyna, Lesbos, Nisyros, Melite, Crete, Tenedos, Megiste, Cercina, Gaulorete, Imbros, Cypros, Menix, Thera, Iasos, Sardanis, Carpathos, Samos.

In none of the Greek and Latin lexicons do we encounter the term *Gaudos* or *Gaudus*. Furthermore, no Greek word comes anywhere close to the root of GAUD. We exclude *Gaudum*, *sive Gauda*, which is derived from ancient French meaning “lizard”, as we exclude *Gussa*, *sive Goza*, meaning “a kind of war machine”. Both words go back only to the Middle Ages.

**The Name of Gaudos**

The name of *Gaudos* was given by Strabo to *Gaulos*, the sister-island of Malta, by mistake. Mistakes of this sort during Roman and later times included the attribution of the so-called “Maltese dog” to our Malta, when, as I explained in the past,<sup>15</sup> it belonged to the island of Mjlet in the Ionian Sea between Serbia and Italy. Another mistake, never accepted by the



Strabo - The name of Gaudos was given by Strabo to Gaulos, the sister-island of Malta, by mistake.  
(Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strabo> - Nov 2012)

Maltese inhabitants, was that St Paul got shipwrecked in the already mentioned island of Mjlet, when we know that the winds as described by St Luke could not have blown north-easterly from Serbia to Mjlet through a very narrow and short channel, but over fourteen days across the sea from southern parts of the Adriatic Sea to our island of Malta. Another mistake was that of confusing Gozo with Pantelleria, called in Classical times “Cossyra” to which, according to Jean Quintin, who wrote the earliest description of Malta in 1536, which I translated and commented upon in 1980, Anna, sister of Dido, fled from Libya.

**Jean Quintin (p.46-48; f.C3):**

Loquitur his aperte lapis de Gaulo male a nonnullis factam Cosyram. Quam geographici omnes inter promontoria Lilybaeum et Mercurii, hoc Africae, illud Siciliae, pari pene intervallo reponunt. Nautis hoc tempore *Pantellaria* nominata, centum a Melita millibus, quum sit Gaulos ferme contigua. Deceptos hoc dixisse coniicio Ovidiano illo versu, Fastorum tertio:

*Fertilis est Melite sterili vicina Cosyrae,  
Insula quam Libyci verberat unda freti.*

dum is Annam fugientem e Carthagine describit; quam equidem non dubito a promontorio Mercurii (nautae nunc sua lingua *Capo Bono* vocant, adversum Siciliae in altum valde procurrens) Cosyram venisse - nulla enim promontorio vicinior, abest quinquaginta millibus pass. - deinde recta quo destinarat Melitam ad amicum regem contendisse. Propterea Cosyram cum Melita coniunxisse poetam.

This inscription clearly treats of Gozo, which was mistakenly identified by some with Cosyra. All geographers however place Cosyra between the promontories of Lilybaeum and of Mercury, the latter in Africa, the former in Sicily, practically half-way in between. Pantellaria, so called by the sailors at that time, is a hundred miles distant from Malta, while Gozo is very near Malta. Those who have said this, I gather, were deceived by that verse, in the third book of Ovid’s Fasti:

*Fertilis est Melite sterili vicina Cosyrae,  
Insula quam Libyci verberat unda freti.*

Ovid was there describing how Anna fled from Carthage. Of course, I have no doubt that she came to Cossyra starting from the promontory of Mercury (which the sailors today call in their own language Capo Bono, looking towards the deep, right opposite to Sicily) - for there is no other island nearer to this promontory than Cosyra and it is fifty miles distant from it - and that from there she came straight to her friend the king in Malta, which was her destination. For this reason I believe that the poet has linked up Cosyra with Malta.

<sup>15</sup> H.C.R. Vella (1980), 24; (1995b), 11-15; (2002), 130-137; (2004), 162-163; (2010), 11.

Another mistake was that of Ovid who claimed that Battus was king of Malta, when he meant Cyrene.<sup>16</sup>

**Ovid, *Fast.* 3.569-70:**

*Hanc petit, hospitio regis confisa vetusto.  
Hospes opum dives rex ibi Battus erat.*

She sought this (island), having trusted in the old hospitality of the king. There, King Battus was (her) host, a very rich man.

Another mistake was the old claim that Malta was once the place where an international council of bishops was held, when Milevum in Africa was confused with Malta, and, as a result, we received the wrong adjective of “Melivetanus”.

**Jean Quintin (p.24-26; f.B1v.):**

Inde illa Melitensia concilia, receptissimae inter ecclesiastica decreta auctoritatis, *Melivetana* Gratianus nominat; et magnus ille Manichaeorum propugnator Faustus, *Melivetanus* pariter nuncupatur. Quam nunc vulgo appellationem Romana similiter curia usurpat, de *Melita* nostra sentiens, ex qua *Melivetum* detorserunt; cum neutra voce vulgaris appellatio convenit, *Malta* vocatur.

Hence Gratianus calls by the name of *Melivetana* those Maltese Councils whose authority is universally accepted among ecclesiastical decrees; and Faustus, that great champion of the Manichaeans, was also called *Melivetanus*. Similarly the Holy See now commonly makes use of this name, meaning our *Melita*, from which name they have distortedly derived the appellation of *Melivetum*. The people commonly call the place with neither of these names, since the island is called *Malta*.

Yet another mistake is that of calling the island of Gozo as “the Island of Calypso”, when Classical geographers place Ogygia East of the Straits of Messina before the turn into the Gulf of Taranto.<sup>17</sup> Ironically, a year and a half ago, I had occasion to show how the last place Odysseus visited before coming to Ogygia, as also mentioned above, was Thrinacia, the island of Malta. He could not have gone from Malta to Gozo, but was described by Homer as having travelled much greater distances than that, after passing close to the Straits of Messina. Indeed, a litany of mistakes: maybe it is because Malta and Gozo are so small and, as the

famous Turkish admiral once reported to Pasha, who had ordered him to capture Malta, according to Greek humour, “*Malta Yok*”, that is, “Malta does not exist”!

It is to be observed here that we have, since medieval times, lost the name of *Gaulos*, but have retained both a transliteration of *Gaudos*, that is, *Għawdex*, and its nickname or a contortion of it, that of *Gozo*. Indeed, the original pronunciation of *Għawdex* was slightly different from what it is today. The ancient Maltese used to pronounce the “gh” with a hard guttural sound, much as some of the inhabitants of Għarb in Gozo still pronounce the name of their village. For this reason, those who transcribed the name of Għarb up to the previous century wrote *Garbo*, and not *Arbo*. In the same way, parish priests wrote Għargħur as *Gregorio*, not because, as it is often said, that Għargħur pronounced as “Gargur” is derived from *Girgor*, but, on the contrary, because *Gregorio*, like *Garbo*, was the Italianization for Għargħur pronounced then as “Gargur”. This ancient pronunciation of “gh” was close to the Greek pronunciation of “g”. Secondly, the diphthong *au* is common to both *Gaudos* and *Għawdex*; thirdly, the change of vowel from “o” to “e”, from *Gaudos* to *Għawdex*, and the affinity of *s* to *x* in the two words are explained by dialectical changes. Thus, in Maltese, we have the word *ħobż* pronounced as *hebż* by some people from Żabbar and other places, while the pronunciation of *s* in Maltese is often met as *x* in other Semitic dialects of the same words. Thus, *ħamsa* in Maltese is pronounced as *ħamxa* in Israel.

If Gaudos was not our island, then what do we know of the Cretan Gaudos?

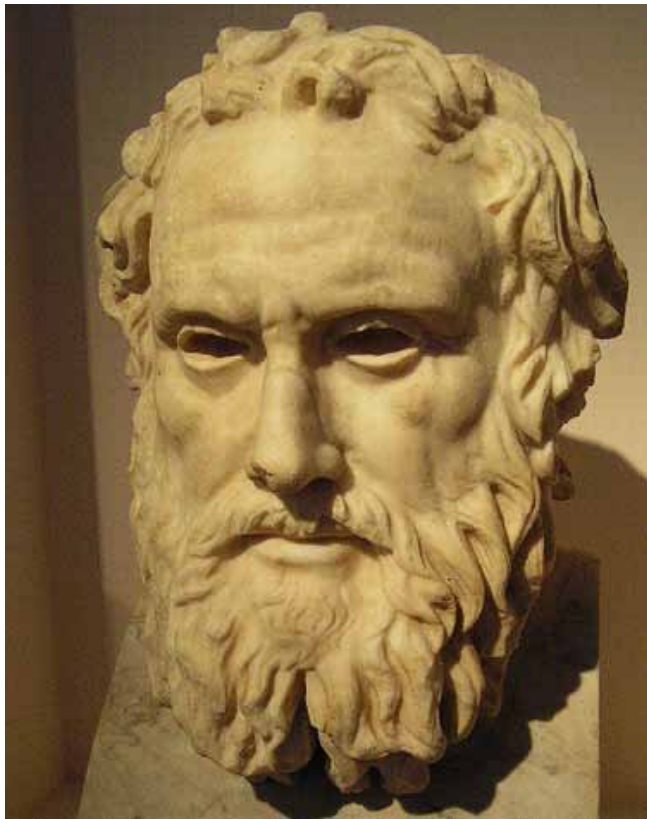
**The Ancient References to Gaudos, near Crete**

This island of Gaudos near Crete bore a number of names throughout the years. Hesiod, the writer of the *Works and days* and of the *Theogony*, was the first classical author to refer to it indirectly as *Ogylie*, known to the Attic dialect as “*Ogylia*”, when he mentioned its surrounding waters by the term of “*Ogyliou pontou*”, that is, “of the Ogylian Sea” (Hesiod *Fr.* 204.58-62). In a fragment of his,

<sup>16</sup> See full discussion in H.C.R. Vella (1995b), 5-8.

<sup>17</sup> Public Lecture February, 2011.





Hesiod the Greek poet.  
(Source: <http://www.athensguide.com/archaeology-museum/athens-national-museum> - Nov 2012)

Hesiod relates how one abstained from sending a messenger to speak on his behalf with Helen of Sparta, but instead he himself travelled across the sea past *Ogygia* to find her.<sup>18</sup>

**HES. Fr. 204.58-62:**

οὐδέ τινα μνηστήρα μετάγγελον ἄλλον  
ἐπεμνεν,  
ἀλλ' αὐτὸς σὺν νηὶ πολυκλήϊδι μελαίνῃ  
βῆ ὑπὲρ Ὀγυλίου πόντου διὰ κῶμα κελαινὸν  
Τυνδαρέου ποτὶ δῶμα δαΐφρονος, ὄφρα ἴδοιτο  
Ἀργεῖν Ἑλένην, ...

He did not even send another noble messenger, but went himself on a fast black ship, on a rough swell across the Ogylian Sea to the house of the wise Tyndareus to see the Argive Helen.

The Alexandrian editor of Homer's *Odyssey* also refers to this island as "*Ogylia*", after Hesiod. He was referring to its confusion with another island of a similarly sounding name, that of "*Ogygia*", an error created by a certain Antimachus.<sup>19</sup> This scholiast distinguishes between the two islands, saying that

*Ogygia* was situated in the West, while *Ogylia* by Crete.

**Sch. Hom. Od.1.85:**

Ὀγυγίην ἐν τῇ κατὰ Ἀντίμαχον Ὀγυλίην γράφεται. Διαφέρουσι δὲ οἱ τόποι. Τὴν μὲν γὰρ Ὀγυγίαν ἐντὸς εἶναι πρὸς ἑσπέραν. Τὴν δὲ Ὀγυλίαν κατὰ Κρήτην Ἡσίοδος φησι κεῖσθαι.

Ogygie; meanwhile it is written according to Antimachus as "Ogylie". But the places differ one from the other. For Hesiod says that Ogygia, on the one hand, exists within towards the West, and that Ogylia, on the other hand, lies near Crete.

The reference to *Ogygia* to the West needs to be explained by the fact that for the Greeks the West was the region of the setting sun beyond their mainland (Achaea and the Peloponnesus), that is, Italy, otherwise also called "*Hesperia*", and the Ionian Sea, the site of *Ogygia*. Apollonius of Rhodes, also of Alexandrine times, identifies Calypso's island with *Nymphaea*, deep into the Adriatic Sea, and so *Ogygia* would be identified with it (Apollonius of Rhodes 4.566-575).

**A.R. 4.566-575:**

αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ τῇσι παραὶ Κέρκυραν ἵκοντο,  
ἔνθα Ποσειδάων Ἀσωπίδα νάσσατο κούρην,  
ἡύκομον Κέρκυραν, ἑκάς Φλειουντίδος αἴης,  
ἄρπάζας ὑπ' ἔρωτι μελαινομένην δέ μιν ἄνδρες  
ναυτίλοι ἐκ πόντοιο καλαίνῃ πάντοθεν ὕλῃ  
δερκόμενοι, Κέρκυραν ἐπικλείουσι Μέλαιναν·  
τῇ δ' ἐπὶ καὶ Μελίτην, λιαρῶ περιγηθεές οὐρῶ,  
αἰπεινὴν τε Κερωσσόν, ὑπερθε δὲ πολλὸν  
εὐῶσαν Νυμφαίην παράμειβον, ἵνα κρείουσα  
Καλυψώ Ἀτλαντὶς ναίεσκε. ...

For then, following those, they came to Cercyra, where Poseidon made to settle the girl Asopis, the beautifully-haired Cercyra, away from the land of Phlius, having stolen her urged by love; and sailors from the sea, looking at it darkened from every side by a dark forest, call it "Black Cercyra"; and then, pleased with a warm breeze, they passed even Melite, and lofty Cerossus, and Nymphaea, being much distant from them, where Mistress Calypso, daughter of Atlas, used to live.

Similarly, some centuries later in Byzantine times, Procopius once more identifies the island of Calypso

<sup>18</sup> HES. Fr. 204.58-62.

<sup>19</sup> Other late Classical writers repeat this confusion of *Ogygia* with *Ogylia sive Caudi sive Caudos*, as, for example, the anonymous author of the *Etymologicum Gudianum* (s.v. "*Cytheria*"), who says that in that island of *Caudos* was a temple dedicated to Aphrodite. In the same statement, he wrongly identifies the island with that of Calypso.

with one of the three *Othoni* islands in the Ionian Sea, not far from Corfù.<sup>20</sup>

**PROCOP. 8.22.18-21:**

οὗτος δὲ ὁ στόλος ἄχρι ἐς τὴν Φαιάκων χώραν, ἣ νῦν Κέρκυρα ἐπικαλεῖται, οὐδὲν ἄχαρι ἐργάζεσθαι ἔσχε. νῆσον γὰρ οὐδεμίαν ἐν τῷδε τῷ διάπλῳ οἰκουμένην ξυμβαίνει εἶναι ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ τὴν Χάρυβδιν πορθμοῦ μέχρι ἐς τὴν Κέρκυραν ὥστε πολλάκις ἐγὼ ἐνταῦθα γενόμενος διηπορούμην ὅπη ποτὲ ἄρα τῆς Καλυψοῦς ἡ νῆσος εἴη. ταύτης γὰρ τῆς θαλάσσης οὐδαμῇ νῆσον τεθέσθαι, ὅτι μὴ τρεῖς, οὐ πολλῶ ἄποθεν τῆς Φαιακίδος, ἀλλ’ ὅσον ἀπὸ σταδίων τριακοσίων, ἄγχιστά πη ἀλλήλων οὖσας, βραχείας κομιδῇ καὶ οὐδὲ ἀνθρώπων οἰκία ἐχούσας οὔτε ζῶων οὔτε ἄλλων τὸ παράπαν οὐδέν. Ὡθονοὶ δὲ καλοῦνται τανῦν αἱ νῆσοι αὗται. καὶ φαίη ἂν τις τὴν Καλυψὼ ἐνταῦθα γενέσθαι, καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα γῆς Φαιακίδος ὄντα οὐ πολλῶ ἄποθεν ἢ σχεδία, ὥς φησιν Ὅμηρος, ἢ ἄλλῳ τῷ τρόπῳ νεῶς τινος χωρὶς ἐνθένδε διαπορθμεύσασθαι.

This expedition as far as the country of the Phaeacians, which now is called “Cercyra”, offered nothing unpleasant to toil at. For it happens that there is no inhabited island in this journey from the straits of Charybdis as far as Cercyra, with the result that I, having often been there, wondered where ever was indeed the island of Calypso. For I have nowhere seen an island of this sea, except for three, not far away from Phaeacia, but about 300 stades distant, being very close to each other, quite small and not even having habitations of men or of animals or of other things whatever. Today these islands are called “Othoni”. And one would say that Calypso was here, and that from here Odysseus, being not far away from the land of Phaeacia, crossed from here either on a raft, as Homer says, or in another manner without any boat.

Luckily for our identification of *Ogylia* with the island near Crete, Homer’s scholiast, quoted above, further identifies *Ogylia* with *Caudi*.<sup>21</sup> This identification of *Ogylia* with *Caudi* was again to be confirmed in the 10th century A.D. by the lexicographer Suidas.

**SUID. s.v. “Caudo”:**

νῆσος πλησίον Κρήτης ἔνθα μεγίστοι ὄναγροι γίνονται.

An island near Crete where very big donkeys are born.

Another important Alexandrine scholar and poet, Callimachus, Chief Librarian of Alexandria and promoter of original style of writing from that of Classical times, further advances the identification of this island by the western coast of Crete, that is, *Ogylia*, *Caudi*, *Caudus* and *Caudo* with yet another name, that is, *Gaudos*.<sup>22</sup> But in doing so, Callimachus called *Gaudos* “the island of Calypso”, as Antimachus had done when he confused this island’s other name of *Ogylia* with *Ogygia*.

**CALL. Fr. 13:**

Ἀπολλόδορος δὲ ἐπιτιμᾷ Καλλιμάχῳ, συνηγορῶν τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἐρατοσθένη, διότι, καίπερ γραμματικὸς ὢν, παρὰ τὴν Ὀμηρικὴν ὑπόθεσιν καὶ τὸν ἐξωκεανισμὸν τῶν τόπων, περὶ οὓς τὴν πλάνην φράζει, Γαῦδον καὶ Κόρκυραν ὀνομάζει. ἐπιτιμᾷ δὲ καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις συγγνώμην εἶναι, Καλλιμάχῳ δὲ μὴ πάνυ, μεταποιουμένῳ γε γραμματικῆς ὅς τὴν μὲν Γαῦδον Καλυψοῦς νῆσόν φησι, τὴν δὲ Κόρκυραν Σχερίαν.

But Apollodorus censures Callimachus, while he agrees with the followers of Eratosthenes because, although he is a grammarian, against the Homeric idea and the localization of the places, about which he speaks clearly, mentions Gaudos and Corcyra. And he censures even the others who have the same opinion, and Callimachus in particular when he changes from what is established, he who says that Gaudos is the island of Calypso, and that Corcyra is Scheria.

Just as in Alexandrine times Homer’s scholiast corrects Antimachus, so also in Roman times, in the first years of the Christian era, Apollodorus, who wrote in Greek on several interpretations of Greek mythology, corrected Callimachus in propagating this confusion of islands, now, however, called *Gaudos* and *Ogygia* respectively.<sup>23</sup> Our quotation of Apollodorus’ correction of Callimachus comes through Apollodorus’ contemporary in Rome by the name of Strabo, who wrote also in Greek on geographical matters. Despite his awareness of the confusion of the two islands from centuries earlier, Strabo yet further advances the confusion by shifting, perhaps for the first time, this same island of *Gaudos* to our archipelago in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea. This brings us to our discussion of our Gozo, also called “Gaudos”.

<sup>20</sup> For the real location of Ogygia, see my public lecture delivered in February, 2011.

<sup>21</sup> SCH. HOM. Od. 1.85.

<sup>22</sup> CALL. Fr. 470 and Fr. 13.

<sup>23</sup> CALL. Fr. 13.



Gillieru Point  
(Source: <http://www.google.com> - Nov 2012)

#### CALL. Fr. 470:

- a. Γαῦδος
  - b. ὀλίγην νησιῶτα Καλυψοῦς.
- 
- a. Gaudos;
  - b. A small island of Calypso.

#### Gaudos, near Melitē

In his description of the sea South of Sicily, Strabo gives the distance, albeit inaccurate, of our two islands from *Pachynus*, close to Cape Passaro, calling the two islands as “*Melitē*” and “*Gaudos*”. Strabo yet commits one more mistake when he says that in this island of *Melitē* were bred small dogs called “*Melitaeen*”.

#### STR. Geog. 6.2.11:

πρόκειται δὲ τοῦ Παχύνου Μελίτη, ὅθεν τὰ κυνίδια, ἃ καλοῦσι Μελιταῖα, καὶ Γαῦδος, ὀγδοήκοντα καὶ ὀκτὼ μίλια τῆς ἄκρας ἀμφοτέραι διέχουσαι.

And away from Pachynus lie Melite, from where come the small dogs, which they call “*Melitaeen*”, and Gaudos, both distant from the promontory by 88 miles.

This island of *Melitē* he had in mind, breeding these dogs, was clearly referred to by ancient scholars themselves as that island in the Ionian Sea, not

far from the *Nymphaea* of Apollonius of Rhodes, which island of *Melitē* once was also the object of controversy when it was referred to as the site of St Paul’s shipwreck, as already mentioned above (Apollonius of Rhodes 4.566-575).<sup>24</sup>

In his transposition of *Melitē* and *Gaudos* from the Ionian Sea and Cretan waters respectively to the sea south of Sicily, Strabo may have been misled by three factors.

In the first place, the second paragraph of the fragment of Callimachus<sup>25</sup> Strabo preserved for us has a lacuna which may or may not have contributed to Strabo’s own mistake. That paragraph starts with the statement, “He (Apollodorus) censures also those who clearly mention Sicily”. Then comes the lacuna, after which Strabo refers to the mistake of Callimachus according to Apollodorus when he said that *Gaudos* was the island of Calypso. If we admit the connection between the first part and the second part around the lacuna, then Strabo would be simply passing on the tradition already existing in Alexandrian times that *Gaudos* had been confused with our *Gaulos*.<sup>26</sup> If we do not admit the connection, then the reference of *Gaudos* to our island of Gozo was made by Strabo for the first time here.

In the second place, Strabo may have been misled both by the name of *Melitē* in the Adriatic Sea and by its vicinity to *Ogygia* according to Apollonius of Rhodes who called it “*Nymphaea*”, and which some writers confused with *Ogylia*, that is *Caudos* or *Gaudos* near Crete. Thus, the coupling of the islands of *Melitē* and *Ogygia* in the Adriatic Sea, the transposition of *Ogygia* to *Gaudos* near Crete, and the yet further transposition of *Gaudos* to *Gaulos* adjacent to another *Melitē* probably misled Strabo in calling *Gaulos* as “*Gaudos*”, which names, furthermore, are different from each other by only one letter.

<sup>24</sup> H.C.R. Vella (2002), 120.

<sup>25</sup> CALL. Fr. 13.

<sup>26</sup> A discussion on the name of Gaulos was also carried out some years ago by Vella, 1995a: 16-18, 1995b: 5, 9-10, and 2002: 145-147.



In the third place, we know that both *Gaudos* near Crete and *Gaulos* near Malta were once Phoenician settlements. In our quotation of the anonymous writer of the *Etymologicum Gudianum*, we learn that in that island there was a temple dedicated to Aphrodite, a goddess venerated by both Phoenicians and Greeks. One should bear in mind also that that island's city was called "*Phoenicia*", typical of Phoenician settlers. Hence, all these details contributed to the confusion of the two islands.

**Et. Gud. s.v. "Cytheria":**

Διὸ καὶ σκοτίας Ἀφροδίτης ἐν Φαιστῷ ἱερὸν εἶναι φασιν. ἐν δὲ Καύδῳ καὶ Καλυψοῦς ἐστὶν Ἀφροδίτης ἱερὸν.

And for this reason they say that at Phaestus there is a temple dedicated to the black Aphrodite. And at Caudus and (the island) of Calypso there is a temple of Aphrodite.

Without contributing to the confusion of Cretan *Gaudos* with *Ogygia* or *Gaulos*, two Roman writers confirm the location of *Gaudos* close to Crete. Mela, a geographer, includes *Gaudos* in a list of islands close to Crete. These other islands were *Astypalaea*, *Naumachus*, *Zephyre* and *Chryse*.

**MELA 2.7.13:**

*Juxta (Cretam) est Astypalaea, Naumachos, Zephyre, Chryse, Gaudos ...*

Next to Crete is Astypalaea, Naumachus, Zephyre, Chryse, Gaudos ...

Pliny, a Roman scientist and encyclopaedist, places *Gaudos* close to *Chrysa sive Chryse* opposite to *Hierapytna* in Crete.

**PLIN. Nat. 4.12.61:**

*Reliquae circa eam ante Peloponnesum duae Corycoe, totidem Mylae, et latere septentrionali dextra Cretam habenti contra Cydoneam Leuce et duae Budroe, contra Matium Dia, contra Itanum promunturium Onysia, Leuce, contra Hierapytnam Chrysa, Gaudos.*

The rest (of the islands) around it (Crete), opposite the Peloponnesus, are the two (islands of) Coryci, and an equal number of (islands of) Mylae; and on the northern side, with Crete on the right-hand side, opposite Cydonea are Leuce and the two (islands of) Budri;

opposite Matius (is) Dia; opposite the promontory of Itanus (are) Onysia, Leuce; opposite Hierapytna (are) Chrysa, Gaudos.

But before these two Roman writers, we have yet another name for the Cretan *Gaudos*, this time also from Alexandrine times. Both the geographer Ptolemy and the historian Hierocles produce a statement, repeating each other verbatim, saying that the island's name was *Claudus*, thus adding in the name the letter "L".<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, they also say that this island had a city with the same name of the island, that is, *Claudus*. That a small island bore the same name as its chief city was common in classical antiquity, as can be seen also from the capital cities of *Melitē* and *Gaulos* called after their own islands.

**PTOL. Geog. s.v. "Clausos"; HIEROCL. HIST. s.v. "Clausos":**

νησος, ἐν ἣ πόλις Κλαῦδη.

An island, in which there is a city (called) "*Claudē*".

A variant of the name of *Claudus* is found as *Clauda* in the account of the voyage of St Paul from Palestine to Rome given in Greek by St Luke, the Evangelist.

**N.T. Act. Ap. 27.16:**

νησίον δὲ τι ὑποδραμόντες καλούμενον Κλαῦδα ἰσχύσαμεν μόλις περικρατεῖς γενέσθαι τῆς σκάφης, ...

Having run a bit South of a small island called "*Clauda*", we were hardly able to maintain the control of the boat.

This account further confirms the vicinity of *Gaudos* to Crete. Another variant is found as *Claudia* in the unknown writer of *Stadiasmus sive Periplus Mari Magni*. Here the writer says that this island had a city and a harbour.

**Stad. 328:**

ἀπὸ δὲ Κλαυδίας εἰς Φοῖνικα στάδιοι τ'. ἔχει πόλιν καὶ λιμένα.

And from Claudia to Phoenix there are 19 stades. It has a city and a harbour.

<sup>27</sup> PTOL. Geog. s.v. "*Clausos*"; HIEROCL. HIST. s.v. "*Clausos*".

In medieval times, Gozo came to be referred to as *Gaudos* of *Melitē*, either as *Melitogaudos* or as *Melitēgaudos*. Similarly, Malta was at the same time referred to as *Melitē* of *Gaudos*, that is, *Gaudomelitē*. The compound name for Malta and Gozo had been created by Byzantine scholars to distinguish these islands from *Melitē* in the Adriatic Sea and *Gaudos* near Crete. The name of *Melitēgaudos* appears in a marginal note written by the scholiast (the poet himself) of the already mentioned 12th-century Greek poem in f.84v.

***Tristia ex Melitogaudio 166-167 (84v.7, marg.):***

[ἐνθάδε] φησι πῶς ὁ ποιητὴς ἐξω[ρί]σθη ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ Μελιτηγαύδῳ.

Here he says how the poet was banished in Melitegaudos itself.

However, the term *Gaudomelitē* had existed much earlier than medieval times. In fact, its first occurrence is found in the 5th-century apocryphal *Acts of Peter and Paul* where the narrative refers to St Paul's shipwreck in Malta, while a second occurrence goes back to the 7th century in the *Historiae Syntomos* by Patriarch Nicephorus.<sup>28</sup>

***Patrologiae 161, 929-932:***

1. ἐγένετο μετὰ τὸ ἐξελεῖν τὸν ἅγιον Παῦλον ἀπὸ Γαυδομελέτης τῆς νήσου ἐλθεῖν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ Ἰταλίαν ...

It came to pass that Saint Paul, after he left from the island of Gaudomelete, came to Italy ...

2. δεξάμενος δὲ ὁ Παῦλος τοὺς δύο ἄνδρας τοὺς ἀπεσταλμένους μετὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς μηνὶ Μάϊῳ εἰκάδι, πρόθυμος ἐγένετο καὶ ἠὲ χαρίστησεν τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ δεσπότη ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ. ἀποπλεύσας δὲ ἀπὸ Γαυδομελέτης οὐκ ἔτι ἦλθεν διὰ Ἀφρικῆς ἐπὶ τὰ μέρη Ἰταλίας, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ Σικελίαν ἀνέδραμεν, ἕως οὗ ἦλθεν ἐν Συρακούσῃ τῇ πόλει ...

And Paul, having received the two men, sent with the letter on the 20th day of the month of May, became eager and thanked our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. And having sailed away from Gaudomelete, he still did not come to the parts of Italy through Africa, but we made a course up to Sicily until he came to the city of Syracuse ...

**Nicephorus, H.S., in Busuttil, J. (1969), 17-18:**

ἐν ᾧ δὲ διέτριβεν ἐκεῖσε, ἀγγέλλεται αὐτῷ ὡς ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ Ἀταλάρχος καὶ Θεόδωρος ὁ τὴν ἀξίαν μάγιστρος, Θεοδώρου δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως ἀδελφοῦ υἱός, σὺν ἄλλοις τισὶν ἐπιβουλεύειν αὐτῷ ἡμελλον. καὶ τοῖς μηνύσασιν πεισθεὶς τούτων τὰς ῥίνας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἐξέτεμε, καὶ Ἀταλάρχον μὲν εἰς τὴν νῆσον τὴν λεγομένην Πρίγκιπον ἐξόριστον ἐξέπεμπε, Θεόδωρον δὲ πρὸς τὴν νῆσον τὴν Γαυδομελέτην προσαγορευομένην, ἐπιτρέψας τῷ ἐκεῖσε δουκί, ἥνικα πρὸς αὐτὸν καταλάβοι. καὶ τὸν ἕτερον τῶν ποδῶν ἀφελέσθαι. κατὰ ταῦτα δὲ καὶ τοὺς συγγινάτας αὐτοῖς τὰ τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς ἐτιμωρήσατο.

In the time he spent there, it was announced to him that his son, Atalarichus, and Theodorus, the real teacher, and the son of the brother of King Theodorus, were about to contrive revenge against him along with others. And having been persuaded by those who disclosed (the matter), he cut off the noses and hands of these men, and he sent off Atalarichus, on the one hand, to the island called "Principus" in exile, and Theodorus, on the other hand, to the island called "Gaudomeletē", having referred the matter to the leader over there whenever he would come up with him, and (said) that he was getting the other out of the way to set free the other of the rest. And in the same manner he even revenged on those who shared their feelings with them regarding the matters of the conspiracy.

From the sixteenth century we have two important sources that confirm the confusion of the Cretan *Gaudos* with our *Gaulos*.<sup>29</sup>

**Jean Quintin, *Insulae Melitae descriptio* 42:**

Paulus (inquiunt) Cretam deserens e Claudia (Ptolemaeo *Claudus* est, Plinio *Gaudos*, vulgo nunc *Gozo*) medio inter Occidentem et Meridiem portu, ...

Paul (they say), leaving Crete from (the island) of Claudia (to Ptolemy it is Claudus, to Pliny (it is) Gaudos, today (it is) commonly (called) "Gozo"), half way between the West and the South ...

In his description of Malta, Jean Quintin, who correctly refers to the island of Gozo as *Gaulos*, and not *Gaudos*, discusses, among other things, the Pauline tradition and starts with St Paul's voyage after St Luke, repeating the name of *Clauda*, but adding the *important* remark that during his times Cretan *Gaudos* was commonly called "Gozo", exactly as we call our *Gaulos* today. By the sixteenth century, therefore, two islands were both called

<sup>28</sup> Nicephorus, H.S., in Busuttil, J. (1969), 17-18. I thank Prof. Stanley Fiorini for the availability of the last two quotations. See also J. Busuttil S. Fiorini and H.C.R. Vella (2010), xxiii.

<sup>29</sup> H.C.R. Vella ed. (1980).



Ptolemy  
(Source: <http://arnett.us.com/psc/theman.html> - Nov 2012)

“Gozo”, *Gaudos* near Crete and *Gaulos* / *Gaudos* near Malta. This is also confirmed by a map also from the sixteenth century, quite similar to the first map of Malta and Gozo as it appeared in the first edition of Jean Quintin, where the island of Gozo is given two names: *Gozo* and *Claudus*.

Anon (1581) in Vella (2002), 150:

Claudus, Goze.

Claudus, Gozo.

This last reference to the names of *Gozo* and *Claudus* attributed to *Gaulos* in the sixteenth century further confirms the unfortunate transposition of names from one island to the other for several centuries. Here one must add that, some years before these two sources, yet another transposition from *Gaudos* to *Gaulos* with a freer variant of *Clauda* came through a fifteenth-century translation of Ptolemy by Pietro della Torre when he called Malta’s Gozo as “*Glaucanis*”.

Della Torre (1499), s.v. “*Glaucanis*”:

Insula et civitas. 36 (1/3) 34 (2/3).

Island and city. 36 (1/3) 34 (2/3).



A sixteenth-century map of Malta and Gozo referring to the island of Gozo in two names: *Gozo* and *Claudus*.

Finally, yet another derivative from the name of *Gaudos*, but referring to Gozo of Malta, still persists by tradition of mistake within the confines of the Gozitan Curia and Diocese. As late as today, the adjective used in Latin for “Gozitan” is sometimes given as *Gaudisiensis* instead of *Gaulitanus*. Such name appears, for example, in the last Latin edition of the Gozitan Ordo, a directory for the use of liturgical feasts within the Diocese of Gozo.<sup>30</sup>

**Ordo of the Diocese of Gozo (1978)**

<i>Gaudos</i>	<i>Gaudisium</i>	<i>Gaudisiensis</i>
<i>Gaulos</i>		<i>Gaulitanus</i>

## Conclusion

*Gaudos* was originally and still is the name of a very small island south-west of Crete. It was itself confused with Calypso’s Island of *Ogygia* when at the very beginning it was called “*Ogylia*”. This island was subsequently named as “*Caudus*” or “*Caudi*”, as well as “*Claudus*”, “*Clauda*” and even “*Claudia*”, commonly called also “*Gozo*”

<sup>30</sup> Anon. (1978).



by the sixteenth century. The confusion of *Gaudos* near Crete with *Gaulos* near Malta, south of Sicily, arose from Strabo in the first century A.D., together with the confusion of our *Melitē* with another *Melitē* in the Adriatic Sea. The result of all this is that the classical name of our Gozo remains *Gaulos*, while its present names of Ghawdex and Gozo are derived from *Gaudos* of Crete.

## References

### Classical Authors

Anonymous, *Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae*. L. Dindorf (ed.) (1832). Bonn: Weber.

Anonymous, *Etymologicum Gudianum*. F.W. Sturz (ed.) (1818). Leipzig.

Anonymous, *Scholiasta in Homeri Odysseam*.

Anonymous, *Stadiasmus, sive Periplus Maris Magni*. Müller, C. (ed.) (1965), *Geographi Graeci minores*. Hildesheim: Olms, G. Verlagsbuchhandlung.

Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica*. H. Fränkel (ed.) (1961). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Callimachus, *Fragmenta*. R. Pfeiffer (ed.) (1965). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Hesiod, *Fragmenta*. R. Merkelbach and M.L. West (eds.) (1967). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Hierocles Historicus. Müller, C. (ed.) (1841-1870), *Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum*. Paris.

Mela, *De situ Orbis*. (1748). Leyden: Luchtmans, S. and Son.

Nicephorus, *Historiae syntomos*. In Busuttil, J. (1969), "Fonti greche per la storia delle isole maltesi". In *Missione archeologica italiana a Malta: rapporto della campagna 1963*. Rome: Istituto di Studi del Vicino Oriente: 15-26.

*Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine*. Nestle, D.E. (ed.) (1907). Stuttgart: Privilegierten Württembergischen Bibelanstalt.

*Patrologiae cursus completus omnium Sanctorum Patrum, Doctorum Scriptorumque Ecclesiasticorum [Series Graeca]*. Migne, J.-P. Et al. (eds.). Turnhout: Brepols.

Pliny, *Naturalis historia*. Ianus, L. (ed.) (1859). Leipzig: Teubner.

Procopius, *Bellorum historia*. J. Haury (ed.) (1905-1913). Leipzig: Teubner.

Ptolemy, *Geographia*. Della Torre, P. (ed.) (1499).

Ptolemy, *Geographia*. Nobbe, F.A. (ed.) (1843-1845). Leipzig. Strabo, *Geographia*. (ed.) (2009). London: Loeb.

Suidas, *Lexicon*. A. Manutius (ed.) (1514). Venice: Suocero.

### Modern Authors

Anonymous (1581). Map of Malta and Gozo.

Anonymous (1978). *Ordo Divini Officii persolvendi Sacrique peragendi in Templo Principe Gaudisiensi universaque Dioecesi Exc[ellentissi]mi ac Rev[erendissi]mi D[omi]ni Nicolai J[oseph] Cauchi, Dei et Apostolicae Sedis gratia Episcopi Gaudisiensis, jussu editus pro anno liturgico 1977-78*. Malta: Hajja Press.

Brincat, J.M. (1991), *Malta 870-1054: Al-Himyari's account*. Valletta, Malta,

Busuttil, J., Fiorini, S., and Vella, H.C.R. (2010). *Tristia ex Melitogaudio: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-century exile on Gozo*. Malta: The Farsons Foundation.

Du Cange. *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*.

Pantaleone, H. (1581). *Militaris Ordinis Iohannitarum, Rhodiorum, aut Melitensium Equitum*. Basel.

Sammut, J.C. 2001. *Currency in Malta*. Malta, Central Bank of Malta.

Vella, H.C.R. (ed.) (1980). *The earliest description of Malta: Lyons, 1536*. Malta: Debono Enterprises.

Vella, H.C.R. (1995a). "Gozo in Classical literature". In Briguglio, L. and Bezzina, J. (eds.) *Gozo and its culture*. Malta: Formatek.

Vella, H.C.R. (1995b). *The Island of Gozo in Classical texts. Occasional Papers on islands and small States* (ed. Briguglio, L.). No. 13. Malta: Islands and Small States Institute, Foundation for International Studies, University of Malta Building, St Paul Street, Valletta (This work is a more elaborate version of Vella (1995a).

Vella, H.C.R. (2002). *Malta u Ghawdex fl-Era Klassika. Kullana Kulturali* (Eds. Schiavone, M. and Briffa, Ch). No. 38. Malta: Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza.

Vella, H.C.R. (2003). "Jean Quintin's *Insulae Melitae descriptio* (1536): an anniversary and a discussion on its sources", *Humanitas* 2, 155-171.

Vella, H.C.R. (2004). *A catalogue of books, manuscripts and other items found at the Archives of the Collegiate Basilica Church of Gharb, Gozo, completed in September, 2004*. Malta: Collegiate Basilica Church of Gharb, Gozo.

Vella, H.C.R. (2010). "Gaudos", *Gozo Observer* 23, 9-16.

Professor Horatio Caesar Roger Vella is an Associate Professor in Latin and Greek at the University of Malta and was previously Senior Lecturer in Latin and Greek at the University of Zimbabwe.

# A Bill to Reform the Courts in Gozo and to Simplify Proceedings between the Courts in Malta and those in Gozo

KEVIN AQUILINA

## Introduction

A draft Bill has been approved by the House of Representatives' Select Committee on the Recodification and Consolidation of Laws on Monday 26 March 2012 which proposes amendments to the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure, Chapter 12 of the Laws of Malta. Essentially the main aim of the Bill is that the courts in Gozo be upgraded to reflect their counterparts in Malta and to facilitate the presentation of documents and the issue of precautionary and executive acts between the courts in Malta and those in Gozo. This paper very briefly discusses the history of the Courts in Gozo, motion no 222 on the judicial process in Gozo, the petition of ten Gozitan advocates in support of motion no 222, the salient points raised in the discussion on the said motion, the proceedings before the House of Representatives Select Committee on Recodification and Consolidation of Laws, the text of the draft Bill and the Committee's Report thereupon.

## History of the Courts in Gozo

It is not the intention of this paper to discuss the history of the courts in Gozo. Such a task has been admirably done by Dr Aaron Attard Hili in his Doctor of Laws (LL.D.) thesis entitled *The History and Jurisdiction of the Courts of Law in Gozo* (Attard Hili, 1995). Suffice it here to state that already in 1335 Gozo had its own judges. Such judicial system remained operational under the Knights of St. John, the French and in the very early part of the British colonial period. Indeed it was on 15 October 1814 when Governor Thomas Maitland issued a proclamation abolishing the

office of judge in Gozo and substituting the two judges sitting in Gozo by two magistrates (Attard Hili, 1995: 128). Interestingly enough the 1812 Royal Commission report had recommended that the office of judge should be kept in Gozo (Attard Hili, 1995: 124-124). So it was only from the British period onwards that judges were banished from the Gozo courts. Since then the situation has remained essentially the same except for two important amendments made in 1995 and 1997.

Through Act No XXIV of 1995, the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure was amended through the insertion of article 41(7) which reads as follows:

Where the Court of Appeal is to hear appeals from the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) in its inferior jurisdiction, it shall hold its sitting in the building of the Courts in Gozo, and for the purpose of such appeals the registry of the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) shall also be the Registry of the Court of Appeal.<sup>1</sup>

The 1995 enactment also abolished the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) composed of three magistrates constituted as an appellate court in terms of article 50(3) of the said Code. Article 24(d) of the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1995 abolished the appellate jurisdiction of the Court of Magistrates (Gozo). Since the 1995 amendments, appeals are now heard by a judge sitting in Gozo as per article 41(7) of the Code.

In so far as the criminal courts are concerned, the Judicial Procedures (Special Provisions) Act, 1997<sup>2</sup> amended article 418 of the Criminal Code so that the Court of Criminal Appeal holds its

---

<sup>1</sup> Article 18 of the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1995 (Act No. XXIV of 1995).

<sup>2</sup> Act No. XXXII of 1997.

sittings also in Gozo. The relevant provision reads as follows:

(2) For the hearing of appeals from decisions of the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) as a court of criminal judicature the Court of Criminal Appeal shall hold its sittings in Gozo.<sup>3</sup>

Essentially the position today is that whilst in Malta the functions of the Civil Court, First Hall, the Civil Court (Family Section) and the Civil Court (Voluntary Jurisdiction Section) are carried out by a judge, in Gozo these same functions are performed by a magistrate except in the case of the Civil Court, First Hall, sitting in its constitutional competence which is not carried out in Gozo and is reserved only for Malta. Moreover, the Court of Appeal sitting in its superior competence (composed of three judges) does not sit in Gozo. The same can be said for the Civil Court, First Hall, sitting in its constitutional competence, the Criminal Court (composed of a judge with or without a jury), the Court of Criminal Appeal sitting in its superior competence (composed of three judges) and the Constitution Court (composed of three judges).

### **The Petition of the Ten Gozitan Advocates**

The ten advocates who practice in Gozo signed a petition, which was laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by the Hon. Justyne Caruana during sitting number 433 of 12 December 2011, confirming their support for Motion No 222.

#### *Motion No 222 on the Judicial Process in Gozo*

The Hon. Dr Justyne Caruana proposed, and the Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, seconded, the motion on the Judicial Process in Gozo, motion no 222. In the motion it was pointed out that in Gozo, although the Court of Magistrates enjoyed a superior and an inferior jurisdiction, the inferior court was granted a superior competence like the Civil Court but there was no judge assigned to Gozo to hear such cases. Instead these cases were heard by a magistrate. This further implied that there were certain cases which could not be heard in Gozo because of this

limitation and Gozitans had to travel over to Malta for these cases to be heard. This brought with it an element of inequality and discriminated between the exercise of the administration of justice in Malta and in Gozo. It was held that this impinged on the status of the judicial system in Malta and detracted from the concept of Gozo being granted regional institutions. Hence Motion number 222 requested the House of Representatives to call upon the Select Committee of the House on Recodification and Consolidation of Laws to carry out the pertinent exercise to evaluate the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure and then to draw up a bill proposing amendments to the said Code to be discussed by the House.

#### *The Salient Points raised in the Discussion on the Motion*

When the Private Member's Motion was discussed in the House of Representatives, the following Members of Parliament intervened: the Hon. Justyne Caruana, as mover of the motion, the Hon. Giovanna Debono, as seconder of the motion, the Hon. Jose' Herrera, the Hon. Anton Refalo, the Hon. Frederick Azzopardi and the Hon. Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, Minister for Justice and Home Affairs.

In brief the following main points were raised as to why the structure of the courts in Gozo needed revisiting. It was pointed out that if, during the hearing of a cause, a constitutional issue arose in Gozo, the matter could not be brought before a court in Gozo but had to be heard in Malta. Not only so, but there are new laws which specifically vest jurisdiction in a superior court of civil jurisdiction and not in a court which sits in Gozo. As Gozitans would have to travel to Malta to pursue such litigation, this was causing an element of discomfort as they have to spend considerable time travelling, would have to take vacation leave for this purpose and ended up spending considerable time to attend a court sitting in Malta. This was considered to amount to a denial of justice and limiting the fundamental right to access to a court. The MPs were not however requesting that all the courts of superior jurisdiction hear cases in Gozo. For

---

<sup>3</sup> Article 3(a)(ii) of Act No. XXXII of 1997.





Gozo Law Courts in Citadel Square, Victoria.  
(Source: <http://obeliskauctions.com> - Nov 2012)

instance, they were not demanding that trials by jury be held in Gozo.

Moreover, it was stated in the debate on the motion that the fact that a judge presides the Superior Courts in Gozo contributes to raising the prestige of the courts in Gozo and contributes to the establishment of a regional court in Gozo, thereby giving Gozo an identity of a region whilst ameliorating the proper administration of justice in Gozo. Nonetheless, the current court structure was creating an inconvenience to the parties and to their lawyers who had to travel over to Malta when such cases could easily be heard before a judge in Gozo. Such a situation brought about undue discrimination and distinction which was not objectively justifiable between the courts in Malta and those in Gozo.

Furthermore, in Gozo it was a magistrate who was hearing cases which in Malta were heard by a judge. The magistrate was in fact paid less than a judge but was carrying out duties above his or her official duties than those of a magistrate. It was also noted that the practice was to assign to Gozo the most junior magistrate to perform duties in the Gozo court. The said magistrate is normally the least experienced, yet has to perform duties ordinarily performed by a judge in the

courts in Malta. Once the junior magistrate gained the required experience he is then reassigned duties in Malta and the last appointed magistrate replaces him or her in the courts in Gozo. It was stressed that Gozo had, prior to British colonial times, courts presided by judges and it was thus important to restore the judicial system in Gozo in the form and with the powers it had in pre-British times. In this way, the court in Gozo was given back the dignity it deserved and obtained the full status of a superior court with a judge sitting in the Gozitan courts, it was noted that in Gozo there is a civil law tradition which had served as the training ground for those magistrates serving in those courts who eventually were appointed judges.

Another inconvenience in the current judicial set up is that certain judicial acts and written pleadings have to be filed in the courts in Malta rather than those in Gozo. In order to file an appeal from a judgment of the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) sitting in its superior competence, an appeal and all consequential judicial acts and written pleadings have to be filed in Malta. It makes considerable sense today to allow the filing of judicial acts in the court of Gozo for onward transmission by the registrar of that court to his counterpart in Malta. Moreover, witnesses can be heard in the court



Pjazza l-Assedju 1551 in Victoria, was being proposed by the government as a building site for the law courts.

building in Gozo without the need to travel to Malta as this was possible through developments in technology. This cuts down on the travelling involved, wasted time and expenses incurred. However, it was pointed out that there were still problems with Industrial Tribunal sittings as these were not held in Gozo.

It was also necessary to upgrade the facilities at the premises which house the courts in Gozo as these were not sufficient to cater for the needs of its users. Mention was also made of the reallocation of the courts to other premises. Security measures required improving, monitors needed to be introduced to provide information to the public and customer care facilities should be introduced together with leaflets containing essential information on the services provided by the courts. The mediator lacked office space in the courts building. A final suggestion was made to the effect that witnesses in Malta should not be required to go physically to Gozo to give evidence but should do so in Malta via video conferencing and vice-versa.

### **Motion No 222 on the Judicial Process**

On 12 December 2011, the Hon. Franco Debono, Chairman of the House of Representatives' Standing Committee on the Recodification and Consolidation of Laws, informed the Committee that the House of Representatives had that same day approved motion no 222 on the Judicial Process in Gozo and that the House had referred it to the Committee for its attention. The present author – who was drafting an Administrative Code for the said Committee – was entrusted with the drawing up of a draft Bill to amend the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure to give effect to the motion's requirements. On 7 February 2012 the Committee discussed the draft Bill proposed by the present author. The English language draft version of the Bill was submitted to Dr Vanni Bruno at the Justice Unit to translate the Bill and provide feedback on its contents. He did so on 12 February 2012. On 13 February 2012, the Committee discussed the draft Bill with Dr Grazio Mercieca and Dr Vincent Galea, both practising advocates in the courts in Gozo.

During the 20 February 2012 sitting, the Chairman circulated submissions on the draft Bill by Dr Grazio Mercieca and feedback on the draft Bill prepared by the Attorney General, Dr Peter Grech, as instructed by the Minister for Justice, Public Consultation and the Family, Hon. Dr Chris Said. These submissions were discussed by the Committee and accepted for inclusion in the draft Bill. The Committee also considered written submissions by Dr Carmelo Galea and the feedback thereupon by Dr Grazio Mercieca. Various suggestions were taken on board by the drafter of the draft Bill. The Hon. Members agreed to authorise the Chairman of the Committee to lay the report of the Chairman of the Committee and the draft Bill in Maltese and English on the table of the House of Representatives.

### *The Bill*

The Bill is entitled ‘An Act to abolish the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) sitting in its superior jurisdiction and to extend the jurisdiction of the Civil Court, First Hall, the Civil Court (Family Section) and the Civil Court (Voluntary Jurisdiction) to the Islands of Gozo and Comino, to establish one Court of Magistrates having general jurisdiction over all the islands in Malta, and to make ancillary and consequential provisions thereto.’ It consists in 48 clauses. The objects and reasons of this Bill ‘is to give effect to motion no. 222 on judicial proceedings in Gozo approved by the House of Representatives on 12 December 2011 whereby the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) sitting in its superior jurisdiction is being abolished and the jurisdiction of the Civil Court, First Hall, the Civil Court (Family Section) and the Civil Court (Voluntary Jurisdiction Section) is being extended to the Islands of Gozo and Comino. The Court of Appeal sitting in its superior jurisdiction is being empowered to hold its sittings in Gozo in order to hear appeals lodged from decisions of the Civil Court, First Hall, and the Civil Court (Family Section) when both the latter two sections of the Civil Court hold their sittings in Gozo. The Court of Magistrates is established as one court with general jurisdiction over all islands in Malta and continuing to hold sittings both in the Island of Malta and in the Island of Gozo. Finally, the Bill facilitates the transfer of cases between courts and tribunals, whether on the same island or otherwise,

and the transfer of judicial acts, written pleadings and other documents between the courts and tribunals in Malta to the courts and tribunals in Gozo and vice-versa.’

Once the Bill is enacted into law, the amendments to the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure and other laws will come into force on such a date as the Minister responsible for justice may by notice in the Government Gazette appoint.

The Bill provides that the Civil Court, First Hall, the Civil Court (Family Section) and the Civil Court (Voluntary Jurisdiction Section) will sit both in Malta and in Gozo. Furthermore, the words “(Gozo)” may be added to any written pleading, judicial act, court decree, *proces-verbal*, form or any other document whatsoever filed or used by these three sections of the Civil Court. The Bill also requires the Court of Appeal composes of three judges to hear appeals in Gozo from decisions of the Civil Court, First Hall, when it holds its sittings in Gozo; the Civil Court (Family Section), when it holds its sittings in Gozo; the Court of Magistrates (Gozo); or judgments or decisions of any board or tribunal delivered by such board or tribunal when sitting in Gozo. However, in so far as the Constitutional Court is concerned, no changes are being made and this court will not be hearing appeals in Gozo but will continue to hold its sittings in Malta.

New provisions will be introduced in the Code to expedite the transfer of judicial acts and written pleadings between Courts in Malta and Courts in Gozo. This is done in the following way. A judicial act or a written pleading may be filed in the registry of the Civil Court, First Hall, in Malta, for onwards transmission by the registrar of that court to the registrar of the competent civil court or tribunal sitting in Gozo indicated in the judicial act or written pleading. Where such an act or pleading is to be served in the Island of Gozo or Comino, it shall be sufficient for all purposes of law for a true copy of a judicial act or written pleading to be scanned in the registry of the Civil Court, First Hall, in Malta, and e-mailed to the registrar of the competent civil court or tribunal in Gozo indicated in the judicial act or written pleading. This procedure applies also when a judicial act or a written pleading is filed in the registry of the Civil





Malta Law Courts in Republic Street, Valletta.  
(Source: <http://tvm.com.mt> - Nov 2012)

Court, First Hall, in Gozo, for onward transmission to the competent civil court or tribunal in Malta indicated in the judicial act or written pleading. The registrar receiving the scanned copy as aforesaid shall acknowledge its receipt by return e-mail to the registrar sending the scanned true copy of the judicial act or written pleading. The officer effecting service of the scanned copy of a judicial act or written pleading as aforesaid shall deliver to the registrar of the Civil Court, First Hall, in Gozo the certificate of service, duly confirmed on oath before the registrar himself who shall transmit it to the registrar of the competent civil court or tribunal in Malta indicated in the judicial act or written pleading and vice-versa. Such delivery may also be made by electronic mail and the registrar receiving the certificate of service as aforesaid shall acknowledge its receipt by return e-mail to the registrar sending the certificate of service.

Another provision deals with the transfer and execution of warrants and orders between courts in Malta and courts in Gozo. The law will provide that when a request for the issue of a warrant or garnishee order by a civil court or tribunal in Gozo may be filed in the registry of the Civil Court, First Hall, in Malta. The registrar of the Civil Court,

First Hall, in Malta, will transmit such a request to the registrar of the competent civil court or tribunal in Gozo indicated in the request. The registrar of the competent civil court or tribunal in Gozo will forward such a request to the competent civil court or tribunal in Gozo indicated in the request to deal with it in terms of law.

If the competent civil court or tribunal in Gozo decrees that such warrant or order is to be executed in the Island of Gozo or Comino, a copy thereof will be transmitted by the registrar of the competent civil court or tribunal in Gozo indicated in the request to the registrar of the competent civil court or tribunal in Malta from where the request originated. A copy of the decree will be served on the person requesting the issue of such warrant or order. The officer effecting execution will deliver to the registrar of the competent civil court or tribunal in Gozo indicated in the request the certificate of service or execution, duly confirmed on oath before the registrar himself who will transmit it to the registrar of the competent court or tribunal in Malta from where the request originated. The procedure laid down above will also apply when a judicial act is filed in the registry of a competent civil court or tribunal in Gozo for

onward transmission to the competent civil court or tribunal in Malta.

A new article allows for the transfer of cases between courts and tribunals. When a case is declared to have been filed wrongly before a court or tribunal by any court or tribunal sitting in Malta or Gozo, the court or tribunal delivering such decision will order that such case be transferred to the competent court or tribunal so that such a case may continue to be heard and determined before the competent court or tribunal, whether such court or tribunal sits in the same or a different island.

Where the name of the court or a tribunal in which a judicial act or written pleading is filed is not indicated correctly, the said court or tribunal may *ex officio* or upon the request of any of the parties authorise the required correction. Such correction will not have any delaying or legally adverse effect on the proceedings or on the parties thereto. If, however, the receiving court or tribunal does not consider itself to be the competent court or tribunal to hear the case, the registrar will refer such case to the Court of Appeal sitting in its inferior jurisdiction which will, if need be after hearing the parties, decide which of the courts or tribunals is competent to hear such case.

The decision of the Court of Appeal will be final and the court or tribunal which has been identified by the Court of Appeal as being the competent court or tribunal to hear the case shall do so without any further delay. The Court of Appeal will forward the records of the proceedings to the competent court or tribunal. Prior to doing so, the registrar will, where there is an assignment to a different court or tribunal to hear the case, verify that the proper fees have been paid. Should this not be the case, the registrar will request the party concerned to pay any difference in such fees. Should the fees have been paid in excess the registrar will refund the fees paid in excess. The registrar will then forward the record of the proceedings to the competent court or tribunal as identified by the Court of Appeal.

The Court of Magistrates will be established as a general court for all Maltese islands and will hear cases both in Malta and in Gozo.

Consequential amendments are proposed to a number of laws to bring them in line with the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act. Such is the case with regard to the Civil Court (Establishment of Sections) Order, S.L. 12.19; the Civil Court (Family Section), the First Hall of the Civil Court and the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) (Superior Jurisdiction) (Family Section) Regulations, SL12.20; the Civil Procedure (Regulation of Registries, Archives and Functions of Director General (Courts) And Other Court Executive Officers) Regulations, SL 12.21.

The Minister responsible for justice may make regulations for the better implementation of the provisions of this Act. These regulations may provide for the transfer of cases pending or formerly pending before the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) sitting in its superior jurisdiction to another court; the hearing of appeals from judgments of the Court of Magistrates (Gozo) which are pending on the date of coming into force of this Act; and the making and implementing any transitory, ancillary or consequential measure that may in the opinion of the Minister be required for the purpose of the proper implementation of the purposes of this Act.

**Conclusion**

At the time of writing this article the Bill has yet to be given a First Reading and discussed by the House. As Motion 222 was approved by both the Government and Opposition, it is not envisaged that there will be any difficulties with the passage of this Bill from the House of Representatives except perhaps to some fine tuning which might take place during the Committee stage. One augurs that this process is expedited and that the court structure in Gozo is updated to better reflect today’s needs.

**References**

Attard Hili, A. (1995). *The History and Jurisdiction of the Courts of Law in Gozo*. Malta: Faculty of Laws, University of Malta, LL.D. thesis.

Professor Kevin Aquilina is Dean at the Faculty of Laws, University of Malta.

# Spatial Preparedness for Green Criminology

SAVIOUR FORMOSA

## Introduction

Introducing a state to high-end information systems that encompass total national coverage is no mean task. Introducing a new paradigm in data creation and dissemination targeting spatial analysis points to a whole new reality. The Maltese Islands, through access to the European Regional Development Fund, managed to create a process aimed at environmental research that included innovative tool creation and scans which will help analysts to monitor the environment and related offences committed on the environment. This was made possible through the scanning of the Maltese Islands in 3D using remote sensing within terrestrial and marine environments.

The process was initiated in 2006, which activity resulted in the creation of fundamental datasets that also brings Maltese terrestrial and bathymetric baseline information to the public domain. These activities have been carried out as part of a €4.6 million project, entitled Developing National Environmental Monitoring Infrastructure and Capacity, which also involves monitoring of air,



Figure 1: The grey area depicts the bathymetric sidescan zone, the black depicts the bathymetric LIDAR zone and the white depicts the terrestrial LIDAR zone.

water, soil, radiation and noise, each causes or effects of offences on the environment. This project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, which provides 85% of the project’s funding and the Government of Malta, which finances the rest under Operational Programme 1 - Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 - Investing in Competitiveness

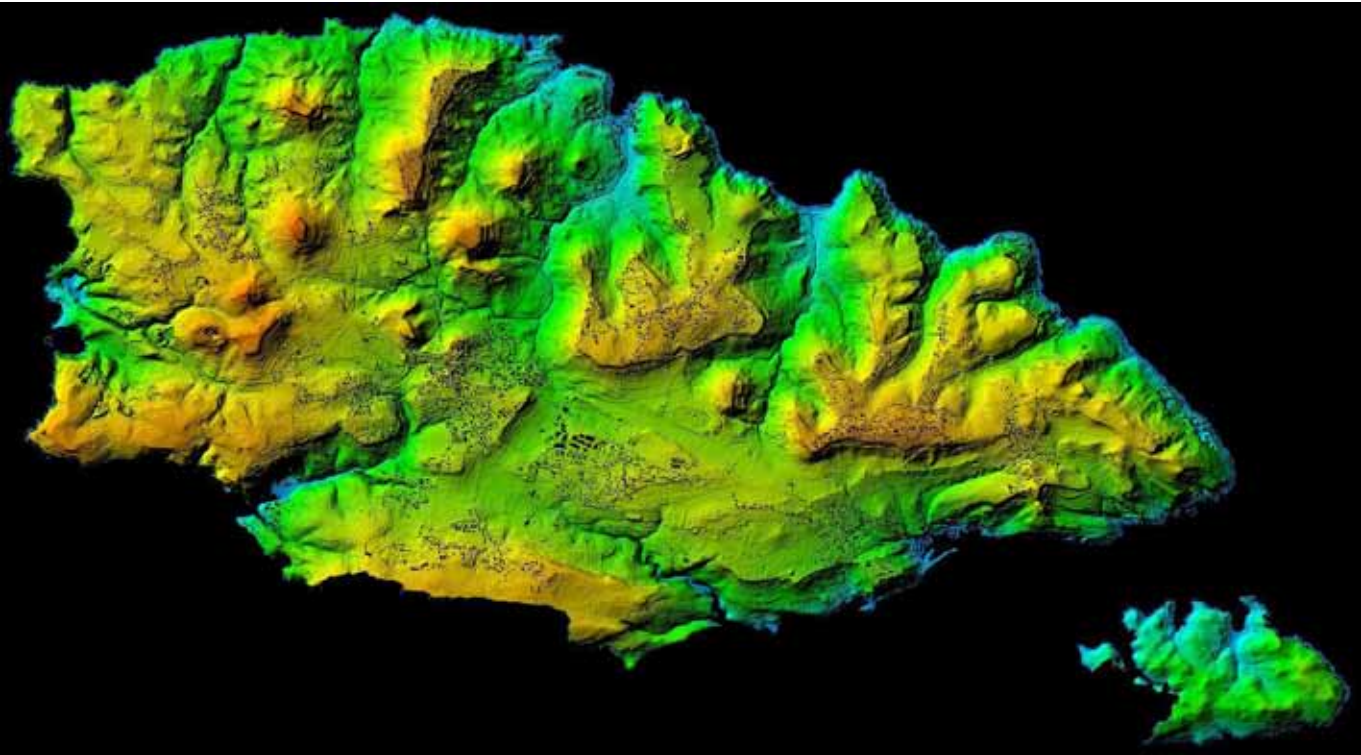


Figure 2: Gozo’s LIDAR scan.



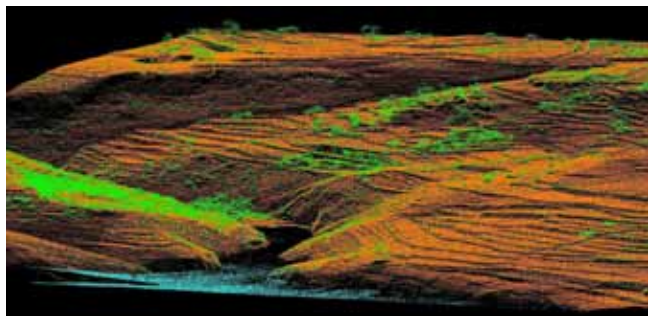


Figure 3: 3D modelling.

for a Better Quality of Life. Partners include the University of Malta, MEPA, MRA, NSO and the Environmental Health Directorate (MEPA, 2009).

### The Project Targets

The project ensures that new sets of baseline data layers are created from which to launch Malta’s new data capturing exercises across the different themes. Terrestrial and bathymetric data are available at higher resolutions suitable for environmental modeling and offence monitoring. As the non availability of high quality 3D spatial data hinders comprehensive land use planning and environmental monitoring, the project delivers a series of scans using different technologies in order to provide a comprehensive seamless dataset. The outputs includes high resolution 3D terrestrial data coverage for the Maltese Islands (Figure 1) using a combination of Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) data (Figure 2), 3D spatial models (Figure 3), oblique aerial imagery (Figure

4) as well as through a bathymetric survey of coastal waters within one nautical mile (nm) radius off the baseline coastline, using a combination of aerial LIDAR surveys, acoustic scans and a physical grab sampling survey as well as GIS-based noise maps. These technologies, as well as other fieldwork technologies, has equipped the researchers with a launching pad for the diverse physical, environmental and social studies that are undertaken in relation to the strengthening of social and environmental health as well as the analysis of offences through the employment of environmental and green criminology constructs. The basis for the future analysis of the multi-thematic analysis was laid through the acquisition of various deliveries that include the following outputs:

- LIDAR Scan: Terrestrial (Topographic Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR))
- Digital Surface Model (DSM) and Digital Terrain Model (DTM) (316 km.sq)
- Bathymetric LIDAR aerial survey - depths of 0 m to 15m within one nautical mile from the Maltese coastline (38 km.sq)
- Bathymetric Scan: Acoustic (side scan sonar)
- Digital Surface Model and an acoustic information map of sea bed (361 km.sq)
- High resolution oblique aerial imagery and derived orthophoto mosaic and tiled imagery of the Maltese Islands (316 km.sq)

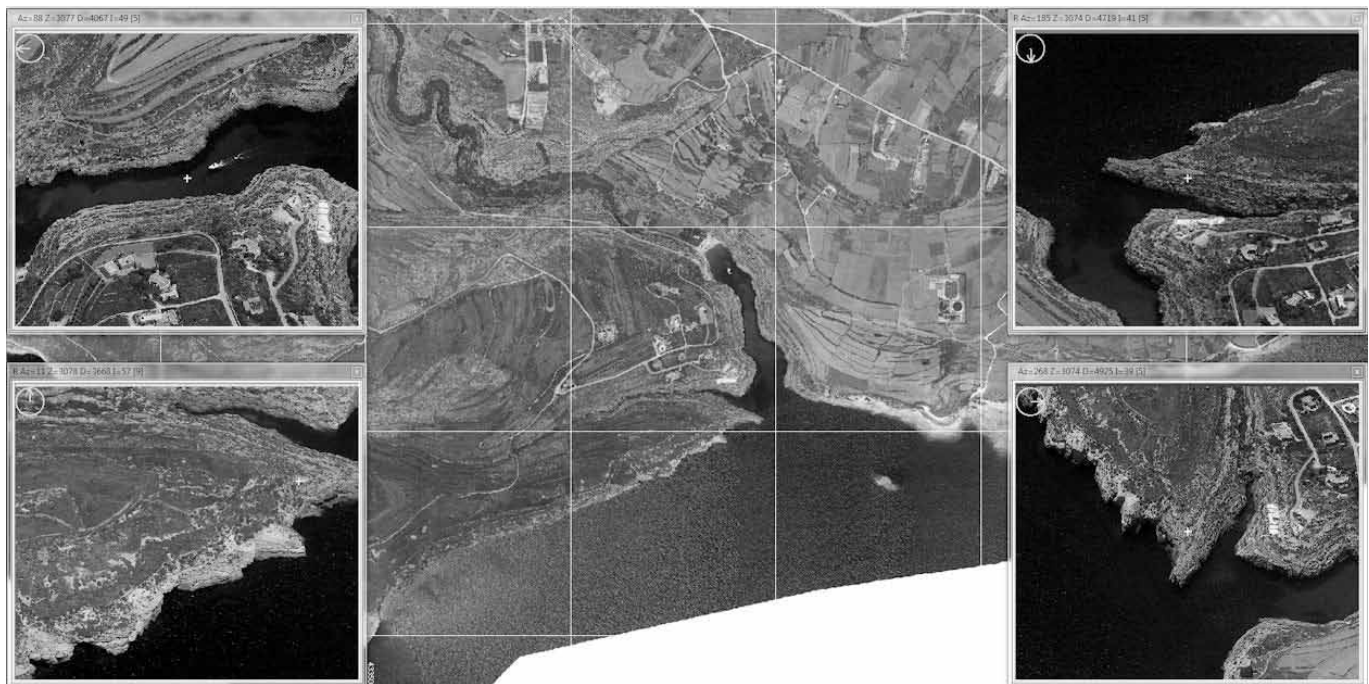


Figure 4: Oblique Imagery Output.

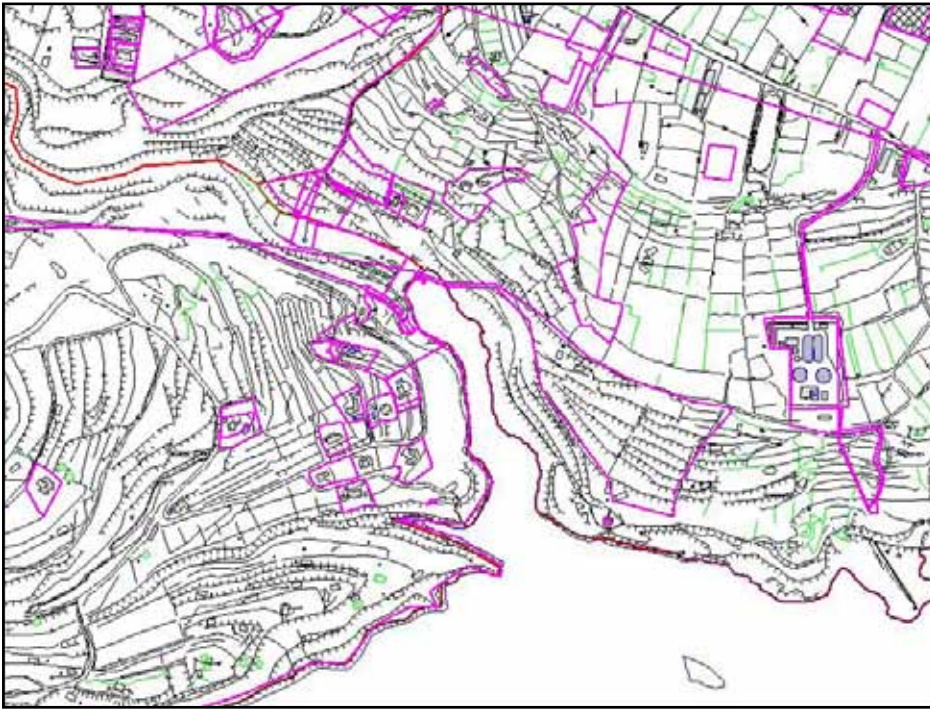


Figure 5: Permits.

- Satellite imagery (GeoEye, RapidEye, Quickbird) (316 km.sq)
- Remote GPS Cameras (Remote capture GPS receiver)
- 3D scanner and 3D printer
- GIS Handhelds for field surveys
- Global Navigation Satellite System Station

This is the first time in recent history that a LIDAR scan as well as a full bathymetric survey is being carried out for all the Maltese terrestrial areas and the coastal waters. Whilst various terrestrial exercises were carried out for development planning purposes, various bathymetric surveys were carried out for specific projects and research work, however, the latter were ad hoc, highly localised and based on specific project coastal development projects without any comprehensive methodology adhered to. Following a review of the emerging technologies, the mapping of the seabed topography at high resolutions for such a large area was deemed essential and the results will provide Malta with a comprehensive and updated database on sea depths.

Mapping the terrestrial and seabed topography has various applications. It will provide a basemap from which various environmental studies can be carried out. These include studies as required by the Corine Landcover Initiative, the Water Framework Directive

and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive which are aimed to protect more effectively the territorial landmass and the marine environment and in turn effect the health of the region's population. It will also serve as a tool for impact analysis of development planning, pollution and chemical prediction modeling, climate change monitoring as well as to render recognition of features.

In addition, it will allow thematic experts to study, monitor, analyse and protect those areas that are vulnerable to degradation and exposure. Spin-offs from the results include updated nautical charts, viewshed analysis and

cross-thematic studies in the physical, social and environmental domains.

Analysts will be able to generate digital terrain 3-D models which can be used for various applications such as urban and transport planning, environmental impact assessments, modeling of runoff water, monitoring of and enforcement of land use activities. The terrain 3D models and the sea bottom 3D models will be merged to form an innovative integrated 3D perspective for the Maltese Islands.

Interestingly, this project is innovative in the fact that it posits itself as a main springboard for a number of international directives, it will ensure the free delivery of all data to the general public. This is the result of an integrated exercise to bring together the requirements as outlined by the Commission's Communication COM (2008) 46 Final "Towards a Shared Environmental Information System", the INSPIRE Directive 2007/2/EC (Official Journal of the European Union, 2007) and the Aarhus Convention (Formosa, Sciberras and Formosa Pace, 2012).

### The Analytical Phase

The technologies and data are employed in the analysis of offences committed in the environment, both urban through environmental criminology knowledge or green criminology which related



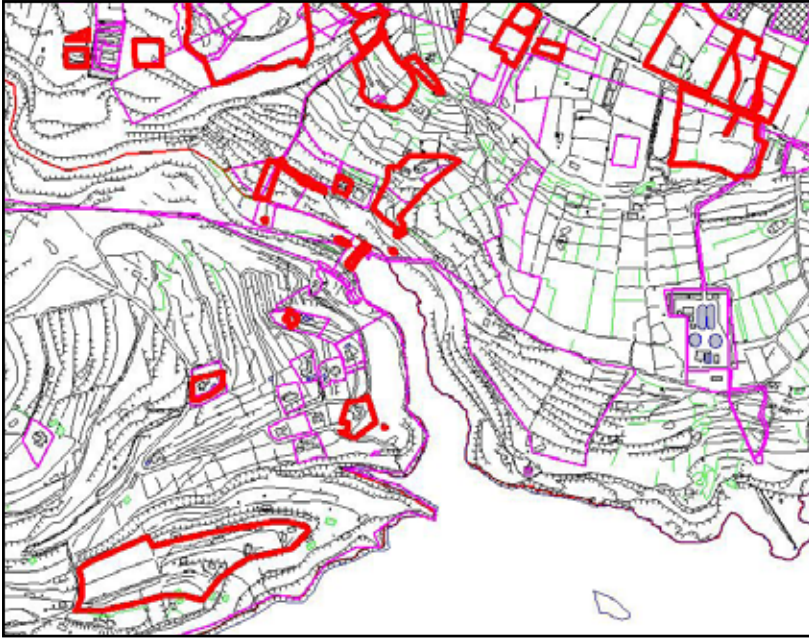


Figure 6: Green Crime.

to offences committed to physical environment (Formosa, Magri, Neuschmid and Schrenk, 2011). Within such scenarios, the combination of the LIDAR scans, the reported offences and the insitu fieldwork enables the identification of infringements within sub-meter accuracy. The integration of development permitting data (Figure 5) and infringement reports (Figure 6) together with the 3D data incoming from the terrestrial and bathymetric LIDAR data would help to identify the range of offence committed, such as height over-extension, sprawl extent, pollution dispersal, noise concentrations and dumping volume. The process, though complex achieves the aim of identifying irregularities and ensures that the environment is safeguarded for the future. Updated data runs will ensure that the data is updated to allow temporal analysis where the differences between one state and the next are automatically identified and action is taken in shorter time spans.

On a final note, the data is disseminated through an open portal, employing the Shared Environmental Information System protocol as the dissemination tool, the Aarhus Directive (Official Journal of the European Union, 2003a; 2003b) as the tool to disseminate information for free and the INSPIRE Directive as the regulating technical tool (Bonozountas and Karampourniotis, 2012; Martinaro, Bonozountas, Formosa, Nolle, Sciberras and Vinci, 2012). The public's use of such a tool will enhance offence reporting aimed at ensuring environmental-sustainability.

## References

Bonozountas, M. & Karampourniotis, I. (2012). *MALTA-SEIS: Deliverable D2.1 Report of Analysis and Detailed Proposal for SEIS, CT3067/2010–02*. Malta.

Formosa, S., Magri, V., Neuschmid, J. & Schrenk, M. (2011). "Sharing integrated spatial and thematic data: the CRISOLA case for Malta and the European project Plan4all process," *Future Internet* 2011, 3(4), 344-361; doi: 10.3390/fi3040344, ISSN 1999-5903. Switzerland: MDPI Online Quarterly.

Formosa S., Sciberras, E., & Formosa Pace J. (2012). "Taking the Leap: From Disparate Data to a Fully Interactive SEIS for the Maltese Islands." In Murgante, B., Gervasi, O., Misra, S., Nedjah, N., Rocha, A. M., Taniar, D. & Apduhan, B. O. (eds) *Computational Science and its Applications – ICCSA 2012, LNCS 7334*. Springer-Verlag Berlin: Heidelberg.

Martinaro, G., Bonozountas, M., Formosa, S., Nolle, M., Sciberras, E. & Vinci, F. (2012). *INSPIRE EF Data Specifications to develop the SEIS-Malta Geodatabase for the Air Quality data management*. INSPIRE Conference June 2012. Istanbul, Turkey: INSPIRE.

Malta Environment & Planning Authority (MEPA), (2009). *Developing National Environmental Monitoring Infrastructure and Capacity*. Floriana, Malta: MEPA.

Official Journal of the European Union. (28 January 2003a). *Directive 2003/4/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2003 on public access to environmental information and repealing Council Directive 90/313/EEC*, L 041, 14/02/2003.

Official Journal of the European Union. (26 May 2003b). *Directive 2003/35/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 providing for public participation in respect of the drawing up of certain plans and programmes relating to the environment and amending with regard to public participation and access to justice Council Directives 85/337/EEC and 96/61/EC - Statement by the Commission*, L 156, 25/06/2003.

Official Journal of the European Union. (25 April 2007). *Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2007 establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE)*, L108, Volume 50.

Dr. Saviour Formosa is a Senior Lecturer within the Department of Criminology, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta. He possesses a Ph.D. in spatio-temporal environmental criminology. This paper refers to work carried out in the implementation of the ERDF156 of which he held the role of project leader.



# Infectious Diseases During the First World War in Gozo

MARIO SALIBA

## Introduction

Laws and regulations against the spread of infectious diseases have been with us since the time of the Knights of Malta. In modern times the main law is the Ordinance of 1908, Chapter 36, which continues to be updated till this very day. These regulations were in full force during various epidemics. There was the Spanish flu in 1918 which killed more people than the Great War. In Gozo 2539 people were reported to have been affected and 81 of them died. Other epidemics during the Great War period included a typhoid epidemic which occurred a couple of years before the flu epidemic and a small epidemic of malarial fever which was imported from Salonika. These were hard times for Gozo and medicine was not yet prepared to deal with these dangerous and serious illnesses.

The knowledge that germs cause disease and that communicable diseases spread from person to person, only became known in the twentieth

century. In 1884 Robert Koch (1843-1910) discovered the bacillus that caused cholera. He also found the bacillus which was causing tuberculosis (1882). His students and other doctors used his methods to find the germs that caused typhoid, whooping cough, tetanus, meningitis, leprosy, syphilis and others. A few years earlier the invention of the microscope, by Robert Hooke (1635 - 1703) together with Antonini van Leeuwenhoek in Holland, helped scientists and other doctors to discover the cause of more diseases.

## Old Burial Customs

During the time of the Knights of Malta people who died of contagious diseases were buried in Lazzaretto cemetery after they were examined by the Protomedicus (Savona Ventura, 2005: 20). Burial in churches lasted till the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and burial in public cemeteries came into existence through the Ordinance of Burial of 10 May, 1869. The first burial outside the church was



The Lazzaretto on Manoel Island  
(Source: <http://www.timesofmalta.com> - Nov 2012)

in January 1872, and by 1922 there were already 113,586 people buried in public cemeteries (Savona Ventura, 2005: 20). This ordinance limited burial under the church parvis to bishops and other high ranking priests only. Burial in churches stopped completely in 1918 when the Church's own Canon Law stated that burial in churches was allowed only for the Pope, cardinals, members of royal families and the bishop of the area. All other burials were done on the parvis outside and under the supervision of the Inspector of Public Health and a police officer, after the deceased had been left lying in his or her coffin for twenty-four hours (Bonnici, 1988: 389).

In 1872 the question arose as to whether persons, who had died due to communicable diseases, could be taken to church for the funeral function. The health authorities were against it and did not give permission for such church functions during the hot summer months when there was a suspicion that the deceased had died from a contagious disease such as cholera, measles, scarlet fever or other infections.

The custom of burying a person twenty-four hours after he or she had been declared dead came about due to the fact that there were cases when people had been buried alive. The coffin was left inside the church and the undertaker had to sleep in the church with the deceased (Grima, 1995). This rule applied to people who died natural deaths and still applies till the present day. In order to bury a deceased person before twenty-four hours had elapsed, there had to be a medical reason or a public health concern. Those who died a sudden death had to be kept for forty-eight hours before the coffin was closed for burial. Only if there were clear signs of decay were they allowed to bury the dead before twenty-four hours had elapsed.

## New Regulations

In 1908 new regulations were issued to protect humans and animals from certain diseases and

to prevent the entry of and spread of infectious, contagious and epidemic diseases.<sup>1</sup> These regulations still apply today although amended from time to time. Under Chapter 36 of this Ordinance any practicing doctor, who was aware of people living at home who were suffering from infectious, contagious or epidemic diseases, had to notify the district medical officer. Any doctor who had a sick person under his care, or who had been called to see a sick person, had to immediately, upon becoming aware that the patient had a disease falling under this section of the Ordinance, submit to the Superintendent of Health, a certificate with the name, address and age of the patient, and the disease that the doctor suspected or thought the patient had.<sup>2</sup> The doctor was required to give notice of each. If he failed to give such notice he would be found guilty of an offense.

The Ordinance stated that in the case of any notification, a doctor was paid a fee of not less than nine and not more than twenty cents; fifty-eight cents in the case of a private physician, and a fee of not less than twelve cents and not exceeding twenty cents in the case of a doctor who was employed with the government. This small remuneration was meant to be an incentive for doctors not to fail in their duties. The diseases that fell under this Ordinance were: plague, smallpox, cholera, diphtheria, croup membrane, typhoid, yellow fever, leprosy and epidemic cerebrospinal meningitis, scarlet fever, typhoid or enteric fever, malarial fever, undulant fever, post-puerperal fever, and diseases known by the name of measles, erysipelas, smallpox, influenza, trachoma, pertussis, varicella, rabies, tuberculosis and other diseases that would appear from time to time but not included in this list.

It is worth mentioning that in 1937 at Fort Chambray the first Leprosarium was opened in Gozo where patients afflicted with the disease of leprosy were treated (Cassar, 1964). Patients who were ill with tuberculosis were kept in the Hospital

---

<sup>1</sup> Ordinanza Dwar it-Tharis mill-Mard, Kapitolu 36 tal-10 ta' Awwissu, 1908, kif emendata bl-Ordinanza XVIII tal-1992 u bl-Avviz Legali 407 tal-2007.

<sup>2</sup> Register of Infectious Diseases, Two Volumes, Public Health Office, Victoria Gozo, by permission of Principal Health Inspector Mr Joseph Borg.



Fort Chambray  
(Source: <http://www.maltaramc.com> - Nov 2012)

of Santa Tereza at tal-Ibraġ near the Gozo General Hospital where today there is the mental hospital. The Hospital of Santa Tereza was opened in 1933 (Cassar, 1964). In the years after the First World War the most common diseases were smallpox, the trachoma, leprosy and tuberculosis.

When a notification was registered, the Medical Superintendent or his delegate had the right to inspect the residence of the reported person. They also had the power to have the patient undergo certain tests and medical examinations and to take the necessary treatment. If there was any danger that the disease could spread, the Superintendent had the power to order the isolation of that person to a specially designated place as advised by the Health Authorities. The Superintendent also had the duty to order the cleaning and disinfection of the house.

This ordinance also specified what had to be done in the cases where suspected patients died. The law required that the corpse be taken directly to the cemetery without being allowed a funeral service at the church and be buried not later than twenty-four hours after death. This was thought to prevent the spreading of the disease. Today, this part of the law has been amended as we know that when a person

dies, the body is no longer contagious although certain sanitary conditions are still observed. This part of the law was mainly in force when there was an epidemic of plague or cholera. Today most contagious diseases have been eliminated because of the routine use of vaccinations which are mandatory and also fall under this law. In Western countries hygiene has improved and also the level of health care and standard of living, so much so that we get very few cases of plague, polio, diphtheria, smallpox and other contagious diseases which are mentioned in the Ordinance.

### **Epidemics in Gozo**

In spite of the laws to protect the public from the spread of diseases being in place for over a hundred years, not all cases of contagious diseases were, or in fact are, reported to the authorities. This has always been so and unfortunately still happens today. Therefore any figures being quoted may be somewhat conservative and reflect only those cases which were reported.

Looking to see what kind of diseases were reported in Gozo at the beginning of the last century, we find that in the year 1916 between August and



December there was a typhoid epidemic. Patients suffering from this affliction had severe fever and diarrhea. In this period a 145 cases were reported, nine of whom died. In Nadur alone twenty-two cases were reported three of which were fatal; a girl of eight, a boy of twelve and woman of thirty.

In the following year, between January and May, there was a measles epidemic. 750 cases were reported from all over the island. The first cases began in the village of Sannat, spreading to Xewkija and Xaghra and then to the west of Gozo to Għarb and San Lawrenz followed by new cases found once again in Xaghra. In the Nadur, Għajnsielem and Qala area there were only twenty-two cases reported by the end of March. This disease affected young children and during this epidemic forty-one people died.

Between November 1913 and December 1917 there was only one case of plague or cholera on the island. This was a man of thirty-five who died in Victoria Hospital on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1917. Other communicable diseases reported during this period included two cases of tuberculosis, one case of post puerperal fever and a case of Mediterranean fever, but there were no deaths from these infections.

In the first six months of 1918, there was an epidemic of whooping cough which affected mostly children and babies. Overall, 784 cases were reported of which forty-three people died, the majority being infants under one year old. This epidemic began in the Nadur, Qala and Għajnsielem area. Dr Ġużi Attard, the Medical Officer of the district, reported 147 cases during the month of February alone. The infection started in Għajnsielem and then spread to the Nadur and Qala area. In Nadur there were 202 cases of whooping cough and five of the afflicted died. In the summer of 1918, two brothers from Nadur, one aged twenty-four and the other twenty-seven, were reported as having tuberculosis. Both of them died.

### **Fever from Malaria**

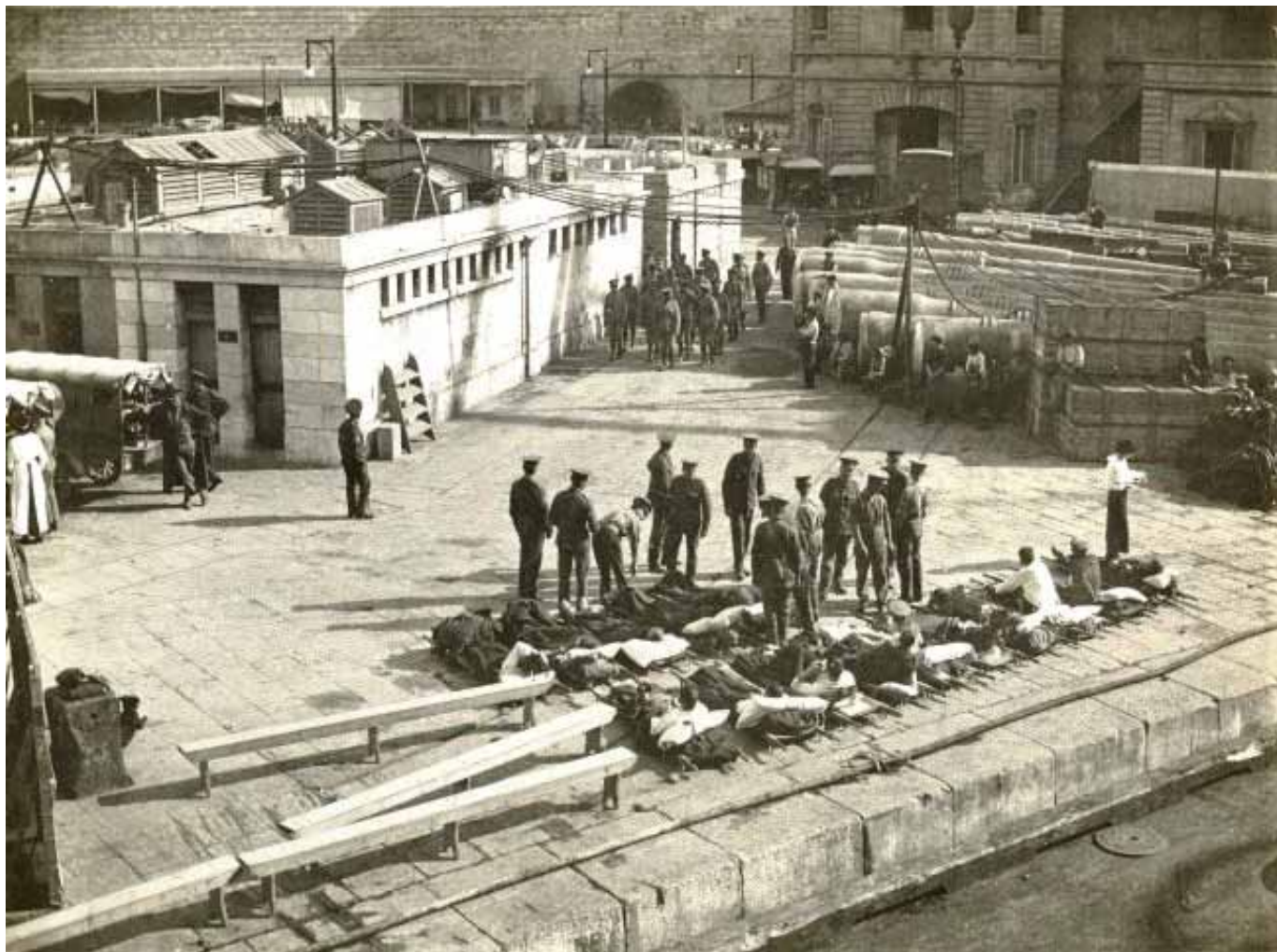
In May of 1918 it was reported by Dr. Alfred Cauchi, that there were fourteen cases of fever caused by malaria. Symptoms of malaria include

headache, fatigue, fever and great chills. What is interesting is that these cases of malaria must have been imported from other countries as this disease does not exist in Malta. None of those who bore the symptoms died due to this infection and all the cases were found in Victoria. The period under scrutiny was during a war and therefore one can only imagine that malaria could have been imported from any country involved in the war, where this disease was endemic, by some soldiers who visited these places and then came to Gozo.

Although Malta and Gozo did not participate directly in World War I, they still welcomed several wounded soldiers who were fighting in Gallipoli and Salonika. Additionally about one thousand Maltese and Gozitans took part in the war with the British fleet. Among these soldiers was a certain Sergeant Major Francis Mejlaq from Nadur who served for four years in Alexandria from 1914 (Said, 2003: 27). It appeared that this man was not afflicted with any infectious illness but another man, also from Nadur, aged twenty was reported on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1918 to be suffering from malarial fever. Seven other cases all from Xewkija, were reported together on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1919 who probably contracted the disease when they were in Salonika. Another man from Nadur who actively participated in the First World War was Francois Camilleri. He was engaged as a private in the Royal Army Service Corps. He was severely wounded in his leg when they were fighting in France. From there he was taken to a military hospital in Cambridge, England, where he was found to have tetanus and died from it on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> November 1918, just two days after the armistice, at the age of twenty-one (Camilleri, 2007: 28).

### **The Spanish Influenza**

The most notorious episode of 1918, apart from the end of the war, was the great epidemic of the type of influenza known by the code A H1N1, or as it is more popularly known, the Spanish Flu. This influenza killed more than forty million people, which is a number greater than the number of people killed in the Great War.



The casualties from operations in Gallipoli (25 Apr 1915 – 9 Jan 1916), and Salonika (Oct 1915 – 30 Sept 1918), were initially treated at Malta and Egypt.  
(Source: <http://www.maltaramc.com> - Nov 2012)

## The Outbreak of the Spanish Flu in Gozo

In Gozo this influenza had a great effect on the life of the people, as it caused disruption of work, education and social life, although not as much as in Malta. The epidemic lasted for almost nine months so the consequences were felt all too well. During this epidemic, the schools were closed, children were not sent to religious lessons, and churches were not holding their usual functions for which many people used to gather (Bonnici, 1988: 210). In Gozo alone, 2539 cases were reported. The first cases were reported on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 1918, in Nadur and Victoria. The first death from this influenza was a man of thirty-six years old who died in Victoria Hospital on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 1918. The last cases reported were on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 1919. According to the census of

the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1911, the Gozitan population stood at 22,695.<sup>3</sup> This means that 11.2 percent of the population was infected with this flu. Eighty-one people of those who were infected died.

As a precautionary measure, in order to reduce the spread of this epidemic, those who were afflicted with this infection were ordered to remain quarantined at home until the symptoms of the disease diminished. Sanitary inspectors were obliged to go and check if sick people left their homes. This measure was introduced as part of the regulations put in place in 1908 for the protection from diseases. Bishop Camilleri ordered the parishes not to sound bells which signaled that someone was dying. This was done so that the sick themselves would not have to bear the fear of hearing the bells pealing for death. This

<sup>3</sup> National Archives, Gozo Public Library. *Censiment 2 ta' April 1911*. Malta: Malta Government Printing Office.

ban started on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1918, and lasted for six months (Bonnici, 1988: 210). Although it was widely known that people had been dying since May of 1918, the first cases of Spanish Flu began to be reported in September 1918. It may have been that at first physicians did not recognize the symptoms as belonging to the Spanish Flu. In Nadur alone there were 362 cases reported to have fallen ill with the flu, almost eleven percent of the population of Nadur at that time. Of these twelve died, nine of whom were under twenty years old. During this period the District Medical Officer for the area of Nadur, Ġhajnsielem and Qala was Dr Anthony Cremona, who was also responsible for Xagħra. The Archpriest of Nadur, Fr. Martin Camilleri, wrote in his diary in April 1919, that he was also affected by the Spanish Flu and had received the last rites (Muscat, 2002: 19).

**Conclusion**

Gozo went through a dreadful period of war, poverty, sickness and unemployment. As seen in this brief research, Gozo has always had rules and laws in place to protect its inhabitants from infectious diseases, since the time of the Knights of Malta. These regulations were still in use until the Ordinance of 1908 which continues to be amended till the present day. One hundred years ago, treatment was still limited and medicine had little to offer to the patient against infectious diseases. There were few vaccines against diseases and nor were there antibiotics against these germs. There was also a marked lack of cleanliness, as well as poverty and ignorance. Diseases spread easily due to lack of washing and hygiene and also because contaminated water was used for drinking.

**References**

Bonnici, A. (1988). “In-Nadur: Ġrajjet Kollegġjata u Bażilika Imxebilkin fil-Hajja Soċjali ta’ Ghawdex,” *Il-Wirt Nisrani fiż-Żminijiet Moderni*, Vol II. Malta: Veritas Press.

Cassar, P. (1964). *Medical History of Malta*. London: Wellcome History Library.

Grima, M. (1995). “Tifkiriet ta’ Tfuliti,” *Luminarja*, Marzu 1995, Hargha Nru. 40. Gozo: Portelli Press.

Muscat, J. (2002). “Registrazzjoni ta’ Mwiet Mhux tas-Soltu,” *Luminarja*, Diċembru 2002. Hargha Nru.71. Gozo: Portelli Press.

Said, J. (2003). “Nadurin li Ghamlu Isem fis-Servizzi,” *Luminarja*, Diċembru 2003. Hargha Nru. 75. Gozo: Portelli Press.

Savona Ventura, C. (2005). *Contemporary Medicine in Malta (1798 – 1979)*. Malta: Publishers Enterprises Group (PEG) Ltd.

Mario Saliba studied at the Gozo Lyceum and the University of Malta graduating MD in 1982. In 1990 he obtained a post graduate Diploma in Diving Medicine from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. In 2009 he finished a Masters Degree in Family Medicine at the University of Malta. He works as a General Practitioner in the Department of Primary Health Care in Gozo and he is a registered Specialist in Family Medicine and is also a Member of the Malta College of Family Doctors.



# The Xaghra Monumental Church\*

JULIAN REFALO RAPA

## Introduction

The village of Xaghra stands on a sprawling plateau which has been inhabited since prehistoric times. Evidence of this are the prehistoric remains that were discovered at various sites around the village. Most important and well-known amongst these are the Neolithic temples of Ġgantija. These temples, dating to 3600B.C., are among the oldest, if not the oldest free-standing structures on Earth. The Ġgantija temples are older than the pyramids of Egypt. Since 1980, they have been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The earliest inhabitants of the plateau were of course farmers and herders who chose the area for their settlement as it overlooks one of the

most fertile slopes and plains of the island with fresh-water springs which still survive today. It is believed that they erected this place of worship in their midst to make offerings and honour their dieties. The complex structure of Ġgantija, the excellent state of preservation of its materials - hard chalky coralline and the softer globigerina limestone - make it an excellent example of megalithic prehistoric art and architecture. The huge megaliths used in the building earned it the name of Ġgantija, derived from the Maltese for ‘giant’, reflecting the lore that the temples were built by giants.

With the coming of Christianity, various small chapels cropped up all over the village. These were generally erected by well-to-do families who were given permission by religious authorities to build these places of worship and endow them with benefices for their upkeep. Unfortunately, with the passing of centuries and due to other circumstances, many of these chapels fell into disuse and neglect, leading to their collapse and eventual disappearance. Among the reasons suggested were the frequent raids by corsairs who infested the Mediterranean and who chose



View of the interior of the Basilica, decorated for the titular feast of 8<sup>th</sup> September.



Church of St Anthony the Abbot that served as the first parish church.

\*Adapted from: Refalo Rapa, J. (1969). *The Xaghra Monumental Church*. Gozo, The Orphans Press, pp. 116.

the bays of Marsalforn, Ghajn Barrani and Ramla as convenient landing places when they needed supplies of water and food. Very often, this included the plunder of anything that came their way, and worse still, inhabitants were carried off as slaves. This forced our earliest predecessors to move further inland and venture out only to tend their crops.

### **The First Parish Church**

Around the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the rise in population of the village led the well-known Gozitan Noble family of Camire and Hinzi to build a chapel in honour of Saint Anthony the Abbot at the area commonly known as Tal-Qaċċa. Thanks to constant care and maintenance by successive rectors, this old chapel still exists and still serves as a very active place of worship and liturgy for those who live in that area. In January of each year, a feast is celebrated in honour of the saint, and this includes a ceremony of the blessing of animals and pets brought over by their owners from all over the island.

As the village population was on the increase, on the 28<sup>th</sup> April 1667, the residents officially forwarded a petition to the then Bishop, Davide Cocco Palmieri, asking that their village be raised to the status of a Parish. This wish was granted a year later on the 28<sup>th</sup> April 1668, through the Apostolic Decree Cum in Prima with the Reverend Bernard Formosa from Rabat as the first parish priest. The Chapel of St Anthony the Abbot served as the first parish church.

### **The Present Parish Church**

#### *The earliest beginnings*

The parishioners at the request of the Bishop started planning to build a new parish church which would better serve the population. This was to be constructed in the centre of the village on public land donated by Fra Gregorio Carafa, the Grand Master of the Order of Saint John. Some Sicilians residing in Xaghra helped the locals in building a larger place of worship at the site of the present church choir. This earned it the



The Parish Church of Xaghra before the dome was added.



nickname of ‘Tal-Isqallin’ (The Sicilians’). It was completed and started to function on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1692. At first it was dedicated to Our Lady of Divine Grace, but soon afterwards, on October 9<sup>th</sup> of the same year, it was dedicated to the Nativity of Our Lady.

Under the leadership of successive parish priests the people of Xagħra did their best to embellish their church and to adorn it with paintings, statues and liturgical objects. Several silver articles from the time survived the pillaging by Napoleon’s troops only due to the foresight of the then parish priest father Vincenzo Cauchi who advised the sextons to bury all precious objects. Unfortunately the scrupulous conscience of one of the sextons made him remove a silver effigy of Our Lady from its hiding-place and so it fell easy prey to the greedy soldiers.

*The parish church as we know it*

In 1813, Parish Priest Cauchi, at the venerable age of eighty, urged his 1200 parishioners to help him raise funds for the building of a larger church. Fr. Cauchi himself donated the first 500 Scudi while the plan was designed free of charge by his nephew, priest-architect Don Salvatore Bondi. The idea was to build a larger church at



The Basilica of Xagħra.

the site of the old one and then demolish the old part as soon as the new edifice was completed. However, events did not turn out so smoothly for the villagers. Soon after the laying of the foundation stone, plague broke out on March 17<sup>th</sup> 1814. In the course of this outbreak that only hit Xagħra, and which lasted until the 26<sup>th</sup> of July, 104 persons died, amongst whom were the Parish Priest and the sexton. The plague brought not only death, but poverty and misery. The new parish priest, Father Frangisku Gafà, tried to proceed with the construction works, but decided to distribute to the poor, the funds earmarked for building expenses. He himself died destitute on February 15<sup>th</sup> 1823.

Construction works got under way again under the new parish priest, Fr Michael Buttigieg, from Qala, who served the parish for 25 years before being moved to Rabat, and eventually was to become the first Bishop of Gozo. Fr Buttigieg himself donated 2100 Scudi, while 4731 Scudi were donated personally by the Bishop of Malta, Mgr Publio Maria dei Conti Sant who also passed on another 1000 Scudi accumulated from a vacant



Fr Michele Buttigieg, 7<sup>th</sup> Parish Priest of Xagħra and later first Bishop of Gozo.



post of Canon. The old church was pulled down on November 20<sup>th</sup> 1850 and part of the new church started to be used for religious services. The blessing ceremony was held on August 10<sup>th</sup> 1851 and Pro-Vicar Canon Tomaso Pace officiated.

The whole new structure was completed by February 14<sup>th</sup> 1855 when it was ceremoniously blessed by the Vicar General, Mgr Vincenzo Chapelle. In all, it had taken 40 years to build, and involved a lot of voluntary work by the parishioners. It was consecrated by the Bishop of Gozo, Mgr Pietro Pace. (By this time Gozo had become a diocese separate from Malta, and Mgr Pace was the third Bishop of Gozo).

*Building of the dome*

The parish church which the villagers were so proud of, was still without a dome. It was the 11<sup>th</sup> parish priest and first archpriest of Xagħra, Fr Giuseppe Diacono, who coordinated this arduous task. Work was entrusted to Wigi Vella, a master mason from Żebbuġ who finished the work in six months' time. Again, the people of Xagħra contributed handsomely in funds and voluntary work. An interesting anecdote goes that every morning, on their way to church, each man, woman or child carried something: a stone, some sifted soil, or a pail of water and left it in front of the church to be used by the builders during the day. When extra hands were needed, the church bell would sound and that was the signal for willing men to meet at the church and help. This was in effect the first cupola to be built in

Gozo, both in design and in height. Eventually, in 1957 the cupola lantern was refurbished, because erosion had rendered certain areas dangerous. The result was a higher and more aesthetically acceptable dome.

In 1913, the same parish priest, urged by the parishioners made further additions to the church building. Two domed chapels, one on each side of the high altar were built. One was dedicated to the blessed Sacrament and the other to the Holy Crucifix. Small domes on each side-chapel in the aisles running along the sides of the church were also built. The mason in charge was a local, Giuseppe Azzopardi, and the architect was Ugo Mallia. The six chapels along the aisles are dedicated to Saint Laurence, the Blessed Virgin Mary of Light, the Shipwreck of Saint Paul, Saint Maurice, Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Our Lady of Victories (Il-Bambina), while the altars in the transepts are dedicated to St Joseph and Our Lady of the Rosary.

**Paintings Found in the Parish Church**

The Parish church of Xagħra boasts the works of several well-known artists.

The main altar-piece, dated 1744, showing the birth of Mary, is the work of Carlo Gimach and has been recently restored.

Rokku Buhagiar produced the painting of Our Lady of the Rosary (1767), the altarpiece in the right transept.



The recently-restored small domes and lunettes in the left apse (Virginio Monti).



The main altar-piece showing the birth of Mary (Carlo Gimach).

Francesco Zahra painted the two altar-pieces showing Our Lady of the Carmel and Our lady of Divine Light. (Around 1770)

Giuseppe Bonnici left us the two paintings hanging in the left transept, one showing the Flight to Egypt and the other, the Dream of St Joseph. (1857)

In the opposite transept, Antonio Falzon has the two corresponding paintings, one showing the Crowning of Mary, and the other the Annunciation. (1861)

One of the most notable artists whose works grace the church is Giuseppe Cali (August 14, 1846 – March 1, 1930). Cali, a Maltese painter, was born in Valletta of Neapolitan parents and educated at the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Naples under Giuseppe Mancinelli. He was a prolific artist: almost every church of any consequence in Malta boasts a work of his. He was commemorated with a series of four postage stamps in 1996, and a coin in 2004. He left us three masterpieces. In 1894, he painted the two lateral paintings in the church choir, one showing the presentation of Our Lady



Choir Apse. Nativity of Mary. (Giuseppe Cali, 1921).





Right apse. Battle of Lepanto (Virginio Monti, 1923).

at the Temple, and the other The Immaculate Conception. In 1921 he produced the magnificent picture in the choir apse, which took him fifteen months to finish.

The altar-pieces of the Martyrdom of St Lawrence and the Arrival of St Paul are both by Cali's son, Ramiro. He painted these in 1915.

In 1918, Ganni Vella painted the altar-piece in the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament and it shows the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

To Virginio Monti (1852 -1942) a well-known Italian artist whose works are found all over Italy, in London and even in the U.S., was entrusted the huge task of painting the church ceiling, the dome, the small domes, various lunettes and other paintings in the choir and the two side-chapels, and last but not least the apses on the left and right transepts as well as that above the main door. In all, there are 112 paintings by this artist or his bottega, accomplished between 1922 and 1932. We shall not list all these, but one cannot but mention the two apses in the transepts, one depicting the thanksgiving of Grandmaster La Vallette after the siege of Malta of 1565, and the other the Battle of Lepanto of 1571.

Virginio Monti was also responsible for the design of a set of twenty stained glass windows which were eventually produced by an Italian



One of the stations of the Via Crucis. Picture is in Mosaico Veneziano (Ditta Favret, Pietrasanta, 1962).



firm and won the first prize at an international fair held at Bari.

**Statues, Marble Works and Other Works of Art or Precious Objects in the Basilica**

Amongst the things that strike the eye when one enters the Xaghra parish church are the marble works all over the place: marble flooring and marble altars, marble balustrades and also various marble statues. A beautiful marble pulpit replaced a wooden one in 1955, commemorating the first centenary of the blessing of the church. All walls and pillars are covered in marble inlaid with gold. The pictures forming the Via Crucis are made of “Mosaico Veneziano” in a marble frame. The marble organ loft is itself a veritable work of art.

Of course, as one would expect, there are a good number of statues for the devotions of the parishioners. A wooden statue of Our Lady of the Rosary, by Natale Morello dates from 1849. It was recently restored and can be found in its niche in the church sacristy. The devotion to the

Passion of Our Lord prompted the acquisition of a whole set of statues depicting various moments of the Passion. Eight of these form the original set ordered in 1914 from the Italian firm Luigi Guacci. Two statues that earn the admiration of all, both produced in France by the firm Galard & Fils are those of St Joseph and the Bambina. The latter is of course the titular statue, since the church is dedicated to her and the titular feast held each year centres around the devotion to the Nativity of Our Lady. This is popularly known as Our Lady of Victories since at various points in our Nation’s history, we have witnessed the intercession of Our Lady on or near the day of the celebration of her birthday. This beautiful statue was crowned with gold and precious stones at a solemn ceremony in 1973, a hundred years from its arrival in Xaghra.

Various gold and silver objects are also present, most of them connected with the liturgy and rightly so. Some of these treasures date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The parishioners were always blessed with saintly parish priests who passed on



Our Lady of the Rosary (Wood, Allesandro Farrugia, 1849).



Jesus crowned with thorns. One of the original set of eight statues brought over in 1914. (Ditta Luigi Guacci, Lecce).



Titular statue of the Bambina (Galard et Fils, Marseilles, 1873).



Solid silver tabernacle, design by Romano Buttigieg (Flli. Germonio, Varese, 1967).

solid values. Jesus in the Eucharist was and still is, as it should be, the focus of our faith, as we believe that He is the Master of the House. In fact back in 1830, even when burdened with building expenses, they still ordered a gilded door for the tabernacle. In 1967, through the initiative of Fr Benjamin Attard, a solid silver tabernacle was installed in the chapel dedicated to the Blessed Eucharist and where Adoration is organised on a daily basis.

The Parish Church of Xaghra enjoys various honours bestowed on it along the years. It was created a Collegiate in 1898 and the canons enjoyed the privilege of wearing a pectoral cross. The parish priest was to be called an Archpriest. In March 1963, Pope John XXIII bestowed the title of Apostolic Protonotary on the parish Archpriest, with the title of Monsignor. Pope Paul VI raised the Collegiate Church of Xaghra to the status of a Basilica on August 26<sup>th</sup> 1967. On 8<sup>th</sup> September 2003, the Basilica became spiritually affiliated to the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, thus having the same privileges of this major Basilica, including several plenary indulgences on special Marian feasts.

## Conclusion

As the clock on the church facade which was assembled in 1885 by the Maltese clock-maker Mikelang Sapiano, still tirelessly strikes the quarters and the hours, let us pray and hope that the hearts of the parishioners of the Bambina will keep on loving God and the Bambina as tirelessly and fervently as those of their forefathers.

Fr Julian Refalo Rapa was born in Xaghra in 1924. After the death of his wife, he started a 4-year course at Beda College, Rome which led to his ordination to the priesthood in 1991.



# Book Reviews:

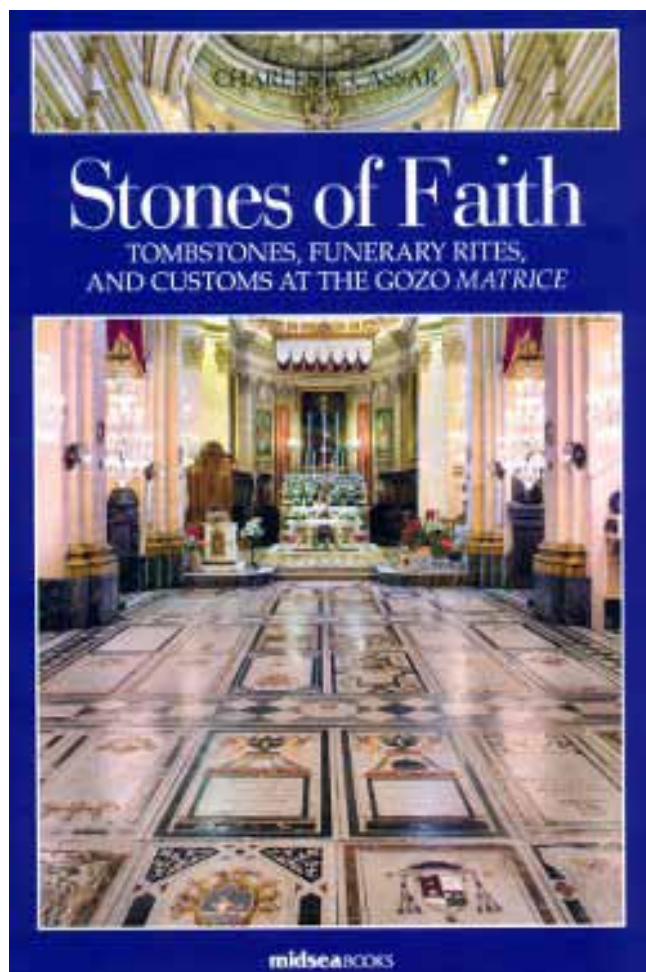
GEOFFREY G. ATTARD

## **Stones of Faith. Tombstones, Funerary Rites, and Customs at the Gozo Matrice**

**Charles R. Cassar,  
Malta, Midsea Books, 2012, pp. 204.**

*Stones of Faith. Tombstones, Funerary Rites, and Customs at the Gozo Matrice* is the name of a sumptuous publication which I have just finished reading, having enjoyed every bit of it and not wanting it to end. In fact, the book is another milestone in the history of the Church in Gozo in the fact that is not simply a narration or analysis of a particular phase in the annals of the Gozitan church but rather a scholarly piece of work that attempts to help the reader to plan his next visit to the Gozo Cathedral with a greater sense of awe and appreciation.

In my opinion the speciality of the book lies in its very subject; Mr. Charles R. Cassar of Victoria has been studying the stone-slabs that enrich the splendid floor of the Matrice Church of Gozo thus bringing to life every inch they cover. It has to be said that until lately, the stone slabs of the Cathedral Church have not been the subject of a focused study. This does not mean that nothing has ever been written about them; on the contrary Cassar provides the interested reader with a great amount of bibliographical notes at the end of each chapter. However it would be fair to say that *Stones of Faith* is the first systematic analysis of these stone slabs. Of course what I have just stated applies only to Gozo since the theme had been the subject of a researched study regarding the Conventual Church of the Knights in Valletta. In his fascinating book *Memento Mori*, researcher Dane Munro transcribed, edited and even translated the inscriptions of the tombstones of the Order into English. However, Mr. Cassar's book has an entirely different aim from Munro's book. In fact the author states quite plainly in



the preface that 'not being versed in the classical languages, it would have been presumptuous on my part to attempt to translate these inscriptions into English, as such translations require a methodical approach in epigraphy and a thorough knowledge of the different inflections of the Latin language' (cfr. xiv). Even without such an accompanying translation, *Stones of Faith* makes for interesting reading. Strictly speaking, Cassar has, perhaps without intending to, laid the table for any researcher who would



like to take into consideration the translation and annotation of the afore-mentioned slabs.

The book should be of interest to both the general reader and the history student. History is however quite a general term and it does have its various connected branches. Epigraphy and heraldry are two such arms. The lover of coat-of-arms and crests could easily feast his eyes on this book. In Gozo, where local noble families were never in their dozens, it was the Church which provided the possibility of flaunting heraldry to its advantage. As to those who might have developed a special fancy for the macabre, *Stones of Faith* is a must. The reader should not forget that in the Catholic Church, parish churches served as cemeteries from time immemorial and it was only the civil law that forbade such use of sacred places through the prohibition of October 1974.

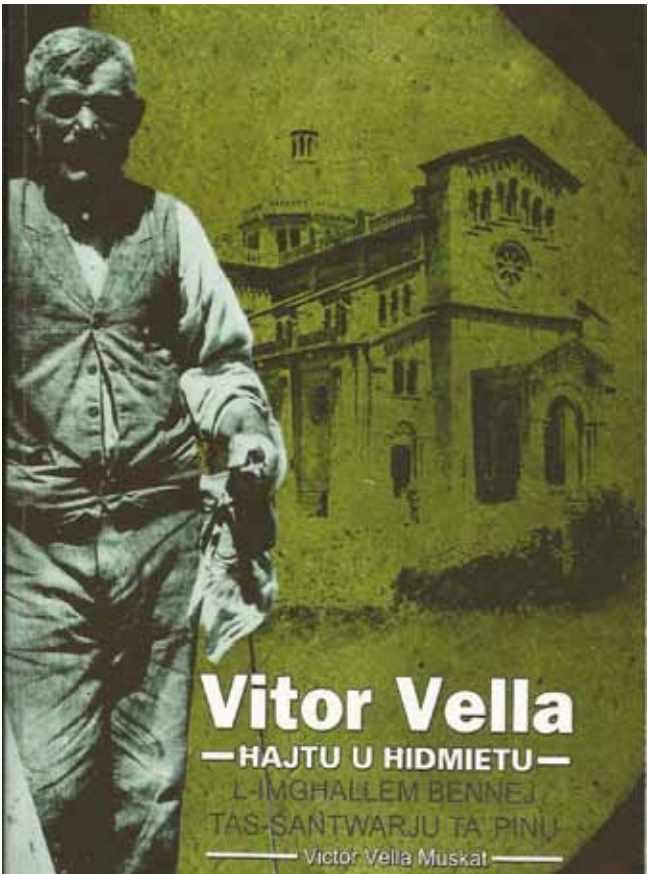
The entire book makes for interesting reading; once you begin reading, it is difficult to put it down. Chapter five is one of the most enticing, providing a couple of curiosities about some particular tombstones. The glossary in the first appendix is very helpful especially for the beginner. The second appendix would be of interest mostly to the researcher. The book has definitely proved itself unique in the fact that it provides between its two hard bound arms the first ever photographic collection of all the stone slabs in the Gozo Cathedral. I would suggest to those who have the history of Gozo close to their heart to obtain a copy of this timely publication. I have no doubt that I will see it referred to in scholarly papers and Melitensia publications in the near future since it has focused on a theme which has until lately been abandoned on the wayside of history.

## Vitor Vella. *L-Imghallem Bennej Tas-Santwarju Ta' Pinu*

**Victor Vella Muskat,**  
**Ghajnsielem, Gozo, Gozo Press, 2012, pp. 202.**

*Vitor Vella. L-Imghallem Bennej Tas-Santwarju Ta' Pinu* is the name of an interesting publication which focuses on Victor Vella, arguably the most renowned mason in the entire history of Gozo. The book is definitely a positive contribution to Gaultitana – the term which has been coined to denote all that has to do with the history, archaeology and folklore of the island of Gozo – especially when one takes into consideration that it was researched by his own great-grandson, Mr. Victor Vella Muskat of Victoria.

The book consists of twenty-seven short chapters through which the author provides the reader with a chronological review of the life and works of master mason Vitor Vella. In a small place like Gozo where people were known more through their family nickname rather than through their name and surname, one has to begin by stating that Vitor Vella was referred to by all and sundry simply as ‘Vitor tal-Qanfuda’.



The name itself commanded respect during Vitor's lifetime since he managed to establish himself as the island's main master mason. However to state this would be short of the truth. Vitor was looked upon with admiration even by various parish priests and church builders in Malta. This fact comes out clearly in the publication itself.

Victor Vella Muskat dedicates the first chapter of the book to providing us with information about the birth and first years of Vitor. In the following chapters he writes about how Vitor came out of a family of builders and stone-workers. He writes also about Vitor's first and second marriages.

The book then delves deeper into the career which made him such a sought-after mason on the island, especially in the sector of church building. Vitor was involved in the building or enlargement projects of the Kerċem parish church, the Santa Luċija church, the Gozo Cathedral, the Xewkija parish church, the Imġarr parish church in Malta, the Sannat, Nadur and Qala parish churches and the convent of St Anthony in Ġhajnsielem. Last but not least he was involved in the building of the dome of his native parish church of Żebbuġ.

However it has to be stated that Vitor Vella put his name on the map of the architectural history of ecclesiastical Gozo through his input in favour of the Ta' Pinu Sanctuary; it is in the building of this glorious edifice that his unique artistic abilities are to be noticed and admired. The book's author dedicated chapter thirteen, which is the most important chapter of the publication, to this massive building project. It took him seventeen years to build the church together with the belfry that stands next to it. Since the book has been researched by a great-nephew of Vitor, the author could also include some rectifications considering that Mr. Victor Vella Muskat owned important family documents related to the great master-mason. Referring to four different documents or publications, Vella Muskat rectifies a couple of errors that these writings may have

contained. Chapter twenty-six consists of various laudatory and appreciative remarks celebrating the prolific career of Vitor Vella. The authors vary from the late Bishop of Gozo Mgr. Nikol G. Cauchi to local writers and clergymen who knew Vitor personally.

The book has an extensive bibliography considering the size and research of the book and includes an introduction by the late Bishop Cauchi. Black and white photos and designs of churches on which Vitor Vella worked are not lacking and the book's size makes it handy. The book has a good presentation and the design is quite attractive although the designer does not seem to have been acknowledged in the following pages. A copy of the book can be obtained from the main local bookshops or from the Żebbuġ parish office.

Fr. Geoffrey G. Attard was ordained for the diocese of Gozo in June 2004. He graduated M.Th. in Ecclesiastical History from the University of Edinburgh in November 2005 and M.Lit. in Practical Theology from the University of St Andrews.

# Recent Activities at the University of Malta - Gozo Campus

JOSEPH CALLEJA

## **Commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of the University Gozo Campus.**

This year's annual summer activity also included the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the University Gozo Centre. This centre was established towards the end of summer 1992 with the first BA course commencing in February 1993.

During its initial years the centre operated from the Sir M.A. Refalo Centre for Further Studies in Victoria. Four years from its inception the Gozo Centre was allocated a historical building in Xewkija as its new premises. Notwithstanding its historical connotations as a lazaretto and also more recently, as a mental hospital, the premises lent themselves well for their new purpose. Today the centre has developed into an airy and attractive campus offering comfortable, updated and modern facilities. Throughout these years the campus also found the constant support of the Ministry for Gozo in its endeavours to improve educational and job opportunities on the island.

The special event was attended amongst others by the Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, the Rector of the University of Malta, Professor Juanito Camilleri, and former Minister for Gozo, Mr Anton Tabone who together with the then University Rector Professor Peter Serracino Inglott was instrumental in launching the idea and establishing the University Gozo Centre twenty years ago, which initiative also found the support of the then Minister for education Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici. Merit is also due to Professor Lino Briguglio who accepted the responsibilities as the first Director of this Centre and succeeded in establishing and administering the Campus during these twenty years. Professor Joe Friggieri has recently been appointed the first Pro-Rector for Gozo. The designation of this role positively reflects on the status of this campus whilst auguring well for the continued development of this important educational services provider on the island of Gozo.



Professor Joe Friggieri, Pro-Rector for Gozo, addressing guests during his introductory speech.



Professor Juanito Camilleri, Rector, University of Malta, delivering his speech.



Professor Juanito Camilleri presenting a memento to Professor Lino Briguglio.





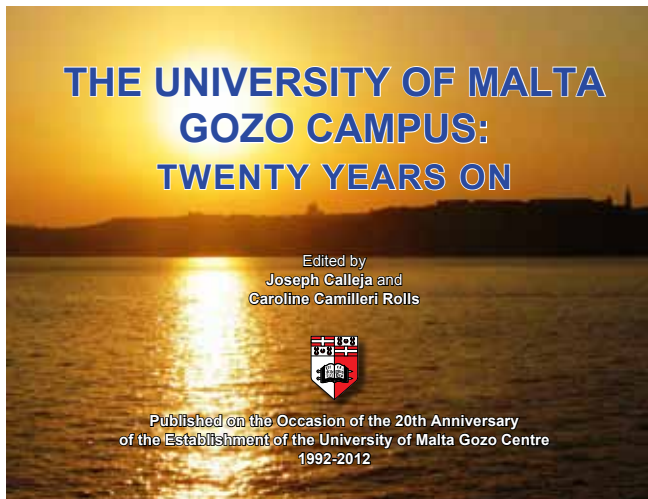
The Chorus Urbanus directed by Maestro John Galea



The inauguration of Ġnien il-hena.



A general view of Ġnien il-hena.



The front cover of the publication entitled ‘The University of Malta Gozo Campus: Twenty Years On’.

Speeches for the occasion reflected the speakers’ respective roles that all contributed towards the results achieved during the past twenty years. These results were described as being beneficial for Gozo and the Gozitan population whilst the primary goals achieved through the campus’s performance included the improvement of competences and skills of many Gozitan workers amongst whom a number of women who wanted to improve their job prospects. This resulted in over 600 graduates, many of whom reaching Masters level with three managing to obtain Ph.D.’s whilst many others also attended other certificate courses. It was also highlighted that the Ministry for Gozo is committed towards its continuous support whilst also furthering its collaboration with the University of Malta in other initiatives that will prove beneficial for Gozo.

During the event Professor Raymond Ellul and Dr. Hans Güsten gave detailed explanations related to the research activities coordinated by the Atmospheric Research Unit from the Gozo Campus during the past sixteen years. The Gozo University Group’s president Ryan Mercieca spoke about his group’s main role as the main representative of Gozitan students who further their studies in Malta. Recently, the GUG has been allotted an office on the Gozo Campus, thus facilitating the coordination of the group’s activities.

This year’s programme was animated by the Chorus Urbanus under the able direction of Maestro John Galea. The rendering of *Pacem in Maribusco* composed by Charles Camilleri and Peter Serracino-Inglott was evocative of treasured memories of both these esteemed gentlemen.

The occasion was aptly concluded with the inauguration of Ġnien il-Hena by the Hon. Giovanna Debono Minister for Gozo and Professor Juanito Camilleri, University Rector. Recent renovation works have resulted in an eye-catching embellishment of the back garden within the precincts of the Gozo Campus. This also reflects the pro-active approach that has managed to make this historic building a high level educational hub.

The event was also marked with the publication of a booklet entitled ‘The University of Malta Gozo Campus: Twenty Years On’.

**A Series of Public Lectures**

A series of public lectures were held between the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2012, as part of the events organised to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the University Gozo Campus. Mr Godwin Vella delivered an interesting lecture entitled ‘*Carta e Veduta Dell’Isole Del Gozo e Comino*: portrait of an eighteenth century island reality’, while Professor Horatio C.R. Vella discussed in depth the origins of the name of Gozo. In his lecture entitled ‘Gozitan Dialects’, Dr Michael Spagnol highlighted the various aspects of dialects present on the island. A final lecture entitled ‘Gozo has its own story to tell’ was delivered by Professor Stanley Fiorini.



One of the public lectures in progress.

**Public Lecture by Professor David Cooper**

On 19<sup>th</sup> September an interesting public lecture entitled ‘The Pleasures and Perils of Food’ was delivered by Professor David Cooper, a regular visitor to the Gozo Campus. The lecture was followed by a traditional meal featuring Maltese food and wine. The event was highly attended by locals as well as foreigners.



The guests during the traditional meal.



Prof David Cooper delivering his lecture

**Courses Offered at the University Gozo Campus**

This year the University of Malta, once again opened a Diploma in Commerce course which is being followed by eight students. This course is being organised on a part-time basis, and is spread over two academic years.

Another two courses, one leading to the Master of Science in Sustainable Energy and the other to a Certificate in Clinical Nursing Practice (Emergency Nursing), are being offered via video-conferencing. This facility enables Gozitan students to follow the course directly from Gozo without the need to cross over to the main island.

In February 2013 the University of Malta will be offering two further courses at the Gozo Campus. These are the Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Leadership and a Certificate in Proof Reading: Maltese.

A certificate course in Lace Making also commenced in October. This course, which is being organised by the Lace Making Programme of the UGC, is spread over one academic year. During the course participants are learning the techniques of Maltese lace on a professional basis as well as the history of Maltese lace and the technical drawing of patterns required. Six participants are following the course.



**Graduation of University Gozo Campus Students**

Twenty four students who completed courses at the University of Malta – Gozo Campus received their certificates during the recent graduation ceremonies. The courses completed were those leading to the Master of Arts in Islands and Small States Studies (two students), Master of Arts in Hospitaller Studies (two students), Master in Translation (one student), Executive Master of Business Administration (five students), Bachelor of Commerce (seven students) and Diploma in Commerce (seven students).

The students who graduated in Master of Arts in Islands and Small States Studies are Mariella Ciantar and Lily Said. Romina Debrincat graduated in Master in Translation while those who graduated in Executive Master of Business Administration are Miriam Azzopardi, Audrey Ann Bugeja, Caroline Debono, Jeanette Margaret Zammit and Maria Zammit Micallef.

The students who graduated in Bachelor of Commerce are Jonathan Debono, Sylvana Muscat, John Pace, Josline Portelli, Nadine Portelli, Vincent Scicluna and Alison Zerafa. Those who graduated in Diploma in Commerce are Miriam Bugeja, David Debattista, Odette Demicoli, Kenny Grima, James Sciberras, Ann Maree Vella and Melissa Xuereb.



The graduates in Master of Arts in Islands and Small States Studies with Professor Lino Briguglio, former Director, University Gozo Campus. Also visible in the photo is Carmen Saliba (right) who graduated Doctor of Philosophy.



The MBA graduates with Dr Saviour Gauci former Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy.



Graduates in Bachelor of Commerce.

**Installation of New Videoconferencing Facilities**

Recently the IT Services of the University of Malta installed two new videoconferencing systems at the University Gozo Campus. With these new facilities a number of courses are being offered via videoconferencing.



A videoconference lecture in progress.

Joseph Calleja is Administrator of the University of Malta - Gozo Campus.





The Gozo Observer is published twice a year by the University of Malta - Gozo Campus. It contains articles relating to all aspects of life in Gozo, including culture, education, business, arts and literature. Those wishing to submit articles for inclusion in the Gozo Observer should contact the Editor of the magazine (contact details below).

The Gozo Observer is distributed without charge, upon request, to interested readers. Current and past issues of the magazine can be obtained, subject to availability, from:

The Editor, Gozo Observer, University of Malta - Gozo Campus, Mgarr Road, Xewkija, Gozo. Tel: +356 21564559, Fax: +356 21564550, E-mail: [ugc@um.edu.mt](mailto:ugc@um.edu.mt)

