

The Origin of the Name of Gozo

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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.¹

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 *thau*, pronounced as “*thav*”, 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	thau	thav	wonder
Ζεὺς	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

¹ 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 Ġhawdex 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.²

Latin	Source	English	Greek	Source	English
Mélita	Greek	Malta	Μελίτη	Μελίτη	Melítē
Mel	mell	honey			

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

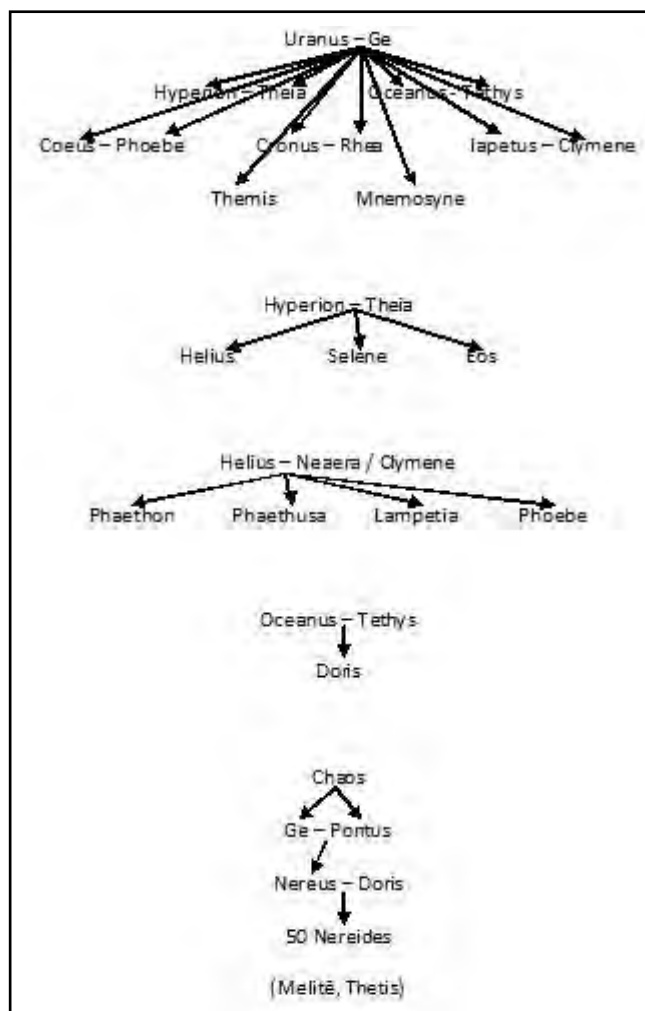
² Vella (2003), 165-166.

The root of *mel* is *mell*, as in “mellifluous”, meaning “flowing with honey” or, metaphorically, “honey-sweet [words]”. Instead, the name of Malta also comes from Greek, that is, *Melītē*, this time to be pronounced as “*Melītē*”, not “*Mélitē*”. And our Maltese tendency to pronounce *Mélitā* as *Melīta* proves a point: that as descendants of Greek-speaking inhabitants, we have ever since retained the penultimate accent in many words, both in semitic and Romance-based vocabularies, as in “kefríja”, “kattiveríja” and “Sqallíja”, and not in “kéfrja”, “kattevérja” and “Sqállja”.

On the contrary, the name of Malta comes from Greek *Melītē*. As discussed recently,³ the nymph called *Melītē* came to be associated with Malta, formerly called “*Thrinacia*”, the last place Odysseus landed on before coming to the island of Calypso. This island of Thrinacia belonged to god Helius, and *Melītē* was his cousin. While Nereus, husband of Doris, was the son of Pontus and Gaea *alias* Ge, Doris herself, like Clymene, wife of Helius, was the daughter of Oceanus. So both Clymene and Doris were Oceanids, and *Melītē*, Thetis and 48 others, children of Doris and Nereus, were grandchildren of Oceanus. The Greeks, then, from very ancient times, associated this nymph with the island of Helius who, as a sun-god, married a sea-goddess, Clymene, just as Nereus, a sea-god, married another sea-goddess, both being the parents of *Melītē*. Associations and transposition of names, as Gaudos to Gaulos in the case of Gozo, were not unknown.

If the name of *Gaudos* was given to Gozo by mistake, then what was the name of Gozo? Well, the proper Greek name for Gozo not only was originally, and remained so after the introduction of *Gaudos* by Strabo, but, for further references, will remain that of *Gaulos*, while its adjective is *Gaulitanus*.

Some years ago, I discussed the occurrences of the name of *Gaulos* referring to our Island of Gozo.⁴ I argued that there was a connection between the Semitic *GWL* and the Greek word *gaulos* which meant “a round-built Phoenician merchant vessel”, but it may not be so obvious that the word comes directly from Punic:⁵ it rather comes from Greek.



Helius / Melitē.

The Greeks, who competed with the Phoenicians in their trade with the West, colonized Malta and Gozo before the Phoenicians as they did in Sicily. In the case of Sicily, the only reason why the Phoenicians did not colonize eastern Sicily was the presence of an earlier settlement of the Greeks there!

Whoever were the earliest settlers of eastern Sicily, Gozo and Malta remained geographically closer to Greek Sicily of the sixth century B.C. than to Phoenician Sicily. As said above, our name for Sicily is still *Sqallija*, ultimately from Greek *Sikelía*, despite the fact that the Sicilians Italianised and even “Sicilianised” their own island’s name (*Sicilia* = *Sixilia*).

Greek	Maltese	Italian	Sicilian
Σικελία	Sqallija	Sicilia	“Sixilia”

³ Public lecture held at the Greek Embassy at Ta’ Xbiex in February, 2011.
⁴ Vella (1995a and 1995b).
⁵ J. Aquilina (1990): 2. s.v. “Gozo”.

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 transliterated 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 upkeep 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.⁶

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 *Ħamiem il-bar*, that is, "Pigeons of the countryside", or "wild pigeons".

⁶ *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 φιλανθρωπίαν ἡμῶν·

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, **damym 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 causa 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, **damym yl barr**, “hamiem 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 Mellieħa 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.

ὑπὲρ προξενίας καὶ εὐεργεσίας Δημητρίῳ Διοδότῳ Συρακοσίῳ καὶ τοῖς ἐγγόνοις αὐτοῦ.
ἐπὶ ἱεροθύτου Ἰκέτα Ἰκέτου, ἀρχόντων δὲ Ἡρέου καὶ Κότητος ἔδοξε 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 πολλάκι γεγένηται, ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ δεδῶχθαι Δημήτριον Διοδότῳ Συρακοσίῳ πρόξενον εἶναι καὶ εὐεργέτην τοῦ δήμου τῶν Μελιταίων καὶ τοὺς ἐγγόνους αὐτοῦ

ἀρετῆς ἔνεκεν καὶ εὐνοίας ἧς ἔχον διατελεῖ εἰς τὸν ἡμέτερον δῆμον. τὴν δὲ προξενίαν ταύτην ἀναγράψαι εἰς χαλκῶματα δύο καὶ τὸ ἐν δοῦναι Δημητρίῳ Διοδότου Συρακοσίου.

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 Quintin⁷ and referring to a certain Lucius Castricius, a Roman Knight; *πρῶτος τῆς νήσου*, 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.⁸ One also comes across *Melitensium primus* in a Latin inscription from Malta,⁹ 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 ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΟΥ
[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 τῶ
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

⁷ H.C.R. Vella (1980), 26.

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

⁹ H.C.R. Vella (2002), 74-75.



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

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.

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 fertility¹⁰.

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.

¹⁰ 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!¹¹

Procopius *Bellorum historia* 3.14.16:

ἀράμενοι τε κατὰ τάχος τὰ ἰστία, Γαύλω τε καὶ Μελίτη
ταῖς νήσοις προσέσχον, αἱ τὸ τε Ἀδριατικὸν καὶ
Τυρρηρικὸν 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. 1151,¹² 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.¹³ Indeed, a man from Gozo is said to be “*Għawdxi*”, 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.

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

Ἐγ[ὼ] 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 ἐπίκοινοι αὐταῖ· Κόρσυρα, Ταυριαννίς, Αστυπάλαια, Κῶος, Λαμπαδοῦσα, Γαλάτη, Χίος, Κνίδος, Γαῦδος, Γόρσουνα, Λέσβος, Νίσυρος, Μελίτη, Κρήτη, Τένεδος, Μεγίστη, Κέρκινα, Γαυλορήτη, Ἴμβρος, Κύπρος, Μῆνιξ, Θήρα, Ἴασος, Σαρδανίς, Κάρπαθος, Σάμος.

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

¹¹ Al-Himyari (Brincat {1991}, 7).

¹² J. Busuttill, S. Fiorini and H.C.R. Vella (2010), xiii.

¹³ J. Busuttill, 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,¹⁵ 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 conicio 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.

¹⁵ 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.¹⁶

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.¹⁷ 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 *ħebż* 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.

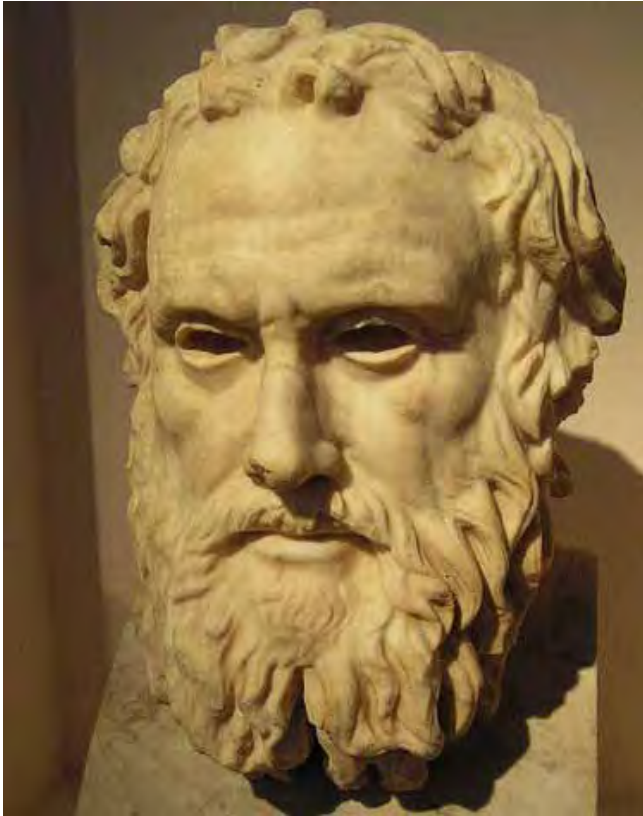
If *Gaudos* was not our island, then what do we know of the Cretan *Gaudos*?

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,

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

¹⁷ 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.¹⁸

HES. Fr. 204.58-62:

οὐδέ τινα μνηστήρα μετάγγελον ἄλλον
ἔπεμμεν,
ἀλλ' αὐτὸς σὺν νηϊ πολυκλιῆϊδι μελαίνῃ
βῆ ὑπὲρ Ὀγυλίου πόντου διὰ κῦμα κελαινὸν
Τυνδαρέου ποτι δῶμα δαίφρονος, ὄφρα ἴδοιτο
Ἀργεῖην Ἐλένην, ...

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.¹⁹ This scholiast distinguishes between the two islands, saying that

¹⁸ HES. Fr. 204.58-62.

¹⁹ 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.

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 ἐσπέραν. 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 (Achaëa 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 *Nymphæa*, 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 τῆσι παραὶ Κέρκυραν ἴκοντο,
ἔνθα Ποσειδάων Ἀσωπίδα νάσσατο κούρην,
ἠύκομον Κέρκυραν, ἑκάς Φλειουντίδος αἴης,
ἀρπάξας ὑπ' ἔρωτι μελαινομένην δὲ μιν ἄνδρες
ναυτίλοι ἐκ πόντοιο καλαινῆ πάντοθεν ὕλη
δερχόμενοι, Κέρκυραν ἐπικλείουσι Μέλαιναν·
τῆ δ' ἐπὶ καὶ Μελίτην, λιαρῶ περιγηθεές οὐρα,
αἰπεινὴν τε Κερωσσόν, ὑπερθε δὲ πολλὸν
εὐῶσαν Νυμφαίην παράμειβον, ἵνα κρείουσα
Καλυψῶ 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 Cerosus, and Nymphæa, 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

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

PROCOP. 8.22.18-21:

οὗτος δὲ ὁ στόλος ἄχρι ἐς τὴν Φαιάκων χώραν, ἢ νῦν Κέρκυρα ἐπικαλεῖται, οὐδὲν ἄχαρι ἐργάζεσθαι ἔσχε. νῆσον γὰρ οὐδεμίαν ἐν τῷδε τῷ διάπλω οἰκουμένην ξυμβαίνει εἶναι ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ τὴν Χάρυβδιν πορθμοῦ μέχρι ἐς τὴν Κέρκυραν ὥστε πολλάκις ἐγὼ ἐνταῦθα γενόμενος διηπορούμην ὅπη ποτὲ ἄρα τῆς Καλυψοῦς ἢ νῆσος εἴη. ταύτης γὰρ τῆς θαλάσσης οὐδαμῆ νῆσον τεθέσθαι, ὅτι μὴ τρεῖς, οὐ πολλῶ ἄποθεν τῆς Φαιακίδος, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἀπὸ σταδίων τριακοσίων, ἄγχιστά περὶ ἀλλήλων οὖσας, βραχείας κομιδῆ καὶ οὐδὲ ἀνθρώπων οἰκία ἐχούσας οὔτε ζῶων οὔτε ἄλλων τὸ παράπαν οὐδέν. Ὀθωνοὶ 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, ὡς φησιν Ὀμηρος, ἢ ἄλλω τῷ τρόπῳ νεῶς τινας 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*.²¹ 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*.²² 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.²³ 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*”.

²⁰ For the real location of *Ogygia*, see my public lecture delivered in February, 2011.

²¹ SCH. HOM. Od. 1.85.

²² CALL. Fr. 470 and Fr. 13.

²³ CALL. Fr. 13.



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

CALL. Fr. 470:

- a. Γαῦδος
- b. ὀλίγην νησιῶνα 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 “*Melitaeon*”.

STR. Geog. 6.2.11:

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

And away from Pachynus lie Melite, from where come the small dogs, which they call “*Melitaeon*”, 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).²⁴

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 Callimachus²⁵ 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*.²⁶ 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.

²⁴ H.C.R. Vella (2002), 120.

²⁵ CALL. Fr. 13.

²⁶ 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 Φαιστῶ 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".²⁷ 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.

²⁷ 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 ποιητῆς ἐξω[ρί]σθη ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ Μελιτηγαύδω.

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.²⁸

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 Συκελίαν 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 Busuttill, J. (1969), 17-18:

ἐν ᾧ δὲ διέτριβεν ἐκεῖσε, ἀγγέλλεται αὐτῷ ὡς ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ Ἀταλάρικος καὶ Θεόδωρος ὁ τῆν ἀξίαν μάγιστρος, Θεοδώρου δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως ἀδελφοῦ υἱός, σὺν ἄλλοις τισὶν ἐπιβουλεύειν αὐτῷ ἡμελλον. καὶ τοῖς μηνύσασι πεισθεὶς τούτων τὰς ῥίνας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἐξέτεμε, καὶ Ἀταλάρικον μὲν εἰς τὴν νῆσον τὴν λεγομένην Πρίγκιπον ἐξόριστον ἐξέπεμπε, Θεόδωρον δὲ πρὸς τὴν νῆσον τὴν Γαυδομελέτην προσαγορευομένην, ἐπιτρέψας τῷ ἐκείσε 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*.²⁹

Jean Quintin, *Insulae Melitae descriptio 42:*

Paulus (inquiet) Cretam deserens e Claudiae (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

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

²⁹ 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.³⁰

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*”

³⁰ 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.

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