

Gozo in Classical Literature*

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Way back in 1971, J. Busuttill (1971) had already referred to Gozo as *Gaûlos* or *Gaûdos* among the Greeks, *Gaulos* or *Gaulus* among the Romans, and *Gaul* among the Carthaginians. The common view that both Greek and Roman names of Gozo derive from “Punic *gwl*” has been repeated by Sznycer (1972-3: 147), Teixidor (1974: no.73) and, recently, by Heltzer (1993: 198).

Regarding the Semitic root of *gwl*, meaning “to go round; circuit” (Brown *et al.* 1907: *s.v. gwl*), we distinguish between *Gwl*, meaning the island of Gozo as used in Punic inscriptions (example as discussed by Heltzer 1993: 198-204), and the root *gwl* used in some Semitic languages, not referring to the island of Gozo, just as we distinguish between Greek Γαυλος and γαυλος. But while we can say that a relationship exists between Greek *Gaûlos* and *gaûlos* (rather than *gaulós*), we have no lexical evidence of Phoenician/Biblical occurrence of *gwl* which could be related to the Punic name of *Gwl* (Brown *et al.* 1907: *s.v. gwl*; Cohen 1970: *s.v. gw/yl*, and Tomback 1978).¹

The absence of occurrence in Phoenician and Biblical texts of *gwl* makes us hesitate to conclude that Greek *gaûlos*, even if it means “a round-built Phoenician merchant vessel”, comes from a Phoenician word. The most we can say is that both Greek *gaûlos* and Greek *gaulós* (as discussed below) share with the Semitic root meaning “to go round”.

We also should not be too quick to conclude that Γαυλος, the Greek name for Gozo, comes from *Gwl*, the Punic name for the same island (Aquilina 1990: 2. *s.v. Gozo*).² Indeed, I do not rule out the possibility that the Greeks, who competed with the Phoenicians in their trade with the West,

1. The author wishes to thank Mr. M. Zammit, a Ph.D. student in Semitic languages at the University of Malta, for his advice on Semitic matters.

2. Aquilina says that the Latin form of *Gaulus* comes from Greek γαυλος, which does not
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could have colonised Malta and Gozo before the Phoenicians as they did in Sicily. In the case of Sicily, the only reason for the Phoenicians not to colonise eastern Sicily was the presence of an earlier settlement of the Greeks there, unless we take Thucydides' words τα επικείμενα νησιδία to include also our islands. This, however, is unlikely, as elsewhere τα επικείμενα νησιδία exclude such islands as Gozo, Malta and Pantellaria (refer to their exclusion in the treaty of 241 B.C. between Carthage and Rome, where such term excluded these three islands – APP. 5.2, quoted below). Thucydides (6.2.6) says that the Phoenicians occupied the coast promontories and the adjacent islands of the whole of Sicily until the Greeks arrived, whereupon they retired to western Sicily. Elsewhere (6.3.1), Thucydides tells us of the first Greeks who colonised eastern Sicily, that is, Naxos near Taormina, which historians date as 735 B.C.

But while we know that the Greeks settled in eastern Sicily in 735 or 734 B.C., we have, on the other hand, little trace of Phoenician trading in Sicily before the 6th century B.C., certainly nothing before the arrival of the Greeks (Graham 1982: 95, 103; Roebuck 1988: 447 n.3). Considering that Sicily has been heavily explored archaeologically, it is highly unlikely that Thucydides' statement in 6.2.6 should hold water any longer. Moreover, the Greeks had already been trading with Sicily and southern Italy since the Late Bronze Age, and settlements of Mycenaean traders have been postulated at Thapsus near Syracuse. Trade then resumed after the gap of 1100-800 B.C. (Graham 1982: 95).

Whoever were the earliest settlers of eastern Sicily, Gozo and Malta remained closer to Greek Sicily of the sixth century B.C. than to Phoenician Sicily. Our name for Sicily is still *Sqallija*, ultimately from Greek *Sikelia* which the Arabs in Sicily passed on to us from the end of the Byzantine period in Sicily, despite the fact that the Sicilians Italianised and even "Sicilianised" their own island's name (*Sicilia* = *Sishilia*). It is

mean, as he says, "a bucket" (see below). P. Curmi (1992: 17) incorrectly says that the name of *Gaudos* comes from the Byzantines. He refers to *Gaudomelete* (which would be spelt as *Gaudomelite*), but see *Gaulomelite* for *Gaulomelitae*, meaning "Gozo of Malta" in ANON. *Rav.* 5.23 as quoted in G. Scallia (1987: 5. 263-77). He also says that *Gaudisium* was given by the Angevins, meaning "joy"; but the Latin *gaudeo* and *gaudium* have, absolutely, no relationship to *Gaudisium* which, as just said, is simply the late Latinised form for Greek Γαυδος, but to Greek γαῶ, meaning "I rejoice" (Lewis and Short 1958: s.v. *gaudeo*). The Romans never called Gozo *Gaudisium*, which is late Latin for Greek Γαυδος, a name which the Greeks, excluding Strabo (as discussed below), never gave.

probable, therefore, that the Greeks, early settlers of our islands, seeing the island of Gozo frequented by several γαυλοι, round-built ships commonly used by themselves and obviously by the Phoenicians as different from warships, called the island by the same name which the Phoenicians would have transliterated into *Gwl*.³

The same argument could prevail for the island of Malta, for instead of saying that *Μελιτη* is the Greek transliteration of Phoenician *Μlth*, we could say that it is *Malitah* that derived from the Greek *Μελιτη*, which name is also given to other Greek islands with no connection with the Phoenician world.

The Greek settlers of our islands in the historical period might well have been less numerous than their fellow-traders, the Phoenicians, who outnumbered them and whose cultural remains are much more visible than those of the Greeks, going back to the 7th century B.C. (Bonanno 1990: 31). But they were present and well integrated in our islands' societies, even enough to escape the bloody warfare between their compatriots and the Phoenicians in Sicily. We know that many Greeks were, from time to time, present and integrated in Western Sicily, while many Phoenicians were to be found in the eastern part of the island; but there, the controversy originated over a problem which could never be solved, the "Punicisation" or "Grecisation" of Sicily.

This problem never arose in our islands. On the contrary, enough inscriptional evidence from Gozo alone points to the existence of one society with one administrative body of Gozo, where both Carthaginian and Greek terms are used, in time spilling over well into the Roman period.

A useful and important distinction between Greek *Gaûlos*, *gaûlos*, *gaulós*, and Latin *Gaulos*, *gaulos*, *Gaulus* and *gaulus* has been carried out and can be consulted in the full text of this paper (Vella, 1995). This discussion, however, can be summarised by saying that *gaulós* means "a

3. Busuttil (1971:506) makes this suggestion as one of three possibilities, without committing himself. P. Curmi (1992: 16) repeats the mistake that Gozo originally comes from Phoenician *gwl* which he wrongly says means "round ship" (but see above). In any case, it is difficult to imagine how the Phoenicians, or anybody else, could have seen Gozo from a distance in the shape of "a round ship", unless from air, while if *gwl* simply means "round", then all islands can be said to be round!

milk-pail”, or “a water-bucket”, or “a machine for raising water”, or “a round vessel” (not a ship), or “a drinking-bowl”, or even “one who lives at the expense of others”; while *gaûlos* means “a round-built Phoenician merchant ship”, as distinguished from a warship. The name of *Gaûlos* for Gozo has the same accent as the word signifying “a round-built Phoenician merchant ship”.

GREEK GAÛLOS: GOZO, NEAR MALTA

In Greek literature, Gozo occurs as *Gaûlos* in Hecataeus, quoted by Stephanus of Byzantium (s.v. Γαυλος); Scylax (111); Diodorus Siculus (5.12.3); Stephanus of Byzantium (s.v. Γαυλος), and Procopius (*Bell. hist.* 3.14.16).

Bonanno’s (1990: 31) observation that Hecataeus refers to Gozo alone here, independently of Malta, points to Gozo’s autonomy from Malta, as confirmed by Scylax and Diodorus Siculus. Also useful is Bonanno’s observation that Hecataeus seems to imply that *Gaûlos* was not necessarily dominated by the Carthaginians, but was merely in their sphere of influence. This further confirms what has been said above, that the Gozitan society was a mixture of both Greek and Carthaginian peoples, and as such could not be imagined as a colony in the strict sense of the word. *προς* (followed by the dative) means towards or near (Carthage), that is, relatively speaking. As such, it does not mean “political influence or control” (Busuttill 1976: 222).

Scylax, writing in the 4th century B.C., refers to these islands as inhabited by the Carthaginians, rather than the Phoenicians. Diodorus, writing three centuries later, refers to *Gaûlos* as a Phoenician settlement, though the word Phoenician may mean originally Phoenician, taken over by the Carthaginians of Phoenician descent. One notes also that Scylax knew of a *πολις*, which word by the fourth century meant a “city-state” rather than a “city”. This should throw light on the status of political autonomy of *Gaûlos* from nearby *Melite*. The reference of the towers here is made to *Lampas*, the last mentioned island, not Gozo.

Diodorus’ praise for the Gozitan harbours would have suited better the island of Malta (Ashby: 67 n.1). Here he seems to recognise two separate

Phoenician settlements, one being Gozo, the other being Malta. This is not surprising, as both islands had separate governments, as will be shown later. Note also that Diodorus, who came from nearby Sicily, lived during the earlier part of the first century A.D. Malta and Gozo had been conquered by the Romans in 218 B.C., and two hundred years later Diodorus still says εσσι (present tense), meaning “a Phoenician settlement” (rather than “colony”). For Stephanus of Byzantium, Gozo, which is 230 miles away from ancient Carthage, is still “near”, that is, relatively speaking.

In the case of Procopius’ passage, as there is no couple of islands with the names of Malta and Gozo in the Adriatic Sea, and judging from the itinerary starting from Sicily to Libya, Procopius’ mistake of misplacing our islands in the Adriatic becomes obvious. The point has already been made by Dewing (1953) when commenting on the text, even if he repeats Procopius’ mistake in his Index of Proper Names.⁴

In Greek, a Gozitan was called *Gaulites* (ST. BYZ. s.v. Γαυλος), which word is to be distinguished from the Greek *Gaulites*, a proper name of an individual (THUC. 8.85.2; XEN *An.* 1.7.5).

LATIN GAÛLOS: GOZO, NEAR MALTA

In Latin, Γαυλος is rendered as *Gaulos*, less frequently as *Gaulus*. Thus we find Mela (2.7.171-4) and Pliny (*Nat.* 3.8.92; 5.7.42) referring to Gozo as *Gaulos*, and Silius Italicus (14.271-4) referring to it as *Gaulus*. Mela, writing in A.D. 45, distinguishes between *Gaulos* and *Calypso’s island*, which he here wrongly says was *Aeaea* (see discussion in Vella, 1995), and between *Gaulos* and *Cossyra*. The spelling of his *Cossura* is correct and this confusion of *Gaulos* with *Cossyra* is discussed at more depth elsewhere (Vella 1980: 74 and Vella 1995).

Pliny, like Scylax above, is here reviewing the islands off North Africa, and he makes no mention of *Melita*. *Galata* should probably be located by the coast of North Africa. Silius Italicus lists the allies and enemies of Rome in her second war with Carthage. Although we know from Livy (see

4. On Γαυλος, see also Coleiro (1964: 25-38), and Pfeiffer (1965: 1 re. CALL. fr. 470).

below) and Silius himself that Malta was taken over by the Romans at the beginning of this war (218 B.C.), Silius, however, makes Gozo (independently mentioned of Malta) on the side of Carthage. As it is highly unlikely that only one island of the Maltese archipelago sided with one or the other power, we would be correct to consider this passage of Silius as historically of no importance. Furthermore, Silius curiously considers *Gaulus* as one of the cities belonging to Sicily (14.248-51).

GREEK GAÛDOS: GOZO, NEAR MALTA

Strabo, writing his *Geographia* (cf. esp. 1.2.37 and 7.3.6) in the later years of the first century B.C. or early in the first century A.D., refers to the bitter criticism which Apollodorus, his contemporary, throws upon Callimachus, the Librarian of Alexandria, for interpreting Homer's *Ogygia* as *Gaûdos*, near Sicily (rather than near Crete), and his *Scheria* as *Corcyra*, that is, *Kercyra* – modern Corfù – (CALL. *Fr.* 13.6). As there is no other island near Sicily formerly with the name of *Gaûdos*, one might be tempted to conclude that Callimachus, according to Apollodorus as quoted by Strabo, could be referring to our island of Gozo as Calypso's *Ogygia*.

Elsewhere, Callimachus himself refers to *Gaûdos*, identifying it with the small island of Calypso (*Fr.* 470). The identification by Callimachus of *Gaûdos* with the island of *Ogygia* will be discussed shortly later. But his assimilation of *Gaûdos* with our Gozo could only come through Apollodorus' criticism as reported by Strabo, who hereinafter remains the only other writer who refers to Gozo as *Gaûdos* instead of *Gaûlos*. Strabo's statement was quoted *verbatim* by his contemporary Marcus Vipsanus Agrippa. One needs not doubt that Strabo is referring to our Gozo here.

In the first place, *Μελιτη* and *Γαυδος* are referred to together as a group of islands with the same distance from *Pachynus* (C. Passaro) in Sicily. As for the distance, one notes that contrary to STR. *Geog.* 17.3.16, quoted above, Strabo does not use here the Greek *stadion* for reckoning, but the Roman mile, that is, *mille passuum*, "a thousand paces". A Roman mile is estimated as 0.92 of an English mile, and so 88 Roman miles give us 80.96 English miles. Although the distance is even shorter by a good 20

miles, the inaccuracy here needs not worry us. The reference to Maltese dogs has been discussed elsewhere.⁵

LATIN GAUDOS: GOZO NEAR CRETE

Mela (2.7.13), Pliny (*Nat.* 4.12.61) and Suidas (*s.v.* Καυδω) refer to our Gozo as *Gaulos*, but by *Gaûdos* they mean an island near Crete. This is probably the island which Callimachus (quoted above) had in mind when he refers to it as *Gaûdos*, the island of Calypso. The name of *Gaûdos*, though at one time in use, is a corruption of Καυδους, Καυδος, Καυδω, which then became also Κλαυδα (N.T. *Act.Ap.* 27.16), Κλαυδια (*Stad.* 328)⁶, Κλαυδος (PTOL. *Geog. s.v.* Κλαυδος and HIEROCL. HIST. *s.v.* Κλαυδος) and *Gozo* (QUINTIN. *Ins. Mel. descr.* 42).⁷

The meanings of these names are uncertain. The island, judging from the name of its city, *Phoenicia*, betrays a Phoenician settlement. As a result of this, probably through trade by the Phoenicians in between the islands, both the name of *Gaûdos*, from which *Ghawdex* comes, and of *Gozo* later on, could have been applied to our island (Vella 1980: 70 n. 325). In addition, even names of *Claudus* appear in 16th century maps of Malta and Gozo (Anon. 349, Pantaleone 1581: 210).

OGYLIA/OGYGIA/GAUDOS

This island is first mentioned by Hesiod (*Fr.* 204.58-62) as Ωγυλη when he refers to ποντος Ωγυλιος near Crete. The scholiast on Homer's *Odyssey* 1.85 commented that Homer's Ωγυγη was found in Antimachus as Ωγυλη, in others Ωγυλη, the last two words being different only dialectically. He distinguished between the two islands, Ωγυγια, which he said

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5. Vella (1980: 57-8 n.112-4) and Vella (1995). On the Maltese dogs, see also Artemidorus Daldianus, 41, Aelian, *N.a.* 16.6, *id. V.h.* 13.41, Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 1.27, and Keller (1905:243-6). Busuttil (1969:208), refers to the "Maltese" tradition of the Maltese dog by quoting Abela (1647: 129); yet the tradition, ridiculed earlier by J. Quintin (1536) as never having existed in Malta, escaped his notice! *Gaûlos* has been subsequently wrongly referred to as *Gaûdos* by various modern authors (e.g. Thomson 1966: 27 and 73).
 6. Müller (1965: 1. note on *Stad.* 328) refers also to the modern name of the island as "Gaudapula".
 7. See also Cluverius (1623: 547C), *M.L. ms.* 145, f.2-2v., and Scallia (1987: 5. 263-77).

is to be found in the West, and Ωγολια near Crete. He added that Hesiod, among others, called this island also by the name of Καυδους.

The controversy raised by Apollodorus as reported by Strabo quoted above could well have been caused by this confusion of the two islands. This confusion is further increased when other writers refer the island of Calypso to some other island adjacent to *Gaũdos*.

In *Etymologicum Gudianum* s.v. Καυδος, Καλυψους, being in the genitive case, requires a substantive in the dative, that is, νησω. As such we have two islands, not one, in the same locality near Crete, one of which is Ωγολη, that is *Gaũdos*! But really, we do not know of such a nameless island by Crete. One suggests that the word και should be ignored, and Καλυψους (νησω) be read as in apposition to the one and the same island of *Kaũdos*. In fact, the text just quoted talks of one temple, and this one temple cannot be imagined in two islands!

Like the writer of the *Etymologicum Gudianum* above, we also have the evidence of Suidas (s.v. Καυδω, 10th century A.D.), calling this one island as Καυδω.

Through Antimachus, therefore, who called *Ogygia*, Calypso's island, as *Ogylia*, which happened to be the other (or former) name of *Gaũdos* near Crete, the island of Calypso was often transposed to this Cretan island.

We still have to reckon with what the Scholiast on Homer's *Odyssey* says regarding *Ogygia* in the West.

Calypso was the daughter of Atlas who dwelt in the regions of north-west Africa. His children, the Hesperides, as their name indicated, were also located in the west, and one imagines that this island of *Ogygia* could also be located in the vicinity of north-west Africa for aetiological reasons. The islands of Malta and Gozo are, according to some interpretation, in the central part of the Mediterranean, not in the West. If we consider that Odysseus travelled around Sicily (refer to Etna, Scylla and Charybdis) and North Africa (refer to the land of the Lotus-eaters in Libya), the islands of Malta and Gozo cannot be ruled out as possible landmarks in his itinerary. Although we have no literary evidence of assimilating *Gaũlos* with *Ogygia*, there is a purely modern tradition pointing to this

conclusion.⁸ Jean Quintin (16th century A.D.), who dealt with Gozo very briefly, does not mention this tradition. Considering that he dealt with most Classical traditions related to Malta, some being correct, others not, he would have included such a tradition if it existed in his times. The whole matter, however, falls into absurdity when we point to tourist “Calypso’s Cave”. One writer (Kininmonth 1979: 217-8) has even referred the three streams mentioned in the *Odyssey* to the locality we have in mind when we talk of “Calypso’s Cave” in Gozo!

The probability is that a tradition assimilating *Ogygia* with *Gaûlos* arose only in modern times as a result of confusing *Gaûdos* with *Gaûlos*, subsequent to which we ended up with a tradition not proved to be ours, and two names for *Gaûlos*, Ghawdex and Gozo, as mentioned earlier. Literary evidence from classical times, however, locate the island of Calypso (with or without the name of *Ogygia*), either by *Bruttium* (Southern Italy) (Scylax 13 and Pliny *Nat.* 3.10.96), or by *Corcyra* (Apollonius of Rhodes 4.566-75 and Procopius 8.22.18-21).⁹ The words of the scholiast on HOM. *Od.* 1.85 and of Apollodorus (quoted above), referring *Ogygia* to the West, *Ogylia* to Crete, may make sense if we consider as Italy, known also by the ancient name of *Hesperia* (meaning western land), to be in the West for the Greeks of mainland Greece. Hence, Scylax’s and Pliny’s texts would support them.

But both Apollonius of Rhodes and Procopius (6th c. A.D.) place the island of Calypso near *Corcyra* and, therefore, near its adjacent island of *Melite*. The combination of *Melite* and *Nymphaea* (that is, *Ogygia*) could have helped in confusing this tradition and, therefore, transposing it to our *Melite* and *Gaûlos*.

Mela (2.7.171-4) (quoted above under *Gaulos*) distinguished between *Gaulos* and *Calypso’s island*, which he then mistakes with *Aeaea* being the island inhabited by Circe instead. The same mistake had been made by Propertius (3.12.27-31) earlier, who although distinguishes the episode of Circe from that of Calypso, finally calls the latter’s island as

8. Curmi (1992:17) translates *fertilis ab undis caput effero* incorrectly as “a fruitful land raising its head from the sea”. Instead, this motto means, “as a fertile land I raise (my) head from the waves”. On the matter of assimilating *Gaûlos* with *Ogygia*, see further Busuttill (1974: 218-20).

9. Müller (1965: I. note on SCYL. 13) refers incorrectly to this passage as 4.22.

Aeaea. On the contrary, *Aeaea* was referred to as Circe's island by Homer (*Od.* 10.135-7), Apollonius of Rhodes (4.661-3) and Vergil (*A.* 3.384-7). Pliny (*Nat.* 3.5.57), however, interprets Homer's island of Circe as being situated by the coast of *Latium*, no longer an island by his times.

THE ROMANISATION OF GAULOS

Gozo came under Roman influence in 218 B.C. together with Malta, as the short distance from it prohibited a different result. The Roman invasion of Malta took place during the consulship of Tiberius Sempronius Longus and Publius Cornelius Scipio, in 218 B.C., which year was also the beginning of the second Punic war. Livy (21.51.11-2) says that Malta was still Carthaginian, even many years after the conclusion of the first Punic war, when Sicily had been taken over by Rome. This, together with Polybius (3.96.13) quoted above, further confirms what has been stated above, that Malta and Gozo, together with Pantellaria, were excluded from the treaty whereby, according to Appian (5.2), Rome and Carthage agreed, by the end of the first Punic war (241 B.C.), that Sicily and its adjacent islands were to pass over to Rome.

Sempronius, therefore, found a garrison of little less than two thousand soldiers¹⁰ headed by their prefect, Hamilcar. 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. *traditur* in Latin does not imply any betrayal, but surrender, that is, by the Carthaginians. It must be assumed that Gozo, which subsequently to this incident, remained politically under Sicily together with Malta, shared with its sister island both the act of surrendering and the acceptance of the first Roman presence within it.

This term "Romanisation" simply means that Malta and Gozo now fell

10. Agius de Sultana (1746: 64) wrongly gives "poco meno di 200 soldati". The date of 218 B.C. has been mistaken for 216 B.C. by several writers of Maltese history. Other writers mistake this second Punic war for the first Punic war (e.g. Bradley 1912:167) or for the third Punic war (e.g. Bellanti 1964: 4, 23). The name of Tiberius Sempronius Longus has also been mistaken for "Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus", "Titus Sempronius", "Titus Sempronius Gracchus", and "F. Sempronius". On this passage, see also Coleiro 1964: 26f.

ultimately within the influence of Rome. In the case of our islands, we must not assume that the Carthaginians were expelled from the islands. The local population, in fact, was and remained for many centuries after, Punico-Greek culturally.

Though Malta's surrender obviously must have pleased Rome, we find no evidence to justify what Ashby (1915: 24) says, that "They were included in the province of Sicily, but they were not subjected to the unfavourable treatment accorded to most of that island; they held the privileged position of a '*civitas foederata*' or '*libera atque immunis*'. Such a position itself suggests that they took the side of Rome voluntarily." On the contrary, we have the evidence of Cicero (CIC. 2 *Ver.* 3.6.12-3) for privileges of various kinds granted to various states in Sicily, but not to Malta or Gozo. By *civitates* Cicero means towns with their territories. Cicero says here that very few states in Sicily had been subdued by war, meaning that the majority of these states, like Malta and Gozo, surrendered to Roman rule. Conquered lands were returned, but tithes (*decumanae* from *decimus* meaning "tenth" – refer to Maltese *l-għexur*) continued to be levied from the whole of the agricultural land of Sicily, which explains how both wine and corn, which Sicily exported together with horses, timber and sulphur (Talbert 1985: 149), were to be found in Rome in great abundance. *Civitates foederatae* were two, Messina and Taormina, and *civitates sine foedere*, but *immunes ac liberae* were five, Centuripae, Halaesa, Egesta, Halicyae and Palermo. *civitas foederata* means that a city with its surrounding territories was considered by Rome as inhabited by a local population with equal rights as those at Rome, not because the population was implanted in foreign territory as a colony of Roman citizens, but through some agreement between itself and that territory which now became either leagued to or allied with it (CIC. *Arch.* 4.7, and Suet. *Cal.* 3). *civitas libera atque immunis* means that that state was free from service to Rome and exempt from taxes (LIV. 37.55.6, and Suet. *Vesp.* 8). We find no evidence that the inhabitants of Malta "took the side of Rome voluntarily", nor any literary or epigraphical evidence of such privileges as mentioned above having been granted to Malta and not to most towns of Sicily. On the contrary, our sources quoted below clearly place our islands under the administration of the *propraetor* of Sicily, with a procurator for both islands directly responsible to the emperor, and a local government in each island as confirmed by the institutions of *municipia* in each island.

Punico-Greek culture persisted in Gozo and Malta for at least two hundred years later, when coins minted in Gozo in 40 B.C., depicting some aspects from Punic religion, bore the Greek inscription of Γαυλιτων, that is, “of the Gozitans”.¹¹ The presence of Greek characters on these coins, therefore, does not signify the introduction of Greek culture into Malta and Gozo from Sicily at that time, as has wrongly been suggested (Coleiro 1971: 79). These coins commemorated the Gozitan solidarity with Sextus Pompeius and Antony who were warring against Octavian and Lepidus. This incident of the first triumvirate of Rome is represented in these coins through Astarte being shown as helmeted and in battle attitude. The minting of coins in this date and, later, in 35 B.C. and 15 B.C. in our islands, is also an indication of an economic prosperity which was gradually becoming higher (Coleiro 1971: 91).¹²

Sicily too, to which Malta and Gozo, as said above, belonged within the framework of province-administration after 218 B.C., continued to be Greek in the style of the composition of its constitution and magistrates, and in its culture, religion and language. Its official Latin language was often replaced by Greek, spoken generally as a means of everyday communication. The Roman population there continued to be small until the first century B.C., when Augustus was constrained to found six *coloniae* to increase Roman presence there (Talbert 1985: 149). All the towns of Sicily, presumably together with those of its adjacent islands, had already been raised to “Latin status”¹³ by Julius Caesar before he was assassinated in 44 B.C. (Cary and Scullard 1975: 278). And when Cicero, earlier, accused Verres, *propraetor* of the Roman province of Sicily, for misappropriation, he was also accusing him of plundering Malta, “his own” territory (*Ver.* 4.103). Also about the same period, a coin from Malta bore the name of a *propraetor* of Sicily (Mionnet: 1.343.26; Mommsen: 374 n.), while an inscription from Malta from Augustus’ times (quoted below) mentions the name of a Procurator of both islands.

Under Augustus (27 B.C.), Malta and Gozo, as part of the Sicilian province, came to be ultimately controlled by the Senate of Rome, instead

11. We do not find, however, Greek words in Latin inscriptions of the second century A.D. from Gozo, as Ashby (1915: 27) says.

12. Also on Roman coins minted in Gozo, see Cahn (1983: 158-60).

13. Not “Roman status”, as Ashby (1915: 26) says. Ashby, however, throws some doubt on his own statement.

of directly by the emperor (Cary and Scullard 1975: 318). It is highly unlikely that he granted Roman citizenship to the inhabitants of Malta and Gozo, as he was rather conservative in granting such a promotion (Cary and Scullard 1975: 341).

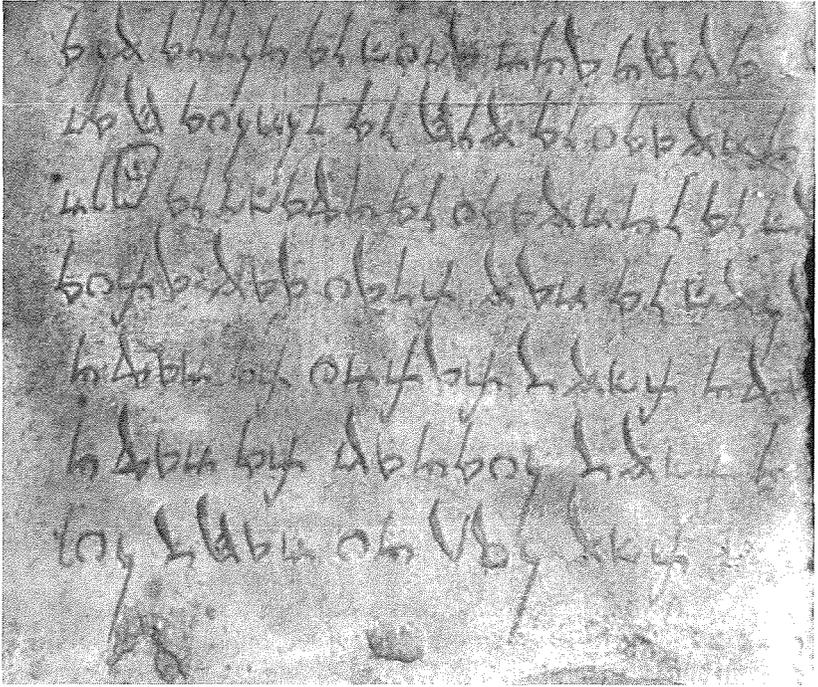
THE INSCRIPTIONS OF GAULOS

The inscriptions found in the island of Gozo, going back to the era where Greek and Latin were read, cover many centuries where the Gozitan society included Carthaginian, Greek and Roman elements. They were set up either to commemorate some event, as was the case of the Punic one referred to below, or to honour some personage, as in the Greek inscription on Demetrius, quoted below. In the Roman period, this could be the Emperor, an envoy of his, or a local person, such as Vallius (Bonanno 1990: 37). These were generally inscribed in marble, either as part of an architectural structure, like the “Vallius” inscription by the old entrance of the old citadel, or as part of the base to a statue, like the “Tulia Augusta” one, or on a copper plate. The inscriptions from Gozo have come down to us written in Punic or Latin, often in a mutilated form. The subject-matter varies from simple dedication, religious tasks, and Municipal authority, to individuals’ *cursus honorum*. In this way they can be described as dedicatory, honorary, or proclamatory.

A Punic Inscription of the Third Century B.C (C.I.S. 1.132)

Although not written in Greek or Latin, this inscription, unearthed in 1855 and stored at the Archaeological Museum in Valletta, is important for us as its dating before 218 B.C. gives us a better idea about the Gozitan society which was made up of Punic and Greek elements before the coming of the Romans.

Heltzer (1993: 198-204) has concluded a whole article from his theory that the inscription under consideration was written before 218 B.C., when our islands were conquered by the Romans. As such, therefore, he considers this inscription as important in that it reflects upon the political structure of the island in the Punic world. But nowhere does he tell us on what grounds he fixes his date as pre-, and not, post-218 B.C. Amadasi Guzzo (1967: 23), Peckham (1969: 181) and, recently, Bonanno



The Island of Gozo is first mentioned in a Punic inscription from the third century BC, discovered close to the citadel in 1855.

(1990: 34) date it as after 218 B.C.; K.A.I. (1964) as anywhere between the fourth and the second century B.C.; Weiss (1931: 546) as anywhere in the third century B.C.

The inscription as deciphered and translated by Heltzer mentions two magistrates (*rabs*) of the council by the names of Arish and Sapput, and not one (as in Bonanno 1990: 34). Furthermore, it mentions the names of the priest (Ba'alsillek), and the inspector of the quarry (Y'). It mentions "the people" of Gozo twice, making no distinction between ethnic groups, as Heltzer incorrectly says.

Heltzer rightly compares this inscription in Punic with a similar inscrip-

tion of Malta engraved in Greek on a copper plate (*I.G.* 14.953.24), which he dates the third century B.C. It was found in Rome and 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. No copies were found in Syracuse or Malta, but this one in Rome. I give the following translation:

“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.”

Also in this inscription, no distinction in ethnic groups is to be inferred in $\delta\eta\mu\omega$ as used above. It does not refer to some close Greek community ($\delta\eta\mu\omicron\varsigma$), as Heltzer (203) suspects, but to the whole people of Malta represented by an assembly.

The people of Agrigentum published two similar inscriptions, also on copper plates, dedicated to the same Demetrius, one of which has survived in Rome and is known as *I.G.* 14.952.22. The similarity in these sister tablets makes one suspect that one and the same Demetrius was the inspiration behind the two dedications. There is no reason to conclude that because of this similarity Malta based its constitution on that of Agrigentum (Ashby 1915: 24). Thus we have two peoples honouring one Demetrius, son of Diodotus, of Syracuse, and his descendants, with terms used for kings and emperors. Such a person could only be one who ruled Syracuse before 241 B.C., the end of the First Punic war, when Syracuse, now an ally of Rome, could no longer enter into diplomatic relations with other states, as that was reserved by Rome as its own right and privilege.

Hiero was allowed only to retain his kingdom in the south-east of Sicily (Cary and Scullard 1975: 598 n. 27).

As we know of no Demetrius, tyrant of Syracuse (Pauly-Wissowa 1901: 4.2.2767-2853 s.v. *Demetrio*), we assume that such an eclipsed person must have reigned during short periods in which democracy took over tyranny in Syracuse. Such periods were 466-459 B.C., 366-357 B.C., 325-322 B.C., 288-280 B.C., and 279-270 B.C. For all the other periods, we know the names of Syracusan tyrants and kings down to Hiero of the 1st Punic war. The comparison of this Greek inscription from Malta with the Punic one from Gozo of the 3rd century B.C., then, tempts us to opt for 288 B.C., when Agathocles was dead, or 279 B.C., when Hicetas was expelled.¹⁴

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. Nor should the term of *rab* here be confused with that of Carthage which Heltzer (200) says was the equivalent of the praetorship in Rome.

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 in Carthage and in its dependant states. 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 *πρωτος Μελιταιων* of a lost Greek inscription of Tiberius' times, first recorded by Jean Quintin (Vella 1980: 26) and referring to a certain Lucius Castricius, a Roman Knight; *πρωτος της νησου* of the *Acts of the Apostles*, referring to a certain Publius of Malta, and to the *Patronus Municipii* as in the Vallius inscription, already mentioned and to be discussed later. One also comes across *Melitensium primus* in a Latin inscription from Malta (*Siciliae* 1784: 18).

One concludes from this that both Punic and Greek inscriptions dis-

14. Caruana (1899: 202) gives the date of this Greek inscription as anywhere between the first and second Punic wars, or later.

cussed are to be dated pre-218 B.C., and at least in the case of the Greek one, before 241 B.C.

The Lucius Prudens Inscription (I.G. 14.601)

“Lucius Castricius Prudens¹⁵, 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).”

This 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, probably, during the reign of emperor Tiberius.¹⁶ Like Gaius Vallius in Gozo (see below), 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*.

In connection with this institution, Augustus founded the provincial *concilia*, meetings of representatives elected by the several towns and islands which fostered this cult. These met once a-year in the chief town of the province to choose a high priest of the cult of *Roma et Augustus* and to conduct a festival in their honour (Cary and Scullard 1975: 341).

Since Malta and Gozo individually formed part of the Sicilian province, one imagines that such men as this Lucius Castricius and M. Livius Optatus (of the “Ceres Julia” inscription, discussed below) went to Syracuse once a-year for this meeting and each could be elected chief priest.

πατρων here is for the more usual πατερων which, like Μελιταιων, is in the genitive case plural of πατηρ, the Greek transliteration of the Latin *pater* for *pater conscriptus*, meaning a member of the senate. In our context, council, senate and *municipium* are synonymous. The title of πρωτος της νησου, met in the *Acts of the Apostles* (28.7), quoted below, is, therefore,

15. On Lucius Castricius, see also Busuttil (1972: 162-7). Further on this inscription, see Vella (1980: 59 n.135). Caruana (258) also says wrongly that presidents of *municipia*, such as this Lucius, Optatus and Publius, were Maltese citizens, not Roman, appointed to their positions because of some Greek autonomy!

16. Caruana (1899: 258) wrongly says that this inscription belongs to the times of Augustus.

more fully to be understood for *πρωτος Μελιταιων και πατερων*, that is, “Head of the People and Council of Malta”.

The term *πατρων* in the inscription, together with the Latin abbreviated term of QVIR in the “Ceres Julia” inscription, also of the reign of Tiberius, are our first occurrences indicating the existence of *municipia*, both in Gozo and Malta, though these institutions existed earlier (see further discussion below). These titles are exactly the same titles encountered in the Latin inscriptions from Gozo which clearly mention *municipium* (see below).¹⁷ For this reason, one rejects Ashby’s suspicion that these terms did not apply to a Roman *municipium* (1975: 26).

The Chrestion Inscription (I.L. 10.7494)

“Chrestion, freedman of Augustus and procurator of the islands of Malta and Gozo, restored the columns of the temple of goddess Proserpina, along with (their) roofs and walls which were prone to ruin from old age. At the same time, he also gilded a pillar.”

This inscription, although from Malta, tells us that both Malta and Gozo fell ultimately under the jurisdiction of a special *procurator*, in this case, one Chrestion.

Under Augustus, a *procurator* was one who served as an ambassador of the emperor to one of his private domains. As such he shared his name with that of the tax-collectors in the imperial provinces (Cary and Scullard 1975: 342). They were either *equites* or freedmen, as this Chrestion. It was at this time that salaries were established to them. They were not to levy soldiers or exact money outside their provinces. They were to leave their provinces as soon as their successors arrived, and be back in Rome within three months (see D.C. 53.16.3-6). Such *procuratores* were sent also to the islands adjacent to Sicily to collect taxes. Thus, Lipari Islands had a *procurator* by the name of Cornelius Masurius during the reign of Tiberius Caesar (*Siciliae* 1784: 17 n.). By the time of emperor Claudius (A.D.41-54), these *procuratores* came to

17. Caruana (1899:258) incorrectly says that the first indication that there was a *municipium* in Malta or Gozo is found in the “C. Vallius” inscription. Bonanno (1990: 37) incorrectly suggests that municipal status and administrative autonomy existed at least by the time of Antoninus Pius (138-161), if not by that of his predecessor Hadrian (177-188).

take the place of proconsuls in the jurisdiction of financial matters in the provinces. At Rome they made up the profession of the civil service of the emperor (Cary and Scullard 1975: 361).

Procuratores of more than one province or *municipium* are known to have existed elsewhere. Under emperor Domitian (A.D.81-96), when Germany was officially divided into two provinces, a *procurator* administered the finances of the two Germanies together with Belgium and was called *procurator provinciae Belgicae et utriusque Germaniae* (Cary and Scullard 1975: 421).

The Ceres Iulia Inscription

“Lutatia, daughter of Gaius, and priestess of the eternal emperor Augustus, (wife) of Marcus Livius Optatus, son of Marcus, *quinquevir* and *flamen* of Iulia, (grandmother) of the eternal emperor Augustus, together with her children, consecrated (this inscription) to Ceres Iulia Augusta, (grand)mother of the Divine Augustus, and of Tiberius Caesar Augustus.”

This inscription from Gozo was erected during the emperorship of Tiberius (A.D.14-37), who was the stepson of Augustus by the latter's second wife, Livia. Tiberius, then, married his step-father's daughter Julia, through whom he had Drusus Caesar. To honour the House of Augustus, this inscription is dedicated to one Iulia, sister of Julius Caesar and grandmother of Augustus and, therefore, great grandmother of his adopted son Tiberius, and not to Livia as has been interpreted (e.g. Ashby 1915: 27 n. 1). Also, she was not the wife of Augustus as has been recently described (Bonanno 1990: 36). The inscription is a testimony of the cult of Augustus and his family members in Gozo, represented here by priestess and *flamen*, being wife and husband of each other. Julia is here associated with goddess Ceres, goddess of creation, daughter of Saturn and Ops, sister of Jupiter and Pluto, and mother of Proserpine, goddess of agriculture. In her capacity of being goddess of providence and sister of the god of gods, Ceres is here venerated as the personified Julia.

Outside the Senate in Rome, only the patricians, that is, those who belonged to the noble families, or who entered this class as *novi homines*, could become *flamines*, that is, priests. These cultivated the state cults

of Jupiter, Mars and Quirinus, who was a Roman equivalent god to Mars himself, and were nominated by the *pontifex maximus* (Cary and Scullard 1975: 50-1, 63). We distinguish between *pontifex maximus*, *pontifex*, *flamen* and *sacerdos* which, in that order, signified a hierarchy. However, irrespective of this general hierarchy, in the times of the emperors, *flamines* were appointed also outside Rome to foster the cult of the deceased and deified emperor.

Elsewhere, the cult of Ceres was looked after by Greek priests (see DIOD. 14.77.5, and CIC. *Balb.* 24). But the name of Marcus Livius Optatus sounds Roman, not Greek.

The term *quinquevir*, a member of a council of five *decuriones*, or councillors, is another proof of the existence of a *municipium*, or council, in Gozo. The granting of the privilege of *municipium* to an island or town meant the bestowal of limited autonomy, that is, self-government, keeping in mind that all states with Latin status, as against Roman status, had to contribute money and soldiers to Rome, and to abstain from independent foreign policy. They could also be visited by Roman judicial prefects.

The term *QVIR* certainly does not stand for *tribus Quirina*, which has wrongly been interpreted to refer to some extra privilege granted to a Knight or a whole people (e.g. *Siciliae* 1784: 46; Boechius and Franzius 1853: 3.32.5754; Ashby 1915: 26 *passim*, 27 n.1, and Busuttill 1976: 279). Ashby continues to confuse the matter by adding, "The quirine tribe seems to have been used for Greeks who obtained the Roman franchise individually, and this may have been the case with Castricius, or perhaps he may have sprung from *Gaulus*"!

Gozo's municipal autonomy meant also independence from Malta and limited independence from Sicily. We do not know exactly when this privilege was granted to Gozo and to Malta; but we would be right to speculate that this privilege goes back to the time of the Republic, when already in 218 B.C. the Romans saw that both Malta and Gozo, like other towns of Sicily, were each governed by a council of a certain standing, of Punic and Greek origin (see discussion on the comparison between the Punic inscription from Gozo and the contemporary Greek inscription from Malta). Changes were to involve a move from dual to single

headship (see above). Furthermore, unlike Roman *municipia* in the East, the Gozitan *municipium* soon adopted Latin terms for its magistrates, such as *quinquevir* and *patronus municipii*, which replaced the earlier Latin terms of Greek origin, such as *archontes* and *primus Melitensium*. It is true to say that if Gozo minted coins during the times of Sextus Pompeius when he was preparing war against Octavian in 40 B.C. (see above), Gozo must have had by then a *municipium*; but it was wrong to say that if Gozo minted coins for Sextus Pompeius, then it was Sextus Pompeius who gave municipal rights to Gozo (E. Coleiro 1971: 90), which, as an enemy of Rome, he had no right to grant (*nemo dat sine habet*). Furthermore, we have no grounds to say that Gozo got its *municipium* before Malta (e.g. Ashby 1915 : 27 n.1), and that by the second century A.D. (e.g. Ashby 1915: 26 n.3; Bonanno 1990: 37), for reasons just given above.

Some Italian *municipia*, before they were granted Roman citizenship, received a further privilege by being called *civitates sine suffragio*, otherwise known as *ius Caeritum* from the belief that *Caere* was the first *municipium* to receive it. This privilege meant that *municipium* received Roman citizenship without the privilege to vote in Rome (Cary and Scullard 1975: 90, 592 n.15, 595 n.15). This last privilege was not enjoyed by Gozo or Malta.

In a narrower sense, *municipium* meant the municipality, that is, the council of five members, one of whom being the president (or mayor), which in Gozo operated from *Gaulos*, the main town of the island.

The *quinqueviri* administered their town or island with its territories as magistrates of matters which varied from finances, public order, culture and religion. They periodically consulted with the people, and called for elections for both the councillors and the magistrates. In time, co-option took the place of the elections, with the result that these positions came to be held hereditarily (Cary and Scullard 1975: 429). This can probably be exemplified by the two Vallius' inscriptions from Gozo, to be discussed later. Rome generally did not interfere in the administration of these *municipia*. The rare occasions of Roman intervention, not recorded for Malta or Gozo, would include civil strife, insecurity and financial maladministration. In the case of the latter, Rome occasionally intervened by appointing a *curator a rationibus* to take the charge of the

finances. Incumbent councillors by the 2nd century A.D. were expected either to pay a lump sum of money into the city's treasury, or to spend money on some public project, such as architectural ornamentation. This further proves that they received no salary for their jobs. A local inscription from Malta (*Siciliae* 18-19) illustrates the expenses a mayor incurred for the public out of his own pocket (*ex liberalitate sua*). This inscription should be dated the beginning of the first century A.D., after which period such terms as *Melitensium primus* were replaced by others (see above).

Despite the fact that these councillors paid money themselves instead of being paid, the honour of the office was for a long while much competed for. Generally, the money they contributed was often spent in the wrong direction, simply to gratify the populace through dinners and amusements (Cary and Scullard 1975: 430). Judging, however, from the architectural fragments which have been found scattered and, sometimes, re-used throughout the former town of *Gaulos*, incorporating both upper and lower Victoria (Bonanno 1990: 38), one concludes that Gozo benefited from proper spending in such a way that its economic prosperity became evident. This prosperity is further evident in the remains of both seaside and agricultural countryside houses such as were excavated at Ramla and Xewkija respectively (Bonanno 1990: 38-9). By the second century or after, the financial burdens carried by these councillors were so great that the list of those eligible for election or co-option decreased as a result of evasion. For this reason, this service to the state came to be compulsory for those with great property or capital. This list got further limited as a result of exemptions granted to certain classes of people, such as people over seventy, women, fathers of five children, veterans of war, doctors, teachers, tax farmers and, with Constantine, the clergy (Cary and Scullard 1975: 501, 532).

The Cestius Poampius Inscription

“Lucius Marcius Marcianus has set up (this) statue out of respect for his best and dearest friend Cestius Poampius Varenianus Aemilianus, son of Lucius, a Frenchman born in Paris, and President of the Council.”

In some of the local inscriptions related to the council, we find the word

patronus meaning “president” or “mayor”; but generally we find elsewhere *princeps municipii*. While we are unable to date this inscription, also from Gozo, at least we can say that the council’s president was not originally from Gozo, but from Paris. This inscription seems to be different from others referring to the council, as it was erected not from public funds, but from the generosity of a friend, and it does not mention any emperor.

The Gaius Vallius Inscription

“The Gozitan people has set up (this inscription) for C. Vallius Postumus, a *quinquevir*, and president of the council, (appointed) by Hadrian, ninth emperor in perpetuity, as *quinquevir*, by the divine Antoninus Pius as the fourth councillor (to be included) among those Knights-Judges possessing four hundred thousand *sesterces*, with all the honours of Rome, having, besides, performed honourably (his) embassy free of charge with Emperor Hadrian and with the Senate in the re-acquisition of dockyards, from money collected on account of his extra merits.”

This inscription of hard stone was found by the Capuchin Church at Rabat, Gozo, in 1736, and is to be seen at the Gozitan Archaeological Museum in the citadel. It tells of the honours which Gaius Vallius Postumus, Mayor of Gozo’s *municipium*, received from his people.

The term *plebs Gaultitana* signifies that a meeting for the public had been held to ratify a proposal by the council of Gozo to honour its mayor. It also ratified the expenditure for the engraving and setting up of the inscription in a public place, probably within a public façade, as with the inscription dedicated to Marcus Vallius, his son (see below) from money either raised thenceforth, or from the treasury. *Aere* means money made of copper or bronze. Strictly speaking, Hadrian was the 14th emperor of Rome. He could be considered as the 9th emperor after Augustus if Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Titus, each of whom having reigned for not more than two years, are eliminated. In fact, A.D. 69 itself is known as “the Year of the Four Emperors” (Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian).

Hadrian here receives the epithet of *perpetuus*, Antoninus Pius, his successor, that of *divus*. Both titles were given to deceased emperors,

which point suggests the dating of this inscription in the post-Antonine period. Gaius Vallius Postumus was renowned for his excellence both in Gozo and abroad. He was president of the council of Gozo and, therefore, one of the five councillors. His income was high enough to promote him to the rank of *equus*, a class of Roman citizens whose status was qualified financially, a rank not easily to be got by Gozitans, as he was the fourth councillor to be thus honoured by Rome. In the Roman *municipia*, Roman citizenship, and possibly subsequent promotion into the *ordo equitum*, was limited to the councillors.

A Roman had to possess 400,000 *sestertii* to qualify as a Knight. During the post-Augustan period, a *sestertius* was equivalent to c. 0.78 Sterling pence, while a thousand *sestertii*, making one *sestertium*, made £7.80. Thus Vallius possessed, at least, a capital of £3120 (less correctly given as £4000 by Busuttill 1976: 279). This figure, by the standard of living of those days, must have been considerable. In fact, Vallius was only the fourth councillor to possess such a sum which a Knight at Rome had to possess.

Since the times of Caligula (A.D. 37-41), the functions of the *ordo equitum* came to include that of sitting as jurymen (*iudices*) in the court *de rebus repetundis*, that is, dealing with the restitution of money extorted by provincial governors. It is for this reason that the term *quadrigenarios* is further qualified by *iudices* (see also *Inscr. Grut.* 431.7). This point has been misinterpreted to mean that C. Vallius was chosen as member of a committee of five jurymen, representing “senators, *equites*, *tribuni aerarii* and *decunarii*” (Busuttill 1976: 279).

A person either joined the ranks of the *ordo equitum* as a *novus homo*, or was born into it, that is, being of parents or ancestors of that Order, as Vallius’ son, Marcus (see *CIC. Agr.* 1.9.27, *Rep.* 1.6.10, and *VELL.* 2.88).

Vallius also received “all the honours” a Roman could receive from Rome. *Civitas* does not mean the state of Gozo, but Rome itself (see *TAC. H.* 1.19, 2.92 (*bis*), and 4.2). The term *civitas* further emphasises the point that a Roman citizen was treated in the same way everywhere in the Empire. Emperors Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius tended to bestow “Latin status” as a half-way house to full Roman citizenship; but Malta and Gozo could not have benefited now as they had already been

promoted by Caesar. Instead, it was their *decuriones*, or councillors at the *Municipia* who, under Hadrian, had their status raised from Latin to Roman (Cary and Scullard 1975: 433 and n. 30). This explains why they raised statues and inscriptions in honour of their emperors.

Vallius' privileges included also, apart from titles, service on behalf of the emperor and his Senate in Rome to re-acquire dockyards for Rome. By this we do not mean dockyards in Gozo or Malta, but elsewhere, as the service which Vallius performed was clearly for the emperor and his *amplissimus ordo*, that is, the Senate of Rome – and not the council of Gozo – (see *CIC. Cael.* 2.5). The term “free of charge” means that Vallius performed this service within an embassy of Rome elsewhere in the empire, quite outside his capacity of being a councillor, for which, we know, he was unpaid. As such, there would have been no need to say “free of charge”.

From the knowledge derived from this inscription, one cannot, therefore, accept as valid certain conclusions recently made on this Vallius, namely, that he was sent to Rome to discuss financial matters (Busuttill 1976: 282), that he was a *flamen* of the deified Hadrian (Ashby: 27 n.1; Bonanno 1990: 36), a member of a special committee appointed by emperor Antoninus Pius, and that he led a delegation to Rome in order to make representations on behalf of the Gozitans to Hadrian (Bonanno 1990: 36).

The Gozitan people here not only honour Vallius, their mayor, for his own excellence and for his repute with the Senate of Rome, but also two deceased emperors, in compliance with their emperor cult.

The Marcus Vallius Inscription

“The Gozitan people (has set up this inscription) for M. Vallius Rufus, son of Gaius, a *quinquevir*, having been honoured with a State horse by the divine Antoninus Augustus Pius, from money collected on account of his merits and to recompense his father, C. Vallius Postumus, the president of the council.”

This is a similar inscription to the above, but dedicated to Marcus Vallius Rufus, son of Gaius (see above). It can still be seen by the old entrance to the citadel in Victoria, opposite to the Archaeological Museum.



The “Marcus Vallius” Latin inscription from the middle of the second century A. D. at the former *Bieb l-Indina*, the main gate of the citadel of Gozo. It was dedicated by the people of Gozo to its mayor. *Photo courtesy of Gaulitana*

The term *divo* suggests the date of the erection of this inscription as in the post-Antonine period, and not during his reign (as in Agius de Sultana 1746: 68: “regnando l’Imperatore Antonino Pio”). It was set up for Marcus Vallio in honour of both himself and his father Gaius discussed above, the latter either formerly or still currently mayor of Gozo. Furthermore, it records the honour of a State horse having been donated to Marcus by the deceased emperor Antoninus Pius – not Hadrian (see Caruana 1899: 260). Like previous emperors, Antoninus here receives the title of Augustus (confer Tiberius in the “Ceres” inscription above) after the first emperor of Rome.

This State horse does not signify any promotion into the rank of equestrians, as has been wrongly interpreted (Ashby : 27; Busuttill 1976: 281; Bonanno 1990: 36), but simply what it says (as in Caruana 1899: 260 and Vella 1980: 73 n. 325). Indeed, one can say that Marcus was, instead, born into this Order, as was the practice in accepting new members into it by

the Censors in Rome (see CIC. *Rep.* 1.6.10, *Agr.* 1.9.27 and VELL.2.88, quoted above).

The term *quinquevir* can be interpreted to be in apposition to either Marcus, or Gaius, his father. In any case, municipal positions had become, by this period, hereditary. The word *pleps* for *plebs* is quoted as it reads in the inscription itself (Vella 1980: 73-4 n. 371).

The Iulia Domna Inscription

“The Council of Gozo, during the administration of Dapsius, president of the council of Gozo, (has set up this inscription) for Julia Domna Augusta, divine mother of the Augusti, and wife of the emperor Caesar L. Septimius Severus Augustus, (successor) of Pertinax, through public money.”

Julia Domna is known as Julia Augusta, from Syria. As wife of emperor Septimius Severus (A.D.193-211), she became known for her cultural circle in Rome whose members included Philostratus, a biographer of sophists, Philiscus, a sophist from Thessaly, Papinian, Ulpian and Paul, lawyers, Dio Cassius and Marius Maximus, historians, Serenus Sammonicus and Galen, doctors, Oppian and Gordian, poets, the latter becoming emperor Gordian II, Athenaeus the Deipnosophist, and Alexander of Aphrodisias, a Peripatetic philosopher. Eminent visitors included Origen, a Christian theologian and critic from Antioch (Cary and Scullard 1975: 502).

Julia Domna is here referred to as the *mater Augustorum* by virtue of becoming the ancestor of later emperors, that is, Caracalla and Geta, her sons, Elagabalus, her grand-nephew who supplanted Macrinus, and his cousin, Severus Alexander.

Septimius Severus was the successor of emperor Pertinax (A.D.193), who had been murdered by his guards after only three months of reign. The senate's short-lived appointment of Didius Iulianus (A.D.193) had been rebuffed by the invasion of Rome of Septimius Severus who advanced from *Pannonia Superior* and the emperor's subsequent deposition and condemnation to death (Cary and Scullard 1975: 490-1). Septimius boasted of having avenged Pertinax, formerly the right-hand man of

Marcus Aurelius, and he decreed himself as the posthumously appointed adopted son of the latter (Cary and Scullard 1975: 494). The title of Caesar had, by this time, come to be used as the deputy, co-reigning and successor to the emperor. In the case of Septimius Severus, the title could never have been attributed to him. As such, it must be interpreted as for his predecessors, most of whom were hailed as *imperator Caesar ... Augustus*.

This inscription is another of its kind illustrating one of the responsibilities of the council of Gozo and its presidents in propagating the cult of Augustus through his successors. It resembles the one dedicated to Ceres Julia Augusta, also ancestor of future emperors down to Nero.

The Adiabene Inscription

“May the gods grant you peace! The council and high priest have set up this inscription (in honour of the conquest) of the Parthico-Arabian Adiabene by L. Septimius Severus, (successor) of Pertinax Augustus, (successor) of Emperor M. Aurelius, (adopted) son of Antoninus Pius Augustus, during the administration of..., through public (money).”

This inscription is commemorative of Severus' first invasion (A.D.195) and second invasion (A.D.197) of *Adiabene*, which is to be placed not in Arabia, but in Armenia. It is one of similar inscriptions commemorating the same event (*Siciliae* 1784: 33). It also propagates the cult of Augustus and his successors, which is here emphasised by the names of four successive emperors.

According to *Siciliae* (1784: 33), the last two inscriptions appeared on two sides of the same base of a statue. It will be noticed that in the later inscriptions from Gozo, the word *municipium* is less frequently mentioned. This inscription has been called “the Geta inscription” (Busutil 1976: 273-7), and subsequently referred to in this manner (Bonanno 1990: 37). But this theory was created on the supposition that *C.I.L.* 10.7503's emendations of *fratri* and *filio* to this inscription, referring to Geta, brother of Caracalla and son of Septimius Severus, were correct. However, without these emendations, imagined to have been erased by Caracalla's order, the inscription as translated above still makes sense.

The purpose of this inscription was to represent Septimius Severus' self-justification of having been installed emperor from outside the family of the Antonines. Indeed, he was at pains to call himself the (posthumously) adopted son of Antoninus Pius, and, as such, the latter's name should not have been made to refer to Geta. Also, emphasis is made in this inscription on the line of succession, to justify Severus' perpetration of the imperial line.

Finally, in between *CVRANTE* and *PVBL*. we have a space, and, therefore, no right to interpret *PVBL*. as being the proper name of the mayor (Busuttil 1976: 273, 277). Instead, *PVB* or *PVBL*. are, often with another P. for *PECVNIA*, synonymous with *AERE CONLATO* met elsewhere in these inscriptions (see also Sandys 1927: 305).

A Mutilated Inscription (Siciliae 1784: 291)

From this mutilated inscription, one can at least gather that the name of the mayor was Publius Antoninus, and that the setting up of this inscription was the result of a common effort by both the Gozitan people and its *municipium*.

The Valerius Constantius Inscription

“The State of Gozo (has set up this inscription) during the administration of Flavius Pollio Rufus, son of Marcus, triumvir, for our lord Gaius Aurelius Valerius Constantius Augustus.”

The Constantius referred to in this inscription was Constantius I (A.D. 292-306), Constantine's father, and not Constantius II (A.D. 353-361), Constantine's son. His name is elsewhere given as Gaius Flavius Valerius Constantius. This inscription, therefore, comes before the Christian era which starts with A.D. 312. In the division of the empire under Diocletian, Constantius ruled Gaul and Britain and, later on, Spain. As such, therefore, Gozo did not come under direct influence of Constantius. Still, this inscription refers to him as “our lord”.

Like the style of the “Julia Domna” inscription above, instead of *patrono* we read here *curante* (and as in the following inscriptions). Also, instead of *quinquevir* we have *triumvir*, if not a mistake in the transcription,

probably an indication that the council by now came to consist of three persons only. The reference to *triumvir* here has no relation with *reipublicae constituendae* as inferred by Agius de Sultana (1746: 97).

The Valerius Maximianus Inscription

Another inscription mentions Galerius, whose full name was Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus. Also under emperor Diocletian, Galerius ruled the Balkans (later on, Asia Minor), and, similarly, was not directly involved with Gozo.

“The State of Gozo (has set up this inscription) during the administration of ... the most eminent ... Rufus, president of the *Municipium*, for our lord and master, Galerius Valerius Maximianus Augustus, emperor.”

Both these last two inscriptions appeared on two sides of the base of a statue (*Siciliae* 1784: 38). In this way, Gozo honoured the two Caesars of emperor Diocletian together.

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to establish the correct name of ancient Gozo and its occurrence in Greek and Latin literatures. It has also given some information on geographical, political and sociological comments on the island by Greek and Roman writers. It ends with an analysis of historical and epigraphical evidence of the Greek and Roman presence in Gozo.

The result of this investigation shows that Gozo, with Malta, was then recognised as important not just as a “resting-place” in busy routes across the Mediterranean, but also for its establishment as a centre of one flourishing civilisation, made up of various ethnic groups.

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