



Malta
Classics
Association

MELITA CLASSICA

Vol. I

2014

*Journal of the
Malta Classics Association*

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From the Editor

Four years ago, the Malta Classics Association was founded with the aim of disseminating and furthering Classical Studies, and especially, the Greek and Latin languages – a daunting task, indeed, considering that the Classics Studies were only limited to University courses, and stood completely outside the curriculum of pre-tertiary education. Ever since its inception in 2010, the Association has successfully striven and has been instrumental in raising awareness of such an important aspect of Education, and its efforts are now bearing fruit. Moreover, the general public's response has been encouraging – membership has steadily increased, the web-site frequently accessed, Classical Studies introduced as a new subject in post-secondary education at the Junior College of the University of Malta, Naxxar Higher Secondary School and Gozo Higher Secondary School, and the public lectures held under the auspices of the Association have always been well-attended.

Inspired by that famous Latin proverb, *verba movent, scripta manent*, the Malta Classics Association has now taken this additional initiative of publishing its own annual Journal, *Melita Classica*, in which both local and foreign Classicists can find an appropriate forum wherein the fruit of their literary endeavours and their researches can be published. In this wise, no constraints are being made on contributors, save that the material submitted pertains generally to Classical Studies and Languages. Contributors are thus most welcome and are encouraged to submit original articles or material for future publications – writing guidelines are printed at the end of this journal.

On behalf of the Editorial Board, I wish to thank all the contributors to this first issue of *Melita Classica*, and earnestly hope that our readers would find the studies offered profitable and enjoyable.

Fra Alan Joseph Adami O.P.

Editor

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Il-Viżta Pastorali ta' Mons. Dusina fil-Parroċċa taż-Żurrieq 1575, Horatio Caesar Roger Vella, Zurrieq Local Council, 2013

Monsignor Pietro Dusina's 1575 Report remains one of the most valuable documents on several aspects of Maltese late medieval and early modern history. Although the chief interest lies in ecclesiastical matters, the document also abounds in details pertaining to current societal, artistic and topographic features of the Maltese islands. Aquilina and Fiorini's edition of the Report (University of Malta, 2001) furnished comprehensive introduction and annotations, but not a translation of the Latin text. Dusina's Latin is the simplified form of church-Latin devoid of the syntactical trappings characterizing Latin prose of the classical age. Yet, its full comprehension would still be a problem to the reader without a sound knowledge of the language.

With the present attractive publication, Professor Vella has mitigated this difficulty significantly, at least with respect to those sections of the Report that deal with the Parish of Zurrieq. During the period in question, the Zurrieq Parish covered a considerably larger area than it does today, incorporating within its perimeters smaller villages such as Qrendi and Hal Far, and the islet of Fifla. In all, it constituted a total of 37 churches. Vella translates Dusina's Latin into lucid Maltese, but next to each paragraph of translated text he also presents the relative original version. This will prove beneficial both to the serious student of Latin and to the reader with some knowledge of language as they read through the book and compare the two versions. Besides an introduction that gives a basic account in Maltese of Dusina's Apostolic Visit, Vella also provides annotations to his translation, some of which entries containing great biographical detail of persons mentioned in the Report.

This publication, made even more attractive with a number of photographs in colour, has been issued by the Zurrieq Local Council, a Council highly sensitive to the importance of a genuine historical consciousness of its people. Indeed, a commendable initiative that should be emulated by other local governments.

Carmel Serracino