

BUONAMICO, THE LATINIST

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Buonamico, a contemporary of Grand Master Brother Nicholas Cottoner (1663-1680), has left us a good number of Latin poems which I shall have the honour of discussing in this welcome collection of articles in honour of our writer.¹ My interests shall fall on some of the Latin poems, prose and inscriptions Buonamico composed, with a view to illustrating the quality of the Latin he used and the prosody he employed in the poems. The poems under discussion can be broadly divided into three parts: 1. Those which belong to the *Gaudia Melitensia sive Divi Pauli Apostoli gesta in Melita Insula totidem epigrammatis celebrata*; 2. the *Kalendae Maiiae* dedicated to Grand Master Nicholas Cottoner; and 3. the shorter poems and inscriptions dedicated to various individuals or referring to other decorative objects.

1 I am indebted to Judge Giovanni Bonello for providing me with these poems by Buonamico. It is indeed a welcome collection since very little has been written about this author. We mention to our knowledge the two works by A. Cassola, *The Belgian memoirs of a Maltese intellectual: Giovan Francesco Buonamico (1639-1680)* (Malta: B.O.V., 2012), and *The German memoirs of a Maltese intellectual: Giovan Francesco Buonamico (1639-1680)* (Malta: ProMinent Fluid Controls Ltd., 2013); the work by O. Vella, 'Buonamico skont De Soldanis u Levanzin' (*Il-Gens Illum*, 31.7.2004 and 7.8.2004), and the unpublished work by R. Farrugia, *Un manoscritto inedito di G.F. Buonamico, letterato e scienziato del seicento maltese*, being a digital dissertation at the University of Malta.

1. *Gaudia Melitensia sive Divi Pauli Apostoli gesta in Melita Insula totidem epigrammatis celebrata*

‘The Maltese joys or The Acts of the Apostle Saint Paul in the Island of Malta equally celebrated in epigrams’²

This collection opens with a Latin epigram of six verses which were intended to appear at the frontispiece below the title of the work. The title and epigrams are separated with a circular illustration recalling the call of Saul at Damascus and the Saint’s shipwreck in Malta. This illustration is flanked by two female images, one of a woman holding a small dog and standing by a beehive, the other of a woman blowing a trumpet. At the very bottom of the frontispiece is an illustration of the front of a church with two doors and two belfries, with trees, a house and a mill on the background. The top of the front of the church bears the name Cosmana Navarra. The illustration is probably a draft by the same poet intended for future printing.

Following the illustration, in a declaration written in Italian, the poet explains how both images represent the Cosmana Navarra coat-of-arms. He also says that the church is the one dedicated to St Paul at Rabat, whose benefactors include precisely Cosmana Navarra. The poet then gives a summary in Italian for each of the sixteen epigrams which follow. Each epigram is short and is preceded by a title and an introduction.

The Latin epigram consists of an alternation of a hexameter with a pentameter. The hexameter consists of six feet made up of dactyls ($\bar{\sim}\sim$) (each consisting of one long syllable, followed by two short ones) or spondees ($\bar{\bar{}}$) (each consisting of two long syllables), while the pentameter consists of two and a half feet repeated once, also made up

2 All the translations appearing in this article have been provided by the present writer.

of dactyls or spondees. Each first half of the pentameter ends with one syllable which, together with the last syllable of the second half, forms the fifth spondee or trochee (¯˘) (one long syllable followed by a short one).

The titles are as follows, with translations: 1. *Paulus tempestate iactatus, ad Melitam perventurum ab angelo edocetur*: “Paul, tossed up by a storm, is informed by the angel that he would come to Malta”; 2. *Naufragus a Melitensibus perhumaniter excipitur*: “Shipwrecked, he is received very kindly by the Maltese”; 3. *A vipera absque noxa mordetur*: “He is bitten by a viper without harm”; 4. *In homicidae suspicionem venit*: “He is suspected of [having been] a killer”; 5. *Pro deo habetur*: “He is held as a god”; 6. *Fontem miraculo excitat*: “He gives rise to a spring by a miracle”; 7. *Noxia animantia veneno, homines superstitione in perpetuum exuit*: “He casts off poison from noxious animals, superstition from men for good”; 8. *Publij patrem, caeterosque aegros miraculo sanat*: “He heals Publius’ father and the rest of the sick by miracle”; 9. *Melitensi terrae vim adversus venenata indit*: “He places strength into the land of Malta against poisons”; 10. *Concionantis vox per universam insulam, vicinamque usque Gaulon, exauditur*: “His voice addressing [people] is well heard through the whole of the island as far as nearby Gozo”; 11. *Primum templum Beatae Virgini erigit, eiusque imagine a Sancto Luca picta ditat*: “He sets up the first temple [dedicated] to the Blessed Virgin, and embellishes [it] with its image painted by Saint Luke”; 12. *D[ivum] Trophimum in Melita aegrum relinquit, maximo utique Melitensium beneficio*: “He leaves Saint Trophimus sick in Malta, indeed of very great benefit to the Maltese”; 13. *Publium Melitensem Episcopum instituit*: “He installs Publius Bishop of Malta”; 14. *Discessurus, a Melitensibus muneribus donatur*: “About to leave, he is rewarded with gifts by the Maltese”; 15. *In Melitam redux, D[ivum] Publium secum abducit Atheniensi Ecclesiae praeficiendum*: “On return to Malta, he

takes Saint Publius with him to preside over the Church of Athens"; 16. *Obsessos a Mauris Melitenses caelitus apparens liberat*: "Appearing from Heaven, he frees the Maltese besieged by the Moors".

As an example of the epigram, I shall transcribe the introductory one which appears at the frontispiece, with the translation thereof:

— √ γ — — / — // — / — γ — — √ — —

Dum cadit, et terram labenti³ corpore pulsat

— √ γ — — √ // — — γ — — γ —

Paulus, ad aethereas tolliturusque Domos.⁴

— √ γ — — √ — // — / — — γ — — —

Naufragus ad Melitam vento iactatus et undis⁵

— — γ — — √ γ // — — γ — — γ —

erranti populo pandit⁶ ad astra viam.⁷

— — γ — — / — // — / — — — √ — — —

Felices casus! Fausta infortunia!⁸ Per quae

— √ γ — — √ // — — √ — — γ —

ducat ad astrigerum seque, aliosque polum.⁹

- 3 *Terram labenti*: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 13.477: *illa super terram defecto poplite labens*.
- 4 *aethereas ... Domos*: hyperbaton, the separation of words, which normally go together, by one or more words. Horace, *Carmina* 1.3.29-30: *post ignem aetheria domo / sub ductum macies ...*
- 5 *vento ... undis*: hyperbaton, where the two nouns are separated by the participle (*iactatus*); Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 4.749: *seminaque ex illis iterant iactata per undas*; Vitruvius, 1.6.2: *ventus autem est aeris fluens unda cum incerta motus redundantia*.
- 6 *Populo pandit*: alliteration of p.
- 7 *pandit ... viam*: Livy, *Ab Urbe condita* 10.41.9: *panduntur inter ordines viae*.
- 8 *Felices casus. Fausta infortunia*: oxymoron repeated, oxymoron being the antithesis of two successive words. Also, a parallelism of phrases, where we have a repetition of an adjective (a) preceding a noun (b): abab.
- 9 *Astrigerum seque, aliosque polum*: a hyperbaton formed by the separation of *astrigerum* from *polum*, with polyptoton in the middle, being the use of multiple conjunctions (*-que*).

quam tuas vellem resonante versu

— — — — —

promere¹² laudes!¹³

“O happy cave, grateful to the heavens above, / O supreme light
of the coast of Malta, / how I would wish to express your praises
/ with resounding verse!”

2. *Kalendae Maiiae*

“The First of May”

This collection is addressed to Grand Master Nicholas Cottoner as *Celsissimo, atq[ue] Eminentissimo Invictissimae Hierosolymitanae Militiae M[agno] Magistro, ac Melitensium Principi etc.*, that is, “To His Highness and Eminence Grand Master of the Most Invincible Militia of Jerusalem, and Prince of the Maltese etc.”. The use of “etc.” in the address of the frontispiece shows the poet’s draft version, which is given more fully in the next page above the Introduction. It is addressed to the *Eminentissimo, Celsissimoque Principi F[ratri] D[omino] Nicolao Cotonero Invictissimae Hierosolymitanae Militiae M[agno] Magistro, Melitaeque, ac Gaulos Principi Bene-meritiss[imo]. Felicitatem.*

After a highly poetic introduction in Latin prose, this collection starts with an epigram of sixteen verses dedicated to the invincible Prince; a *dactylicon* consisting of twenty-seven verses each made up of a dactyl and a trochee, which remind us of the last verses of the strophes that make up the hymn dedicated to the Crypt of St Paul (above); an Italian poem entitled *Canzonetta pastorale* of five

12 Alliteration of *v*, *r* and *s*.

13 *Tuas vellem ... promere laudes!*: double inner hyperbata, where *tuas* and *laudes* are separated by *vellem ... promere*, and where *vellem*, which takes *promere* as its infinitive, is further separated by *resonante versu*.

strophes, each alternating with a repeated one meant to be sung by a choir; another Latin poem entitled *Ad solem*, “To the sun” in Phalaecian metre or hendecasyllables in 26 verses; a sonnet in French; another poem entitled *Ad Melitam Insulam. Ode*, “A song to the Island of Malta” in the same metre as that of the hymn dedicated to the Crypt of St Paul above, and an epigram in Latin entitled *Frater Nicolaus Cotonerus anagramma: flos vernans Turcae victor. Epigramma*, “Brother Nicholas Cottoner. Anagram. The flower of spring, champion over the Turk. Epigram”, of four verses.

I shall first transcribe the introduction to this collection in Latin prose as follows:

Dum suavi concentu cantillant¹⁴ per opacas frondes argutae aviculae,¹⁵ ipsaeque etiam stridulae cicadae in camporum sulcis rauco obstrepunt susurro,¹⁶ quid mirum, Princeps Eminentissime, si Melitenses pariter Musae inconditos hosce sonos Tibi edere sunt ausae [?] Nam cum minutis illis animalculis adeo gratus insit erga Divinum Numen sensus, ut quibus demum possunt vocibus, parati sibi liberaliter victus gratias illi agere non desistant; Tui subditi, qui Tibi soli, post Deum, in hac calamitosa penuria omnia se debere nimis agnoscunt, quo tandem pacto¹⁷ conticescent?¹⁸ Negat nobis consuetas fruges avara patria,¹⁹ Tu, Princeps Benignissime, toto ex Orbe conquisitis

14 Alliteration of *c* and *n*.

15 *concentu ... aviculae*: Cicero, *De legibus* 1.7.21: *etenim propter hunc concentum avium strepitumque fluminum non vereor condiscipulorum ne quis exaudiat*; Vergil, *Georgica* 1.422: *... hinc ille avium concentus in agris*; Propertius 1.18.30: *cogor ad argutas dicere solus aves*.

16 *rauco ... susurro*: hyperbaton between *rauco* and *susurro*; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 4. 391-392: *tympana cum subito non adparentia raucis / obstrepuere sonis, ...*; Calpurnius Siculus, *Ecloge* 1.3: *et spument rauco ferventia musta susurro*.

17 *quo ... pacto*: hyperbaton.

18 *Agnoscunt ... conticescent*: alliteration formed by the letters *c*, *q*, *t* and the combinations of *sc* and *nt*. The allusion is here made to the great prosperity the Grand Master provided in times of hunger.

19 *Consuetas fruges avara patria*: parallelism of phrases, with a sequence of adjective and noun repeated.

abunde instruis: Dumque vicinarum urbium fora ac compita²⁰ fame misere enectorum cadaveribus sternuntur; nostra (quae tua admirabilis est providentia) praeter omnium spem, omnis generis edulij copiose se cumulari sentiunt et mirantur.²¹ Utinam haec et digne satis, et pluribus celebrare liceret linguis,²² quo apud omnes gentes praeclarum istud eximiae tuae prudentiae exemplum vulgaretur; et gratissimi semperque memoris Tuorum animi exiguum saltem specimen²³ innotesceret. Sed illud satis superque²⁴ fama praestabit, hoc nostrae facile condonabitur / tenuitati²⁵. Tu vero, Celsissime Princeps, qui bene semper agere, quam audire, maluisti; hos qualescumque subiectissimae Musae lusus, quando et Caelum minimae cicadae stridorem haud despicit, benignis ferre auribus²⁶ ne gravator. Deus Te Principum exemplo, Tuorumque incolumitati²⁷ quam diutissime conservet.

Celsitudini Tuae.

Devinctissimus atq[ue] Humillimus Servus

Ac Subditus Obsequentissimus

Joannes Franciscus Bonami<cus>

“While the small rustling birds sing in sweet harmony through the dark leaves, and even the hissing cicadas themselves resound with a harsh whispering in the furrows of the fields, is it surprising, O Most Eminent Prince, if also the Maltese Muses

- 20 *fora ac compita*: copia, a figure of speech where for emphasis two words, often synonymous, are provided instead of one.
- 21 *sentiunt et mirantur*: copia.
- 22 *pluribus ... linguis*: hyperbaton.
- 23 *exiguum ... specimen*: hyperbaton.
- 24 *Satis superque*: Plautus, *Amphitryon* 1.1.14: *noctesque diesque assiduo satis superque est*.
- 25 *hoc ... tenuitati*: double chained hyperbata, where *hoc* is separated from its verb (*condonabitur*), and *nostrae* from *tenuitati*.
- 26 *benignis ... auribus*: hyperbaton.
- 27 *Principum exemplo, Tuorumque incolumitati*: parallelism of phrases, where the genitive plural (*Principum, Tuorum*) is followed by the dative singular (*exemplo, incolumitati*) in successive sequence.

have dared to produce for You these uncouth sounds? For the gratifying sense so belongs to the Divine Majesty with those minute animalistic [sounds], that they do not cease giving Him thanks for the nourishment freely prepared for them, indeed with whatever voices they can;

“Your subjects, who very much realise that they owe everything only to You, after God, in this calamitous time of scarcity, how will they at the end be silent? The avaricious fatherland denies us the usual crops; [but] You, O Most Kind Prince, abundantly provide [us] with [those] acquired from the whole world: and while the public places and the crossroads of the cities nearby are piteously covered with the corpses of those killed with hunger, ours [your providence is wonderful] appreciate and are surprised [to see] themselves full of food of every kind.

“Would that it be possible to celebrate even these things worthily enough and in most languages by which [manner] this notable example of your distinguished prudence be made known among all peoples, and would that at least [this] small example of Your very gratifying and ever memorable soul be made known! But [your] fame will sustain it more than sufficiently; it will easily pardon our insignificance. Indeed You, O Most Lofty Prince, who has preferred to always act well than [just] to hear: do not be slow to bear with kind ears these trifling verses, such as they are, of a most inferior Muse. May God preserve You as an example to Princes, and your safety as long as possible.

“To Your Highness.

The Most Devoted and Humble Servant
and the Most Obedient Subject

John Francis Buonamico”

Next I shall transcribe and translate the *Dactylicon*, produced here vertically in three columns:

— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — ∪	— ∪ γ — ∪
Horrida nimbis,	perque vireta,	hos tibi tellus
— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — ∪	— ∪ γ — —
Saeva procellis, ²⁸	florida prata, ²⁹	subdita fundit;
— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — ∪	— ∪ γ — —
iam procul isto	picta roseta	quippe benignum,
— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — ∪
dira recessit	blanda recurrens,	propitiumque, ³⁰
— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — —
littore bruma. ³¹	aethera circum	numinis instar,
— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — ∪
Sola favoni	nectar ³² olentes	sentit ut illa,
— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — ∪
aera mulcens ³³	spargit odores. ³⁴	sic tibi rite
— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — ∪	— ∪ γ — —
gratior aura	Inclyte noster	numine dignos
— ∪ γ — —	— ∪ γ — ∪	— ∪ γ — —
vibrat aristas ³⁵	Dux Cotonere,	solvit honores. ³⁶

28 *horrida nimbis*, / *saeva procellis*: parallelism of phrases, where the adjective in the feminine singular (*horrida*, *saeva*) is followed by a dative plural (*nimbis*, *procellis*) in successive sequence; Lucretius, *De rerum natura* 3.804-805: *quam mortale quod est in mortali atque perenni / iunctum in concilia saevas tolerare procellas?*

29 *florida prata*: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 13.790: *floridior pratis*, ...

30 *benignum / propitiumque*: copia.

31 *dira recessit / littore bruma*: hyperbaton between *dira* and *bruma*.

32 *circum / nectar*: alliteration of *c*.

33 *favoni / ... mulcens*: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.107-108: *placidique tepentibus auris / mulcebant zephyri natos sine semine flores*. Here the poet changes Ovid's *zephyri* into its synonym, *favoni*.

34 *olentes / ... odores*: hyperbaton.

35 *mulcens / ... aristas*: Ovid, *Fasti* 5.161: *frigidus Argestes summas mulcebit aristas*; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8.374: ... *ambo vibrata per auras*; Propertius, *Elegiae* 4.7.60: *mulcet ubi Elysias aura beata rosas*.

36 *dignos / ... honores*: hyperbaton.

“A dactylic poem.

“The harsh winter, horrid with clouds, wild with storms, already has receded far thither from the shore. Only the soothing air of the West wind, more pleasant than a breeze, shakes the ears of grain: running through the green grasses, the flowery meadows, the colourful soft roses, it bestows odours smelling of nectar around the upper air. Our Illustrious Leader Cottoner, the subdued land pours forth these [odours] for you; which, just as it is appreciative of [you] being kind and propitious, like a deity, so it duly pays you honours worthy of [that] deity.”

I shall turn now to another metre used by Buonamico in this second set of Latin poems, namely, the Phalaecian metre, in the poem entitled *Hendecasyllabon ad solem*. I shall quote the first nine lines, accompanied by the translation, as follows:

— — / — — ∪ √ // √ — √ — ∪
 O fons aetherei perennis ignis,³⁷
 — — / — — ∪ √ // √ — √ — ∪
 axis stelliferi³⁸ micans ocellae,
 — — / — — ∪ √ // √ — √ — —
 et rerum genitor, satorque Titan:
 — — / — — ∪ √ — — // — √ — ∪
 tu dum per duodena curris astra,³⁹

37 *Fons aetherei perennis ignis*: double chained hyperbata, where the second adjective in the middle (*perennis*) agrees with the noun in front (*fons*), while the first adjective also in the middle (*aetherei*) agrees with the noun at the end (*ignis*): abab. At the same time, we have here a chiasmus, the inverted order of noun, adjective, adjective, noun: abba; Caesar, *De bello Gallico* 8.43: *quo facto repente perennis exaruit fons*; Ovid, *Fasti* 1.473: *quae simul aetherios animo conceperat ignes*.

38 *axis stelliferi*: Seneca, *Hippolytus* 785: *autte stellifero despiciens polo*.

39 *per duodena ... astra*: hyperbaton; Vergil, *Georgica* 1.232: *per duodena regit mundi sol aureus astra*.

— — / — — ~ γ / / γ — γ — — —
 alternans gelidas calore brumas,⁴⁰

— — / — — ~ γ / / γ — — γ — —
 en rursus placidos refers tepores,⁴¹

— — / — — ~ γ / / γ — — γ — —
 et terrae reserans sinum feracis,⁴²

— — — / — — ~ ~ / / / γ — γ — — —
 das florum vario⁴³ colore pingi,

— — / — — ~ γ / / — — γ — γ — — —
 laetas et nemus explicare frondes.⁴⁴

“O perennial source of the heavenly fire, / O resplendent wonder
 of the starry heavens, / both begetter of things and Father Titan,
 / you, while you run through the twelve stars, / alternating the
 freezing winters with [your] heat, / behold, bringing back again
 the gentle warm weather; / and while you plant again the fold of
 the fertile earth, / you cause the grove to be painted with varied
 colours of flowers / and to shoot out rich foliage.”

3. *Minora*

The third set of poems and inscriptions consist of a sonnet
 in Italian on sins committed in Carnival; another sonnet
 in Italian on the sinner’s reply; six short Latin epigrams: *In*
Syrenis statuam in fonte locatam, “On the statue of the Siren

40 *gelidas ... brumas*: hyperbaton; Vergil, *Georgica* 3.441-443: ... *ubi frigidus inber / altius ad vivum persedit et horrida cano / bruma gelu, ...*

41 *placidos ... tepores*: hyperbaton; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.107-108: *placidique tepentibus auris / mulcebant zephyrinatos sine semine flores.*

42 *terrae ... feracis*: hyperbaton; Lucretius, *De rerum natura* 2.1097-1098: ... *et omnis / ignibus aetheriis terras suffire feracis.*

43 *Florum vario*: Tibullus, *Delia* 7.45: *sed varii flores et frons redimita corymbis.*

44 *explicare frondes*: Vergil, *Georgica* 2.335: *sed trudit gemmas et frondes explicat omnis.*

placed in a spring”, *Pro fonte artificiali*, “To an artificial spring”, *In fontem Vallettae erectum a M[agno] M[agistro] Alofio de Vignacourt*, “To a spring set up in Valletta by Grand Master Alof de Vignacourt”, *In Baccii tumulum*, “To the tomb of Baccius”, *In idem*, “to the same”, and again another *In idem*; *Ad R[everendum] P[atrem] Joannem Franciscum Sagnanum de Spiritus Sancti adventu apostolico zelo concionante[m] epigramma*, “An epigram to the Reverend Father John Francis Sagnano preaching with apostolic zeal on the coming of the Holy Spirit”; *Ad Rever[en]d[um] adm[odum] Patrem, virumque undiquaque praeclarissimum, P[atrem] D[ominum] Bernardum Nani, Cler[icum] Regionalem*, *zelo vere Ap[osto]lico in Mellita Ins[ula] concionante[m] ode 1677*, “A song to the Very Reverend Father, a man everywhere most famous, Father Lord Bernard Nani, Regional Cleric, preaching indeed with apostolic zeal in the Island of Malta. 1677”: a poem of eighteen strophes in Sapphic metre; *Ad eundem epigramma*, “An epigram to the same [person]”; an inscription in Latin set up by the Noble Gregory Bonici by the façade of a church dedicated to St James, the Apostle, built by his ancestor in c. 1480; another inscription in Latin set up by the Noble Cosmana Navarra by a statue of St Paul erected in 1678; another Latin inscription set up by the same benefactress to commemorate the miraculous sound of the divine trumpet heard also in Gozo; another Latin inscription dedicated to Bartholomew Testaferrata set up in 1679; a Latin epitaph dedicated to Ignatius Bonici set up in 1661; a Latin epigram dedicated to Thomas Constance; a Latin inscription set up by Cosmana Navarra dedicated to Rabat, which was the first place to hear St Paul’s preaching; and another by the same benefactress commemorating St Paul’s preaching, miraculously heard also in Gozo.

I shall produce the inscription dedicated to the church built by the Noble Gregory Bonici, with its translation, as follows:

D[EO] O[PTIMO] M[AXIMO]
VETUSTUM HOC MAIORUM PIETATIS MONUMENTUM,
D[IVO] JACOBO APOST[OLO] DICATUM,
A TRITAVO SUO JACOBO BONICIO, IOANNIS
IURISCONS[ULTI] FILIO,
ABHINC AMPLIUS SAECULIS PRIMUM ERECTUM,
ANNOQUE DEIN MDLXIX
AB UGOLINO PROAVO LUCULENTIUS EXORNATUM,
AC QUOTIDIANO CELEBRANDO SACRO
IURISPATRONATUS BENEFICIO LOCUPLETATUM,
GREGORIUS BONICIUS, MARIJ FILIUS, NOB[ILIS]
MELITENSIS,
AC PATRITIUS ROMANUS,
SUORUM APUD POSTEROS RECOLENDAE MEMORIAE,
HAC EPIGRAPHE OBSIGNAVIT ANNO D[OMI]NI
MDCL<XXX.>

“To God, the Best, the Greatest. Gregory Bonici, son of Marius, a Maltese Nobleman, and a Roman Patrician, has affixed this inscription, in the year of the Lord 1680, to this old monument dedicated to Saint James the Apostle, reflecting the devotion of [his] ancestors, built for the first time more than two centuries ago by his great-great-great-grandfather James Bonici, son of the lawyer John, and then decorated more splendidly in the year 1569 by [his] great-grandfather Ugolinus, and enriched by the celebration of daily Mass, being a benefice of the Right of Patronage.”

Conclusion

The prolific Giovan Francesco Buonamico wrote in good Latin in imitation of the Classical authors, particularly Ovid and Virgil. His Latin writings, among other works, appear

in poetry, prose and inscriptions. He continually quotes indirectly phrases from the Latin authors, imitating them in the use of stylistic figures. He shows passionate respect to the Grand Masters of the Order of St John, as well as to a surrounding nature which he allegorically portrays in praise of the same Princes of Malta. His several references to the nobility of Malta betrays his connections with it. None of his works, with the exception of the *Laurae Cotonerae*,⁴⁵ were published in his own time.

45 Published in Lyons. Thanks to Prof. Arnold Cassola for providing me with this information.