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AMRC Newsletter

Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre, Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo, BC, Canada

Malaspina Translations Update

The long-term effort to translate into English the extant letters of Alexandro Malaspina, along with some written by related figures, has now come to its conclusion.

Director John Black has been able to complete the remaining tasks after retiring from teaching and administration at the University. The translations and original texts have been posted to the Centre website, where they can be found under the "Research" tab.

The content of the letters is very diverse. Some deal with practical matters associated with his grand scientific and political expedition; others with philosophical musings shared with the friends of his youth, others again with the progress of his protégé Fabio ala Ponzone.

Malaspina wrote in a wide variety of languages, including his native Italian and adopted Spanish, as well as French, English and Latin. This range is reflected in the set of letters preserved on the website, with the exception of Latin.

In that language he wrote *General Theses from Physics*, a bold yet perhaps flawed attempt at an axiomatisation of Newtonian physics, published in 1772 when he was eighteen years old. Its translation into English is nearing completion.

Although the Centre does not have a complete set of Malaspina's letters, our collection, combined with those published by the Hakluyt Society in its translation of his Journal, forms a comprehensive archive. Efforts to extend it may be made in the future, depending on what can be made available to us.

Among other documents currently awaiting our attention is a copy of Malaspina's will, written in French during the Napoleonic occupation of northern Italy. As with all our translations, the results will be displayed on the website to be shared with scholars and the wider world.

In the meantime, the website has also had a font upgrade to improve its legibility.

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The History of Psychology

Honorary Research Associate and retired VIU psychology professor Brad Piekkola writes on the history and present-day rôle of paradigms within his discipline. Many of these paradigms originated in the period now known as the Enlightenment, and so are of great interest to the Centre's work.

Last year, Piekkola's new book *Conceptual and Historical Issues in Psychology* was published by Sage, to enthusiastic reviews.

The book covers key issues, movements and conceptual frameworks that helped to shape psychology, from early philosophical debates between rationalists and empiricists, and between realists and antirealists, through to the emergence of psychology as a science and continuing discussion about objectivity, truth and differing ideas about what a science of psychology should be.

AMRC Website: web.viu.ca/black/amrc/index.htm