

Anastácio da Cunha (1744–1787), o matemático e o poeta

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The “Comissão de Lisboa de Homenagem a Anastácio da Cunha,” created by an initiative of the Department of Mathematics of the University of Lisbon and composed of several other departments of the three main universities in Lisbon, the Portuguese Society of Mathematics and the Portuguese Society for 18th Century Studies, organized an interdisciplinary and international meeting in honor of the Portuguese mathematician and poet José Anastácio da Cunha (Lisbon, 1744–Lisbon, 1787).

In the opening session, honored with the presence of the Secretary of State of Science and Technology (chairman) and of the Secretary of State of Culture, Professor Luis de Albuquerque (Coimbra) lectured on the teaching of mathematics after the remarkable reform of the University of Coimbra in 1772. Besides the evocation (with a few new contributions) of the life, the military formation, and the importance of da Cunha in the history of Portuguese literature, the main talks (in French and Portuguese) dealt with the history of mathematics and da Cunha’s book *Principios Mathematicos* (published in Lisbon, in 1790, and, in French, in Bordeaux in 1811; they were reprinted in facsimile by the University of Coimbra in 1987). The lectures were as follows: I. Grattan-Guinness (London) on “The Calculi of the Late 18th Century”; E. Giusti (Firenze) on “Quelques réflexions sur les ‘Principios’ de da Cunha”; J. Carvalho e Silva (Coimbra) on the “Principios Mathematicos” and A. Leal Duarte (Coimbra) on its influence; J. Mawhin (Louvain) on “Le concept de différentielle chez Da Cunha et ses successeurs”; A. Franco de Oliveira (Lisbon) on “Some Aspects of the Metaphysics of the Calculus in A. da Cunha”; P. Almeida (Lisbon) on “Viewpoints of A. da Cunha on Mechanics”; J. Hernandez (Madrid) on “da Cunha: el espectro y el libertino”; and V. d’Ambrósio (Campinas) on the “Influence of J. A. da Cunha in Brasil.”

The interdisciplinary feature of the meeting appeared in several other interesting lectures on the literature and general history of the Enlightenment in Portugal. The agreeable and modern environment of the Forum Picoas, where the sessions took place, contributed to the success of this first meeting in a country without tradition in the history of mathematics.

In addition to the meeting, the “Comissão de Lisboa” also organized an exhibition in the National Library. Its catalogue, as well as the forthcoming proceedings, can be ordered from the reporter.