

**Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre
Vancouver Island University**

Annual Report 2011-12

Overview

This report covers the period from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012, during which the Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre at Vancouver Island University has continued its research and outreach activities on a number of fronts. Amanda Gryba was appointed student research assistant for the academic year, took part in the organisation of the fourth Biosphere Conversation, and created a useful bibliography on sustainability which was distributed to participants. The Centre is currently in the process of moving to a new location in the building which houses the Liberal Studies and Modern Languages Departments, in order to provide faculty more convenient access to its resources. Several meetings have taken place with a view to revising the mandate of the Centre, and discussions are continuing to this end.

Personnel

Department(s)

Director:	Dr. John Black	Liberal Studies & Philosophy
Associated Scholars:	Dr. Ana María Donat	Modern Languages
	Dr. Oscar Clemotte Silvero	Philosophy
	Dr. Erik Liddell	Eastern Kentucky University
Honorary Associates:	Dr. Barry Gough	Professor Emeritus, Wilfrid Laurier
	Robin Inglis	Director, North Van. Museum (retd.)
	Ian Johnston	Liberal Studies and English (retd.)
	Dr. Russell McNeil	Liberal Studies and Physics (retd.)
Student Assistant:	Amanda Gryba	

Centre Research Projects

General Theses on Physics

The only work published by Alexandro Malaspina during his lifetime consists of an axiomatization in Latin of the metaphysical basis of Newtonian physics. John Black will continue to work on its translation into English, a task which has been interrupted by his recent appointment as Dean of Social Sciences.

The View of the Shore/The View from the Shore

During the summer of 2011, the Centre hosted the Finnish cultural historian Reetta Niemi as student intern. Ms. Niemi worked on an historico-cultural analysis of images derived from the 18th-century visits of European navigators to the northwest coast. In the process she created a comprehensive database of images which now forms part of the Centre's permanent resource collection.

Related Projects

Translation and Web Publication of Source Documents

The project of translating, among other documents, the letters of Alexandro Malaspina and historical newspaper articles about him and his expedition, for publication on the Centre's website, continues. New facsimiles continue to be provided by Australian private scholar Robert King.

Biosphere Conversation Series

The fourth Conversation *The Rôle of the Post-Secondary Institution in Advancing Sustainability on Vancouver Island* took place in October 2011 at VIU's Deep Bay Field Station. The series centres on discussion of the rôle of philosophical discourse in helping people with diverse perspectives on environmental issues achieve a common ground for communication.

Public Events and Other Activity

Malaspina Lecture

The 2012 Malaspina Lecturer is Prof. John Lutz, of the History Department at the University of Victoria. The Lecture itself will be given at the beginning of October 2012, on a topic related to the investigation of oral history, unofficial journals, and other overlooked records of the contact period on the northwest coast.

Additional Public Lecture

In November 2011, the Centre co-sponsored (with the History Department and the Faculties of Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities) a lecture by Vivian Nutton, Professor Emeritus at University College, London, and a leading authority in classical medicine, entitled "Medics or Historians? The Curious History of Medical History."

Alexandro Malaspina Liberal Studies Award

The recipient of the 2011 Award, which honours Alexandro Malaspina's broad range of intellectual achievement and a Liberal Studies student's success in interdisciplinary study, was Jamie Branch.

Respectfully submitted,

John Black

Director

Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre

July 16, 2012