

Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre Vancouver Island University

ANNUAL REPORT 2010-11

OVERVIEW

This report covers the period from April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011, during which the Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre at Vancouver Island University has continued its activities on a number of fronts. Several research projects are ongoing, and the annual Malaspina Lecture was given in the Spring by Robin Inglis, the most recent of the Centre's Honorary Research Associates. Manuela Fahme was appointed student research assistant for the academic year, and took part in the translation of historical letters and newspaper articles from Italian to English.

PERSONNEL

Director: Dr. John Black Liberal Studies & Philosophy

Heritage Research Group:

Dr. Stephen Davies History

Dr. Laurie Meijer-Drees First Nations Studies & History

Dr. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh History

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: Manuela Fahme

INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Centre continues to operate independently of yet in collaboration with other research groupings at Vancouver Island University. The Director of the Centre sits on the Institute for Coastal Research Steering Committee, and this engagement has resulted in a number of useful collaborations. Of particular interest is the Biosphere Conversation Series, co-sponsored by the ICR and the Clayoquot Field Station in Tofino.

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 continues to work on its translation into English during a research leave in early 2011.

Political Axioms regarding America

This document by Malaspina, first published in Spain by Juan Pimentel, consists of the first half of the navigator's report to the Spanish Crown on the political and economic state of the Latin American colonies. The second half, a set of recommendations for radical change in the administration of the colonies, is missing, presumably on account of the sedition trial and imprisonment of Malaspina after his return to Spain. John Black has just completed its translation into English.

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 with the assistance of Manuela Fahme. Some new newspaper facsimiles have been provided by Australian private scholar Robert King. By the end of 2011 the entire web-collection will have been translated.

Biosphere Conversation Series

The fourth Conversation *The Rôle of the Post-Secondary Institution in Advancing Sustainability on Vancouver Island* has been scheduled for 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

In February 2011 the Centre hosted the annual Malaspina Lecturer, in this case our own Robin Inglis, who gave a talk entitled □ Northwest Coast Native Societies and the Malaspina Encounters of 1791. □

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

As a result of contacts developed during 2008-9, the Centre has been accorded □associated team□ status on a major Spanish research project, Malaspina 2010, involving both scientific and historical components. The Director has contributed to the latter component a paper entitled □ Malaspina's *Meditation on Beauty in Nature*, □ completed in February 2011.

ALEXANDRO MALASPINA LIBERAL STUDIES AWARD

As a way of honouring Alexandro Malaspina's broad range of intellectual achievement, the Centre several years ago supplied seed funding for a student award, to go to the Liberal Studies BA major student who shows the greatest commitment to and achievement in interdisciplinary study. The recipient of the 2010 award was Virginia Philipson.