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AMRC Newsletter

Alexandro Malaspina Research Centre, Malaspina University College, Nanaimo, BC, Canada

AMRC Launches Heritage Research Group

The AMRC has completed a significant expansion this week with the formation of the new Heritage Research Group.

The HRG contains five scholars whose ongoing research falls under the theme of the impact of heritage on memory, identity, society and nationhood. Their research will, it is hoped, be used to broaden intercultural understanding, and to facilitate the creation of new research relationships among both faculty and students.

Joining AMRC Director Dr. John Black in the Group are Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, Laurie Meijer-Drees, Patrick Dunae and Stephen Davies. The four are historians, though Dr. Meijer-Drees teaches and writes in the area of First Nations Studies.

Dr. Davies is well-known for his Canadian Letters and Images Project, which has created an online archive of the Canadian experience of World War I. Dr. Dunae is a pioneer in the use of digital Geographic Information Systems to record and analyze public history.

Dr. Meijer-Drees has written *Healing Histories: Aboriginal Peoples and Health Care in Canada* for UBC Press, and Dr. Krasnick Warsh *The Case for Chaos: Women and Health in North America in the 19th and 20th Centuries* for Broadview Press. These two have also collaborated on *An Illustrated Social History of Health Care in Canada* for Lorimer Press.

The HRG will be commencing its public activities with a lecture series in early 2008. Details will be announced in the Newsletter.

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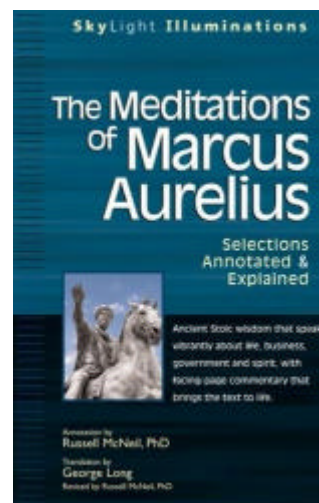
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McNeil's Meditations on Marcus Aurelius

Research Associate Dr. Russell McNeil has just published (with Skylight Paths) a new selected and annotated version of the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius (978-1594732362).

The book sets out to banish the reputation of Marcus' Stoicism as "a cheerless, stiff-upper-lip philosophy of suffering and doom," and "to uncover the startlingly modern relevance his words have today."

Dr. McNeil has selected and re-arranged about half of the 2nd-century Roman Emperor's text,



cancelling the repetitiveness of the original and allowing an orderly appreciation of the thought it contains. He has updated the 19th-century Long translation for the modern ear, and each page of Marcus' words is faced by helpful commentary by the author.

Loyal devotees of Alexandro Malaspina might like to note that the navigator/philosopher gives considerable attention to the philosophy of Stoicism in his own *Meditations on Beauty in Nature* (see next page).

AMRC Website: web.mala.bc.ca/black/amrc/index.htm



Lorill Ireland: "Fabulous!
Awesome! It's all good!"

Return of the Research Assistant

We are delighted to announce that Lorill Ireland has rejoined the Centre as student research assistant for a second year.

Lorill was instrumental last year in setting up the first Biosphere Conversation at the Clayoquot Field Station in Tofino. As well as working on the second Conversation next weekend, she will collaborate with our new research assistant Maria Guadalupe Soto de Podritske on the translation of letters and historical newspaper articles for the AMRC website.

Lorill is a fine example of the interdisciplinary range expected of students in Liberal Studies at Malaspina University College, combining humanities and science (in the form of geology) in her course of study. She is also a fervent and engaged environmentalist, as evidenced by her continuing work in support of World Water Day. She recently completed a 56 km walk to raise funds for new lab equipment for the Geology Department. Such enthusiasm is very welcome at AMRC!

Biosphere Conversation Number Two

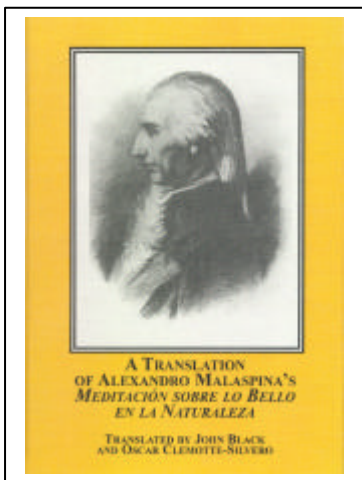
The second in the Biosphere Conversation Series sponsored by AMRC takes place October 12-14 at the Clayoquot Field Station in Tofino, on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

Co-sponsors include the Tofino Botanical Gardens Foundation, BC Healthy Communities, the Institute for Coastal Research and the Institute for Practical Philosophy.

Participants will include some of those who attended the first Conversation, and a number of new voices. The topic will be a continuation of the previous one, but with a more political twist: How can environmental discourse be pursued so that activists, scientists, the media, government and industry learn to speak to one another in a language each understands?

A key principle of the Series is that philosophy can be helpful in answering this question, and so the second conversation will be moderated by a philosopher: Dr. John Black.

An audio synopsis of the first Conversation can be accessed at: <http://web.mala.bc.ca/black/amrc/Events/Past/biosphere.htm>.



Meditación sobre el Bello en la Naturaleza

The Spanish-English parallel-text edition of Malaspina's *Meditation on Beauty in Nature* (ISBN: 978-0-7734-5404-0) is now available from Edwin Mellen Press and Amazon.com.

The work explores philosophical questions about beauty – Is it in the eye of the beholder? What, if there is one, is the ultimate standard of beauty? Does beauty lie in Nature or in Art? –

from a well-read but amateur perspective. Translators Dr. Oscar Clemotte-Silvero and John Black were impressed by Alejandro Malaspina's grasp of the relevant contemporary literature, but found that his thought is less systematic than they had hoped.

Nevertheless, the *Meditation* is a fascinating read for anyone who wants to acquire an understanding of the Spanish Enlightenment.