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On Miracle Ground XVIII

**James Gifford,
President, ILDS**

Durrellians, as On Miracle Ground XVIII rapidly approaches, I look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to Vancouver for a very fine program of presentations in a culturally plural city on the edge of the Pacific and on a campus dedicated to looking outward to the world. We are fortunate to be hosted by Fairleigh Dickinson University—Vancouver, the newest of the University's four campuses, which is in the heart of the Yaletown district of the downtown core: a city of glass on the Ring of Fire.

It would be impossible to repeat the superb work done by Charles Sligh for the Durrell Centenary in London, and trying to replicate such an event would only remind us of what's been done rather than what we're doing next. The Vancouver conference will be in a high-tech, state-of-the-art facility in a young city with new traditions, a city looking to new ideas and new directions for scholarship, and a new generation of readers and writers—but with the iron chains of memory always building the future from the past... One panel will be dedicated to students at the beginning of their careers, and

our poetry reading will feature new artists with works going fast into the 21st century. And for those who cannot be in Vancouver, we will leverage the IT resources as much as possible to provide highlights at a distance and a record of the event. That said, older traditions are returning as well, including the silent auction as a fund-raiser for the ILDS, and a good, solid book launch (the physical print kind!) for our own Ravi Nambiar. More than one full print run of the first *Deus Loci* series (1977-1986) will be on the auction table, and much more is already pledged. We'll also be filming an interview with Ian S. MacNiven about the history and early years of the ILDS and making plans for 2016 as well as the years between and beyond.

The Vancouver conference will mark the end of my final term as ILDS president, and I thank you all for entrusting a second term to me and for your support over the past four years. These years have seen much change, for me as well as for the ILDS. With a new son born into our family in each of my two terms, I've not accomplished all, nor even half, of what I'd planned for the Society, but fine colleagues have carried the torch, and we have many recent successes to celebrate. James Clawson, for instance, has relaunched the online critical bibliography in a database format

through Zotero. Please peruse this resource and, in fine self-reflective fashion, let us know if we've missed any of your own excellent publications. This new bibliography will be a continuously updated resource, and many corrections from the transition are still in progress—when you notice errors or omissions, please let us know. Additionally, the ILDS website, www.lawrencedurrell.org, has been rebuilt and modernized (a seemingly odd phrase to use for the web already!) with capabilities for online membership and renewal, conference registration, and, in the near future, online ordering of ILDS publications and other print material.

In this issue of the *Herald*, you'll find news of Michiko Kawano's translation of Durrell's *Sappho*; the latest of Grove Koger's invaluable bibliographic reviews; Peter Baldwin's newest dispatch from Pudding Island; Charles Sligh's impressions of



"Teaching Durrell"; an update on periodical criticism by Pamela Frances; and a remembrance of Ray Morrison.

Special thanks go to Anne Zahlan and David Radavich for bringing the *Herald* back to a reliable production schedule, and Anna Lillios has yet another issue of *Deus Loci* forthcoming in the near future. I also must express my personal appreciation to my co-conspirator, Vice President Charles Sligh, whose ingenuity, creativity, and seemingly limitless kindness to all have made more happen during the past four years than his modesty would allow me to say. He is a producer and facilitator of great things, and a dear friend to us all.

In addition to my deep thanks to everyone who has contributed to ILDS successes over the past four years, I also want to leave you with a challenge, and if that does not suffice, a demand or presentation of the bill. The Society is at a turning point with young scholars coming to our annual panels at the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture since 1900, many new participants for On Miracle Ground XVIII, and a remarkable flurry of scholarship from outside the Society's membership (my personal highlights here include the exceptionally fine work in Hala Halim's *Alexandrian Cosmopolitanism* [Fordham UP] and Rachel Potter's *Obscene Modernism* [Oxford UP]). I would like to see you all engage with new work, support its production, and expand its scope. When the Durrell Society was founded at the 1980 MLA Convention, our

buzzwords were "postmodern" and "metafiction." This year the MLA will follow in our footsteps to Miracle Ground by holding the 2015 convention in Vancouver, and new fashions and new trends will be in the air. I would like to see the ILDS leading the way with new ideas, new innovations in scholarly work on the 20th century, and highlighting the vitality of Durrell's works in literary studies in the new directions of the 21st century.

You've placed your trust in me for four years, and in May the membership will elect a new President—I hope that the transition will show a desire for new directions and new energies, as well as continued growth based on the fine traditions we've already established.



A New Translation of *Sappho*

Our devoted Durrellian, Professor Michiko Kawano, has recently published a Japanese translation of Lawrence Durrell's play, *Sappho*. Her new book forms part of a second wave of interest in

Durrell's work in Japan. Editions of Durrell texts in Japanese appeared in the fifties soon after the publication of *The Alexandria Quartet*, when Prof. Takamatsu published a translation of *The Quartet* and Prof. Fujikawa followed with one of *The Revolt of Aphrodite*. Unfortunately, a long silence followed, and few Japanese have been concerned with Durrell's writing for a long time.

Prof. Kawano studied British and American Literature at Kyoto University and received her Ph.D. from Bukkyo University. She has taught English and English Literature at several universities in Japan and has published books about Dylan Thomas, T. S. Eliot, and Arthur Miller, as well as an *Introduction to British and American Literature*. Kawano came to Durrell as an apprentice to the late Miho Shimada, long-time member of the Durrell Society, and initially she knew Durrell largely through the criticism. But in 1996 she participated in Miracle Ground IX in Alexandria, and she has since participated in the conferences in Corfu, Rhodes, Ottawa, New Orleans, and most recently London in 2012.

Of the development of her interest in Durrell, Professor Kawano says, "I was attracted to his poetry first, and his neo-romanticism before modernism and post-modernism in his later novels." Because Japanese syntax is so different from that of English, Durrell is very difficult to translate, whether in prose or poetry. Nevertheless, Kawano felt challenged to translate *Sappho* into Japanese because she



Michiko Kawano presenting a paper at On Miracle Ground XVII in London, 2012

In Memoriam: Ray Morrison

James Gifford

I first met Ray Morrison in the pages of a journal. His seminal article “Mirrors and the Heraldic Universe in Lawrence Durrell’s *The Alexandria Quartet*” is probably known to every Durrell researcher, regardless of age or occupation. Morrison remained an influence in text form until we first met on Miracle Ground on Corfu in 2000. He was terribly kind to the young graduate student I was and afterwards to the young scholar I became. I was later privileged to be asked to read his manuscript for *A Smile in His Mind’s Eye: A Study in the Early Works of Lawrence Durrell* and found Ray to be a capacious thinker eager for genuine feedback and an engaged reader who would question and express quibbles. The book, published by the University of Toronto Press, has made a major impact on Durrell studies and provoked us all to return our attention to the early works, an emphasis near my own interests in no small part due to Ray’s influence.

My own editions of *Pied Piper of Lovers* and *Panic Spring* were first transcribed from materials that already bore Ray’s marginalia, and the stamp of his vision shaped my own first reading deeply as, in a real sense, a way of following Durrell’s narrative in Ray’s footprints. If I learned to blaze a trail, it was by following a long path already set down before me with its own directions, rest

points, and interludes for contemplation.

But apart from this scholarly influence, I also saw Ray as a mentor. We met a handful of times in Vancouver to talk shop, discuss books, and chat about the latest concerts or productions from Vancouver Opera. Ray had retired to Vancouver from Ottawa, and he remained very productive, publishing a monograph and two groundbreaking articles on Durrell as an emeritus professor. Still, it was his generosity to discuss the discipline, collegial support in a community of scholars, and the long tradition of scholarship he’d seen across his career that most impressed me. Apart from his knowledge of specific writers, whether Durrell, Forster, or Benjamin Britten, it was his generosity in sharing lunch or coffee and freely giving of his intellectual energies and good spirits that I admired. He was endlessly pleasant and had only kind comments for everyone, even while giving a critical eye to their work with an impressive acumen that I still endeavour to approximate. I learned from Ray what it meant to be a *good* colleague, one who gives of his energies to others’ work, encouraging with kindness without masking the necessary critique.

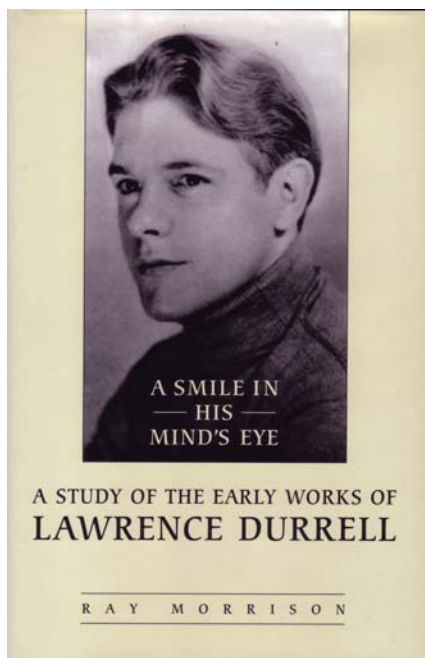
My fondest memory of Ray dates from the 2006 conference in Victoria when the entire Durrellian crew went stomping about Craigdarroch Castle overlooking the Pacific and what I think of as the loveliest city on its shore. He stayed below in the shade of the magnificent oaks on

admires the title character’s faith in humanity and her way of life.

In publishing the new translation, Professor Kawano furthers a revival of interest in Durrell in Japan. In 2013 and 2014, volumes of *The Quintet* were translated into Japanese and have been or are being published by a young professor named Fujii. Kawano hopes interest in Durrell’s writing in Japan will develop further. On behalf of Durrellians everywhere, the editors express congratulations and best wishes for *Sappho’s* success in finding a good readership.



the castle's grounds, chatting with his old friends perched on the short stone wall beside the green. I saw the scene from the building's spire, but Ray stood out, laughing and smiling—in retrospect, it made me recognize that the kind support and collegial interest in my work I had received was the same he gave us all. I saw him less after I returned to Vancouver with the pressures of a new campus and a new administrative post, and news of Ray's death came as a shock. I know that my sadness at not having had a chance for another discussion, another coffee, or another view of him resting in the spring sun is shared by everyone he knew in the ILDS. I've enjoyed returning to Ray's works recently, hearing his voice reading in my inner ear, as I do now with too many colleagues gone ahead of us, and I hope others in the Society will bring back his voice, even if only for a few minutes, with renewed reading and very fond recollections. *Ave atque vale.*



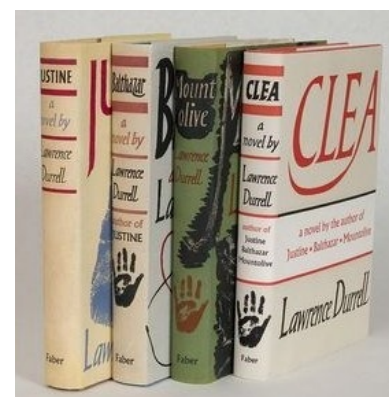
On Teaching Durrell

**Charles Sligh,
Vice President, ILDS**

In the spring term of 2011, I had the good fortune to teach an upper-level “Seminar on the Novel” in which Lawrence Durrell’s *The Alexandria Quartet* played a role at once conspicuous and decisive. The course was, in many ways, designed as a sequel to another genre-specific course, “Development of the English Novel.” That other course had sought to chart what has by now become familiarly known as the “Rise of the Novel,” starting with Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and working its way through readings from Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Jane Austen, Sir Walter Scott, and George Eliot. By contrast, my Spring 2011 “Seminar in the Novel” had as its exclusive focus a reading list of works coming quite late in the novelistic tradition, all of which, arguably, presented decisive attempts by their authors to come to terms with the generic inheritance. The syllabus for my “Seminar in the Novel” included:

- 1) Lawrence Durrell, *The Alexandria Quartet* (1957-1960)
- 2) Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967)
- 3) Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity’s Rainbow* (1973)
- 4) John Crowley, *Little, Big* (1982)
- 5) Angela Carter, *Nights at the Circus* (1984)

As this reading list makes clear, all of the works chosen for the seminar exhibited some sort of



“knowingness” about their status as “novels”—a self-conscious awareness about what had been previously accomplished in the tradition. (Other titles originally considered for the syllabus had included Italo Calvino’s *If on a winter’s night a traveller* [1979] and David Foster Wallace’s *Infinite Jest* [1996].) At the same time, all of the course readings evidenced their authors’ desire to get beyond established benchmarks of style, narrative form, thematic content, and moral enquiry. Critical readings were drawn from the writings of Wolfgang Iser (*The Implied Reader*), Patricia Waugh (“What Is Metafiction?”), and Brian McHale (*Constructing Postmodernism*). Ultimately, it was my hope that the course would provide students with a working laboratory by means of which they might come to better understand their critical presumptions about the novel.

The semester’s reading began with Durrell’s *Quartet*, a work that ably met all of the above criteria. It was welcome to see that Durrell’s tetralogy had not lost its ability to deliver powerful impressions. These young readers in 2011 were no less surprised, intrigued, enchanted, and dismayed than

the readers who first encountered the *Quartet* in its moment of debut. That noted, these twenty-first century students (many of them experienced majors in English literature) confessed that it was the lingering uncertainties of *Justine*, rather than its “exoticism,” that proved most memorable and significant. These students were intrigued by that first novel’s precariously open sense of interpretative possibility. As several class members noted in our discussion, there is perhaps no greater emblem of the deep dubieties that dapple *Justine* and the larger *Quartet* than the mysterious and troubling “gap” created by Durrell’s decision not to name the narrator within the pages of the first novel. In noticing the manifold problems of identification, attribution, and verification created by that blank space of the unnamed narrator, the students recognized that *Justine* serves to make clear the underlying problem of knowledge inherent in all works of prose fiction. A series of questions ensued. “To whom should we attribute the writing in *Justine*?” (Several students admitted that, given the immediacy of the autobiographical tone, they had mentally substituted “Lawrence Durrell” for the unnamed “I.” It was delightful to listen to these students reconsider their previous understanding once Darley was revealed, late in the pages of *Balthazar*.) “How do we know what we know about any of these characters, this history, and this world?” “Who exactly is quoting these conversations and these documents? And if the narrator of *Justine* freely quotes

from diaries, letters, novels, and recollected conversations—texts to which we readers never do gain direct access—well, in summation, how does one ‘know’ anything in a verifiable sense, within the pages of *Justine* or in any other novel?” To put first matters first, the class came to the stunning realization that no other work of fiction in their common experience had made them pause and consider the elementary, ambiguous mysteries of the Quotation Mark—that pretense of verification that serves as the very foundation of every novelist’s prestidigitatory enterprise.

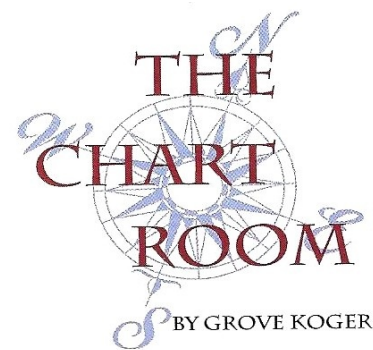
Durrell memorably closes *The Alexandria Quartet* with Darley reflecting upon the necessity for writers and readers to recognize ambiguity while also embracing the illusion inherent in the novelist’s art:

Yes, one day I found myself writing down with trembling fingers the four words (four letters! four faces!) with which every story-teller since the world began has staked his slender claim to the attention of his fellow-men. Words which presage simply the old story of an artist coming of age. I wrote: “Once upon a time....”

And I felt as if the whole universe had given me a nudge!

It was pleasing for this teacher to see that, even five decades after its original publication, *The Alexandria Quartet* had lost none of its powerful ability to “nudge.”

**Register for OMG XVIII at
www.lawrencedurrell.org.**



In a March 1, 2014 entry in his always fascinating blog, Michael Haag draws attention to a little-known piece of writing by Lawrence Durrell: his brief introduction to *Three Caravan Cities: Petra, Jerash, Baalbek, and St. Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai*, by Paul Gotch. Haag points out that the book, which was published in Alexandria by Whitehead Morris in 1945, fails to mention Durrell on its cover or title page, and goes on to discuss the poignant circumstances under which Durrell came to write the introduction.

New works on Durrell include an important study from C. Ravindran Nambiar, *Indian Metaphysics in Lawrence Durrell’s Novels*. Published by Cambridge Scholars, the work includes a foreword by Corinne Alexandre-Garner and an introduction by Ian MacNiven, the latter of whom observes that Nambiar brings a “vital new perspective to Durrell studies.”

And speaking of new works, I realize that I’ve been inexcusably remiss in not mentioning two other important volumes—*Durrell and the City: Collected Essays on Place*, edited by Donald Kaczvinsky, and *The Stronger Sex: The Fictional*

Women of Lawrence Durrell, by Jim Nichols. Kaczvinsky arranges the essays in the former in five sections, including “Durrell’s Alexandria” and, somewhat unexpectedly, “Durrell and the American Literary Landscape.” In the latter, Nichols argues that throughout his *oeuvre*, Durrell “displays a clear and consistent understanding of and belief in woman as the center of human experience.” Both volumes are published by Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Hala Halim’s *Alexandrian Cosmopolitanism: An Archive* includes “Uncanny Hybridity into Neocolonialism: Lawrence Durrell,” as well as sections on C.P. Cavafy, E.M. Forster, and Bernard de Zogheb, a society columnist noted for his operetta libretti. Writing about de Zogheb a few months after his death in 1999, Halim noted that “his keen eye for detail and excellent memory ... made him an invaluable resource for researchers writing on the social, architectural and cultural history of Alexandria.” Halim’s book is published by Fordham University Press.

Richard Pine’s “Durrell School of Corfu,” a summary of that fine institution’s origins, programs, and library, appears in the second edition of *Greece and Britain since 1945*, edited by David Wills and published by Cambridge Scholars.

Richard Aldington’s 1929 novel *Death of a Hero* has been reissued by Penguin with an introduction by James H. Meredith, a contributing editor of the journal *War, Literature, and the Arts*. Although Durrell and

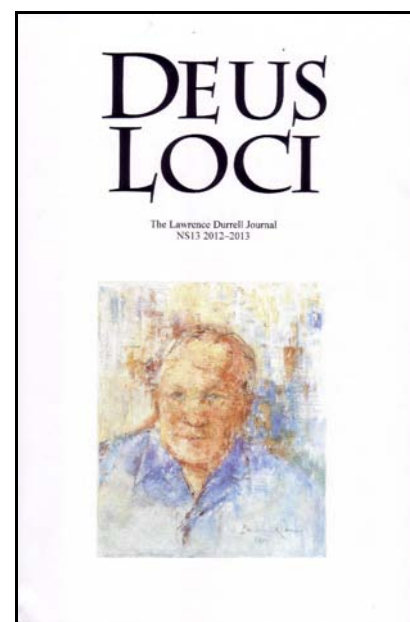
Aldington had exchanged letters in 1933, they met for the first time in 1957 and became fast friends, carrying on a lively correspondence until Aldington’s death in 1962. (Ian MacNiven and Harry T. Moore collected the highlights in *Literary Lifelines*, published in 1981 by Viking.)

In number 30 of the *Herald*, I mentioned the cover illustrations that the late John Craxton had provided for most of the John Murray editions of Patrick Leigh Fermor’s books. As our British readers may have noted, Murray art director Sara Marafini has found an equally talented artist, Ed Kluz, to design the atmospheric cover of *The Broken Road*, which concludes the trilogy Fermor had begun with *A Time of Gifts*. As Kluz explains in his blog, he felt that he had to create a jacket that “sat comfortably” alongside Craxton’s series while preserving his own style.

Building on the wave of interest attending the publication of *The Broken Road* and Artemis Cooper’s biography, John Murray has announced yet another book from Fermor, *Abducting a General*, due to appear October 9. This is presumably the lengthy account of the abduction of General Heinrich Kreipe that Fermor prepared for one of the volumes of the “Purnell History of the Second World War” and that apoplectically frustrated editor Barrie Pitt had to cut drastically. (See Cooper for the details.) Supplementary material will include Fermor’s intelligence reports from Crete.

A good friend of both Durrell and Fermor, Xan Fielding wrote accounts of his own remarkable exploits in peace and

war in *The Stronghold: Four Seasons in the White Mountains of Crete* and *Hide and Seek: The Story of a War-Time Agent*. Originally published in the 1950s, the two books have been reprinted in attractive new paperback editions by Paul Dry Books of Philadelphia, each with a biographical sketch and a foreword by Robert Messenger. Fielding and Fermor feature prominently (and Durrell is quoted) in *The Ariadne Objective*, by Wes Davis. Subtitled *The Underground War to Rescue Crete from the Nazis*, the book is published by Crown.



The NS 2012-13 issue of *Deus Loci* with a 1990 portrait of Durrell by Barbara Robinson.

Recent Contributions to Durrell Studies...

Pamela J. Francis

It has been my good fortune this semester to lead a seminar that I have called "Studies in Modernism." My students and I have investigated many differentisms and aspects of the ever-elusive modernism, including modernist science and the atonality of Schoenberg's music. But it's clear that these exceptionally advanced teenagers have most enjoyed our investigation of surrealism. We travelled to Houston to take in exhibitions of works by Magritte and Braque, and in the two weeks after the excursion, we discussed surrealist art, surrealist film (we bravely screened *Un Chien Andalou*), and surrealist drama. And then we moved on to tackle post-surrealism.

Fortunately, Durrell scholarship has claimed a critical space for this particular moment in late modern literature. A recent issue of the *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* featured a collection of essays addressing "Anarchism's Modernisms." ILDS President James Gifford's contribution to the issue focuses on the Villa Seurat network of periodicals, including *The Booster* and *Delta*, edited by Durrell, and their influence on and connection to the New Apocalypse poets back in London. According to Gifford, the "anarchist ordering of unconscious impulses" characteristic of the New Apocalypse, New Romantic, and Personalist (think LD's *Personal*

Landscape) poets is a "post-surrealist" turn originating from the Villa Seurat network. Here "post" implies a response to surrealism, rather than a superseding or total rejection; as Gifford explains, Henry Miller and G.S. Fraser saw themselves as "rewriting and rethinking metaphors arising from the unconscious and thereby bringing the creative process under conscious control, as opposed to surrealism's free rein on the imagination" (286). Durrell played an important role in the development of Fraser's ideas both before and after their time in Cairo, but you'll have to read the article to find out the many other ways Durrell was connected to the post-surrealist movement.

I'm always amused—and pleased—by the number of poems, memoirs, and even trilogies inspired by Larry's life and literature. Perhaps the oddest in recent months is *Buffets and Breadlines: Is the World Really Broke or Just Grossly Mismanaged?* This is the first in an *Athena Trilogy*, a trio of economics texts the author says to have been "inspired by a delightful holiday in Corfu. . . and in humble emulation of Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*." Economist Kimon Valaskakis then proceeds to explain LD's use of multiple perspective as a useful structure in his economic theories!

More often, Larry inspires creative, rather than informative, writing. The newest collection of poems by Frances Garrett Connell, a former Peace Corps volunteer and current academic, activist, essayist, and poet, is titled *Between the Shadow and the Soul:*

Random Poems. One of its random poems, "Notes from Lawrence Durrell on Corfu," demonstrates a sensitive familiarity with *Prospero's Cell*; more endearingly, she participates in an exercise much loved by Durrellians: remembering the first encounter with Durrell's Alexandria or Provence or Corfu. Connell, like most of us, remembers exactly: "Reading you in that icy Kabul winter of 1975/ when the sun escaped."

Two recent articles that *should* have been of great interest to Durrell scholars sadly disappoint. Transaction Publishers' series *Culture & Civilization* features periodic themed volumes, and their latest (January 2014) is titled *Travel, Discovery, Transformation*. I was glad to see "The Journey to Greece in the American and the Greek Modernist Literary Imagination: Henry Miller and George Seferis" by Nektaria G. Klapaki, but I was ultimately disappointed. Durrell gets some type, of course: the "credit" for introducing Miller to Katsimbalis and therefore Seferis. But anyone writing on Miller in Greece surely "owes" Larry more than just a sentence or two.

The second article, "Parallel Women Characters and Femininity in Durrell's and Kazantzakis's Work" by Helena Gonzalez-Vaquerizo, is disappointing for reasons beyond any issues of loyalty. As I began reading, I wondered if Gonzalez-Vaquerizo would make the case for any strong parallel between Durrell and Kazantzakis, but she did not. Certainly, she is well-read in both authors' work, but

she too often asserts similarities that never pan out. Despite Gonzalez-Vaquerizo's claims of a strong role for women in *The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel*, I'm inclined to agree with Poulakidas' assertion that, "There is not a dominant heroine or female protagonist in any of [Kazantzakis'] works." A strong female character might upstage his strong males like Zorba, Captain Michales, and Father Yanaros. Gonzalez-Vaquerizo employed James Nichols' recent work on Durrell's women (*The Stronger Sex*, 2011) as a framework for her comparison, but there is no way to compare Durrell's Justine to any of the women in Kazantzakis, even to the Magdalen, certainly the strongest and most intriguing of his fictional women. Furthermore, while Kazantzakis accepts and respects the flesh, his ultimate goal is to turn it into spirit. In Durrell, the flesh is, if not its own religion, its own religious practice.

Finally, I draw your attention to a recent article in *Modernism/Modernity*: "Entoporn, Remy de Gourmont, and the Limits of Posthuman Sexuality." In this article about the French Symbolist's unusual (it addresses the sex lives of insects—thus the "entoporn" of the title) essay, *The Natural Philosophy of Love*, Michael O'Driscoll employs Durrell as an example of the influence of Gourmont on Anglo-American literary modernism. O'Driscoll cites Ray Morrison's identification of *The Natural Philosophy of Love* as a major influence on *Pied Piper of Lovers* and *The Alexandria Quartet*, and

comments that Gourmont's ideas "provided him with the ground for his attacks on conventional bourgeois values" (632). O'Driscoll then traces Gourmont's influence on other modernists, including T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. This article is useful (and intriguing), not just for those interested in Durrell's intellectual development, but also for those interested in the wider study of French Symbolism—and yes, entomology.

Articles on Durrell:

Gifford, James. "From *Booster* to *Bolero*: Post-Surrealism and Apocalyptic Anarchism." *The Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* 4.2 (2013): 270-298.

Gonzalez-Vaquerizo, Helena. "Parallel Women Characters and Femininity in Durrell's and Kazantzakis's Work." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 15.4 (2013): <<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.2090>>

Klapaki, Nektaria. "The Journey to Greece in the American and the Greek Modernist Literary Imagination: Henry Miller and George Seferis." *Travel, Discovery, Transformation. Culture and Civilization*, Vol. 6. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2014: 59-80.

O'Driscoll, Michael. "Entoporn, Remy de Gourmont, and the Limits of Posthuman Sexuality." *Modernism/modernity* 20.4 (Nov. 2013): 627-643.

Inspired by LD:

Bower, Jonathan. "Reading and Re-reading Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*." *Views from an Irish Barbarian*. Paragon Publishing, 2013. (It's worth noting that Mr. Bower has also just published a novel, *In Love in Alexandria*.)

Connell, Frances Garrett. *Between the Shadow and the Soul: Random Poems*. AuthorHouse, 2013.

Valaskakis, Kimon. *Buffets and Breadlines: Is the World Really Broke or Just Grossly Mismatched?* AuthorHouse, 2013.

Thirty Years Ago in the Herald

This excerpt comes from incoming president Jim Nichols' column in the first issue (Volume I, Number 1) of The Lawrence Durrell Society Herald, edited and produced by Gregory Dickson, Susan S. MacNiven, and Lawrence W. Markert, and dated 15 May 1984.

Michael Begnall has sent welcome news: He and the Department of English of Pennsylvania State University are willing to host On Miracle Ground IV. Speaking of conferences, I was very happy with your comments about OMG III [held at Muskingum College in Ohio] and wish to share part of a letter from Bill Godshalk:

Dear Jim,

What a wonderful conference. I was so very pleased with everything that my whole outlook on literature—and especially Lawrence Durrell—was renewed. I realize that sounds hyperbolic, but nevertheless it's true. I'm glad that I finally made it—and you can be sure that I'll be on hand next time for the next conference.

I look forward to seeing Bill and all the rest of you in University Park, Pennsylvania in 1986.

Views from Pudding Island . . . Mary Mollo and Lawrence Durrell

Peter Baldwin

We shuttled for a while along the ink-shadowed line of cliffs where the engine's heartbeats were puckered up and thrown back at us in volleys. And so at last outwards upon the main deep, feeling the soft swelling unction of the water's rhythms begin to breast us up, cradle and release us, as if in play. The night was superlatively warm and fine. A dolphin broke once, twice at the bow. A course was set.
(*The Alexandra Quartet*, London, Faber & Faber, 2005 (pb), 667)

It takes but a short step of the imagination to read this passage from *Clea* as descriptive of an early encounter between Lawrence Durrell and the photographer Mary Mollo (or Hadgkinson to use her official married name since she had married Henry in 1943). The meeting occurred when Mary's photojournalist assignment enabled her to join Larry and Eve on an April 1946 duty tour for Larry of the Dodecanese Islands. Larry had taken Eve with him to his new post as Information Officer on the war-ravaged island of Rhodes, and both were excited at being able to share their lives without the encumbrances of life in Alexandria. In any case, I can hardly imagine that the duty was onerous, as it entailed touring the group of islands to the west of

Rhodes. At long last Larry was back on his beloved Greek soil. Larry's account of the trip is given in chapter 3 of *Reflections on a Marine Venus*. [See also Ian MacNiven's biography of Durrell, p. 323.] By some happy chance (one might appropriately term it "uncanny" in the Freudian sense), Mary had already started to admire Larry's work, having read that bold celebration of the English language, *The Black Book*.

At the chance of the trip with Larry, Mary "was terribly excited at the prospect of landing on Hellenic soil. The hazards of war had sent me to all sorts of places, but Greece was the country that attracted me most." Larry and Mary shared a deep love of Greece, perhaps both having a sense of uprootedness from their pasts. Says Mary, "I have never loved another country as much as I loved Greece."

On the personal level, Mary was a witness to how happy Larry and Eve were when they lived in the Villa Cleobulus (1945-1947). Later, when Eve was pregnant with Sappho and had travelled to Oxford for her confinement, Mary provided companionship. Indeed, Mary suggested Sappho's forenames, a jest taken seriously, and she was also Sappho's godmother. The friendship continued through Larry's Cyprus years but, sadly, Mary did not keep Larry's letters from that period.



Having long sought an excuse to examine some of Durrell's work now housed in the British Library, I followed the on-line catalogue and quickly spotted a discrete collection suitable for examination and reflection in this

essay for the *Herald*: the small archive of correspondence between Mary Mollo and both Larry and Eve. Not surprisingly, we do not have Mary's side of the correspondence, but we do have letters from both Eve and Larry. Mary's memoir of Larry can be found in the selection of contributions from Larry's friends in *Twentieth Century Literature*, vol. 33, Fall 1987—"Larry, my friend."

The British Library archive is well catalogued and sorted, and for my examination I divided my notes into three categories: letters from Eve to Mary; letters from Larry to Mary before Larry moved to France; and letters and cards from Larry to Mary after he moved to France. The items in this last group are increasingly brief, as time, creative pressures, and perhaps age, limited Larry's ability as a correspondent. In this piece and for the longer essay I plan for *Deus Loci*, I am focussing on the first two categories. For the sake of completeness, I have quoted from one or two letters printed in *Spirit of Place*. (Dates of the letters, so far as they are ascertainable, appear in brackets after the resume of each letter.) These letters bear out the enduring nature of Mary's friendship with Larry as well as with Eve and Claude.

It is evident, as we well know, that Larry found Argentina where he and Eve lived in 1947-48 almost intolerable from the outset of his stay. He even says, "I really think I would prefer England to staying here" (7 February 1948). The hot, saturated climate, a strong contrast to the refreshing Aegean

winds, affected both Larry and Eve badly. Mary was also exiled from Greece, and, also in February 1948, Eve writes warmly and at length to her. The climate is again a source of complaint, as Eve seeks to comfort Mary against some unspecified personal catastrophe. What is evident is the warmth of the friendship both Larry and Eve feel towards Mary as all pine for Greece. Eve records how Larry has turned to painting as a way of dispelling his tensions. Later, in 1967, Larry was to ask Mary to pretend to be the sister of Oscar Epfs and to pose as her in engaging with likely purchasers at the opening of Larry's first exhibition of Epfs paintings in Paris. Regrettably, Mary's view of the work of Oscar Epfs is not recorded!

In a letter from June 1948, Eve records that Larry is considering a change in his stated position on the royalist regime if it would help him get a job back in Greece. At this time, Larry is seeing his poetry collection *On Seeming to Presume* through the press at Faber and Faber and has written the verse play *Sappho*, which he hopes Faber will publish. A focus for Larry's work is the series of essays he is preparing for the British Council and which would be published in 1952 as *A Key to Modern British Poetry*. In an undated letter, Larry encourages Mary to keep on at her own attempts to write—just

the act of putting pen to paper helps one understand one's feelings. Larry has decided that he cannot risk another *Black Book*, at least with his Paris publisher out of action.

The ever-elusive return to Greece causes Larry to compare Yugoslavia unfavourably with the country he loves so much. There is only one letter to Mary from the Belgrade years extant in the British Library collection (25 October 1950). In it, Larry seems bursting with creative ideas, but circumstances frustrate his attempts to get them down on paper. Yet he is delighted at the second-hand Rolleiflex camera Mary has bought for him. Already a sense of loss of the old camaraderie with Miller and other contemporaries is reflected in this letter. Moving from post to post, job to job means also the loss of regular contact with Larry's established writer friends.

Mary summarises her friendship with Larry thus: "A man of simplicity, yet with probing intelligence, he can be generous, humorous, sometimes cruel; always he is an indefatigable worker. He once described himself as a 'literary adventurer.' I have known him for so long and under so many different conditions that it is an effort for me to perceive him as Lawrence Durrell, the literary giant, and not just as Larry, my friend."

Durrell in Kentucky: The Louisville Conference

Every year since 2003, the International Lawrence Durrell Society has sponsored one or two invited panels at the *Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture since 1900*. At this conference a number of other societies dedicated to such authors as Virginia Woolf, H.D., and Iris Murdoch also offer dedicated sessions. In addition to the Durrell panels, the ILDS Executive Board meets to plan the Society's programs and activities, and ILDS members present in Louisville gather for drinks at the Brown and go out for dinners on the town.

"Durrell and Place: Translation, Migration, Location" is the theme of the May 2014 "On Miracle Ground XVIII" in Vancouver. Those who wish to continue the discussion should consider joining fellow Durrellians in Louisville next February. For information on the Society's participation in the Louisville Conference and for guidelines for submitting a proposal, contact James Clawson at <mailto:clawson@gmail.com>.

