



# The International Lawrence Durrell Society

## The Herald

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### The Herald - Editorial

I start with an apology for the late publication of this issue of The Herald. This is my responsibility but I have been heavily committed in health and other family issues over the last six months which have been my priorities. Having said that, a quick look at the contents list will show you that there is plenty to interest and entertain you. I pay tribute to the contributors to this newsletter who have been very prompt to respond to my request for copy. I have set what I hope will be a realistic date for copy for the next Herald, mid- March for mid-April publication.

Our incoming Society President, Jamie Gifford, writes about his perspectives for his tenure as President. Please look at the new tally on Executive Board members approved at the Society’s members-meeting last June (2022) at:

[https://lawrencedurrell.org/wp\\_durrell/society/officers/](https://lawrencedurrell.org/wp_durrell/society/officers/)

Please, now immerse yourselves in the treats which follow!

Peter Baldwin.

Fellow Durrellians,

I write with both thanks and regrets. The most obvious are my thanks for being elected again to the ILDS presidency and my regrets for communicating only now. We, the executive board, have much to do for the Society and find ourselves at an exciting juncture not only in Durrell Studies and appreciation of his work, but also for societies such as ours and for the world. We are emerging, whether early or late, from a pandemic, and while we all have much to process from the experiences of the past few years, we also have much to learn about what worked and what did not. It is a “Stop, Start, Continue” conundrum to find what things from the times in which we live should be filed under each term. Finding the “new normal” is still an open question, as is how to balance our face-to-face gatherings as a global society with the opportunities that remote participation or other innovations make possible. I can only say the ILDS executive is learning and wants to learn more.

But I must return to the thanks... We all owe a great debt to outgoing ILDS President Isabelle Keller-Privat who steered the Society through extraordinary challenges. I’m certain she had not signed on to manage the ILDS through such times! Despite the unavoidable delays and struggles around OMG XXI, she organized a remarkably successful conference last summer, against all odds. From my own perspective, she not only met but exceeded all expectations, and indefatigable as ever, she and Anne Zahlan are now preparing an edited collection based partly on the event. I (and we all) owe Isabelle great thanks for everything she achieved and the kind sponsorship she secured from l’Université Toulouse – Jean Jaures as our host for OMG XXI.



I also want to thank the authors who submitted work for the Godshalk Prize.

As with all such competitions, only one prize can be given, but this was an exceptionally difficult decision. The quality and achievement of the finalists shows the distinguished scholarship that lies ahead. The talent and achievement from all of them point to not only a bright future for the ILDS but also a bright legacy for what the ILDS has already done. If you did not hear their papers presented during the conference, I hope that you will read them in the near future (see pages 6 & 7).

I am also bound to offer thanks to everyone on the Executive Board of the ILDS (and beyond) who give their energies to publishing *The Herald*, maintaining the website, managing the Society’s social media (please follow on Twitter and Facebook!), keeping our finances on a solid footing, editing, distributing, publishing, &c., &c., and many other activities. If there’s a lesson the pandemic years have taught me, it is that nothing sustains, grows, or flourishes without the goodwill and genuine care of good people.

I have other regrets as well... I will refrain from adding names other than my own, but I regret the slowness of my first communication reaching society members. I will, however, also mention those whom I regret not seeing at future meetings. Long-time members H.R. “Stoney” Stoneback, Brewster Chamberlin, and Joe Bratcher have proceeded ahead of all of us and will be missed. Ave atque vale. Hail and farewell, my friends. I learned from all of you, and thanks to your writing, I will continue to learn from you, as will many others.

I won’t mention more regrets. Instead, I want to close this letter with hopes. The coming year means decisions about our next On Miracle

Ground in 2024. We have options, but proposals are welcome and wanted (see the ILDS website under “Conferences”), as are members’ views on what such an event should include. As I mentioned above, we have much to learn from the past few years. Accessibility, best practices, and ways of reaching everyone “where they are” or “as they are able to be” remain unanswered questions – please share your solutions, or if not, at least your hopes. Input from ILDS members is an enormous help here, and my (wildly overrun) inbox is open for all of your thoughts.

There are also hopes to improve what we do to promote the study and appreciation of Durrell’s works. These hopes range from our support for publications, awards for writing, online and in-person events, and outreach beyond the ILDS. There are also the hopes each of you hold for the ILDS – the board wants to hear about them. Please let us know, and we will try. Also,

contrary to the spirit of *The Alexandria Quartet*, your direct suggestions are welcome\* as emails rather than displaced objects, great interlinears, or diaries that are actually drafts of a novel. So that...

\* Reach out to any of us on the Executive Board or to me using the contact information on the ILDS website. Unlike my predecessor who saw great challenges arrive unexpectedly, I know that I am stepping into a time of uncertainty, so the more I can hear from you all, the more I can be sure we address. Oh, and if the ending of this President’s Letter seems confusing, the final pages of *Justine* will clear it all up...that is, unless you’re reading the American edition. In which case, send me an email to ask why that matters, and tell me what you’re hoping for in OMG XXII at the same time.

—James Gifford

### Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture – 2023

The International Lawrence Durrell Society will host “‘Emanations of the ground’: Disruptive Landscapes, Modernist Identities” at the 50th annual Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture. The conference will take place the weekend of February 23-25, 2023. The conference planners have not yet set the exact day and time for the ILDS panel, but please refer to the IDLS website for updates: <https://www.lawrencedurrell.org/>

The panel will include the following presentations:

- James Gifford’s “Lawrence Durrell and Samuel R. Delany; or, ‘Trouble in Alexandria: An Ambiguous Heterotopia’”
- James M. Clawson’s “Rejections of a Machine Venus: Reflecting on Durrell and Digital Humanities”
- Pamela J. Francis’s “Gothic Spaces in the Alexandria Quartet: The Children’s Brothel as Heterotopia”
- James M. Decker’s “‘Dead for me now’: Henry Miller, King Vidor, and the Deleuzian Time-Image”

Please join us in Louisville for what should be an entertaining and enlightening panel as well as a full weekend of Durrellian fellowship.

James Decker

## On Miracle Ground XXI: Toulouse, France; June 2022

**Organized by Isabelle Keller- Privat on behalf of the International Lawrence Durrell Society.**

Following pandemic uncertainties that led OMG XXI to be organized online, Durrell scholars and readers from all over the world were finally able to convene virtually via Zoom in Toulouse from 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Although we all agreed that we dearly missed the casual chats and learned discussions that we all remembered from coffee breaks, tasty banquets or wine and cheese tasting from previous conferences, there was something special about this first online OMG conference. Our participants' dedication, cheerfulness and undaunted professionalism brought about very lively and thought-provoking exchanges throughout these intense three days. And I must say I was more than impressed by the coherence, the dynamics and the depth of our conversations that brought together academics and non-academics who triggered a new and refreshing approach to Durrellian studies.

Our brilliant keynote speakers, Philippe Hoffmann, who spoke to us from The École Pratique des Hautes Études (UMR 8584, Paris), and Adel Darwish, the distinguished author of the much-acclaimed recent portrait of Alexandria (*Alexandria Adieu. A Personal History 1939 – 60*, London: Nomad Publishing, 2022) provided us with fruitful insights. The former explored the links between Plotinus and the city of Alexandria in *The Quartet*, bringing to light the characteristics of neo-Platonism and tracking Durrell's sources, while the latter brought us back to the historical and political complexities of the multi-faceted city, spurring moving and inspiring talks. We were very sad not to be able to welcome Cécile Oumhani, who was forced to cancel her reading at the last minute; but thanks to Peter Baldwin's help a reading of her poetry was organised that included one so far unpublished translation of her beautiful text "Passeurs de rives" that best exemplifies Cécile's work, constantly "ferrying between the shores" of language and art. Another memorable event was the Reading Seminar on Lawrence Durrell's "Matapan" organized by Peter Baldwin who initiated a new type of interactive session, bringing together learned readers and enthusiastic lovers of Durrell's poetry.

It would be impossible to give a fair account of the scope and wealth of the discussions that unfolded over these three days. Suffice it to say that it rekindled everybody's desire to meet more often and to rely, perhaps more often than in the past, upon virtual modes of communication that bring together well-recognized academics, young scholars, readers and poets whose voices we were most privileged to listen to during the White Mice Poetry Competition Session artfully orchestrated by David Radavich.

All of this would not have been possible without the invaluable support and enthusiasm of all our ILDS members and Board members. Thank you all for your dedication, your generosity and your inspiring stamina!

Finally, allow me to express heartfelt congratulations to our new Board and our recently elected new President and Vice-President, James Gifford and Pamela J. Francis whose long-standing commitment to our Society and much appraised expertise in Durrellian studies are only equalled by their generosity and loyalty to all of those who have been privileged to count them as their friends over the past years. I wish them both the best of luck and a very successful OMG XXII!

Isabelle Keller-Privat

*Editor's comment. As a participant of OMG XXI, may I express our own thanks and heartfelt admiration for Isabelle's professional and skilled organisation of this conference? I was part of the committee supporting the conference but felt I had little to do against the competence of Isabelle in setting up and running this conference. Well done, Isabelle.*

### **William Godshalk Prize for New Durrell Scholarship**

This year the Jury received four submissions and each of them has shown real academic involvement, meticulous scholarship and a subtle reading of Lawrence Durrell's work, thus making the Jury's choice considerably difficult!

The winner of the 2022 William Godshalk Prize for New Durrell Scholarship is Ali Reza Shahbazin for his paper "Here Once Lay the Body of the Great Alexander: From the Poetic Image of Alexandria to Poetic Dwelling." This paper has been deemed highly promising for the development of an original interdisciplinary perspective—literary and architectural—shedding new light upon a central characteristic of Lawrence Durrell's writing: the concept of poetic dwelling.

I would also like to commend, in the name of the Jury, the other submissions: Christopher M Bacon's "Conflicting Cosmologies: The Herculean Labour That Transformed *A Marine Venus*" as well as Luca Barbaglia & Bartolo Casiraghi's joint paper "'A HAZY FREEHAND COPY' Lawrence Durrell & Georges Bataille." Both papers struck the Jury as being extremely well written, clearly structured, evincing in-depth reading, and promising fruitful developments and a renewed insight into Durrell's work. Thank you all for providing us with such a stimulating reading! We hope that interest in Durrell's work among young scholars will continue to expand and we express very special thanks to Steve Moore for his most generous donation and his commitment to support emerging scholars.

As winner of the 2022 William Godshalk Prize Ali Reza Shahbazin will receive a check from our treasurer as well as an official letter. Like our last year's winner, Athanasios Dimakis, Ali will also be awarded a one-year membership in the International Lawrence Durrell Society and we all very much hope that we can fully celebrate both Prizes at the Conference banquet of OMG XXII.

*The Herald editors are grateful to Ali Reza for his permission to reproduce in this edition of the newsletter his Abstract of his winning essay.*



**Here Once Lay the Body of the Great Alexander:  
From the Poetic Image of Alexandria to Poetic Dwelling**

**- Abstract -**

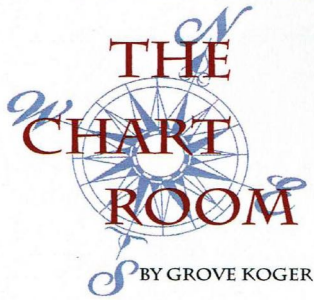
[Winner of the 2022 William Godshalk Prize for New Durrell Scholarship]

While it is difficult for architectural representations to show lived-in, atmospheric, urban environments using conventional means such as diagrams and maps, the language of literature can reveal such qualities of architecture: places, moods, and atmospheres. I believe that studying Lawrence Durrell's deep sensitivity towards place as found in *The Alexandria Quartet* (1957) can help scholars better understand place in an architectural context. To this end, I investigate historical sites through their manifestation in the *Quartet*, where the city of Alexandria provides a spatial frame for the protagonists' imagination, and narratives embodied in different places of the city evoke poetic imagination. My theoretical framework draws on the phenomenological understandings of imagination and place found in the works of Martin Heidegger, Gaston Bachelard, and Paul Ricœur, in which poetic imagination engages the senses and language while sensitizing the existential self to the world. I trace how *Quartet* characters engage with the city through such poetic imagination (Nessim Hosnani, Darley, and Ludwig Pursewarden), and I show how one urban center of this poetic imagery is Alexander's tomb, known as the Soma and located at the intersection of Soma Street and Canopic Street, where the Mosque of Nabi Daniel stands.

The Soma directs the characters' attention and grounds their emotions by connecting mindscape with cityscape. For instance, the Soma becomes part of Nessim's dreamscape, as an internalized poetic image of the city. In much the same way, in his dream-like walks, Darley contradicts the real Alexandria and observes the streets as the "arms of a starfish," radiating from the center of the city, at the site of the Soma. Alexander's tomb thereby alters the geometry of the real city; Alexandria's chessboard layout is transformed into a radial pattern. In another graphic example, when Pursewarden passes the Mosque of Nabi Daniel one day, an imaginary gap opens, defining the space with something that is no longer there: the Soma. Poetic imagination transmogrifies the Mosque's material reality, becoming a mode of seeing for Pursewarden in which the Mosque evanesces into Alexander's tomb. The significance of the Soma for Alexandrians and sojourners is not merely a literary invention of Durrell's. E. M. Forster was also enchanted with the poetic image of the Mosque in the place of the Soma, as he indicated in his essay on Canopic Street ("Between the Sun and the Moon"). Such poetic urban experiences direct characters' emotions, set their mood, and embody their experience throughout the novels. In this paper, I therefore argue that city dwellers can, by evoking the poetic image of the city, open up a space for poetic dwelling: attuned and complete, in place. This is a lesson that the *Quartet* has for architects: one fundamental goal of meaningful architecture is to unveil the poetic image of a place as the possibility for poetic dwelling.

Key Words: *The Alexandria Quartet*, Soma, the Mosque of Nabi Daniel, poetic imagination

Abstract © Ali Reza Shahbazin.



## THE CHART ROOM

“‘Crutches, Trusses, Trolleys, Slings and Breeches-Buoys’: Hotel Deformities in Lawrence Durrell’s *Bitter Lemons of Cyprus*,” by Athanasios Dimakis, appeared in *Hotels and the Modern Subject: 1890-1940* on June 15, 2022.

Allyson Kreuiter’s “Blind Medusa: The Portrayal of Liza Pursewarden in Lawrence Durrell’s *Alexandria Quartet*” appeared in *Gender Questions* 10.1, 2022.

Stock Editions (Paris) have published *Trois Alexandrines* by Sibylle Vincendon. The book deals with the author’s great-grandmother, grandmother, and aunt—the last of whom, Claude, was Durrell’s third wife.

“In Focus: Gerald Durrell, the ‘Pioneer with a Marvelous Sense of Humour,’” by Jack Watkins, appeared in *Country Life* for April 1. Watkins points out that “there was a time when *My Family and Other Animals* was standard reading for schoolchildren. A generation of zoologists and naturalists received their earliest inspiration from its pages, and its underlying message of the interconnectedness of humans with the wider animal world remains as vital as ever.”

In “Anais Nin and the Handsome Sierra Madre Ranger,” in the *Pasadena Star-News* for August 27, John Crawford describes the time that Nin lived with forest ranger (and future husband) Rupert Pole on Sturtevant Drive in Sierra Madre and assisted the Forest Service during the wildfires of 1953. Apparently, Nin took to answering the phone with the words “Forest Service, Paris Branch.”

Paul Herron has recently posted a series of programs titled “Catching Up with Anaïs Nin,” on YouTube. The first, “Myths,” appeared on May 25.

Sublunary Editions of Seattle will publish a “lost” manuscript by Henry Miller, *The Book of Conversations with David Edgar*, in late spring of 2023. According to the publisher, “Around the time” he published *Tropic of Cancer*, *Black Spring*, and *Tropic of Capricorn*, “Miller handwrote and illustrated six known ‘long intimate book letters’ to his friends, including Anaïs Nin, Lawrence Durrell, and Emil Schnellock. One of these, *The Book of Conversations with David Edgar*, had been unaccounted for, both unpublished and privately held, until recently, when it came into the possession of the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature at the New York Public Library.” Edited by Miller scholar Michael Paduano, the book will appear in “regular” and limited-edition paperbacks, both of which will include full-color reproductions of the watercolors in the manuscript. Sublunary also intends to publish a broadside featuring one of the watercolors.

Grove Kroger.

### Editors’ note:

Mark Ellingham of Profile Books, London, tells the editors that Profile plan to publish in July next year the late Michael Haag’s biography of Durrell’s early years, 1912 until 1947 when Durrell left Alexandria. And it looks like James Gifford at Fairleigh Dickinson University Press will be publishing the book in North America.

*Mutatis mutandis* ■ Gods, Ghosts, Englishmen ■ Cycles, Places, Alchemies  
Myth, Music, Love ■ Poetry, Fiction, Drama ■ Gnostics, Romans, Gypsies  
Paris, Provence, Africa ■ Labyrinths, Mysteries, Miracles  
Biography, Bibliography, Reviews ■ Criticism, Assessment, Analysis  
Legacies, Celebrations, Dedications



■ *The Lawrence Durrell Journal* ■

*Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Journal* invites submissions of original scholarly articles for the forthcoming volume 17 (2020-22). The editor is seeking articles on all aspects of the life and work of Lawrence Durrell: his circles (including Henry Miller, Anais Nin, Gerald Durrell, Richard Aldington, Keith Douglas, Bernard Spencer, Olivia Manning, etc.); his landscapes—Greece, France, or England; his philosophical and artistic concerns.

Please submit critical article manuscripts in MLA style of documentation (based on *The MLA Handbook*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Electronic copies should be saved as a Word .doc or .docx.

**DEADLINE: December 1, 2022.**

Inquiries regarding the submission of your paper should be sent to Dr. Anna Lillios, Editor, at [Anna@ucf.edu](mailto:Anna@ucf.edu)

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***A Brief History of the Coptic Orthodox Church, from its beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon, 451.***

*Pamela J. Francis*

*Pamela J. Francis is the current Vice-President of the International Lawrence Durrell Society. She teaches literature at the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts in Natchitoches, Louisiana.*

*Reading Durrell in her early twenties led her to pursue a master's degree in religious studies (with an emphasis on Eastern Christianity) and a Ph.D. in British literature.*

I suspect that I am not the only reader introduced to the Coptic Orthodox Church by way of Durrell's third volume of the *Alexandria Quartet*. Through the figure of Mountolive, we learn that this community, a religious minority in Egypt, consider themselves descendants of the ancient Egyptian race, and pride themselves on the antiquity of their community. The bitter patriarch of the Hosnani family tells the young diplomat Mountolive, "We call ourselves *Gypt*—ancient Egyptians. Yet we are Christians like you, only of the oldest and purest strain."<sup>1</sup>

This single passage led me to pursue a master's degree in religious studies. Given access to a whole new world of resources, I learned that while the Copts claim to be of the earliest Christian communities, the Syrian Orthodox Church and the St. Thomas Christians of India also claim to be founded by apostles in the first century C.E. There is little point in trying to prove one community's seniority over another; rather, their similar histories emphasize a direct connection to one of the "seventy apostles," giving them pride of place as "apostolic" churches.

Early Christianity, by virtue of its geographic spread and minority status, was necessarily syncretic, and Egyptian Christianity especially

so. There is evidence of Gnostic elements in the early Egyptian church, especially the teachings of Basilides and Valentinus; additionally, there was no clear distinction between the Christian community and the very large Jewish community in Egypt. In short, we may agree with Wilfred Griggs, who has not found any evidence that shows "that doctrinal or ecclesiastical unity in the Christian church...was of great concern in the first and early second century Egypt" (46). Tradition, instead, defined the community. Along with the communities of Rome, Antioch, Jerusalem, and later, Constantinople, the church in Alexandria claimed a direct connection to the "first" church of the apostles through St. Mark. Much like the doctrinal "requirements" of early Christianity, the history of St. Mark in Alexandria is a bit muddled. Tradition tells us that Mark the Evangelist came to Alexandria during the 40s, actively preached, founded the See of Alexandria, and was martyred in 68. Other sources claim that Mark was in Antioch and Cyprus during those years; still, the Copts base the Church's apostolicity on Eusebius' claim in *Historia Ecclesia* that "this Mark is the one whom they say to have been the first sent to Egypt to preach the Gospel, which he had also written down, and the first to establish churches in Alexandria itself."

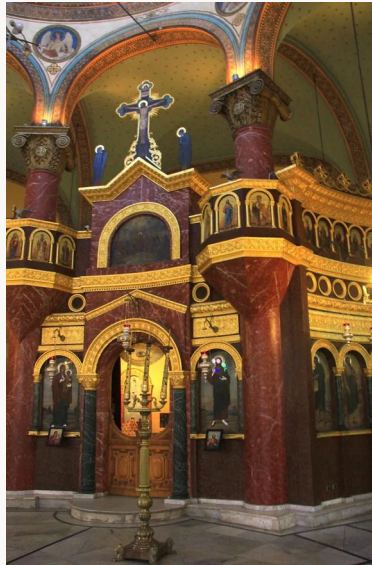
Egyptian Christianity, in its early years as well as now, is rich with narrative traditions. Of these, Meinardus tells us "the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt is a significant, living tradition for [Egyptian Christians]" (14). This infancy narrative, found only in the Gospel of Matthew, and written for a Jewish-Christian community, connects the Flight into Egypt to fulfilment of prophecies from the Hebrew scriptures, while mirroring the story of Moses' birth. The Qu'ran, as well as non-canonical Christian texts such as *The Armenian Infancy Gospel* and *The Ethiopic Synaxarion* outline the

1 Durrell, Lawrence. Mountolive. New York: Dutton, 1958: 25. (the first American edition)

Family's travels through Egypt, and include stories of the Christ-child healing and teaching. The sites associated with the Holy Family's time in Egypt are still popular sites of pilgrimage, and many places, such as the Tree of the Virgin at Bilbais, are honored by both Christians and Muslims.

By the second century C.E., the growing number of Christian converts necessitated a need to instruct believers in their new-found faith. The Catechetical School, or *Didaschalia*, first established in Alexandria in 180, promoted a Christianity highly inflected by Gnostic and Platonic elements. In both the Gnostic and Platonic views, the humanity of Christ is nearly inconceivable, with the Platonic notion of the *logos*, or, the Holy Spirit, in Christian terms, dominating his material being. Clement of Alexandria (150-215), a teacher at the Catechetical School, and mentor to one of the great theologians of the early church, Origen, wrote of Christ, "He was wholly without passion and into him there entered no emotional movement, neither pleasure nor pain." In short, Clement is emphasizing the divinity of Christ over his humanity. Here we see an opening salvo in the Christological debates that will occupy Christian thought and practice throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Throughout the third century, the See of Alexandria increased in importance as the intellectual center of Christianity. Clement had left Alexandria and the new Bishop Demetrius appointed Origen (185-253), then a student, to teach in the Catechetical School. Even though Origen was eventually condemned as a heretic three centuries after his death, and many of his positions anathematized—for instance, Universalism, interpreted to mean



The interior of a Coptic Church in Cairo

[www.maverickbird.com/outside-in-dia/africa/egypt/the-intriguing-coptic-quarter-of-cairo/](http://www.maverickbird.com/outside-in-dia/africa/egypt/the-intriguing-coptic-quarter-of-cairo/)

that even Satan can attain salvation—Origen remains one of the most important theologians of early Christian history. Accusations of heresy by other important theologians and councils have prevented the Coptic canonization of Origen, yet Origen's works continue to provide important information in the history of early Christianity, especially with regard to the influences of Greek philosophy on Christian doctrine.

Until a rearrangement of episcopal succession in Egypt in the third century, churches outside of Alexandria were frequently led by deacons and presbyters, and this accounts,

in part, for the continued syncretic and heterodoxic practices found in many Egyptian communities. As the Bishop of Alexandria ordained more and more bishops, his hope was that the new bishops would maintain a strong bond with the Alexandrian Bishop and lead to a more specifically hierarchical arrangement which, in turn, would impose a more strictly defined theology throughout Egypt. This fairly successful attempt to unify Egyptian Christians throughout the region is evident in the close ties between Egyptian monasticism and the Alexandrian episcopate.

Christian monasticism was born in the Egyptian deserts, and this spiritual movement intensified throughout the fourth century. Both eremitical (solitary) and monastic practices reflect a peculiarly Alexandrian thought and spirituality. Infused with the Greek emphasis on contemplation and asceticism, as well as the Gnostic disdain for the flesh, Alexandrian Christianity was well suited to desert life. The Desert Fathers, joined by numerous women who likewise lived monastically, viewed their privations as a substitute for martyrdom. The

earliest movements were made largely of individuals who settled in unlikely places and practiced extreme self-abnegation; Antony the Great, according to his biographer, the Church Father, Athanasius, lived in a cemetery, and “ate once a day, after sunset, sometimes once in two days, and often even in four” (*Life* 7, qtd. Frend 191).

Just as *The Life of Antony* provides a glimpse of solitary practices, Pachomius (290-345) has provided a history, in Coptic, of early Egyptian monasticism. After a vision in which he was instructed to build a monastery, he did, and eventually his order grew to nine monasteries and two nunneries. He imposed a rigorous but not punishing discipline on the communities: monasteries were expected to be self-supporting, and all surplus was given to the poor. This life of tempered austerity drew thousands from throughout the Roman empire, and became the basis of the *Ascetica*, the monastic rule followed by most Eastern Orthodox communities. Monasticism remains an important feature of the Coptic Church, and many ancient monasteries are thriving today. While priests are encouraged to marry and live within their congregations, bishops are almost always chosen from the ranks of monastics.

For many of us, the numerous controversies of this period of Christian history seem unnecessarily complicated and ultimately unimportant. Yet, however arcane they appear to us now, these conflicts produced a new paradigm of religious authority, as well as doctrinal and practical divisions that have been maintained for centuries. Conflicts arose over a number of questions; for instance, the Melitian schism, which maintained its own bishops as late as 334, centered on the punishment of *lapsi*, those who had saved their lives during imperial persecution by sacrificing to pagan gods. However, almost all of these controversies are founded in the varied understandings of two related aspects of Christianity: the processes

of the Trinity (Trinitarianism), and the nature of Christ (Christology). More often than not, these disputes were theological fronts for power battles between the sees.

The last concentrated persecution of Christians by a Roman emperor ended in 312, and co-emperors Licinius and Constantine agreed to a policy of tolerance in 313. Constantine looked to Christianity as the means to realize his vision of a single monarch ruling under the auspices of a single Supreme Being. But it was clear to him that to unify the Empire through a religion, he would first have to unify that religion.

The Arian Controversy provides a vivid example of the significance of a religious dispute that threatened the unification of Christianity. Pope Alexander of Alexandria engaged in a dispute with the very popular presbyter (priest), Arius, on the nature of Christ. It was essential, Alexander believed, that the divinity of Christ be preserved; Arius countered with an absolute monotheism, claiming that if the Son were an emanation of the Father, or of the same substance, God could no longer be a single whole. The Son, therefore, has a beginning (unlike God) and God became God the Father only after the Son was created from nothing. The Arians believed in Christ as a perfected creature, one that we can imitate in behavior, so that we, too, can be “adopted” by God. The Arian view was initially popular among Egyptian Christians, but Alexander convened a hundred or so Egyptian bishops under his own auspices, and this ad hoc synod condemned and deposed Arius. Arius, however, sought protection from the bishop of Nicomedia, and what had previously been a local dispute became a matter for all Christendom. After an initial attempt at reconciliation, the Emperor Constantine recognized the necessity of a Church-wide solution to this and other problems.

The Council of Nicea, held in Bithynia (Turkey)





Domes of Coptic Churches in the Coptic Quarter of Cairo

[www.maverickbird.com/outside-india/africa/egypt/the-interesting-coptic-quarter-of-cairo/](http://www.maverickbird.com/outside-india/africa/egypt/the-interesting-coptic-quarter-of-cairo/)

in 325, was attended by over 300 bishops, mostly from the Eastern regions of the Empire. While Constantine had hoped for an agreement that would allow room for Arianism, any mention of the subordination of the Son was rejected outright by an overwhelming majority. The penultimate document of the council, the Nicene Creed, emphasized that the Son is of *one substance* with the Father. This creed eventually became the creed of the universal church, and is accepted by what are now the three branches of Christendom, Western (Roman), Eastern (Byzantine) and Oriental (Coptic and Syrian). However, the fact that two bishops voted against adoption of the creed (they were excommunicated) and that two others refused to sign on to the sentences condemning Arianism foreshadow future disputes. In fact, decades of discussion followed; Pope Alexander's successor, Athanasius, was exiled no less than four times for his persistent and occasionally violent persecution of the remaining Arians. Still, for about the next hundred years the church could be conceived of as a single organization, under the political, if not theological leadership of the Emperor.

In between councils, the sees engaged in power politics. At the first council (Nicea, 325), the Sees of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch (in Syria) were granted special status; Jerusalem, on the other hand, was demoted to an "honorary"

status. By the First Council of Constantinople (381), Constantinople was granted honorary primacy over all sees except Rome. However, the most significant conflicts, both political and theological, pitted the Sees of Antioch and Alexandria against each other.

The differences between Alexandrian and Antiochian theology and Christology reflect two different soteriologies, that is, two paths to salvation. Antioch was not always aligned with Rome, but generally, Antioch represented the main tenets of Western thought, which consistently insisted on the human nature of Jesus in perfect union with the perfect nature of God—perfect union, yes, but still two complete natures. In contrast, Alexandrian Christology insisted on "out of two natures, one." Christ's human nature exists within the unity of the *logos*, that is, the Holy Spirit, and thus the *logos* and human (in one nature) died at the crucifixion. Otherwise, Cyril, the Pope of Alexandria (412-144) argued, it is only a man who has died for us. It is *not* a man who has become king over us, but rather God in the form of a man.

Lest we imagine that these finer points of Christology were hashed out (or not!) by sedate theologians in roundtable discussions, it must be noted that these disagreements manifested frequently in physical violence. Concerned by the dissension between the sees, Emperor Theodosius II called a council at Ephesus in 449 and unwisely asked the hot-headed Dioscorus, Cyril's successor as pope of Alexandria, to preside. Dioscorus had brought 1000 monks with him to what is now referred to as the "Robber Council." Seeing the opportunity to proclaim primacy for Alexandrian Christology, Dioscorus took it upon himself to ignore an important doctrinal statement sent to the council by Pope Leo of Rome. Instead, he read statements excommunicating two bishops, whereupon his attendant monks beat one of them so badly he died the next day.

Two years after the Second Council of Ephesus, the new Roman Emperor, Marcian, called for another council, to be held at Chalcedon on the eastern shore of the Bosphorus. The event was attended by over 500 monks, most from the Eastern sees, though four Roman legates attended as well. The Christological debates were at the top of the agenda, but other important matters were to be discussed, such as ecclesiastical jurisdiction and the adoption of doctrinal statements, including Cyril of Alexandria's letters condemning Nestorianism.

The most historically significant item on the agenda, however, was a discussion of *The Tome of Leo*, which Dioscorus has pointedly refused to read at the Second Council of Ephesus. Pope Leo I, who had come to the Papal (Roman) throne in 440, was an able administrator and a thoughtful theologian, and his *Tome* carefully addressed the two natures of the Son. He emphasized that in Jesus neither true Godhead nor true manhood could exist without the other. While the document required some modification, it was incorporated into the Definition of Faith, the penultimate document produced by the Council.

Dioscorus was having none of Leo's dyophysitism, and left Chalcedon after the first two sessions of the council, ignoring imperial commands to return. The rowdy and inalcitrant representative for Alexandria was then condemned by the council for his violent and irregular actions at Ephesus and sent into exile. Proterius, Dioscorus' former assistant, was elevated by the Council to Patriarch—as what would now be referred to as a Chalcedonian. The fact that Proterius was brutally murdered by a mob in 457 demonstrates the intensity of the schism, and the seemingly unfair treatment of Dioscorus, along with perceived

imperial overreach, gave rise to the Egyptian epithet “Chalcedon, the Ominous.” The next few decades saw more conflict between the factions, and as the non-Chalcedonians (the Melkites) refused to accept ordination by the Chalcedonian patriarch, traditional Alexandrian Christianity lacked leadership. However, by the time of Patriarch Peter IV (576-578), a new non-Chalcedonian clergy and leadership had emerged, and became identifiable as the Coptic Church. By the Arab Conquest of the seventh century, the Melkite Patriarch could count on roughly two hundred thousand supporters, while as many as six million Egyptians supported the non-Chalcedonian faith.

***In the next issue: the development of the Coptic Orthodox Church, its practices, and its place in contemporary Egyptian society.***

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**A Colonial Connection:  
My Search for the Books of Lawrence Durrell  
by David Nigel Lloyd**



I was born in Kenya when it was a British colony, pronounced *KEEN-yuh*. My father had been transferred to Mombasa from Liverpool by Guardian Assurance. In 1959, he and my mother separated. She and I flew to England to live with her parents who had something I had never seen before: a television. Being not quite five years old, I had trouble, it seems, discerning television from reality. One day, for example, I watched a man in white tropical clothing trying to catch armadillos. The man not only looked like my father, his name, like my father's, was Gerry. Was this indeed Daddy catching animals in a place that certainly looked more like Kenya than did England? My mother explained that this was Gerald *Durrell*. Daddy was Gerald *Lloyd*. In my child's mind, however, that merely made them aspects of each other; my father was, of course, both 'Gerrys'. My mother had mentioned that she had a book written by Gerry Durrell. Would she read it to me for my bedtime story?



It was a grown-up book, she protested. I don't think I cried but I'm sure I was insistent. The book was *The Bafut Beagles* [1954] – in the later edition published in 1956 by The Reprint Society, London, by arrangement with Rupert Hart-Davis, the original publisher. The book is Gerald's account of his 1949 animal collecting expedition to the traditional mountain kingdom of Bafut in the British Cameroons. I think that she read from the chapter about the predawn hunt he and his Bafutian hunters made for hairy frogs (*Trichobatrachus robustus*).

After the hunt, to quote the book, "the rim of the eastern horizon was a pale powder blue, flecked with gold, and in the sky above us the remaining stars were flickering and dying as stripes of jade green spread across the sky. ... The hunters... broke into song as they picked their way down the path in single file; a lilting Bafutian melody that they rendered with great verve."

I demanded another tale from Bafut the next night and perhaps the night after that. Eventually my mother gave up and gave me the book. It would be a few years before I would be able to read it, but Ralph Thompson's ink illustrations created an exquisite, if not heraldic, sub-narrative.

By the time I could read well enough, I had sought out every other Gerald Durrell adventure book I could find. He collected and filmed animals in hunting grounds that included a return trip to Bafut (*A Zoo in My Luggage* [1960]); Patagonia (*The Whispering Land* [1961]), and the Antipodes (*Two in the Bush* [1966]). By the time we had moved to southeastern Pennsylvania with Ricky, my stepdad, I knew that Gerald Durrell was 25 days older than Gerald Lloyd and therefore not my father. Even so, some sort of sympathetic magic had inflicted itself upon my psyche. All I had to do to return to

the land of my father, I realized, was to become like Durrell a collector of animals in the jungles of South America and in the grasslands of Africa. To learn how, all I had to do was read Gerald Durrell's most beloved book, *My Family and Other Animals* [1956]. Young Gerry had the olive groves of Corfu in which to roam, hunt and learn. I had the wide wild woods behind my house. This did not work, however. Well into my teenage years, I realized that Gerald Durrell's new zoo collecting books had become stale and, almost as a consequence, that I was not much good as an animal collector.

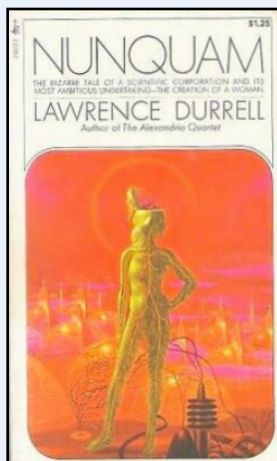
Meanwhile, the world of the British Colonial—the world in which the Durrells and I were born—was being viewed as a grotesque; the noxious practice of apartheid in white South Africa being a favorite egregious proof. My father, who had been transferred to South Africa, repudiated European racism and colonialism in the only way he knew how. He returned to England with his family. I knew nothing of my father's reasoning. I knew only that I would no longer need to become a zoo animal collector in order to find him. An airplane ticket was duly purchased. On my return to Toronto, where we were then living, it seemed only natural that I should focus my attention on the bellowing and comic Dickensian caricature that roamed through *My Family and Other Animals* and its sequels: big brother Larry.

The library at Seneca College not only had *The Alexandria Quartet* [1962] but several monographs on Lawrence Durrell, himself. These monographs I would read in one sitting, even if it meant skipping class. But *The Quartet*? I gingerly pulled each volume from the shelf and snuck sneak peaks at its contents. I refused to check the books out because I was convinced by then that I wished to own them. I was saving myself for marriage, so to speak.

However, my local W. H. Smith bookseller stocked only *Nunquam* [1970] and *White Eagles Over Serbia* [1957]. One claimed to be “An adventure story for the young.” Instead, I purchased the one with the naked woman on the cover - *Nunquam*. It was tough going, however: “A man with no shadow, a clock with no face. Something about Greece and Turkey? ... the darkness turned violet sometimes and was apt to dance about in his skull.”

Was the whole book written like this? I rushed back to W. H. Smith. But despite its general readability and the memorable line “this omelette tastes like Stalin's moustache,” I pronounced *White Eagles Over Serbia* an unconvincing spy thriller, warmed-over John Buchan at best. But

before I could make further foolish decisions about brother Lawrence, *A Key to Modern British Poetry* showed up, Durrell's 1952 book of poetry criticism. Here Larry suggested that *The Wasteland* be viewed as a screenplay. There he predicted that the implication inherent in Einstein's theory of relativity would be a unified field of science, literature, and religious thought. Before I could apply this to the rock songs I was trying to write, a most beautiful Faber edition of *The Alexandria Quartet* arrived at W. H. Smith. I was so glad I had saved myself.



What can I say that others have not said better on these pages? I was overwhelmed by Durrell's language. Like Eliot's *the Wasteland* it was a poem of a city, a living cosmos. The landscapes, characters and story layering were not served by a master writer so much as they were aspects of the prose poem itself and thus, as real as reality itself. That its culminating thesis was a spy thriller — this one as gripping and tragic as anything by le Carré— was to me the grand joke of Durrell's cosmos. I savor it still. That its moral was that a painter [Clea] must lose the hand with which she paints in order to find her palate, her form, the singularity of her art..... Well! My remaining time in Toronto was governed by Clea's phantom pain. The capping phrase of Durrell's 1956 poem "At the Long Bar" became my watchword. "The sickness of the oyster is the pearl."

I dropped out of college. Two years later, I took a Greyhound Bus to Los Angeles in order to become a rock star. If, I could lose my voice, that is. Did I take my copy of *The Alexandria Quartet* with me? Of course. I reread it on the bus. Surely, I was bound to strike it rich. The number of that bus and the year of the California Gold Rush were the same: 1849. On the other hand, I arrived in downtown LA on Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of June, 1975. Six years later the LA new wave rock scene breathed its last. Me and my band BLaM [Big B, Loud and Mayhem] were at its bedside. I wore a pair of black leather trousers that had belonged to Steve Jones of the Sex Pistols. Yes, the music business got the better of me but in my shoulder bag was a copy of Durrell's *Vega and Other Poems* [1973]. I carried it with me everywhere. The sense of sorrow, resignation and gallows humour that permeates Durrell's last collection of verse absorbed my own. But, it was Durrell's elegiac modality in "Seferis", a poem from that collection<sup>1</sup>, that echoed through a handful of songs I had begun composing on a cheap acoustic guitar. I still sing them.

*David Nigel Lloyd lives with his wife, the painter Gita Lloyd, in far northern California. Regarded by Spyros Hytiris of Corfu's public radio station as "an iconoclastic loner of acid folk," DNL has just released his sixth CD, Of Service in Rosemary Lane. Sign up for his monthly BlogPost at [davidnigellloyd.com](http://davidnigellloyd.com).*

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1 David has referred us to the following lines from Lawrence Durrell's 1972 poem 'Seferis':

*His words float off like tiny seeds,  
Wind-borne or bird-distributed notes,  
To the very end of loves without rehearsal,  
The stinging image riper than his deeds.*



## ILDS Mini-Minutes

OMG XXI Virtual Business Meeting

10 June 2022

As part of the On Miracle Ground XXI conference, the International Lawrence Durrell Society convened a general meeting via Zoom on 10 June 2022 at 4:40 p.m. Paris time, President Isabelle Keller-Privat presiding.

Having welcomed the participants, President Keller-Privat asked those present to remember ILDS members who had passed away in the two years since the 2020 general meeting: John Nugent Hope (1924-2020); Frédéric Jacques Temple (1921-2020); Brewster Chamberlin (1939-2020); David Williams Russell (1945-2020); Peter Lotz (1937-2021); H.R. “Stoney” Stoneback (1941-2021); Julius Rowan “Jack” Raper (1938-2022); Edmund Leroy “Mike” Keeley (1928-2022). Following remembrances, a moment of silence was observed.

President Keller-Privat then turned the meeting over to the 2022 Nominations Committee (James Clawson, Grove Koger, David Radavich) for the conduct of elections. On behalf of the committee, Chair David Radavich expressed gratitude to Isabelle for her exemplary service in trying times and heartfelt thanks also to Vice President James Decker, Secretary-Treasurer Paul Lorenz, and the at-large members rotating off the Board after two consecutive terms: Steve Moore, David Radavich, and Fiona Tomkinson.

Nominated for ILDS president for the term 2022-2024 was James Gifford; for vice president Pamela J. Francis; for secretary-treasurer Paul Lorenz. For at-large board positions, the Committee recommended Umme Al-Wazedi, Peter Baldwin, James Decker, Athanasios Dimakis, and Charles Sligh. A motion (Ian MacNiven/Peter Baldwin) to accept the slate recommended by the Nominations Committee passed with unanimous approval. (Those elected will serve on the 2022-2024 ILDS Executive Board along with active former presidents.)

In her report to the membership President Keller-Privat thanked everyone on the board and others in the Society for help and support during her two terms in office. Secretary-Treasurer Paul Lorenz reported that the Society currently numbers 208 members; and added that a breakdown of the membership by gender and nationality had recently been made available. On the Treasury side, Paul noted that “thanks to some generous donations,” “we are now financially very stable” with over \$35,000 in our account. (On the subject of one particular “very spectacular donation,” President-Elect James Gifford reiterated ILDS appreciation to Steve Moore for his generosity in funding the Godshalk Prize.)



Outgoing vice president James Decker reported on a successful ILDS presence at the 49<sup>th</sup> “Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900.” Noting that the February 2023 Louisville Conference would consist of two virtual and three in-person days, James indicated that he would soon issue a “Call for Papers” for a Durrell panel or panels.

As the Officers’ Reports concluded, Ian MacNiven pointed out that Paul Lorenz had served as ILDS Secretary-Treasurer for many years and proposed a heart-felt motion of appreciation that was seconded by James Decker and adopted by unanimous consent: “Be it resolved that the members of the International Lawrence Durrell Society recognize and commend the long and admirable service of Paul Lorenz as the organization’s Secretary-Treasurer, responsible keeper of membership rolls and steward of material assets.”

Finally the meeting turned to consideration of the next ILDS conference, On Miracle Ground XXII projected for 2024. Having expressed her hope that OMG XXII would be in-person, Isabelle noted that ILDS guidelines for conference proposals are available on the Society website <https://www.lawrencedurrell.org/>; [the instructions can be found on the Conference page of the website under the heading [2024 Preliminary Conference Proposal informational page](#)]. James Gifford later stressed the need for institutional support in hosting an OMG conference.

Peter Baldwin volunteered the “somewhat radical” view that he actually likes a virtual OMG that he can enjoy “in the comfort of [his] own home,” and went on to propose an alternation between virtual conferences and “spirit of place” meetings. While there was support for OMG-hosted virtual events in future, there was also agreement with the view stated by Athanasios Dimakis that “a live component is essential.” Anthony Hirst mentioned that Byzantine Greek Summer School courses have recently been taught online. James Clawson noted the hybrid meeting concept now adopted by the Louisville Conference. Ian MacNiven and Peggy Fox expressed support for a hybrid model.

In considering actual meeting locations, Pamela Francis, citing the tradition that Durrell Society conferences alternate between North America and other parts of the world, wondered whether, since OMG XXI did not, in fact, take place in Europe, the next conference could be located other than in North America. Pamela reminded the meeting that Belgrade had been proposed in the past. A return visit to Avignon, site of OMG VII, was also mentioned as an option for a future conference.

In regard to possible North American sites, James Gifford mentioned the Fairleigh Dickinson University campus in Teaneck, New Jersey, a location close to New York City and convenient to all forms of transportation. Pamela suggested Houston, Texas as a desirable site, and Isabelle commented that exchange faculty from France had spoken highly of Houston. David Radavich expressed concern about the political atmosphere in some parts of the United States during the 2024 election year and supported James Gifford’s earlier proposal that the Executive Board be tasked with exploring possible sites. It was agreed that the Executive Board would review all proposals and make a final decision.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:40 p.m. Paris time.

Anne R. Zahlan



## ***The Herald - editorial guidelines and publication dates***

*The Herald* is the newsletter of the International Lawrence Durrell Society [ILDS] – see: [www.lawrencedurrell.org/](http://www.lawrencedurrell.org/). It will be emailed as a matter of course to all members of the ILDS. It will also be uploaded to [www.lawrencedurrell.org/](http://www.lawrencedurrell.org/) for free access to any interested reader.

Should a member wish to receive a printed version of *The Herald*, they may contact the editors at [newsletter.ilds@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.ilds@gmail.com) to make the change.

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Readers are invited to contribute articles, news items, events and details of new publications by or about Lawrence Durrell for future publication in *The Herald*. Articles and contributions should, in the first instance, be limited to no more than 300 words. Unpublished photos or illustrations which may be of interest to readers of *The Herald* will also be welcome provided the editors are satisfied that appropriate copyright consents have been obtained.

Would-be contributors are advised to email the editors ([newsletter.ilds@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.ilds@gmail.com)) to discuss the scope of their contribution and its suitability for *The Herald*.

All inquiries about *The Herald* should be sent to [newsletter.ilds@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.ilds@gmail.com)

Copy date for the next edition of *The Herald* [NS] is March 15, 2023 for publication in April, 2023.

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