PREFACE

We wait somewhere between the idea of loving and the essentiality to be loved; somewhere between the urge to know ourselves and the Absolute. Durrell, who was first shocked to witness the spiritual death in England, later discovered that the whole civilisation had been in a sham. Its theology and industrialisation, although attractive, in actuality, were self-devouring and destructive. This inward chaos of man came to be investigated by Lawrence Durrell. Art, love and sex are closely allied in that, they encompass the essence of spirituality; they follow the same process of self-exploration and Self-Realisation. Durrell’s works thus become journeys, quests or pilgrimages into the innermost corridors of the lover’s and the artist’s psyche. In the following pages, my attempt is to examine the creative spoils of Durrell’s Odyssey - - the eastern thought and wisdom embedded within the precincts of his love, sex, art, life and reality.

Although my specific intention is to make an assessment of Durrell as a poet, certain value judgements regarding his fiction and other writings have of necessity surfaced and perhaps, become inevitable for my work. I admit that this thesis is not set forth as a
thorough logical discourse, but, rather a series of thought patterns organised to intrude into the philosophical and mystical flora and fauna of Durrell’s “mindscape.” In the course of my presentation, I have quoted writers from both the East and the West, of different cultural and historical era. It should be mentioned that certain philosophical and mystical treatises of India have found inclusion, because of its inevitability and reliability in my venture. Hence an inter-disciplinary approach has become necessary to understand Lawrence Durrell’s writings in depth.

I hope this work will be of use to all scholars and critics of Durrell.