



The WALSC Commentaries

“It’s Time To Begin, isn’t it?” *Imagine Dragons*

December 2012

Well, you probably thought that *The Commentaries* was never to return, since this is the only issue we have published in 2012—and this at the end of the year, barely in time for the WALSC Annual Christmas Party. But we do have an excuse. We have been planning and building the infrastructure throughout 2012 for the new WALSC format, including the WALSC X-Change, The Reuther-Wheeling Library, and the State Cellar, all of which will be announced (and described) tonight at our end-of-the-year celebration.

In addition, check out our “Off the WALSC” column, where Executive Director Barb Knutsen reports that over 10,000 students in local and area schools have now experienced the WALSC

Letter from the Editor

Foundation Mock Trial Program, and why we expect the program to be adopted state-wide for all fifth-graders over the next few years.

This will, however, be the last issue of *The Commentaries* in its present format. But don’t worry; we expect to continue publishing a newsletter in the future, starting in 2013, but consistent with the new WALSC format.

In the meantime, don’t miss reading this issue, because it contains the final two chapters of *La Cerca*,—yes, the story comes to an end with this issue, and you will finally be able to read chapters 1 through 20 all at once (separated from the rest of the newsletter and on the webpage as of the first of the year) since many have told me that it took your editor so long to finish this


story, that they not only forgot where it started, but can’t now even imagine where “in the Hell,” it was going. Actually, I’m not sure it “went” anywhere, other than around in a circle, and I hope you enjoy completing that circle with the final chapters.

And don’t pine too much for the old *Commentaries*, because we wouldn’t be surprised if some of your old favorites, like “Sir Peter Quimsley,” make a come-back in 2013. You will also be able to access all of “Sir Peter’s” prior columns separately on the website as of the first of the year, as well as our member “Profiles” and “State of Justice” columns.

We are excited to take WALSC in this new broader direction for the benefit of our members,

and to contribute to the growth of local community (and economy) by X-Changing information and promoting opportunities for jobs, services, utilization of talents, and other public interests, member by member.

In the same vein, we will offer use of the Reuther-Wheeling Library (named after that local boy who promoted economic opportunities his entire life), as a repository for books and other works of art for local and West Virginia writers, authors, and artisans, and a place for study and reflection by members, with free coffee and “wireless” provided on a daily basis in the State Cellar.

We’ll tell you all about it tonight, and hope you will come along—and not just for the ride. 

Your Editor,
O’Casaide, of Donegal.

La Cerca - Chapter 19

By the following night, Gallagher and the students had returned to Kaliningrad, and Gallagher was asleep in a troubled-dream state at the Hotel Kaliningrad. He found himself a spectator in a large room of gleaming walls, polished smooth as marble, but multi-colored, and more gem-like. "Amber," he thought.

In the center of the room was a large round table, also covered with amber, around which sat a group of Teutonic Knights.

In Gallagher's dream, the room's ubiquitous mixture of forest resin and Baltic sea illuminated millions of years in the struggle for life on earth, but as

a veil over that struggle, as a thing of beauty that heralded, however illusory, the triumph of civilization over the arbitrary power of nature.

"The Amber Room!" he thought, "it must be 'The Amber Room.'"

This was a legendary room covered entirely in amber that was said to have once been located in the bowels of the Königsberg Castle, which had been the home of the Teutonic Knights in the famous Baltic seaport of Königsberg as early as the Thirteenth Century, and had existed until the Twentieth. In 1946, the Soviet Union decided to demolish what was left of the Castle after severe allied bombing damage to stamp out any remaining vestige of a German identity in Königsberg, which was renamed Kaliningrad

the same year.

The nearby Königsberg Cathedral is situated near the castle on an island in the Pregel River. Interestingly, the Northeast corner housed a mausoleum containing the tomb of Immanuel Kant (The Sage of Königsberg), which was spared by the Russian authorities, who commenced a slow renovation of the cathedral, as well as the surviving buildings of the nearby Albertina University, where Kant, and much later Schmidt's father, had lectured in a more enlightened age. From the ruins of Albertina rose the Kaliningrad Pedagogical University, which is known today as the Immanuel Kant Russian State University.

From Gallagher's bedroom window at

the Kaliningrad Hotel, he could see directly over to the location where the Castle once stood, and where construction was started in 1960 on the House of the Soviets—one of the more notorious examples of ugly, post-war Soviet architecture.

The Soviet Union planned for the House of the Soviets to make a grand architectural statement, and serve as the administrative center for the entire Kaliningrad Oblast, but although the massive outside shell of the building was completed, the ghosts of the Teutonic Knights exacted their revenge as hidden cellars of the old castle began to crumble and the building started to sink into the ground. Some say the Amber Room itself was crushed beneath the weight of the building, but no excavation has ever been allowed by the authorities. To the

locals, who not so affectionately refer to the building as “the Monster,” it has remained one of many reminders of the failure of “central planning” by the Soviet State.

As Gallagher watched, the knights passed around what appeared to be amber marbles, the colors of pure white, and blood- red, and dropped them into a silver bowl sitting in the middle of the table.

The first knight was dressed in a pure white tunic, with a matching white cloak, the black cross of the order emblazoned on the cloak in the area of the left shoulder. In contrast to the simplicity of his clothes, his headgear was reminiscent of a scene out of Wagner’s Ring, topped with two huge animal horns. If those

horns historically had any ritualistic meaning, all was now lost to a vague display of intimidation and cynical power, all of which made his appearance even more spectral, and only half-human.

A knowing smile on his face, he slowly and deliberately dropped a red marble into the bowl.

“It is a matter of simple reckoning. He killed the child’s father, he must die.”

The second knight, dressed much like the first, but without a horned-helmet on his head, seemed yet more human, more thoughtful.

“Not so much killed—allowed him to die—as we have all done, by not speaking up, by not saying ‘no,’ to the many horrors that kill our brothers and sisters every day. One does not have to be driving a getaway car to be an

accomplice. I vote no. Let him live.” His brief response at an end, the second knight dropped a white marble into the bowl.

This obviously agitated the first knight, whose wry smile changed instantly into a scowl, as he began again to speak in a mocking tone...

“So you would allow him to live, with such a stain on his life?”

“The only response to death must be life. How will he help others to live, how will he seek his own redemption, if we end his life now?”

At this, the first knight abruptly rose from the table, loudly pounding the table with his right hand as he rose to bellow, “Blasphemy! There has been only one redemption of which we should concern ourselves!



*Königsburg Castle
Circa 1900*

Only one that was necessary! Have your forgotten ‘He’ who died for us, so that our sins would be forgiven? Is that not why we have given an oath of blood to this Christian Brotherhood?”

The second knight, unperturbed, made not a move, but looked directly into the first knight’s face, now glowing red.

“My friend, the last Christian died on the cross. He did not relieve us of our duty to mount our own cross.”

Once more the first knight feigned



AKA, "The Monster"

sarcasm:

"What makes you think such a man as Gallagher even capable of choosing redemption?"

"He has already chosen it. He needs only the strength to begin his ascent," said the quiet one.

In a last desperate plea, made as if the first knight was speaking of an impending judgment on his own life, he walked away from his chair, and wrapped his cloak tightly around him as if to leave. "Such strength

requires superhuman powers! The power of a man who can overcome even himself. That any person can muster such strength in these dark times is only a lie."

"Perhaps," said the second, "But a Holy Lie, indeed."

With those last words, the knights vanished instantly, the table now transforming into a throne of amber, upon which sat another figure dressed in a flowing white robe, a high white Tiara with triple crowns upon his head, giving him as well a look of

otherworldliness.

Even in his dreams Gallagher instantly recognized him as the Pope—the Polish Pope, speaking ex cathedra to the world, renouncing others who had allowed millions to die in the name of Communism, never mentioning his predecessor Pius XII's own acquiescence in similar numbers under Nazism, or the death of his immediate predecessor, or the many sins of his priests against children of the church.

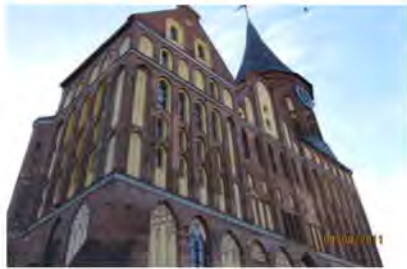
"We shall overcome!" bellowed the Pope.

Gallagher then heard a voice responding to the Pope. It seemed the voice of Schmidt. "You have learned too many pronouns, my educated humanist.

Each is left in the end with only his own redemption."

As the voices receded into the mist, Gallagher started to become lucid, and was seized with a thought, long repressed, from his days as an alter-boy at St. Mary's in Donegal—of a hand touching him, stroking him, at which instant he awoke in a cold sweat.

All the betrayals in his life—of the British, of his Church, of the IRA, of himself, flooded over Gallagher. He had been taught to distrust all authority. Had thought that such distrust justified revenge against life. But he had come to realize all of that only justified refusal, renewal, and an attempt to live again a life of meaning. He thought of those few people in his life who did not betray him—his parents—and Schmidt, and how



other than his own family, it was only Schmidt that ever seemed to care if he became a better person, the person who he could become.

He remembered Schmidt's good natured kidding every time they were together in a room, or a hallway, in the presence of a mirror on the wall. "Look into the mirror, Gallagher, and tell me, have you yet become yourself?" Back in those days, he never quite knew what Schmidt meant. He was starting to understand.

At that instant, Gallagher bounded out of bed with the energy

of those who just realized they had something important to do. He must call Fidanzo, to arrange for the meeting with him and Schmidt at the end of the academic year.

"So tell me, Fidanzo, have you and Schmidt decided on a place, and when we can meet?"

"Yes, in Venice, May 22nd, at the end of the academic year. We have chosen the Danielle Hotel, near Piazza San Marco, for our re-union. Will you come?"


"Of course, I promise on my life. Get me the particulars as soon as you can,

and I will make my travel arrangements."

Still in an excited state, Gallagher phoned the students' guest dormitory, to speak with Kevin Gray. He would not tell him of his role in his father's death. He would not tell him of his own human weakness, but he wanted to be for Kevin what Schmidt had been for him—a true educator, a friend, a mentor who would challenge him to become a better man than Gallagher himself, remembering yet again Schmidt's fondness of the Nietzsche quote, "one repays a teacher badly if he remains always only a student."

"Kevin, I will need a graduate assistant at the University of Edinburgh when I return to the UK in the fall. As this is your last year at the University in Belfast, would you

consider transferring over to the University of Edinburgh for your graduate studies and serve as my graduate assistant in the moral philosophy department starting in the Fall of 2009?"

"It pays a handsome stipend which would cover your graduate work if you want to go on for your Doctorate. . . You would consider it? Great. Talk it over with your mother, and let me know for sure by the end of the term. I look forward to working with you!" 



This page, two views of The Konigsberg, (now Kaliningrad) Cathedral

La Cerca - Chapter 20

Joy engulfed all three men as they embraced in front of the Hotel Danielle on May 22, 1999, the Grand Canal directly behind them, the bustle of Piazza St. Marco just beyond. Schmidt was the last to arrive, having been wheeled along the canal's promenade from the direction of the piazza by the unfailing Frederica Illyich.

Although Schmidt was still largely silent as a result of his stroke, he seemed less frail than when Fidanzo had last seen him, his eyes as animated as when Fidanzo first met him in Wheeling nearly seventeen years before.

Although the Danielle had a large sitting room and bar off the lobby, the air off the Canal was warming, and though

dusk was approaching, Fidanzo suggested that his friends sit outside, around one of the few tables in front of the hotel entrance, with a view of the Canal immediately in front of them.

Having helped Frau Illyich to substitute Schmidt's wheelchair for one of the chairs around the table, Fidanzo set out to the hotel bar for a bottle of wine and three glasses.

As Fidanzo entered the bar, only one person sat in the bar, an impish and unworldly looking fellow who sat quietly sipping his drink, with what appeared to be a small, birthday cake in front of him. Perhaps it was the fact that he stood out with his open white shirt and matching white trousers, or perhaps it was the contrast with his white clothes and the unusual purple

beret on his head, seemingly made of velvet, that Fidanzo could only associate vaguely with those old portraits and photographs he remembered having seen depicting Richard Wagner during his years of fame in Venice.

"A perfect 'satyr' for my play," thought Fidanzo, "in the same beret Wagner probably owned on the day of his own funeral here in Venice."

As the three men settled at the table outside, Fidanzo noticed the man in white walk out of the hotel, seemingly start to approach them, but then stopping only to bow graciously to the group, before directing a wry smile in Fidanzo's direction, and turning to walk away towards to the piazza.

Amidst much laughter and good

hearted ribbing, the men began filling in the gaps in their knowledge of each other's individual adventures in the United States and Germany, how Schmidt had been exiled to the Belarusian Museum by the KGB, and how Fidanzo and Gallagher had finally been able to renew their search for Schmidt after many years of wondering whatever became of him, which ultimately led Fidanzo to his last apartment in Brest, Belarus.

Fidanzo and Gallagher took the lead in eliciting Schmidt's story by way of their mutual interrogation of him, to which he would make simple responses like "Yes," "No," and as to his many years under house arrest, "Terrible!" But as to his studying of the Nietzsche manuscript, and his annotation of it, "Eleganz!"

When Gallagher recounted his whereabouts over the

years, he left out his brief stint with the IRA, and his participation in the Toome Bridge bombing, but freely confessed to his long addiction to alcohol, which he assured the others he had kicked, as he sipped his glass of wine slowly and deliberately. By the time the men had finished their first bottle of wine, Frau Illyich, discreetly observing them from the hotel lobby, brought them another bottle, unable to resist admonishing both Fidanzo and Gallagher not to “overextend” the good Herr Doctor Schmidt.

“It appears that Frau Illyich has taken good care of you over the years, Georg!”

“Terrible!” He replied, to the laughter of all, including the Frau.

The talk then turned to business, and Fidanzo and Gallagher promised Schmidt that they would attempt to

have his annotations of “The Transfiguration of all Values” published over the next few years, and renew the attempt on behalf of their disabled friend to locate the actual Nietzsche manuscript, so it could be published internationally and take its rightful place in the Nietzsche oeuvre.

After the plan for their renewed search was outlined, Fidanzo told his friends about another work of art he was working on—a play that he had been writing for some time, about the last day in the life of Friedrich Nietzsche, “A kind of satyr-play,” said Fidanzo, “that Nietzsche himself was thinking of writing before his death.”

“What is a satyr-play,” asked Gallagher.

“Well, Nietzsche never really said,” Fidanzo replied, to more laughter all around.



Venice, just before dusk

“But I think it was in response to the morality of the satyr he spoke of in the *Birth of Tragedy*. You know the story, Georg... King Midas sees a satyr in the woods, and asks him what is best for man, and the Satyr tells him...” it is the best thing for man to never have been born; but the next best thing is to die soon....”

Georg did of course know the story, and his eyes gleamed in anticipation.

“And how will it conclude?” asked Gallagher.

“Well, not with a wedding. That was not to be for our good friend. I have this last scene in my head, where Nietzsche himself, as theatre-goer and spectator of his own life, appears from one of the finest boxes at the theatre, impeccably dressed, having now watched his life flash before him—all the joy, all the struggle, and gives his final summation on life, on death—’de capo, de capo, encore.’”

With this, Gallagher could not resist clapping out loud, and looked over to Schmidt, who in turn

gently wiped a silent tear from his eye.

Fidanzo continued.

"You two have inspired me to write it. I want it not only to be about his life, but to express his philosophy, and how he should not be remembered as the philosopher of the Will to Power, but as the philosopher of much simpler truths... about how to live well, about how to love one's friends—with what he called the "furthest" love—wanting to see them reach their potential, and how such love leads inevitably not to the negation of life, but to its celebration—to making each life a work of art, a thing of beauty forever—all of which can only be done by rejecting the false idols of the time—

Christianity, authoritarianism, militarism, intolerance, and greed."

"For example, many who criticized the "The Birth of Tragedy" for being just a celebration of Richard Wagner fail to see it as a very public, yet also personal challenge he laid out to Wagner to become the person who Nietzsche knew he could become, but was not yet."

"I want to show that he was not the nihilist who celebrated unbridled power, but one whose life was sacrificed in a cause, in his own search, for the true values of life—those which give all life meaning; those which abide; those which he himself referred to as his "humble little truths." "

Gallagher joined in. "Yes, and some of those he found here in Italy—like the golden hour just before dusk on the Canal, or the sun of a Mediterranean morning; or sharing a simple meal; or taking a long walk in

the Mountains!"

"Once and again, eternally," rejoined Fidanzo, who continued,

"And the truth of the meaning of 'health,' whether one is well, sick, or disabled. The health that is the strong individual, the person with a 'Yes,' a 'No,' a 'Straight Line,' and a 'Goal'; and his teaching that all those "isms,"—imperialism, socialism, anti-Semitism, could only be conquered one person at a time, even if that meant sometimes with tragic consequences—by each person overcoming their own limitations, their own prejudices, going "over" themselves.

Those were the ones he called the men and women of the future....only in them did he see a hope for the future of humanity, for a new species of humanity."

"Ah yes, he believed that only the individual who overcomes his own limitations could ever contribute to the life of the community, to the life of a New Europe. As in his identifying himself as a Good European," said Gallagher.

"Yes, a "Good European," replied Fidanzo. "In the tradition of Kant. Not the 'Anti-Christ' many have described since."

Fidanzo continued, "It is nearly finished, and we will start production early next year. The centennial of the philosopher's death will be, as you both know, on August 25, 2000. I hope to have the World Premiere of the play in my humble little hometown of Wheeling, West Virginia. I think Nietzsche would have approved. He was skeptical of big productions in famous venues!"

“Yeah, like Wagner in Bayreuth,” mused Gallagher.

“And that will be a day of celebration for us. For all of us, who have been companions in the search for The Values.... I would hope all of you can be there together with me that night.”

“Of course we will,” said Gallagher.

“Yes. Yes,” said Schmidt.

Fidanzo looked over to their old friend, “Herr Schmidt, how do you say ‘search’ in

Italian?” Schmidt tried to mouth the words, but to no avail.

Gallagher spoke up. “Well, I’m not a linguist, but I know the word ‘research’ in Italian is ‘reccerca,’ so I guess ‘search’ in Italian would be ‘la cerca.’”

“Then Cheers to La Cerca!” said Fidanzo, raising his glass to his friends,

As Gallagher raised his glass of wine to make his own toast, the three men all at once momentarily paused, as a sleek black gondola slid by close to their side of the

Grand Canal, not far from where they sat.

It was that very time of the day in Venice of which Nietzsche spoke, when the late sun of the day showered the hulls of even the most modest boats on the Canal with a radiant golden glow, invisible to those who could not see, useless to many others, but necessary to those who believed in the idea of Apollo, of civilization itself, the dream of a world in harmony, a world at peace.

And as it silently passed, they could make out the small but prominent figure of a

man in the gondola’s passenger’s seat, whose white clothes contrasted vividly with the red velvet backing on the Gondola’s chair, giving it the impression of a throne, a flash of purple atop a head staring straight ahead, as if he wanted to demonstrate his nonchalance to the three of them, or perhaps to proclaim he had business much more pressing to attend to, with others more to his liking.

To him, the light reflected off the Gondola’s hull held no mystery.



Gallagher paused yet one more moment before he again raised his glass.

“So Slainte to

The Good European as well,” rejoined Gallagher.

“To The

Good European,” repeated Fidanzo, and looked over to Herr Schmidt. “And what say you friend Schmidt?”

Schmidt

paused, and Gallagher and Fidanzo watched as he carefully pursed his lips as if trying to form a sentence, or perhaps think of a different word, and then realized once and for all that he had plenty enough words to say.

“Eleganz!

Yes, Yes, Yes,” cried Schmidt. 🌀

All 20 Chapters of La Cerca, separated from prior issues of “The Commentaries,” will be available for downloading from the WALS website (firststatecapitol.com) as of January 1, 2013. We thank all of you for your patience over the past five years (starting in 2007), when your editor decided to complete the fictional back-story for “The Good European,” first produced at the Capitol Music Hall in Wheeling, West Virginia, on the one-hundredth anniversary of the death of the German philosopher Frederich Nietzsche, August 25, 2000.

(THE END)

Off the WALS:

News of the Wheeling Academy of Law & Science (WALS) Foundation




Mock Trial Manual



Hancock Co. Teachers

We began our journey with the mock trial project ten years ago with a plan, scripts and lot of enthusiasm. Ohio County was always our base but we took the show on the road in eleven West Virginia counties, presented it, along with our volunteer lawyers, to more than 10,000 students, and brought the American Justice System to life time and time again. Students in public, parochial, private and after school programs, as well as some home-schooled students have been a part of the program that has also utilized "indirect," and "role-play" methods of education to teach our students about the dangers of the abuse of prescription drugs in an objective, non-threatening and fun manner.

The new WV 5th grade Social Studies Standards provide that students should "participate in a mock trial," so we have entered into a partnership with the office of the State Superintendent of schools and RESA 6 educators to prepare a manual which describes the program from A to Z, and to help train all fifth grade teachers in the local area in presenting our mock trial program, expecting that our partnership will continue next year while the RESA 6 teachers become the trainers for the rest of the 5th grade teachers throughout the state. Our plan is to transfer the whole program to the state school system, perhaps staying involved in only a "consulting" capacity, and sincerely hope the project will expand state-wide for all of the more than 20,000 5th grade students next year.

Thanks to everyone who has supported this program over the last ten years. It's been an unbelievable journey for all of us at WALS, and all of those involved—our Executive Director, without whom the project would have never been the great success it has been, our volunteer lawyers, and especially our students, who have embraced the program in an Amazing way! 



UPCOMING in 2013!

More CLE's for our area lawyers

NEW PROGRAMMING:

- The WALs X-Change
- The Reuther-Wheeling Library
- New Lecture and Educational Series

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Wheeling, WV 26003-3582
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First State Capitol



the
Blackstone
club