RICE UNIVERSITY

Death and Degeneration in Malcolm Lowry's, *Under the Volcano*

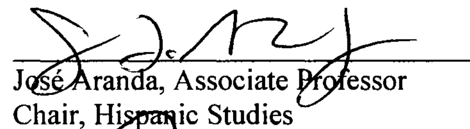
by

Jonathan Michael Palin

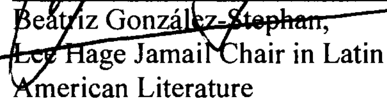
A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Master of Arts

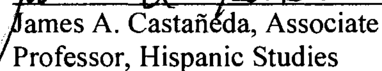
APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:



José Aranda, Associate Professor
Chair, Hispanic Studies



Beatriz González-Stephan,
Lee Hage Jamail Chair in Latin
American Literature



James A. Castañeda, Associate
Professor, Hispanic Studies

HOUSTON, TEXAS

MAY 2008

UMI Number: 1455272

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI®

UMI Microform 1455272

Copyright 2008 by ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest LLC
789 E. Eisenhower Parkway
PO Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

ABSTRACT

Death and Degeneration in Malcolm Lowry's, *Under the Volcano*

by

Jonathan Michael Palin

In *Under the Volcano*, Lowry creates a world of excess, extreme situations, otherness and exoticism. Within this primitive Mexico, the protagonist, Geoffrey Firmin, experiences an individual degeneration. It is through Geoffrey Firmin's individual degeneration, along with the social degeneration of Mexico during the celebration of the Day of the Dead, that he accomplishes his goal of living as an *Indio* in Mexico. By living as an *Indio* in Mexico, however, he meets the same fate as the (dying) *Indio* on the side of the road. Lowry utilizes aspects of Mexican history, religion, macabre details of the Day of the Dead, and alcoholism to create a Mexico worthy of the Consul's "catastrophic success." In Lowry's world, we are able to observe the transformation of Firmin from pseudo-imperial Consul to a *compañero*, accepted into the ranks of the exploited.

Acknowledgements

It is a pleasure to thank the many people who made this thesis possible.

First and foremost, I want to thank my thesis director, Professor José Aranda. He provided encouragement, sound advice, good company, and lots of great ideas. I would have been lost without him. I would also like to thank my committee members, Professor Beatriz González-Stephan and Professor James A. Castañeda for their enthusiasm and inspiration. I wish to extend a special thank you to Bev for providing a comfortable environment for her grad-kids. I am indebted to my colleagues, Lorena Gauthereau-Bryson, Marité Preti, Viviana Díaz and Bianca Condon, for providing a stimulating and fun environment in which to learn and grow. I am especially grateful to Lorena for her time and assistance. I want to acknowledge the Army for funding my program. It is only through their confidence in me that I have had this opportunity. I would like to thank my lovely wife, Kendra, for the incredible amount of patience she had with me in the last 2 years. I would not have been able to do this without you. Lastly, and most importantly, I wish to thank my mother, Rose Kirby. She bore me, raised me, supported me, taught me, and loved me. I dedicate this thesis to her.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction 1

I. a. Degeneration 5
I. b. History 6
I. c. Civilization and Barbarianism 10

II. Day of the Dead 15

II. a. Form of Carnival 19
II. b. Landscape 22
II. c. Death as the National Sign in Mexico 25

III. Alcoholism and Hallucination 28

IV. Conclusion 42

V. Bibliography 45

I. Introduction

Malcolm Lowry wrote *Under the Volcano* in the mid-to-late 1930's and published the work in 1947. His novel has features that liken his style to many modernist writers of the era, namely William Faulkner and his *The Sound and the Fury*. Lowry's novel has three key features that create a modern literary masterpiece. To begin, Lowry's novel displays a heightened interest in subjectivity. The flow of the novel is not limited to what people say; it is possible to actually look into the mind of the characters due to Lowry's use of "stream of consciousness" or "free indirect speech." Next, Lowry experiments with the form of the novel. He presents the novel using different techniques to pass time and by presenting fragmented narratives. Lastly, the novel is a rejection of western modernity. Lowry maintains an interest in the primitive. In the world that Lowry creates in *Under the Volcano*, there are excess, extreme situations, otherness and exoticism. It is within this primitive world that the protagonist, Geoffrey Firmin, experiences an individual degeneration due to his alcoholism. It is through Geoffrey Firmin's individual degeneration, along with the social degeneration of Mexico during the celebration of the Day of the Dead, that he attains his goal of living as an *Indio* in Mexico. By living as an *Indio* in Mexico, however, he meets the same fate as the (dying) *Indio* on the side of the road.

There are a host of possible reasons why Lowry elected to use Mexico as the setting for his novel, but I will concentrate on 3 definitive aspects of Mexico that allow Lowry to produce this immensely dark fiction. He chose Mexico as the ideal location to stage the Consul's euthanasia due to two particularly Mexican characteristics; the

celebration of the Day of the Dead and the landscape of Mexico combined with the Consul's alcoholism.

Not only does Mexico remain a society steeped in ritual worship of the dead, a tradition prevalent in Mexico long before colonial powers set their sights on the assimilation of Mexico, but also provides a landscape readily available to literary metaphor for the author. Lowry spent a considerable amount of time in Mexico prior to writing the novel, two trips totaling over 25 months in the country. Ronald G. Walker recognizes that, "Lowry's personal contact with Mexico was much more extensive than that of the other English novelists" (Walker xi). He was familiar with the intricacies of Mexico's landscape and Mexican culture. Lowry knew, first hand, the accounts of Walker who described the country as, "Mexico – with its fabled history, its subtropical volcanic landscape, its millions of Indian peasants, its reputation for sporadic violence, and its cult of death – was a veritable treasure of the exotic" (Walker 2). The initial draft of the novel consisted of a short story detailing the death of an *Indio* alongside a roadway in Mexico; an experience Lowry would never forget. This experience was what would become *Under the Volcano*. Through his several revisions of the novel, beginning with the short story of the dying *Indio*, Lowry shaped the novel to read as the death of a representative of imperial power in the *infernal* land of Mexico.

Lowry utilizes several aspects of Mexican history, religion, macabre details of the Day of the Dead, and popular culture in 1940's Mexico to create a Mexico worthy of the Consul's "catastrophic success." Not only does Lowry acknowledge the importance of the celebration of the Day of the Dead, but he also acknowledges and exploits the general idea of death in Mexican culture. He employs the cultural analysis that Claudio Lomnitz

brings to light in his recent study, *Death and the Idea of Mexico*. With Lomnitz's insight into the resonance of death in Mexican culture, it is possible to determine more clearly why Lowry's use of Mexico is perfect for the degeneration of the Consul. His use of death as a theme in Mexico aligns with the beliefs and writings of Lomnitz. Lomnitz defines death as the 'national sign' of Mexico. Not only does he explain the intricacies of how death advanced to the forefront of the cultural stage in Mexico, but he also explains the acceptance of death as the national totem by drawing from the history of death in Mexico from its Peninsular and Mesoamerican roots.

The Day of the Dead is the first of two major themes in Lowry's novel. It is important to note that Lowry must introduce the celebration of the Day of the Dead as a pastime specific to Mexico; otherwise, his novel could have taken place in a wide variety of locations to include peninsular Spain, Central or South America, or any other Hispanic country that observes a celebration of the deceased with an annual celebration. The celebration of the Day of the Dead prevailed for centuries in some form or fashion in each of these countries; however, Lowry is concerned with only the Mexican celebration. Lomnitz describes how the mid twentieth century Day of the Dead celebration differs from past celebrations in Mexico. He describes, through the use of social, political and cultural phenomena, how the celebration varies in popularity over time. Pertinent to Lowry's novel, the celebration experienced a political and cultural reemergence during the time of his work on *Under the Volcano*.

The reemergence of the celebration of the Day of the Dead in Mexico is often divided into two categories. The first category is the urban, or macabre, celebration stemming from more contemporary views of death in Mexico. The second category is the

agrarian, or Mesoamerican, celebration grounded in a tradition emphasizing the fine line between life and death (Lomnitz 402). Lowry's purpose for setting his novel during the celebration takes into consideration elements from both of the categories. Since my study includes elements from both categories, my examination of *Under the Volcano* will reflect a generalized celebration of the Day of the Dead that encompasses both contemporary and traditional elements. There is, however, one element of the celebration that is crucial to my analysis; that Lowry utilizes the Day of the Dead as a form of Carnival in mid twentieth century Mexico. Ultimately, the analysis of the Mexican celebration of the Day of the Dead is requisite in order to align the Consul's individual degeneration with the social degeneration in Mexico.

While determining the overall character of Mexico in the novel, it is also necessary to examine the political, social and physical landscape in Mexico. It is the landscape of Mexico that provides Lowry the setting for the degeneration of the Consul. Lowry, having spent no more than twenty-five months in the country prior to writing the novel, develops a landscape based on current social and political events, historical events, and imagined or fictional accounts that serve to produce a stereotypical setting. The manner in which Lowry's uses the landscape and culture in Mexico functions as an 'Infernal Paradise.' It is possible to better understand Lowry's reason for using Mexico as the backdrop for his novel by utilizing Walker's, *Infernal Paradise*. Walker's text, coupled with the storied past of Mexico's indigenous population with relation to imperial endeavors by foreign nations, provides a perfect location for the degeneration of the Consul.

Geoffrey Firmin's ultimate goal in life is to realize his dream of living as an *Indio* in Mexico, just as William Blackstone had accomplished to the north in the colonial United States. Unlike Blackstone, however, the Consul meets with the same fate as the *Indios* in Mexico. As the Consul lay dying beside the cantina in the final scene of the novel, *Indio* accepts the Consul as his equal. "But someone had called him 'compañero' too, which was better, much better…It made him happy" (Lowry 389).

I. a. Degeneration

Degeneration is the process by which an individual experiences a "lowering of effective power, vitality, or essential quality to an enfeebled and worsened kind or state" ("Degeneration" def. 1). In Malcolm Lowry's, *Under the Volcano*, the ex-Consul protagonist, Geoffrey Firmin, experiences an individual degeneration to the point where he has "drunk himself sober." The novel is set in mid twentieth century Mexico at the end of the Spanish Civil War and at the outset of the reemergence of the Day of the Dead in Mexico. Lowry opens and closes the novel during the celebration of the Day of the Dead. The Consul might see death as linear, but for the Day of the Dead, death gives rise to life. Not unlike Firmin's quest to live among the *Indios*, a degenerative wish at best for a former Consul of the British throne, Mexico itself realizes a social degeneration with the reemergence of the Day of the Dead as a highly celebrated, national affair. By utilizing social degeneration during this celebration, it is possible to paint a mid twentieth century view of Mexico, utilizing the reemergence of the Day of the Dead as a national holiday, and also to explain the systematic destruction of Geoffrey Firmin. By paying particular attention to the time when the novel was written with respect to the cyclic reemergence of the celebration in Mexico and Firmin's extreme alcohol abuse, we are able to observe the

transformation of Firmin from pseudo-imperial Consul to "one of the exploited, violated as much by the tyranny of self as by the dehumanizing schemes of the fascists" (Walker 280).

I. b. History

In March, 1938, Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas expropriated foreign oil companies due to their inability or refusal to "answer government demands for increasing wages and training native Mexicans for managerial positions" (Costa 67). As a result, in November, 1938, England severed diplomatic relations with Mexico. Geoffrey Firmin is a former British Consul living in the town of Quauhnahuac (Cuernavaca), Mexico. The Consul decides to remain in Mexico after British-Mexican diplomatic ties fade in order to fulfill his desire to "live among the Indians" (Lowry 86). In one of his historical musings to his estranged wife Yvonne, he refers to William Blackstone, an early settler to the Americas who chose to live among the *Indios* and assume another culture rather than execute his duties as colonizer (Lowry 86). It is essential to recognize the difference between the two roles the Consul could have assumed. The first role is the most common and consists of the Consul as a representative of early colonizers of Mexico and the second as an outsider attempting to integrate into a foreign society. The Consul "identifies with Blackstone rather than with Cortés and Maximilian [early colonizers of Mexico], for he sees himself as a kind of visionary on a quest for secret knowledge associated with the primitive peoples, and not as a champion of empire" (Walker 257). This quest for secret knowledge leads the Consul through a process of individual degeneration, to the point where he is, in fact, living the life of an *Indio* in Mexico. The resulting situation, in the opinion of any Eurocentric scholar, consisted of one man's fall

from educated, reasonable graces to a Calibanian existence. We see, during the progression of the novel, the degeneration of an individual that not only highlights the degeneration of a culture in Mexico perceived by European standards, but also reflects the, then, contemporary political situation in Mexico and Spain.

Lowry delicately fashions the Consul's demise in Mexico from a political standpoint. In a conversation with his neighbor, Mr. Quincy, the Consul draws a parallel between Cárdenas and God and himself and Adam. The Consul is hinting at the current political situation in Mexico. The Consul proposes that there is more to the Garden of Eden legend than meets the eye (Lowry 139). He speculates that Adam was never really banished from the Garden at all. It is possible that "his punishment really consisted…in his having to go on living there, alone, of course – suffering…or perhaps, perhaps Adam was the first property owner and God, the first agrarian, a kind of Cárdenas, in fact…kicked him out" (Lowry 140). The Consul is Adam, and as a landowner and foreigner, is in "constant danger of being evicted from Mexico" (Ackerley and Clipper 196).

The reminiscence of Laruelle in the early chapters of the novel do not only echo Mexico's colonial past, but also hint at the current political situation in Mexico and Spain at the time. In order to understand the Consul's precarious position in Mexico, it is imperative that the reader understand the political situation in Spain and Mexico during the 1940's. General Francisco Franco and his leftist supporters led the Spanish revolution in 1939, successfully displacing the traditional Spanish monarchy. Lowry includes several allusions to Franco's fascist government in his novel. Hugh, the Consul's brother, likens his inability to help the *Indio* on the side of the road with his inability to fight in

the revolution against Franco. The Mexican police are fascist representations of the Spanish *Guerra Civil*: "They are fascist and involved in the murder of the Indian, whose dying exclamation 'Compañero,' comrade, was the word of address used by the Reds in the Spanish Civil War" (Lowry xxii). After the end of the Spanish Civil War, the Reds that were not incarcerated or murdered were forced into exile. Exiles either displaced to areas around Europe or set sail for America.

A day after Pope Pius XII's reception of more than 3,200 Spanish National soldiers in Rome, whom he thanked for "fighting against their enemies to restore the 'Cross of Christ' to the Spanish nation", the Secretary of the Interior in Mexico, Ignacio García Téllez, embraced 1,600 Spanish refugees as "defenders of democracy against the Hispanic and European fascists who dreamed of reconstructing an Empire" (Cate-Arries 118). In standing with the degenerative theme of the novel, it is only prudent to look back through history at the Imperial forces which shaped Mexico into the country it was during the 1940's.

The novel traces the contemporary illustration of Mexico backward to its colonial and imperial past. The most recent imperial presence in Mexico was Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian Joseph of Hapsburg and his wife Marie Charlotte (Carlota) (Ackerley and Clipper 26). They arrived in Mexico in 1864 after receiving pressure from anti-democratic forces in Mexico and Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the emperor of France (26). Although the two genuinely believed their presence was welcomed by the Mexican people, it became obvious in May, 1867, that Mexico was not receptive to their rule. Their presence resounds in the novel as the characters each reflect on the ruins of the Imperial Palace.

In the first chapter, which takes place exactly one year after the deaths of the Consul and Yvonne, M. Laruelle, walks to Maximilian and Carlota's former palace in Cuernavaca and contemplates the effect of colonialism on Mexico:

> ...he immediately regretted having come. The broken pink pillars, in the half-light, might have been waiting to fall down on him: the pool, covered in green scum, its steps torn away and hanging by one rotten clamp, to close over his head. The shattered, evil-smelling chapel, overgrown with weeds, the crumbling walls, splashed with urine, on which scorpions lurked – wrecked entablature, sad archivolt, slippery stones covered with excreta – this place, where love had once brooded, seemed part of a nightmare. (Lowry 14)

Laruelle begins to develop a scenario of two lovers moving to Mexico to realize their dream of settling in paradise. He begins at the end, the failed love affair between the Consul and Yvonne, the failed attempt at colonialism by Maximilian and Carlota, the nightmare that has become of the Palace: "Yes, you are right. I had my chance with you. Never a chance like that again!" (Lowry 15). The scene comes to Laruelle, a French filmmaker, just as he would imagine the scene of a movie. Available to the audience however, is not only the situation surrounding the evidence of the failed love affairs of the two couples, Maximilian and Carlota, the Consul and Yvonne, but also the overarching failed conquest of Mexico, hence the ruins of the Palace. Although, the scene develops with Maximilian in mind, Laruelle is quick to liken his fate to that of the Consul: "But it was the Consul's voice, not Maximilian's, M. Laruelle could almost hear in the Palace" (Lowry 15). The effect of this scene on the novel is evident. Just as Maximilian had met his fate in Mexico, the Consul will also complete his fateful journey in Mexico.

Prior to Maximilian and Carlota there was Hernán Cortés. Cortés was a Spanish conquistador and considered "the conqueror of Mexico" (Ackerley and Clipper 45). The

ensuing battle for control of Mexico culminated in the total destruction of the Aztec's (*Indios*) civilization (45). This feat would not have been possible without the help of Spanish reinforcements and, more importantly, the smallpox plague which "carried off tens of thousands of Aztecs" (45). The result of this initial invasion of Mexico by Spain was a "city and civilization easily the equal of anything in Europe at the time, despite its emphasis upon militarism and human sacrifice" (46). It is from this early encounter between Europe and America that we see the dichotomy between civilization and barbarianism.

I. c. Civilization and Barbarianism

When reading the novel one of the first questions that comes to mind is why would the Consul want to become an *Indio* living in Mexico? I believe the answer can be found by looking at the Consul's position in Mexico and relating it to the, then, contemporary political situation in both Spain and Mexico. It is apparent that Lowry is creating not only a work based on the life of the Consul, but also on the effects of hundreds of years of colonization in Mexico.

In the final scene of the novel, the Consul is questioned by the Chief of Rostrums. It is in the Consul's answer that the reader can see the transition from Consul to *Indio*. The response to the Chief of Rostrum's question regarding the Consul's identification, the Consul replies that he is William Blackstone. The identification comes directly from a previous remark to Yvonne when he stated, "I'm thinking of becoming a Mexican subject, of going to live among the Indians, like William Blackstone" (Lowry 302):

> The Consul is identifying himself with someone who, although actively involved in the British colonization of the Americas, longed for more intimate contact with the aboriginal peoples of the continent – longed, that is, to heal the wounds inflicted not just by colonization but by the emergent ideology of nationalism that was legitimating the colonial process of territorial appropriation. (Miller 11)

The Consul's brother, Hugh, is an advocate of leftist causes in Spain and is disappointed that he is not directly participating in the revolution. The Consul, on the other hand, "does not share Hugh's affinity for leftist causes" (Miller 11). It is particularly important that one understand the connection between the Consul's inability to find motive behind revolution and his desire to become an *Indio* in Mexico. Miller indicates that the Consul and Hugh both share a sense of "transcendental homelessness" (Miller 11). Again, we hear the echo of the Consul's professed desire to become a 'Mexican subject,' but as Miller emphasizes, "A rich connection to the land is something that he is never able to attain" (Miller 11).

At the outset of the novel, Lowry introduces the location of Quauhnahuac with respect to other locations around the globe:

> It is situated well south of the Tropic of Cancer, to be exact on the nineteenth parallel, in about the same latitude as the Revillagigedo Islands to the west in the Pacific, or very much further west, the southernmost tip of Hawaii – and as the port of Tzucox to the east on the Atlantic seaboard of Yucatán near the border of British Honduras, or very much further east, the town of Juggernaut, in India, on the Bay of Bengal. (Lowry 3)

Although this passage identifies locations that seem entirely arbitrary, sharing only the nineteenth parallel among them, Miller argues that these locations are, in fact, extremely pertinent to the political message in the novel. The locations turn out to not only share common latitude, but also similar colonial pasts. They are not entirely arbitrary: "in various ways they exemplify how the actions of colonial powers have left their mark on

the world" (Miller 13). Furthermore, Lowry, "relying simply on the evocative power of place names…subtly weaves together the colonial and imperial histories that have made such varied places as Hawaii, Honduras, and India seem elements in a single narrative of global modernization" (Miller 13). The effect of this global modernization, know also as a modern-day imperial endeavor waged by both British and American interests, was the Mexican nationalization of the region's oil supply in 1938. Mexico is, in a sense, "an imperfectly decolonized state" (Miller 13):

> Far from being a tangential matter, this piece of sociopolitical history is intimately connected with the events of Lowry's novel; after all, the Consul's ambiguous situation results first and foremost from Britain's decision to break off diplomatic relations with Mexico, a decision precipitated by Mexico's nationalization of British oil interests. (Miller 14)

Miller recognizes that Lowry's novel is, "indeed partly about the perceived nature of man's fate under conditions of modernity" but explains that the novel "is also partly about the inadequacies of those national formations that, by virtue of their administrative and mass-cultural articulations, sustain our sense of having decisively broken with an archaic past" (Miller 14).

The timeline in the novel is significant due to the geopolitical perspective offered by Miller. The events in the novel take place in 1938, "a year in which the reverberations of fascism's impending triumph in Spain were being felt throughout the world – even in these isolated portions of Mexico in which Lowry situates his narrative" (Miller 15). Miller argues that Lowry takes the effect a step further, by beginning the novel from the retrospective vantage point of November, 1939. It is during this time period that we encounter the beginning of World War II, which Miller explains "tacitly frames Lowry's often solipsistic narrative of love, drunkenness, and self-destruction" (Miller 15):

> In the localized Mexican milieu that Lowry depicts, the corrupt agents of the police serve as the most visible embodiment of the broader violence that was then being actively manifested, on a global scale, by the military instrumentalities of the nation-state. (Miller 15)

With this in mind, we are able to determine that Lowry's depiction of the police in the café as "not only metaphorical fascists but also literal ones" (Miller 15). Ultimately, Miller argues that there is substantial meaning for integrating the fascist police into the novel. He concludes that, "Lowry compels us to recognize the dangerous ethnocentrism and violence that is part of the logic of state-based nationalism – even when that nationalism is motivated by the desire of postcolonial states (such as Mexico) to assert their sovereignty" (Miller 15).

Interestingly enough, in Lowry's critique of Empire, he includes a seemingly benign reference to India. As the novel unfolds, the reader is able to identify the most pronounced political statement; the fall of the British Empire following World War II. It is through this critique of Empire that the reader can discern the degeneration of colonialism in a post-colonial society such as Mexico. Cárdenas' actions did lead to the dissolution of political ties between Mexico and Britain, but an often-overlooked political statement exists. This political statement can be found in the lineage of the Consul. The Consul is an extension of Britain in Mexico by virtue of his profession, but he is also of Indian (Kashmir) decent. The final draft of the novel contains few references to his Indian ancestry, but it is a theme that must be explored in order to understand the true degeneration of the Consul.

In search of India, Columbus discovered Mexico. It is this Mexico that the Consul is hoping to join as an *Indio*. The Consul's precarious position in Mexico can be described as an attempt at self-discovery. In the early drafts of the *Volcano* this

relationship is more evident. It is only through Lowry's continual editing that the theme lost its prominence. The importance of the Consul's heritage is in Lowry's writing of Mexico as a false stand-in for India. Between the two countries, Mexico and India, Lowry has chosen the one that is able to offer the Consul the best attempt at recovering his Indian roots. Mexico exists to the Consul as a form of Carnival, a place in which he is able to attain a more primitive state of being. The cyclic reemergence of the Day of the Dead, along with his rampant alcoholism, is what the Consul uses to try and escape his Empire. Lowry could not have integrated this story of self-discovery and degeneration in India because at the time the novel was written, it had not concluded its transition into a postcolonial nation. There was still a large British presence in India. It was not until after World War II, and the release of the novel, that India gained its independence from Britain. Celebrations similar to the Day of the Dead were not available to Lowry had he used India as the setting.

II. Day of the Dead

Prior to developing an argument based on the Mexican celebration of the Day of the Dead, we must first define exactly what the Day of the Dead represents in Mexico:

> The Day of the Dead is a specifically Mexican term referring to the Mexican version of pan-Roman Catholic holy days: All Saints' and All Souls' Days, observed on November 1 and November 2, respectively. Strictly speaking, the Day of the Dead—known in Spanish as el Día de Animas (Souls' Day), el Día de los Finados (the Day of the Deceased), or el Día de los Fieles Difuntos (the Day of the Faithful Departed)—refers to All Souls' Day, which normally falls on November 2. Only when November 2 happens to coincide with Sunday is All Souls' Day celebrated on November 3. (Brandes 360)

Lowry depicts the celebration of the Day of the Dead in the novel as an inherently Mexican holiday. Brandes clearly defines the holiday as uniquely Mexican when he comments: "What is clear is that, for Mexicans, foreigners, and peoples of Mexican descent, the holiday has come to symbolize Mexico and Mexicanness. It is a key symbol of national identity" (Brandes 361). To go a step further, Brandes presents the particular reason that delineates the celebration as inherently Mexican holiday. Brandes recognizes that the basic formula for representing the celebration as Mexican is by rooting it in Mexico's *Indio* heritage. Brandes refers to one major resource enjoyed by Mexico in its quest for unique identity: "the Indian, past and present" (Brandes 361). Brandes's marked distinction between the celebrations of the Day of the Dead in Mexico versus all other celebrations worldwide is paramount in Lowry's use of the celebration as the time setting for the degeneration of the Consul. The Day of the Dead is the only amount of time in the novel. No time exists outside of the Day of the Dead. Lowry fully integrates the celebration of the Day of the Dead into his novel, or better said; Lowry fully integrates his novel into the celebration of the Day of the Dead. The Day of the Dead exists not only

as a time for celebration, but also as a way of life in Mexico. It is this celebration that the Consul must embrace in order to live among the *Indios* in Mexico. It is only after the Consul becomes a participant in the Day of the Dead instead of merely a spectator that he will carry out his desire to live among the *Indios*. Lowry's use of the Day of the Dead and its *Indio* roots offer insight into how Mexico is different from Spain with regard to the celebration:

> Gutmann is correct to state that Mexican intellectuals tend to date Mexico today from the times of the Spanish conquest, "whether for the triumph of the Spanish in the case of Ramos, or for the defeat of the Aztecs in the case of Paz" (Gutmann 1993:53). Nonetheless, it is Mexico's Indian heritage, as demonstrated through archaeological and ethnographic evidence, that clearly separates the country from both Spain and the United States, and it is the Indian heritage that the Mexican state has chosen to elevate symbolically. (Brandes 361-362)

The next step in validating the Day of the Dead as a significant Mexican celebration that adds to the events of the book (the Consul's desire to live among the *Indios*) is demonstrating the cyclic reemergence of the holiday; particularly the rise in popularity of the celebration during the time Lowry was living in and writing his novel. The Day of the Dead was, during the conquest of Mexico, a Catholic celebration that originated in peninsular Spain. The Mesoamerican *Indios* also participated in their own ritual worship of the dead, much like the Spanish Day of the Dead. It was the fusing of these two cultures that produced the modern celebration of the Day of the Dead in Mexico. However, during the early years of the conquest:

> The Day of the Dead, like Carnival, always presented a threat to the official political and religious establishment. Hence, during the colonial era, the Spanish rulers attempted to tone down, if not entirely eradicate, the popular celebration of All Saints' and All Souls' Days. Chamber (Real Sala del Crimen) prohibited attendance at cemeteries and also imposed a prohibition on the sale of alcoholic beverages after nine in the evening. Nearly one hundred years later, following Mexico's independence from Spain, the Day of the Dead still seemed to pose a threat to public order and stability. (Brandes 363)

The novel opens during the Mexican celebration of the Day of the Dead, precisely one year after the death of the Consul. Including the Mexican view of death in literature was certainly not a new concept to European writers. It was the extent the celebration of the Day of the Dead and landscape played in Lowry's novel that is worth noting. Walker comments at length about the underlying death-fixation that is endemic in Mexico. He proposes that Lowry, along with other foreign writers, believe that Mexico should be "represented as a land saturated with death: the politics, the art, the fiestas and other social customs, the ancient and modern religious rituals, the landscape itself" (Walker 20).

It is necessary to understand the cyclic reemergence of the Day of the Dead in Mexico. In this analysis, I posit that although the celebration originated in Spain and was brought to Mexico through religious tradition, the celebration underwent a major change when put into contact with the indigenous inhabitants of Mexico. To a great extent, the celebration rose and fell from grace with respect to the then current governing bodies. Although initially well received and widely celebrated, the government in the late nineteenth century restricted the celebration to a great extent on the assumption that it was contrary to good order and discipline.

The reemergence of the celebration in the mid twentieth century marked a turning point in popular sentiment, and once again people outwardly celebrated the deceased. Ronald Walker, in his description of the Mexican view of death, highlights the monumental aspiration in the life of the Consul: "On this earth there can be no experience of salvation – however it is defined – without the awareness of what loss of salvation means, no rebirth without first an ascent into the underworld of spiritual death, no heaven entirely divorced from hell" (Walker 24). In the novel, Lowry initially develops the Day of the Dead as a ritual celebration in Mexico through the use of the *Indio*, dying on the side of the road, reaching for the cross in order to find salvation. By utilizing the *Indio* as the individual seeking salvation, rather than a descendent of Spanish colonialism, Lowry integrates the belief that it is the *Indio* who experiences his salvation. It is on the Day of the Dead that the line between life and death is at its thinnest, and on this particular day two Indians will be seeking their salvation. Brandes explains that seeking salvation on this day that makes the Day of the Dead distinctly Mexican (Brandes 365). "The Day of the Dead supposedly demonstrates the Mexican's 'contempt for death' (Paz 57), 'obsession with death' (Lope Blanch 8), 'indifference toward' death (Brodman 39), 'slight regard for human life' (Covarrubias 390), and 'fondness for dying' (Hewes 219)" (Brandes 272).

Lowry creates an environment in which the Consul will achieve his goal of living among the *Indios* in Mexico. In order to examine the relationship between the fateful last days of the Consul and social overtones created by the celebration, we must examine how Mexican culture perverts the modern-day celebration into a form of Carnival, the menacing landscape of Mexico in which the celebration takes place, and the Mexican

view of death as a culture. Claudio Lomnitz explains the emergence of death as the national sign of Mexico from an historical aspect. Stanley Brandes and Jonathan Arac expand the death motif in contemporary Mexico by addressing the Spanish and Mesoamerican origins of the celebration of the Day of the Dead and the form of carnival associated with the Day of the Dead respectively. Overall, of importance to Lowry is that the celebration of the Day of the Dead emphasizes the relative proximity of life and death in popular culture in Mexico.

II. a. Form of Carnival

The Day of the Dead is represented as a form of carnival in *Under the Volcano.* According to Arac, "carnival is a pageant without a stage, without any division into performers and spectators" (Arac 487). Just as the events occur in the novel, Arac proposes that during a celebration such as a carnival, everyone is caught up in it. From the very first draft of his novel, Lowry is caught up in the presence of a Carnival atmosphere. The novel grew out of the short story of the *Indio* dying beside the road. In the final draft, although the event is secondary to the storyline, the Carnivalesque situation still exists. According to Arac, during Carnival there is no division between performers and spectators. Everyone takes part in the celebration on the same level. It can be said that Lowry takes this lack of division a step further and promotes the idea of Carnival from a cultural vantage point. Beginning with the initial draft, there is Carnival in a sense that nobody responds to the *Indio* dying on the side of the road. The Consul ends up taking part in the situation by not participating at all. He fails, as do the other people in the bus, to act out the part of the Good Samaritan. The only individual that steps in to participate in this situation is the *pelado*. There is cultural significance in this

scene as once again, the *pelado*, the one whom Hugh had called a thief, is of European lineage. He is a *mestizo*; a product of the comingling of cultures that is still committing aggression towards the indigenous population in Mexico. In one regard, the *mestizo* represents the non-division of actors. Everyone is caught up in this situation and the *pelado* is the only one to benefit from it.

Arac also expresses the necessity of having a particular location set aside for the celebration, a carnival square. In this carnival square, "people, however diverse, meet on a basis of equality, and on the right day all public spaces take on this quality: streets, taverns, public baths, and bullfights" (Arac 487). Lowry introduces Cuernavaca by hinting at this comingling of cultures. He describes the main street that divides Cuernavaca as: "A fine American-style highway [that] leads in from the north but is lost in its narrow streets and comes out a goat track" (Lowry 3). With regard to the taverns that Arac maintains are essential to Carnival, Lowry is careful to mention in the second paragraph of the novel that there exist in Cuernavaca eighteen churches and fifty-seven cantinas (3). There is no shortage of baths either as Lowry continues to build his fictional town that contains "no less than four hundred swimming pools, public and private, filled with the water that ceaselessly pours down from the mountains" (3). Then, it is by no surprise that Lowry also includes a bullfight in the novel. The Consul, Yvonne and Hugh make their way to Tomalín to watch a bullfight. It is in Tomalín that Yvonne begins to ponder the significance of the bullfight. She contemplates:

> …the bull was like a life; the important birth, the fair chance, the tentative, then assured, then half-despairing circulations of the ring, an obstacle negotiated – a feat improperly recognized – boredom, resignation, collapse: then another, more convulsive birth, a new start; the circumspect endeavors to obtain one's bearings in a world now frankly hostile, the apparent but deceptive encouragement of one's judges, half of whom were asleep, the swervings into the beginnings of disaster because of that same negligible obstacle one had surely taken before at a stride, the final enmeshment in the toils of enemies one was never quite certain weren't friends more clumsy than actively ill-disposed, followed by disaster, capitulation, disintegration… (Lowry 270)

Yvonne's description of the bullfight fits neatly into Arac's definition of Carnival. However, for the Consul and Yvonne, the Carnival does not end in the public square. It is only after the realization that the bullfight is a metaphor for degeneration, death, rebirth and life altogether, she attempts to reconcile with the Consul. Yvonne's situation is dire. In fact, when discussing the possible reunion during the bullfight it was as if "all at once they were talking – agreeing hastily – like prisoners who do not have much time to talk" (Lowry 288). It is at the end of the bullfight that the Consul expresses his true desire to reunite with Yvonne. Although initially intrigued by the idea, and after having given Yvonne false hope, he responds to her statement of, "We could be happy, we could" with his response "Yes…we could" (Lowry 289).

The very essence of the Day of the Dead in the novel follows this form of Carnival. There is, what Arac would qualify as a "publicness of life and erasure of usual social distinctions" that "makes carnival a world of life the wrong way 'round: of familiarity, eccentricity, and profanation" (Arac 487). He goes on to express that, "what seems improper and unseemly under ordinary circumstances is now the rule of the day" (Arac 487). The Consul's goal is congruent with the idea of Carnival. He is attempting to free himself from the bonds of eurocentrism and live the life of an *Indio* in Mexico.

II. b. Landscape

Lowry chose twelve hours during the Day of the Dead in Mexico as the time in which his novel takes place. His choice of location in the novel, Cuernavaca, is equally important as his choice of time. By utilizing Mexico as his setting he benefits from several particular characteristics of Mexico. The first of these characteristics that differentiates Mexico from other possible settings is the natural landscape:

> There are many other aspects of the natural world in Lowry's novel; but they are either used semiotically, like the cleft rock in Chapter Two, which signifies to Yvonne the sundering of her marriage with Geoffrey; or as atypical and taunting instances of affirmation, like the halcyon terrain of Chapter Four, in which Hugh and Yvonne ride through gently sloping fields across a cool stream to reach a tranquil and orderly park. Such beauty cannot be real, Hugh knows; it is only as if he and Yvonne have been allowed for one hour a glimpse of what never was at all: because this is the day when the dead come to life, they have been allowed a glimpse of the way things might have been if Man had not fallen. (Day 329)

Lowry uses the landscape in Mexico not to convey the beauty of the country but rather utilizes the "chthonic imagery [which] is, clearly, archetypally demonic in nature: that is, it employs the traditional affirmative apocalyptic images of the Mount of Perfection, the fertile valley, the cleansing stream or fountain, and the blossoming garden, but employs them in an inverted, ironic form" (Day 329-330). This inversion of the meaning of the landscape draws heavily from the death-oriented culture in Mexico. The forms that are most available to interpretation in the novel are the two volcanoes, *Popocatepetl* and *Ixtaccihuatl*. Once again, Lowry utilizes opposites to highlight his theme of degeneration. The name *Popocatepetl* derives from the Nahuatl words *popoca* and *tepetl* together meaning "Smoking Mountain" (Ackerley and Clipper 11). The name *Ixtaccihuatl* derives from the Nahuatl words *iztac* and *cihuatl* together meaning White Woman (Ackerley and Clipper 11). It is no surprise that *Popocatepetl* is the novel's dominating symbol, "its

snowy peak and burning heart epitomizing both man's aspiring and destructive capacities" (11).

Lowry is a British writer, writing about the country he visited for a total of twenty-five months. The type of imagery employed by Lowry expresses a general attitude toward the culture in Mexico. From the outside looking in, the world that Lowry creates is his own. With the understanding of the form of Carnival in the novel we can see how: "What had indicated fruition now indicates sterility; what had represented cleansing, now represents corruption, and what had symbolized the soul's striving upward toward salvation, now symbolizes the decent into damnation…It is of a world turned upside down that Lowry writes." (Day 330) Just as the Day of the Dead is perverted into a type of Carnival, the landscape of Mexico is transformed from an Edenic garden to an 'Infernal Paradise.' Lowry creates a Mexico that is littered with generalizations and stereotypes that is primed for the Consul's degeneration and impending death.

Walker emphasizes that Mexico maintains a storied past as a premier destination for writers of fiction. For the same reasons Lowry selected Mexico as the stage for his novel, "all of these artists intuited something distinctive, a profound 'otherness' bordering on a national mystique, in Mexico" (Walker 12). Walker utilizes the words of Evelyn Waugh to convey the message of "otherness" in Mexico; she states, "Anything may happen there; almost everything has happened there… [But it is] also a distorting mirror in which objects are reflected in perverse and threatening forms" (Walker 12). So it is the element of distortion, the presence of perversion and the Mexican otherness that provides Lowry with the quintessential landscape for the Consul's degeneration. In

Walker's words, the landscape in Mexico "induce[s] a kind of dreamy, visionary state in the observer" and it is "the inclusion of the Indians of Mexico as the purveyors of this dream-like persona" (Walker 20). Lowry, like many authors, relates the hallucinatory power of Mexico to its Indian presence (Walker 16).

The landscape in the novel not only includes the inanimate world of which Lowry writes, but also includes the living presence in the novel, the animals:

> These very potent images all have their appropriately sinister attendants from the insect and animal worlds. The novel swarms with scorpions, spiders, vultures, armadillos, hideous and starving pariah dogs, and horses straight out of the Apocalypse. Other than the ever-present pariah dogs, the animal Geoffrey Firmin sees most often is probably the figure on the label of bottles of Anís del Mono: a red and grinning monkey, brandishing a pitchfork and wagging his barbed tail. (Day 331)

Lowry is quick to include the obvious Mexican landscape that lends texture to the topic of degeneration. He also takes the initiative to create scenes that are filled with this same texture that may not be entirely factual. Although Lowry is creating fiction, his objective is based on common knowledge. In some cases, he implements his fictional license to create scenes that appear more foreboding. Such is the case with the label on the bottle of Anís. Lowry's depiction of the label dramatizes the bottle in way that reflects the presence of death in his alcoholism. Although Lowry describes the Mexico that is typically a land of hallucination and mired in death, there is criticism by other authors that Lowry distorted Mexico, "to an extent beyond the normal scope of fictional license," and that "the curious exaggerations and distortions which appear in [his] accounts of Mexico in fact represent the imposition, over the true map, of [his] fears and hopes" (Walker 20).

II. c. Death as the National Sign in Mexico

> The scene is Mexico, the meeting place, according to some, of mankind itself, pyre of Bierce and springboard of Hart Crane, and age-old arena of racial and political conflicts of every nature, and where a colorful native people of genius have a religion that we can only roughly describe as one of death, so that it is a good place, at least as good as Lancashire, or Yorkshire, to set our drama of a man's struggle between the powers of darkness and light. Its geographical remoteness from us, as well as the closeness of its problems to our own, will assist the tragedy each in its own way. We can see it as the world itself, or the Garden of Eden, or both at once. Or we can see it as a kind of timeless symbol of the world on which we can place the Garden of Eden, the Tower of Babel and indeed anything else we please. It is paradisal: it is unquestionably infernal. It is, in fact, Mexico. (Lowry 1)

At the same time Lowry was writing *Under the Volcano*, Spanish surrealist poet, Juan Larrea submitted the idea that Death was Mexico's national totem (Lomnitz 23). At the time, totems were defined as "tutelary signs that represented an ancestral figure of the group as a whole" (Lomnitz 23). It is necessary to point out that death was not forced on Mexico from outsiders; death was elected by Mexicans to express Mexican culture. It was Mexican writer Octavio Paz who reinforced this "pervasive, often humorous, and frequently intimate representation of death" and later wrote, Mexicans sometimes referred to themselves collectively as 'hijos de la chingada,' an expression that at once means 'bastards,' 'sons of the fucked one,' and 'children of death'" (Lomnitz 23). It was ultimately the model of totemism defined by Freud that Larrea's generation adopted. Freud's definition of totemism explains that there is a "primal form of identification that preceded formal religious and state institutions. As such, the cult of death could be thought of as the oldest, seminal, and most authentic element of Mexican popular culture" (Lomnitz 24). Again, the arguably most outspoken Mexican writer on the subject of Mexican national character included in his crowning work, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*,

"a core chapter to attitudes toward death as a diagnostic feature of the condition that Paz called 'solitude,' a condition of nihilism and self-consciousness that had taken hold of Mexico upon its entry into the *modern* world" (Lomnitz 25):

> In short, dying, death, the afterlife, and commemorations for the dead provide rich repertoire of figures and images that are deployed in any number of situations. As a result, there is a deep cultural resonance in the move to use popular intimacy with death as a conceptual field with which to think through the national question, and indeed as a metonymic sign of Mexicanness itself. (Lomnitz 27)

Paz asserts death "is a mirror which reflects the vain gesticulations of the living" (Paz 54). In other words, "death defines life" (54). It is only from the Mexican vantage point that we can truly understand death in Mexico. To highlight the Mexican view of death, Paz explores the idea of death as it is interpreted in seemingly imperial countries and Mexico:

> The word death is not pronounced in New York, in Paris, in London, because it burns the lips. The Mexican, in contrast, is familiar with death, jokes about it, caresses it, sleeps with it, celebrates it; it is one of his favorite toys and his most steadfast love. (Paz 57)

Both Paz and Lomnitz juxtapose the idea of death as it is viewed around the world and in Mexico, highlighting the peculiar status of death in Mexico. The Mexican relationship with death is not based on national liberation, imperial expansion or religious sacrifice (Lomnitz 41). Instead, it is "meant to be a popular characteristic deployed in everyday life" (Lomnitz 41). Lomnitz takes the idea of death in Mexico a step further and sets death in Mexico contrary to the view of death by other cultures. In order to better understand the explosion of the culture of death in Mexico, Lomnitz identifies the event that ignited the explosion of death culture in Mexico:

> Mexican attitudes toward death are generally understood as peculiarly powerful instances of cultural hybridity or *mestizaje*, an area of life in which indigenous and popular culture has enveloped and transformed the culture of the colonizer. In this respect, Death occupies a peculiar, if not a unique, position. For the artists of the 1920s, the symbolic valence of the Mexican's intimacy with death was antithetical to the violence of colonialism, imperialism, and capitalist exploitation. On the other hand, the popular embellishment of death, with its resonance with both Aztec and Catholic traditions, seemed to be a perfect embodiment of the formula of cultural hybridity, *mestizaje*, which was at the heart of Mexico's Cultural Revolution. (Lomnitz 45)

It is with the culture of the colonizer that the Consul is attempting to disassociate. He is attempting a type of social regression by remaining in Mexico. The Consul himself is a half-breed, of British and Indian descent. He is attempting, through the culture in Mexico, to find his roots, just as Mexico regresses to an earlier time during the celebration of the Day of the Dead, the Consul degenerates with his abuse of alcohol.

III. Alcoholism and Hallucination

It is impossible to overstate the importance of alcohol in the Lowry's novel. Just as alcohol proved to be a dilemma in Lowry's personal life, it is the vehicle for the Consul's degeneration. With the aid of alcohol, the Consul accomplishes his goal of living among the *Indios* in Mexico, on a day that was created to celebrate the Mexicanness (or Indianness) of Mexico. It was through his alcohol abuse that he was able to bridge the gap between life and death. There are two relationships that stand out when analyzing the link between alcohol and the Day of the Dead in the novel.

First, there is the relationship between the actual consumption of alcohol in Mexico during the celebration of the Day of the Dead. Due to an increased consumption of alcohol during the mid nineteenth century celebration of the Day of the Dead, the Mexican government introduced a prohibition of alcohol (Brandes 363). The second relationship consists of the Consul's alcoholism and his eventual ability to become an *Indio* by closing the gap between life and death during the celebration. In other words, it was through his alcoholism (his degenerative disease) that he was able to finally attain his goal.

By taking into account the relationship between alcohol and the celebration of the Day of the Dead, it is possible to surmise exactly when the reemergence of the celebration took place:

> In 1847, liquor stores were closed for all but two or three hours on November 1 and 2, as a security measure. *The North American Star,* a newspaper serving the U.S. community in Mexico City, declared on November 2 that "yesterday, the first day of the festival, went off with perfect quietness, with no disturbance of any kind, that we could hear, and we presume we shall be able to say the same to-day and to-morrow" (1847). Despite the observed calm, the holiday apparently caused some anticipation of social unrest. It is precisely this unrest, whether or not justifiably feared, that undoubtedly produced some degree of press censorship. Throughout the colonial era and the 19th century, Mexican newspapers and other popular sources provide only the most limited, sanitized coverage of Day of the Dead activities. (Brandes 363-364)

The presence of alcohol in the novel is important on many levels. The Consul takes the alcohol as his sacrament. Lowry's use of alcohol in numerous situations highlights the relationship of alcohol and the degeneration (or salvation) of the Consul. By understanding the Consul's approach to alcohol, taken as his sacrament, it is possible to extract certain Biblical references that also highlight the salvation of the Consul through his alcoholism. At one point, the Consul drinks from a tequila bottle hidden in his garden. His response to his pull from the tequila bottle was, "Ah. Good. God. Christ. Bliss. Jesus. Sanctuary" (Lowry 133). It is at that moment when the Consul notices a snake hidden in the garden. It eventually slithers away, but not before evoking the Eden-eviction theme. In this particular instance, the religious symbolism likens the alcohol to the apple from which Adam ate. The Edenic landscape of Mexico quickly becomes infernal. Reference to the Garden of Eden is prevalent in Lowry's work. Immediately following her return to Mexico, Yvonne is discussing the Consul's garden with his brother Hugh. She explains how it has fallen into complete disrepair. Yvonne comments to Hugh, "My God, this used to be a beautiful garden. It was like paradise" (Lowry 102).

There is a sign in the public garden that reads: "¿Le gusta este jardín? ¿Que es suyo? ¡Evite que sus hijos lo destruyan!" (Lowry 134). It is possible that the Consul is a

"forlorn Adam; his own garden, once beautiful, has become a jungle where he hides liquor bottles" (Costa 77). This cursory explanation of the public garden and its sign highlight the Consul's alcoholism and his degeneration.

It is not as though the Consul was not attempting to curb his alcohol consumption in order to return to a more traditional lifestyle. The Consul was on a self-prescribed cessation program where he would complement his consumption of alcohol with strychnine. The Consul himself explains that with the strychnine he may be able to recover from his alcoholism. It becomes evident, with his inability to perform with Yvonne sexually, that the Consul is not recovering from his disease. The Consul affirms that "strychnine is an aphrodisiac. Perhaps it will take immediate effect. It still may not be too late" (Lowry 95). However, after his failed attempt at intercourse with Yvonne and his ability to consummate his short-lived relationship with Maria, it is apparent that the strychnine is not aiding in his cessation of alcohol.

Alcohol is the one aspect of the Consul's life that remains the same. The abuse of it, the alcoholism, will ultimately be the downfall of the Consul, but it is simply a means to an end. Oddly enough, it is only through the consumption of alcohol that the Consul can enjoy his degeneration. At times, it is as if the other characters in the novel not only support the Consul in his habit, but also entice him to drink more heavily. When the Consul approaches Dr. Vigil asking what to do about a case of "chronic, controlled, all-possessing and inescapable delirium tremens", the good doctor simply advises him that, "More alcohol is perhaps best" (Lowry 145). Alcohol is also portrayed artistically throughout the novel. In Jacques' room, there is a picture titled, "Los Borrachones"

(Lowry 208). In the artwork, there is delineation between the drunkards and those who are protected by the angels above. The drunkards plunged down:

> ...headlong into hades, selfish and florid-faced, into a tumult of fire-spangled fiends...shrieking among falling bottles and emblems of broken hope. A few lone females on the upgrade were sheltered by angels only. It seemed to him these females were casting half-jealous glances downward after their plummeting husbands, some of whose faces betrayed the most unmistakable relief. (Lowry 208)

It is the unmistakable relief that adds the element of Carnival to his alcoholism. It is the reason for his plunge into Hades; however, he maintains that in the end, there will be relief. By deduction, with the understanding that the Consul is seeking relief, one is able to see that the Consul is now in pain. Until that relief comes, the Consul finds his temporary escape by consuming alcohol. He takes alcohol religiously throughout the course of the novel. It is through this consumption that he finds life. In one particular instance, "the fire of the tequila run down his spine like lightning striking a tree which thereupon, miraculously, blossoms" (Lowry 215). Edmonds points out that critics usually see the brilliant passage in Chapter 10, in which the Consul imagines the "bottles, bottles, bottles" and "glasses, glasses, glasses" he has piled up over the years, as a litany of despair (Lowry 292). "But could not these bottles and glasses be considered the soaring accomplishments of the dedicated drinker?" (Edmonds 283).

Edmonds stresses that the Consul's plunge has its "moments of bliss and glory and that drink is the Consul's mistress, his muse, his God, no matter what dark fate awaits him" (283). He also relates the alcoholism to the Day of the Dead. It is on this day that the Consul is attaining his goal. Edmonds asks, "Who is to say that on the Day of the Dead he does not realize his destiny through his long day's drinking?" (283). In the end, the Consul dies an alcoholic, but as Edmonds indicates, he lives as one too (283).

The relationship between the Consul's alcoholism and his eventual ability to become an *Indio* by closing the gap between life and death during the celebration of the Day of the Dead is explained with the use of alcoholic hallucination. Hallucination is a recurring theme in Lowry's novel:

> No one has fully appreciated Lowry's almost breathtaking audacity in forging a modern Everyman or Dantesque figure from a man with a gargantuan craving for alcohol. Nor has anyone sufficiently noticed the importance in the novel of a result of such excesses which is well enough known to observers of alcoholism but which, to other readers, may be one of the strangest characteristics of the story: its hero's numerous and vivid alcoholic hallucinations. (Gilmore 286)

Gilmore contends that, "Lowry himself recognized the importance of hallucinations in *Under the Volcano* as demonstrated in his letter to Cape; he was pleased that Cape's reader found 'the mescal-inspired phantasmagoria,' 'the Consul's delirious consciousness,' impressive, objecting only to the reader's complaint that these effects are 'too long, wayward and elaborate'" (Gilmore 287). Although these critiques arose after the first draft of the novel, they remained as part of Lowry's work throughout several revisions. The hallucinations are important to the overall objective of the novel, to blur the line between real and imaginary, and more importantly, between life and death.

One aspect of the hallucinations did change during the revision of the novel. When Lowry "undertook to revise the novel, it became a spiritual thing" (Gilmore 287). It is with this "apparent connection of the squalor of alcoholic hallucinations with spiritual matters" that allows Lowry to "blur distinctions or to combine ideas or categories usually kept discrete" (Gilmore 288). Gilmore's account of alcoholic hallucination in the novel is best summarized by observing the presence of the Consul's "familiars" (Gilmore 288). According to scientists, these are "auditory hallucinations,

which some scientists regard as more common among alcoholics than the visual kind" (Gilmore 288). However, these voices "are sometimes also Lowry's versions of good and bad angels, an interpretation put beyond doubt by the novel's epigraphs from Bunyan and from Goethe's Faust, and by several allusions within the novel to Marlowe's Faustus, in some respect an even closer analogue to the Consul than Goethe's character" (Gilmore 288). Gilmore submits that if, as Douglas Day maintains, *Under the Volcano* is the greatest religious novel of this century, the authority of its vision derives to a great degree from the soil of the alcoholic hallucinations (Gilmore 288).

In order to better understand the role of hallucination in the novel and how they relate to the degeneration of the Consul we must first define alcoholic hallucination. There are a wide variety of hallucinations and each is caused by a different source. Gilmore's definition of hallucination is most important when relating hallucination to the novel as he is concerned with alcoholic hallucination. In order to understand the alcohol-induced hallucination it is better to explain first what it is not. Alcoholic hallucination is not the same as a drug-induced hallucination, "which at least in the early stages of drug use often consists of recurrent geometric patterns or designs and vivid colors with either a neutral or a pleasing emotional effect" (Gilmore 288). Alcoholic hallucination is best described as "paranoiac, involving schemes or plots of persecution, threats of violence, or the perpetration of violence, sometimes leading to the death of the hallucinator-victim" (Gilmore 288-289).

It is with the definition of the alcoholic hallucination that we are able to see the importance of alcohol. According to Gilmore, in a survey consisting of "382 hallucinating alcoholics, no less than 48 believed that hostile gangs or the police were

pursuing them" (Gilmore 289). The Consul in the novel may or may not have been succumbing to alcoholic hallucinations, however; "the recurrent motif that the Consul is being spied on, which turns into full-blown police persecution in the last section bears so striking a resemblance to a common type of alcoholic hallucination" (Gilmore 289).

Gilmore's interpretations of hallucinations recorded in medical or scientific works are "evidently the fruit of mediocre minds: in spite of the lurid or sensational circumstances giving rise to them, they make rather dull reading" (Gilmore 290). But he maintains that this is not the case with the Consul's hallucinations. Gilmore highlights one of the final scenes of the novel in which the Consul is sitting in the Farolito "sinking into a despair one source of which is that he is faced with the prospect of hallucinating whether he continues to drink or not, he nevertheless seems incapable of anything less than an arresting vividness even though the following passage seems to be almost a synoptic reprise of hallucinations he has frequently suffered" (Gilmore 290):

> His room shaking with daemonic orchestras, the snatches of fearful tumultuous sleep, interrupted by voices which were really dogs barking, or by his own name being continually repeated by imaginary parties arriving, the vicious shouting, the strumming, the slamming, the pounding, the battling with insolent archfiends, the avalanche breaking down the door, the proddings from under the bed, and always, outside, the cries, the wailing, the terrible music, the dark's spinets. (Gilmore 290)

Gilmore presents an argument that Lowry is simply not satisfied with including the alcoholic hallucinations in the novel. In fact, the above hallucination is littered with what Gilmore describes as "distinctively Lowryan touches" (Gilmore 291). Although the "daemonic orchestras" and "insolent archfiends" may be "strictly metaphorical or slightly humorous (or both)" according to Gilmore, Lowry endows the "most seemingly simple hallucination" "with some moral or spiritual overtones" (Gilmore 291).

Gilmore develops a matrix to describe how Lowry utilizes hallucination to present the thin line between reality and imagination. He concentrates on the hallucination by the Consul after he arrives at the Farolito. Upon his arrival at the Farolito, the Consul "has what seems to be a couple of auditory hallucinations, but unlike the common run of these, which are merely persecutory, the Consul's are as usual packed with moral meanings or hints: '...the place was not silent. It was filled by that ticking: the ticking of his watch, his heart, his conscience, a clock somewhere. There was a remote sound too, from far below, of rushing water, of subterranean collapse'" (Gilmore 291; Lowry 337). There is a link between the hallucination to the Consul's reality and imagination. Using this example, Gilmore explains the rushing noise with relation to the nearby barranca, "the ubiquitous ravine symbolizing a kind of cloacal hell into which the Consul's body is finally hurled" (Gilmore 291). There is a definite link between the use of hallucinations and the overall morality of the Consul in the novel. Gilmore uses the phrase "subterranean collapse" and hints either "physically or literally at the barranca" and "metaphysically or morally at the Consul's spiritual condition" (Gilmore 291). Not only do the hallucinations characteristically have moral import; they also usually have contact with or basis in reality (Gilmore 291). In the case of the Farolito, the ticking may be a clock ticking somewhere in the bar, and there certainly is a barranca that may be responsible for the rushing noise in the passage. "The hallucinations, then, are ordinarily placed in some nonhallucinatory matrix, seen as connected with or emerging from reality" (Gilmore 292). The product of this nonhallucinatory matrix is the ability to make each hallucination believable. The hallucination attributed to Mexico itself makes the novel more surreal, yet believable. When introducing Mexico, Lowry establishes Mexico

as a "land whose scenes are objectively quite surreal or hallucinatory" (Gilmore 292), a land on which, even the Consul's friend Jacques Laruelle reflects:

> you would find every sort of landscape at once, the Cotswolds, Windermere, New Hampshire, the meadows of the Eure-et-Loire, even the grey dunes of Cheshire, even the Sahara, a planet upon which, in the twinkling of an eye, you could change climates, and, if you cared to think so, in the crossing of a highway, three civilizations; but beautiful, there was no denying its beauty, fatal or cleansing as it happened to be, the beauty of the Earthly paradise itself. (Lowry 10)

Mexico is portrayed, on the Day of the Dead, as a surreal place in which "the Consul's hallucinations will seem at least less bizarre than they might otherwise" (Gilmore 292). Lowry's use of hallucination is not limited to the Consul. In fact, the other characters, such as Laruelle, "sometimes respond to Mexico as if it had a hallucinatory strangeness" (Gilmore 292). Yvonne is no less affected by hallucinations as are the Consul and Laurelle; "On her return to the Mexican street where she has lived, Yvonne, the Consul's former wife, registers most of its scenes as if they were novel and disturbing: for instance, a shanty 'with its dark open sinister bunkers' from which their servant 'used to fetch their carbon'" (Gilmore 292, Lowry 63). Hugh, the Consul's brother, is also struck by hallucination in the novel:

> Something like a tree stump with a tourniquet on it, a severed leg in an army boot that someone picked up, tried to unlace, and then put down, in a sickening smell of petrol and blood, half reverently on the road; a face that gasped for a cigarette, turned grey, and was cancelled; headless things that sat, with protruding windpipes, fallen scalps, bolt upright in motor cars. (Lowry 248)

The alcoholic hallucinations permeate the novel in Chapter 12, the final chapter of the novel. According to Gilmore, Chapter 12 is the section of the novel which "most thoroughly incorporates the themes, plots, and moods of alcoholic hallucinations" (Gilmore 294). The final chapter in the novel is of the utmost importance to the overall

objective of this study. The Consul finally achieves his goal of living as an *Indio* in Mexico. The Consul is not actually becoming an *Indio*. It is the mingling of hallucinations and reality that allows the Consult to attain his status as an *Indio*. Gilmore recognizes this mixture of hallucination and reality and submits that it is in this instance that we find the Consul's divine comedy; the comedy in which there is, in Lowry's words, "macabre," with "a certain gruesome gaiety" that is hard to describe any more exactly (Lowry 363, 354). The police enter the Farolito to arrest the Consul. At the moment the police take hold of him; "the Consul sees something that appears to be a kind of comically sympathetic reflection of his own condition, the more startling for its incongruity in this context: 'it was only the uncontrollable face on the barroom floor, the rabbit, having a nervous convulsion, trembling all over'" (Gilmore 294, Lowry 370-71). Lowry not only demonstrates the ability of the Consul to combine his reality with his hallucinations, but he also includes humor in the scene to alleviate the gathering gloom (Gilmore 294).

The Consul is seeing his dream of becoming an *Indio* come to fruition. Just as the *Indio* in the early stages of the novel was taken advantage of by the *pelado*, he himself becomes the object of persecution. The old woman who attempts to warn the Consul when the police arrive is the same woman that attempts to pick his pockets (Lowry 367). There are several other characters that combine hallucinatory qualities with reality. According to Gilmore, the "figure most successfully blending macabre humor and deadly seriousness is the pimp, a symbol of love degraded to lust (one of the Consul's sins in this final section) and also the animate symbolic counterpart to the barranca, the Consul's cloacal retribution and hell" (Gilmore 294). The Consul encounters the pimp after having

intercourse with the prostitute, Maria. Lowry describes the pimp as "an incredibly filthy man sitting hunched in the corner on a lavatory seat, so short his trousered feet didn't reach the littered, befouled floor" (Lowry 352). Gilmore's explanation for the description can only be summed up by noting that it was a "vision so grotesquely disgusting that at first it can hardly be credited except as hallucination" (Gilmore 295).

Lowry undoubtedly knew the effect of hallucination in literature. It is obvious that he took notes from one of the greatest writers of hallucinatory fiction, Cervantes:

> Perhaps it is no coincidence that the tavern keeper of this section is named Cervantes; *Under the Volcano* is as adept as *Don Quixote* at mingling hallucination or fantasy with reality, and the two stories, by means of their ambiguities, raise perplexing and not always answerable questions about the validity of conventional distinctions between sanity and insanity, reason and imagination, fantasy or hallucination and reality. (Gilmore 298)

The reality of the novel is that the Consul hallucinates his reality. Mexico, the Day of the Dead, alcoholism and alcohol induced hallucinations all combine in the final scene of the novel. "Simultaneously and mysteriously, as in a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy, the hallucinations become actuality" (Gilmore 300).

Throughout the novel, the Consul is self-destructing through his abuse of alcohol. It is not surprising that he refers to alcohol as his sacrament. The amount of alcohol the Consul ingests during the novel is extremely relevant. After a thorough analysis, Edmonds reinforces the importance of alcohol to the Consul. He states that: "References to drinks, drinking, drinking places, and/or drunkenness occur on 252 of the 377 pages" (Edmonds 278). The Consul is well aware of the toll the alcohol is taking on his body. He often complements the intake of alcohol with sips of strychnine to help moderate his drinking. Although this attempt at moderation is not necessarily an attempt by the Consul

to stop drinking, he takes his medicine, even if it means poisoning his body with yet another substance. Midway through the novel, it is possible to see the Consul's complete resignation to his disease. He expresses his angst as he murmurs; "At all events I am progressing, slowly but surely" (Lowry 97). Again, shortly after sipping his strychnine he concedes that; "The will of man is unconquerable. Even God cannot conquer it" (Lowry 97). The Consul requires the sacramental hallucination brought on by indulgence. Without it, the Consul is "too sober" (Lowry 96). Alcohol continually surfaces as a form of religious practice for the Consul. The religious importance of the alcohol is apparent when the Consul suggests, "I have lost my familiars, my guardian angels" (Lowry 96).

Even in this darkest hour, he maintains a positive attitude. He is achieving his goal. The Consul equates every aspect of his life to alcohol. It is his being, and he has no regrets. There are several instances in which the Consul finds complete peace, humor and direction with the use of alcohol. The Consul contends, again, that his drinking bears some type of religious importance, in the case of this letter to Yvonne, he states, "…but this is how I drink too, as if I were taking an eternal sacrament" (Lowry 42). He goes on to comment on the most picturesque view imaginable, "…what beauty can compare to that of a cantina in the early morning?" (Lowry 52). The relationship between the Consul and alcohol goes beyond the realm of mere wants and needs. It is with alcohol that the Consul feels "…an immense comfort…in the mere presence of the whiskey bottle" (Lowry 72). It is then, no surprise that one of the familiars (guardian angels), during one of his hallucinations, tells him that mescal would be "the end though a damned good end" (Lowry 73). The Consul equates his drunkenness to his state of sobriety. He believes that "this precarious stage [of drunkenness], so arduous to maintain, of being drunk in which

alone he was sober!" (Lowry 89). He exclaims at one point that, "Nothing in the world was more terrible than an empty bottle...unless it was an empty glass" (Lowry 90). At last he grips a bottle of whiskey and declares "I love you" (Lowry 95). Ultimately, we are able to see the full effect alcohol has on the Consul. In short, the Consul's future consists of "[d]rink all morning...drink all day. This is life!" (97). "And perhaps it's fortunate I've had some whiskey since alcohol is an aphrodisiac too. One must never forget either that alcohol is food. How can a man be expected to perform his marital duties without food?" (Lowry 96-97).

Alcohol is the primary vehicle for the Consul's degeneration in the novel. What is not so obvious is the presence of alcohol in the novel even when there is no mention of it. There are several scholars who discuss the presence of alcohol in Lowry's work. Day presents the most intriguing insight into not only the presence of alcohol in Lowry's work, but also into the imagery in the novel that represents alcohol.

> There are Quauhnahuac's 400 swimming pools, one of which belongs to Geoffrey Firmin; and Hugh and Yvonne do swim twice during the day. But the only water of significance in the novel is conspicuous by its absence: the cleansing revivifying fountain, represented throughout by the Consul's recollection of a refrain from Marvell's "Chlorinda and Damon": "Might a soul bathe there and be clean or slake its drought?" No, of course, here it might not: no water comes even from the shower under which, fully clothed, the Consul stands. Instead of water, we have alcohol, more of it than one would have believed possible to pour into a mere twelve chapters: pulque, beer, Scotch, whiskey, tequila, and the dread mescal. (Lowry 83; Day 328)

Lowry's inclusion of 400 swimming pools not only describes the manner in which Lowry creates a scene of Carnival, but also provides a direct link to alcoholism. The combination of the number 400 and the presence of a white rabbit "in one corner of the

room...eating Indian corn" (Lowry 349) communicates an old Aztec (*Indio*) law of inebriation:

> When a man was intoxicated with the native Mexican drink of *pulque*, liquor made from the juice of the *Argave Americana*, he was believed to be under the influence of a god or spirit. The commonest form under which the drink-god was worshipped was the rabbit, that animal being considered to be utterly devoid of sense. This particular divinity was known as *Ome-tochtli*. The scale of debauchery which it was desired to reach was indicated by the number of rabbits worshipped, the highest number, four hundred...representing the most extreme degree of intoxication. (Ackerley and Clipper 416)

The finality of the Consul's alcoholism is obvious. Not only is the rabbit an "emblem of drunkenness" but 400 rabbits also represents a "crime punishable by death" (Ackerley and Clipper 416).

Perhaps one of the most apparent signs of hallucination and distress in the novel is the actual style in which Lowry wrote the novel. Lowry wrote the novel in stream-of-consciousness, allowing the reader to get "inside the head" of the protagonists. Gilmore emphasizes an "almost pervasive ambiguity in the novel between hallucinations and reality" (Gilmore 300). The increased difficulty in determining reality versus hallucination supports the assumption that the Consul is achieving his goal of becoming an *Indio* in Mexico during his final days. This hallucination breaks down the barrier between what is believed to be real and what is imagined. The Consul's quixotic attempt at integrating himself into the Mexican Mystique is evident during a visit to one of the many taverns in the novel. His journey is quixotic in the sense that he is, as Quixote, attempting to live a life that is not his own. The work of Cervantes and the novel by Lowry both suggest that "imagination, insanity, or hallucination offers surer roads to more important truths than does reason or sanity" (Gilmore 300).

IV. Conclusion

In the final scene, a radio announcer, with the use of a loudspeaker, repeatedly questioned; "¿Quiere usted la salvación de Méjico? ¿Quiere usted que Cristo sea nuestro Rey?" (Lowry 383). It is precisely this salvation of the Mexico that Lowry creates that the Consul receives. Lowry wrote a "typical Mexican novel" that focuses on "spiritual struggles that may be called religious" which involves "a quest for rebirth" (Walker 23). Walker describes the steps a protagonist such as the Consul takes during their enlightenment. According to Walker, the Consul is first: "Entrapped within a landscape trembling in the throes of revolutionary conflict" while undergoing "a process by which the protective layers of the self that had been built up prior to their exposure to the Mexican ambience in its present condition are stripped away" (Walker 23). It is this stripping away that "amounts to a kind of slow death, portending the swifter and more irrevocable annihilation that the characters fear is eminent" (Walker 23). Walker explains that:

> Before that final blow falls, however – sometimes only just before – the process culminates in an expansion of awareness, which comes simultaneously with the stripping away of the final layer of the self: egoistic willfulness, one's innermost conception of oneself as a special case. (Walker 23)

In Lowry's *Under the Volcano*, "the revelation comes too late to save the [Consul] from his headlong descent into the *barranca*" (Walker 24). Walker maintains that, "on earth there can be no experience of salvation – however it is defined – without the awareness of what loss of salvation means, no rebirth without first a decent into the underworld of spiritual death, no heaven entirely divorced from hell" (Walker 24). This is how Mexico functions as an infernal paradise, "a dualistic image which conflates all of the horrors and

hopes that constitute the spiritual [life] of the [protagonist]" (Walker 24). In Lowry's novel:

> The character experiences a kind of paralysis, directly the result of a protracted series of vacillations. The character wavers between, on the one hand, the all too human impulse to escape from the terrors of elemental reality embodied by Mexico (or by a particular locality within Mexico, such as the Farolito cantina in Parián); and on the other, the unremitting necessity of accepting that reality and all it involves. (Walker 25)

Walker's concludes that "after prolonged anguish and indecision, the latter (much more painful) alternative is always, in the end embraced" (Walker 25). His description of Mexico qualifies Lowry's choice of setting as "more tangibly infernal than paradisal…and yet, as events run their course, Mexico emerges pre-eminently as a land where 'A terrible beauty is born'" (Walker 25). Although Walker's conclusion supports the idea that Mexico is the ideal place to stage the Consul's euthanasia, he does not report on the specific role of alcohol in the Consul's degeneration. It is only through the combination of Mexico as an *Infernal Paradise* and the Consul's alcoholism that the reader can fully understand the Consul's degeneration.

Costa argues that "some readers may believe that Lowry allows the Consul's addiction to mescal to take over. The quality of diffused attention, admittedly, is intensified by drink, but it is also in his drunkest moments that the Consul sees most clearly" (Costa 83). The Consul is well aware of his degeneration. It is in his last words to Hugh and Yvonne before his eventual death in Parián that we find his "verdict for death against life" (Costa 83):

> For all you know it's only the knowledge that it most certainly is too late that keeps me alive at all...You're all the same, all of you, Yvonne, Jacques, you, Hugh, trying to interfere with other people's lives,...True, I've been tempted to talk peace. I've been beguiled by your offers of a sober and non-alcoholic Paradise. At least I suppose that's what you've been working around all day. But now I've made up my melodramatic little mind... (Lowry 325-327)

It is true, "he hover's between the 'either' and the 'or'- between the illusion of Paradise and the reality of the barranca – but he never really doubts when the test comes what the result will be. He chooses addiction, death, and destruction" (Costa 83).

The conclusion of the novel details the complete degeneration of the Consul. He realizes his dream to live as and *Indio* in Mexico. In the final scene, after being shot by the Chief of Rostrums, the only remark he contemplates is that of "*pelado*", "Hugh's word for thief." (Lowry 389) "But someone had called him *compañero* too, which was better, much better. It made him happy." (Lowry 389) The Consul appears to be fighting "less to preserve human consciousness, than to transcend it, a latter day incarnation of the Massachusetts settler William Blackstone, he seeks not to vanquish the *Indios* who dwell within him, on that 'final frontier of consciousness' bordering the unconscious, but to cross over and join them" (Lowry 135; Cross 47).

V. Bibliography

Ackerley, Chris and Clipper, Lawrence J. *A Companion to* Under the Volcano. Canada. The University of British Columbia Press, 1984.

Arac, Jonathan. *The Form of Carnival in Under the Volcano.* PMLA. Vol. 92, No. 3. (May, 1997), pp. 481-489.

Brandes, Stanley. *Sugar, Colonialism, and Death: On the Origins of Mexico's Day of the Dead.* Comparative Studies in Society and History. Vol. 39, No. 2. (April, 1997), pp. 270-299.

Cate-Arries. *Re-imagining the Cultural Legacy of a Sixteenth-Century Empire: Spanish Exiles in 1940s Mexico.* Hispanic Research Journal. Vol. 6, No. 2. (June, 2005), pp. 117-130.

Costa, Richard Hauer. *Malcolm Lowry.* New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1972.

Cross, Richard K. *Malcolm Lowry: A Preface to His Fiction.* London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

"Degeneration." *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.* 10th ed. Springfield: Merriam-Webster Inc, 1993.

Edmonds, Dale. *Mescallusions or the Drinking Man's "Under the Volcano".* Journal of Modern Literature. Vol. 6, No. 2. (April, 1977), pp. 277-288.

Gilmore, Thomas B. *The Place of Hallucinations in "Under the Volcano".* Contemporary Literature. Vol. 23, No. 3. (Summer, 1982), pp. 285-305.

Gutmann, Matthew. 1993. Primordial Cultures and Creativity in the Origins of "Lo Mexicano." *Kroeber Artlzropological Society Papers* 75-76: 48-61.

Lomnitz, Claudio. *Death and the Idea of Mexico.* New York: Zone Books, 2005.

Lowry, Malcolm. *Under the Volcano.* New York: HarperCollins, 1984.

Miller, Andrew John. *Under the Nation-State: Modernist Deterritorialization in Malcolm Lowry's "Under the Volcano".* Twentieth Century Literature. Vol. 50, No. 1. (Spring, 2004), pp. 1-17.

Paz, Octavio. *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, translated by Lysander Kemp, Yara Milos and Rachel Phillips Belash. New York: Grove Press, 1985.

Walker, Ronald G. *Infernal Paradise: Mexico and the Modern English Novel.* Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978.