

# Ut Pictura Poesis: From Alberto Gironella to Malcolm Lowry

Mais si, sans se laisser charmer,  
Ton oeil sait plonger dans les gouffres,  
Lis-moi, pour apprendre à m'aimer.

BAUDELAIRE

## I

“The book is written on numerous planes with provision made, it was my fond hope, for almost every kind of reader.” LOWRY

Few readers of Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano* are better versed in the novel's “poetic cases” than the contemporary Mexican artist Alberto Gironella.<sup>1</sup> And few readers can teach us so much about *Under the Volcano*. In *El vía crucis del Consul* (*The Consul's Way of the Cross*), Gironella has taken up Baudelaire's challenge: to teach us how to read—and to love—Lowry's book.

What I propose to do here is to read Gironella's reading of Lowry and, in the process, to identify the ways in which their texts instruct and control a reader who dares to follow the textual signs in a search for meaning in the complex semiotics of Lowry's, Gironella's, and our contemporary world. My approach to this semiotics rests on basic assumptions that it is best to note at the start because it is at this very point of departure that readers and readings will differ.

Despite all that must be said about textuality, discursive formations and postmodernism, I believe that Lowry and Gironella intend to create artistic meaning that can be grasped by a reader and that this meaning, in addition to the language, form, and system in which it exists, can enrich our lives. This is a fundamentally romantic view of the artist and of artistic intention that is unfashionable in post-structuralist criticism. It takes us back to Baudelaire—that avatar, “kindred spirit,” and fellow traveller of Lowry and Gironella—and back to an allegorical habit of mind in which correspondences are sought between our semiotic systems and a reality that is believed

to lie both in and somewhere beyond the surface play of signifiers. The *search* for that paradise where semiotics and reality (be it existential or transcendental) are one is, for the romantic artist, a voyage that never ends; arrival is endlessly deferred thus, the desire for meaning (call it *correspondance*, presence, Logos) provides the impetus for creative acts that ease the twentieth-century's sense of loss, or what Lyotard calls "nostalgia for the unattainable."<sup>2</sup>

In my reading of Gironella's and Lowry's creative acts, I will employ the tools of the archeologist, as Foucault outlines them in *The Archeology of Knowledge*, to uncover and compare the homologies and differences that allow me to describe the novel and the art as constituting an "interdiscursive configuration" within the discursive practices of romantic, western humanism.<sup>3</sup> But I will also move beyond Foucauldian archeology by insisting upon interpretation.

## II

"The twelve chapters should be considered as twelve blocks. . . . Each chapter is a unity in itself and all are related and interrelated." LOWRY

Both *Under the Volcano* and *The Consul's Way of the Cross* defy summary and confound first impressions. Constructed, like a churrigueresque cathedral, in an "overloaded style" on many levels that duplicate and mirror each other, *Under the Volcano* proliferates images, symbols, signs, intertexts and meanings in a bewilderingly complex, yet meticulously balanced, system. Taking its cues from the novel, *The Consul's Way of the Cross* reconstructs that system in a multi-media, pictorial language that interpellates itself into the novel *and* stands outside it in an autonomous installation where it mirrors and comments on the Consul's story and the novel's discourse.

## III

"The allegory is that of the Garden of Eden, the Garden representing the world, from which we ourselves run perhaps slightly more danger of being ejected than when I wrote the book." LOWRY

The story, or diegetic core, of *Under the Volcano* is familiar and simple. It is a tale of the collapse and disintegration of a marriage and of the couple whose love could not prevail over the internal and external forces undermining them. Lowry lifts this bathetic story from the level of soap-opera cliché to the level of tragedy and allegory through his discourse: the husband becomes a figure of Adam, Faust, and a cabbalist; his wife becomes a

figure of Eve, Marguerite, and the feminine principle of the cabbala; the failure of their marriage signifies our failure to remain in the Garden of Eden, which in turn signifies western civilization's failure (in two wars) to preserve the earthly garden of this world. Religious and political allegory expand the simple story into a discursive formation that, as Foucault reminds us, inscribes a "system of dispersion" (37) through "a schema of correspondence" between narrative events and other, extra-narrative "series of events" (74), between the discursive formation of a novel and the "non-discursive domains" (162) of political, social and cultural events.

#### IV

"Aunque el pintor se sirve de los ojos y el poeta de la lengua, ojos y lengua obedecen a la misma potencia: la imaginación." PAZ

Alberto Gironella's *The Consul's Way of the Cross* exists in three forms: as illustrations in a sumptuous new edition of *Bajo el Volcán*; as an exhibition catalogue containing a critical essay by Lowry scholar Carmen Virgili, with photographs, drawings, a set of testimonials, and reproductions of selected pieces from the exhibition; and as the exhibition itself. In each of these forms the work comprises a complex juxtaposition of visual and verbal texts that comment upon and address each other in a discourse ranging from agonistic celebration to comic parody and from dizzying narcissism to ironic objectivity. To say that *Under the Volcano* inspired *The Consul's Way of the Cross*, or to argue that Lowry's novel provides the model or "hypotext" for Gironella's art is to miss the point by over-simplifying the nature of each text in itself and of the relationship between them.<sup>4</sup>

Judging from the titles alone, I might say that *The Consul's Way of the Cross* refers to *Under the Volcano* synecdochically, as a part to the larger whole, except that Gironella, like Lowry, has a way of proliferating parts until they take on a generative power all their own. Synecdoche, then, will not help me, and another way into the dialogue must be found.

#### V

"Las verdaderas obras de arte siempre están más allá de su interpretación, se caracterizan por su capacidad de permanecer vivas dentro de ella." PONCE

At the May-June 1994 exhibition in the Mexican Cultural Centre in Paris, the unsuspecting gallery flaneur enters, literally, a set of rooms opening off one another rather like the rooms of the Farolito in chapter XII of the *Volcano*. The

first of these rooms, however, is hung with text. The wall to the left contains row upon row of books, their dustjackets displaying *Bajo el Volcan* on the front or a yellow altar to Malcolm Lowry on the back.<sup>5</sup> In a glass case near the window lie more volumes, some closed to display their deep blue cover embossed with a large black scorpion, others open to reveal the Spanish text.

The right-hand wall is covered by fifty-four brilliantly coloured images (16 x 24 cm) mounted on black mats and recessed in shallow frames. The visual impact is stunning. On closer inspection one sees that each piece, with its dominant blue, white, red, and black composition, is a collaged surface built from paint, ink, various types of paper and labels, and bottle caps. The letters MEZCAL leap out here and there; a horse with the number 7 surfaces at several points; Tarot cards emerge—"The Fool," "The Wheel of Fortune," "The Hanged Man"; the number 666 suddenly erupts from a corner of an image; maps and labels appear and disappear, announcing and obscuring the Battle of the Ebro, Tequila, Johnnie Walker, Carta Blanca, Alas, ALAS! The closer one looks, the more each collaged surface acquires a dizzying complexity and a paradoxical depth, until one slowly realizes that in the background (the pictorial ground) looms the abstract shape of a volcano.

On the threshold of the inner room are more rows of books, open or closed, displaying their dustjackets. Then, facing the viewer from the rear wall of this inner room is the "Grand Altar to Malcolm Lowry," an installation piece (see Figure #1) constructed of wood painted a vivid, cadmium yellow, the very yellow used for cantinas in Mexico. Dominating the "altar" in the central recessed enclosure, sits a slightly larger than life-sized portrait of Malcolm Lowry (looking uncannily like a younger Alberto Gironella), his hand extended from the recess, as if over the counter of a bar, holding an *empty* glass: "Mescal. . . mescal, poquito."<sup>6</sup> And on the counter lie fragments of the Consul's last day, those objects that acquire such vitality in chapter XII of *Volcano*: dominoes, a gun, cigarettes, a telephone. The letters "Farolito" flash above his head. Instead of votive candles, further evidence from that Day of the Dead sits in the four altar niches surrounding this central recess: "bottles, bottles, bottles . . . Rye, Johnny Walker, Vieux Whiskey, *blanc* Canadien . . . the beautiful bottles of tequila" (UV 294). Beside the bottles are four smaller images, one per niche—an elaborately framed crucifixion here, a miniature portrait of John Donne there. Bizarre advertisements, or icons? Above and between the niches are signs and trays, the familiar appurtenances of a cantina, advertising beverages.

Figure 1: This photograph, taken at the opening of the exhibition, shows "Altar mayor a Malcolm Lowry" (300 x 190 x 21 cm) with red candles and yellow flowers and two of the boxed collages. It is reproduced by permission of Circulo de Lectores and courtesy of the artist.



Around the three remaining walls of this inner sanctum hang twelve boxed collages ("cajas-collage," each 83 x 100 x 21 cm). These are Gironella's windows opening into *Under the Volcano*. Each glass-covered, yellow box encapsulates and comments upon one of the twelve chapters of the novel. The "slow progression of the hours" (SL 66) is indicated by the shade of blue used for the ground of the collaged images that constitute the narrative link between boxes and across the gulf (*gouffre*/gulf/golf) that separates them; the blue builds from the pale light of early morning to the intense blue of mid-day to a deeper blue fading to grey before it gives way to the black of night. Arrayed in front of and beside the collage are key objects and verbal/visual signs of the chapter being presented; thus, the box for chapter VI features a guitar, and the one for chapter IX contains a crutch and bicycle wheel. And always there are bottles. Just as they do in *Volcano*, these disjunct, inanimate, found objects, standing or affixed to the surface of the

box, acquire a disturbing, menacing vitality. As one peers in at them, mesmerized, or follows them from box to box, one plunges deeper and deeper into the proliferated thing-ness of the Consul's world. Each box captures and reduplicates the traces—the outline of a volcano, twelve faint letters (one per box) that spell M-A-L-C-O-L-M-L-O-W-R-Y, labels, words, numbers, *things*—already familiar from the wall of collages in the outer room.

The impact of all this reduplication on the gallery visitor as she moves from outer to inner room and slowly around the boxes to the altar is not unlike the shock received on entering a church/cantina/brothel in a Bunuel film where disjunct fragments of the objective world clamour, threaten, or mutely command attention in revolving iterations and *mises en abîme*. How can one read, and learn to love, such a text?

## VI

“Hugh and the Consul are the same person, but within a book which obeys not the laws of other books, but those it creates as it goes along.” LOWRY

The 1992 deluxe edition of *Bajo el Volcán* is a reprint of the 1964 Spanish translation of *Under the Volcano* by Raúl Ortiz y Ortiz, with a Spanish translation, by Carmen Virgili, of the “Prologue” that Lowry wrote for the 1949 French translation of his novel, and with fifty-six full colour illustrations, a cover and a dustjacket by Gironella. This volume takes its place in a long tradition of emblem literature and illustrated texts in which the relationship between verbal and visual languages is central to the semiotics and aesthetics of the text.

Gironella's illustrations of the novel exist in four forms that together constitute a parallel discourse to the novel: dustjacket, scorpion cover design, twelve small black and white reproductions (5 x 6.5 cm) of the lithographs based on the collages in the boxes, and fifty-six plates (16 x 24 cm) tipped-in strategically, with four at the beginning and end of the novel and four per chapter. First impressions on leafing through the volume are of brilliant colour, visual complexity, and dizzying repetition. One illustration *seems* to duplicate another, but what is duplicated are elements of composition, colour, words, numbers, and fragments of text. Only two plates are, in fact, repeated. The black and white lithograph reproductions, each one set below its chapter number, appear on the individual, otherwise blank pages that separate the chapters. They provide further reiterations of elements in the colour plates, and while they are less likely to catch the eye, they are subtle

visual/verbal *mises en abîme*, for the chapter that follows and for the important breaks (*gouffre*/gulf/golf) between chapters.

Nothing in this intertextual assemblage is accidental. Let me take one example: chapter IV. Here, the chapter lithograph announces “C.T.M.” (see Figure #2), the Spanish translation of “see tee emma” in Hugh’s telegram to the Daily Globe, the telegram that opens chapter four and finds its way into Hugh’s sports jacket, which the Consul will put on in chapter seven and be wearing in chapter twelve. Behind these bold letters is the faint outline of a large letter “C” (from MALCOLM), holding within its open space the words “CONSUL,” “mezcal,” and traces of words barely discernible on the surface of the original collage. In harmony with Lowry’s textuality (allusions, echoes, intertexts, re-presentations, proliferating signs), Gironella duplicates Lowry’s methods and, thus, aspects of his meaning: everything is connected, interwoven, interconnected, yet these intertexts and signs are contained, controlled, isolated (like the characters), and *framed*.

Figure 2: Gironella introduces each chapter with these black and white reproductions of his lithographs from the boxed collages. This image introduces chapter IV and is reproduced by permission of Circulo de Lectores and courtesy of the artist.



Turn the page, and the telegram, in Spanish, with its “CTM confederación trabajadores mex,” stares back at you. Half a dozen pages into the chapter sit the four illustrations, the first of which is dominated by the large black capitals: CTM. And because this is Hugh’s chapter, a fragment of newspaper headline announces the Battle of the Ebro. The next three illustrations introduce new intertextual elements—Peter Lorre, the white horse with the number “7,” “la sepultura” (the pulqueria where Hugh and Yvonne stop during their ride and Yvonne sees the armadillo)—and repeat what is, by chapter four, an already familiar set of signs: the volcano, the bottle caps, the blue, yellow and red, and “mezcal.” Again, Lowry’s method is duplicated in Gironella’s pictorial language, so that words and images, novel and pictures, together, constitute an interdiscursive configuration.

## VII

“Life is a forest of symbols, as Baudelaire said, but I won’t be told you can’t see the wood for the trees here!” LOWRY

“Golf = gouffre = gulf,” or so Geoffrey Firmin reflects in chapter seven of *Volcano* (206) as he stares through binoculars, past Yvonne, from Jacques’ tower to the distant golf course. From such small touches, Lowry establishes the correspondences that work inter- and intra-textually across the discursive formation of the novel. *Gouffre* invokes Baudelaire, and the gulf, of course, is the barranca, the ultimate hell-hole in Geoffrey’s botched golf game of a life. The play on golf, however, carries Geoffrey into an elaborate, erudite parody of John Donne’s “A Hymn to God the Father”—“Who holds the flag while I hole out in three?” (*UV* 207)—a parody that quickly becomes self-parody laced with self-loathing, self-reproach, self-pity, and with irony, regret, longing, and serious humour. Such rich ambiguity of tone and of self-reflexive parody lies at the heart of *Under the Volcano* and represents both Lowry’s strength and his weakness as a writer. Time and again, his narcissism is relieved (just in time) by his irony, his “subjective [. . .] equipment” (*SL* 59) balanced by the objective demands of parody.

For whatever reasons, personal, temperamental, artistic, Gironella celebrates Lowry’s subjectivity by placing his construction of the Lowryan artist at the centre of his work. In the catalogue for *The Consul’s Way of the Cross*, Gironella is photographed seated before his “Great Altar to Malcolm Lowry,” bearded, cane in hand, looking for all the world like the Consul and his creator. His signature repeats itself on all the images until it becomes an inevitable, unavoidable,



integral part of the total composition, until it (he) is written into the on-going voyage, until the name creates itself by asserting filiation and genealogy.

As with Lowry, Gironella's "subjective [. . .] equipment" is balanced by irony, parody, and serious humour, perhaps even with a touch of one-upmanship. So you can play golf-gouffre-gulf? Well, just watch me! Or just watch Donne watching you from several vantage points including the lower right niche of *my* altar. The joke, finally is on the reader/viewer who, dismayed by the extravagant self-reflexivity of Lowry and Gironella, may miss the allusions to precursors (here, to Donne and Baudelaire, but there are many others) that simultaneously mock and validate these romantic altar-egos.

### VIII

"'Esto es gallo'. Es su sello y su juego de viñeta-sello con la literatura y la pintura." 𐀀𐀁𐀂

The Horatian dictum notwithstanding (*ut pictura poesis*, as is painting, so is poetry), the semiotic basis for inter-artistic comparison rests on structural homology, not analogy, let alone artistic temperament. To be fully comparable and complementary, the sister arts must be capable of being discussed in the same terms.<sup>7</sup> Where one might argue that pigment, line, and plastic form, the primary tools of the painter, are at best only analogous to the words and imagery, the sentences, story divisions, and focalization of the novelist, it seems to me that Gironella has grasped, almost literally, the principle of homology through the pictorial language of collage, the narrative genre (which, of course, has a long history in painting), and the concept of installation.

Gironella has created works that function autonomously as visual art, that engage Lowry in dialogue and that, within the covers of *Bajo el Volcán*, show us how to read by staging a reading of the novel. Collage works homologously in this staging by constructing a visual/verbal surface composed of the same fragments that constitute Lowry's verbal world—scraps of actual text, quotations, maps, labels. The syntax of Gironella's surfaces develops cumulatively and paratactically, as do Lowry's sentences, through the embedding of visual and verbal signs. Narrative is an obvious, traditional homology articulated here in the twelve collage boxes that should be read/viewed/studied in sequence and, like the chapters of the novel with which they correspond, carry one back, repeatedly, to the beginning. This narrative compulsion holds the novel and the series of boxes together as a discursive formation, while permitting each one to function on its own, in its own (temporal) frame and space.

Gironella's use of installation is at once the most daring and problematic of his homologies. It is problematic because it can only work for the gallery visitor with intimate knowledge of *Under the Volcano* and Malcolm Lowry. When it works, however, this homology is possibly the most fruitful one because what Gironella achieves by it is a dramatic staging of *the reading process* that literally places the viewer/reader inside a simulacrum of the text and leads her around and around a virtual reality of potentially endless readings of the text called *El Vía Crucis del Cónsul Under the Volcano*.

## IX

"And I am telling you something new about hell fire." LOWRY

To some extent, all works of art attempt to instruct and manipulate their readers/viewers. They all assume an audience. Lowry's and Gironella's work, however, demands a participating audience, one that will accept the Baudelairean challenge to plumb the depths and learn to love. But as the traces of armadillos (literally, the bony plates from their backs) in Gironella's boxes remind us, and as Hugh warned Yvonne, armadillos cannot be tamed and, if you try to tame them, they will pull you into a hole with them. This risk of becoming confused and lost—swallowed up—in the proliferations of *Volcano* and the *Consul's Way*, is only one danger facing a reader/viewer. The other is the risk, as Baudelaire knew, of "se laisser charmer," of succumbing to the self-destructive, romantic myth of the artist as demi-god at whose altar we must worship and whose art we must accept as gospel.

To recoil and reject, however, is an extreme and hasty response, for taken singly these works provide a fascinating commentary on the activities of readers, on the creation and consumption of art, and on contemporary life. Taken together they demonstrate the attraction and persistence of the romantic artist as a central figure in the narrative of western humanism: Lowry wants to tell us "something new about hell fire" (*SL* 80), and Gironella wants to celebrate that telling. Why?

## X

"The constant repetition of churrigueresque 'of an overloaded style' seemed to be a suggestion that the book was satirizing itself." LOWRY

Although the hells created by Lowry and Gironella are secular, composed in and of the detritus of this world, the ghosts of religious belief hover over every bottle and behind every sign. Churches, altars, candles, magic, hymns, prayers,

and ritual pervade novel and art. And yet, because of the irony and parody in both texts, one must ask just what is being worshipped and what gods invoked. The obvious answers spring to mind from the Judeo-Christian tradition that is so obviously inscribed in both, but it is at this point that an important difference (*gouffre*) opens up between Lowry and Gironella.

Where Lowry wants to warn us about the failure of love and the imminent destruction of the world by the forces of evil within us, Gironella is content to comment upon the frantic consumerism of late twentieth-century life. He does this by displaying the empty bottles, crushed snakes (all that is left of the devil?), armadillo plates, dented bottle caps, used matches, torn labels, discarded boots, broken instruments, faded photographs, in short, the garbage of our lives, in aesthetically pleasing arrangements, side by side with images and fragments of the humanist tradition in art, literature, philosophy, and religion, *where it carries equal weight and value with that tradition*.

This and this alone—this actual, physical, garbage from the real world—is what we stand in the gallery worshipping. Things. Things consumed and discarded. Gironella nowhere indicates that this is his warning, but he has nevertheless actualized the Consul's tragic realization in chapter twelve of the *Volcano* that the things of this world, down to "the ash and sputum on the filthy floor" (*UV* 362) correspond to his being, sum up his wasted life.

## XI

"You like this garden? Why is it yours? We evict those who destroy!" LOWRY

Lowry's vision is, finally, a modernist one, and *Under the Volcano* is a modernist text, albeit one that approaches what we now think of as postmodernism. For Lowry, the gods, the unities, the design-governing strategies of art are still operative, even though we have abused them. His novel has the high seriousness of a tragedy in which the fate of an individual soul still matters and the desecration of the garden is a sin punishable by eviction. His postmodern qualities lie in his sense of language as a system of dissemination, in the acute intertextuality of his discourse, in the proliferating signifiers of his semiotic system.<sup>7</sup> Between the modernist story of death, loss, and damnation and the postmodernist discourse of *Volcano* sits Lowry's thematization of the vertigo that accompanies his characters' nostalgia for presence, Logos. If this vertigo is not the "obscene" ecstasy described by Baudrillard as central to postmodernism, it is only because Lowry judges and damns it in the act of communication that is, and points beyond (transcends), *Under the Volcano*.<sup>8</sup>

Gironella's *The Consul's Way of the Cross*, as installation, is a fully post-modernist re-statement of the problem. For Gironella, the world is an aesthetic object and Lowry, like his novel, is a part, albeit a privileged part, of that simulacrum. Gironella takes collage, parody and intertextuality to their dizzying extremes in order to construct an "obscene" shrine at which we worship, without nostalgia, an always already written text that promises nothing beyond its own virtual reality.

## XII

"For the book was so designed, counterdesigned and interwelded that it could be read an indefinite number of times and still not have yielded all its meanings or its drama or its poetry." LOWRY

But Gironella's art does not exist only in the installation space of a gallery. Within the dustjacket, cover, and pages of *Bajo el Volcán*, his collages serve to reinforce the meaning of Lowry's text and to instruct us in the way of the cross, of the Consul, of reading. Gironella's homage here is to the wonder of human creativity in the tangible text of Lowry's novel. By illustrating the Spanish translation of the novel, the painter's art supplements the writer's (and translator's) in an interdiscursive configuration that works to reassure us that, regardless of how desperate and hopeless the late twentieth-century may be, it is still possible to find meaning, order, beauty and pleasure in representational art and to find hope in the human capacity to make art.

Finally, one must not forget the humour, seriously parodic though it may be. From the gigantic jokes of this world, Lowry and Gironella have fabricated elaborate, churrigueresque jokes that remind us never to take ourselves too seriously. After all, when you close Gironella's *Bajo el Volcán*, what you see on the back of the dustjacket is the grand yellow altar to Malcolm Lowry.

Ceci n'est pas une pipe. Esto es gallo.

## NOTES

- 1 The fourteen quotations that frame and introduce the twelve parts of this paper are from the following sources. Charles Baudelaire, "Épigraphe pour un livre condamné," *Fleurs du mal in Baudelaire: Selected Poems*, selected and translated by Joanna Richardson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), 186-87: "But if, remaining free from spells, / Your eyes can plumb the hellish deep, / Read me, and learn to love me well"; for parts I, II, III, VI, VII, IX, X, XI and XII, they are from Lowry's 2 January 1946 letter to Jonathan Cape, *Selected Letters of Malcolm Lowry*, ed Margerie Lowry and Harvey Breit (Philadelphia and New York: Lippincott, 1965), 66, 65, 66, 75, 78, 80, 85, 88; all further references to this

letter are included in the text. The quotation for part IV is from Octavio Paz's "Testimonial" in *Alberto Gironella: El Vía Crucis del Cónsul* (Barcelona: Círculo de Lectores, 1992): "Even though painting and writing exist in separate realms, both are the product of the power of imagination" (43); for part V, from Juan García Ponce's "Testimonial" in *Alberto Gironella*: "great works are those which are always beyond the reach of interpretation and are able to stay alive within it" (44); and for part VIII, from Julián Ríos's caption in *Alberto Gironella* explaining the artist's ironic use of a phrase from *Don Quixote* as a type of signature: "'This is a rooster.' It is his seal and an interplay vignette/seal between literature and painting" (22). The closing epigram is a combination of the inscription on René Magritte's 1928-29 surrealist painting of a pipe called "The Treachery of Images" and Gironella's "seal." I would like to thank Pablo Restrepo for his translations from the Spanish in the catalogue *Alberto Gironella: El Vía Crucis del Cónsul*. Gironella (1929- ), a leading Mexican artist, has had solo exhibitions in Mexico, Spain, and France and been represented in group exhibitions of surrealist and contemporary art across Europe and Latin American and in London and New York. He has had a long and intimate interest in literature.

- 2 See Jean-François Lyotard's discussion of the nostalgia within modernism and the way it is transformed in postmodernism in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: U Minneapolis P, 1984), 79-81.
- 3 Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (London: Routledge, 1972), 158. All subsequent references are included in the text, but see, in particular, chapter 4.
- 4 "Hypotext" is Gérard Genette's term for the antecedent text in a set of texts that are closely related through their "hypertextuality": see *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982), 11-12.
- 5 At the Paris exhibition, the two second-floor rooms of the gallery contained Gironella's lithographs and a display of Lowry artefacts, letters, and manuscripts in a further re-duplication of intertextualities.
- 6 The Consul whispers this to Cervantes at the beginning of chapter X of *Under the Volcano* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981), 283. All further references to the novel are to this edition and are included in the text. The new Spanish edition, described in part VI, was published in 1992 by Círculo de Lectores in Barcelona. I would like to thank Dr Ortiz for sending me a copy and for introducing me to Gironella's work.
- 7 In *The Colors of Rhetoric: Problems in the Relation between Modern Literature and Painting* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1982), 1-69, Wendy Steiner examines the problems and history of the painting-literature analogy, and the process of semiotic comparison.
- 8 In "The Ecstasy of Communication," a brief section translated by John Johnston from *Le Système des objets* (1968) for *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed Hal Foster (Port Townsend, Wash.: Bay Press, 1983), 126-34, Jean Baudrillard outlines his distinction between "scene" and "obscene," between a traditional (and modern) faith in representation, referential meaning and mystery beyond a visible surface and the post-modern "delirium" produced by simulations of the real in which all things exist as fully visible commodities.