5. Borges and Postmodernity

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The "Rhizomorphic" Producer and the Reader as "Literary Detective": The Adventure of Signs; or, The Postmodernity of Borgesian Discourse (Intertextuality-Palimpsest-Deconstruction-Rhizome)

In all fiction, when a man is faced with alternatives he chooses one at the expense of the others. In the almost unfathomable Teju Pön, he chooses—simultaneously—all of them. He thus creates various futures, various times which start others that will in their turn branch out and bifurcate in other times. [. . .] all the possible solutions occur, each one being the point of departure for other bifurcations.
—Borges, Ficciones, 98

He believed in an infinite series of times, in a dizzyly growing, ever spreading network of diverging, converging and parallel times. This web of time—the strands of which approach one another, bifurcate, intersect or ignore each other through the centuries—embraces every possibility.
—Borges, Ficciones, 100

INTRODUCTION

Historically, the works of the Argentinean writer Jorge Luis Borges have usually been analyzed from philosophical, psychoanalytic, religious-mystic, or other standpoints. He has also been read in comparison with other authors, such as Valéry, Michaux, and, especially, Kafka.²

Beginning in the sixties, poststructuralist thinkers and the Tel Quel group devoted considerable attention to Borges. Today it is habitual to speak of his narrative texts as "postmodern."
Traditional literary science used to search (and still searches) for the “message” of Borges’s work, which has constantly refused to be semantically decoded. Often extremely brief and sometimes trendy, many poststructuralist-oriented studies have concentrated on the description and functions of his narrative techniques, such as the literary description—understood by Ricardou and his school as a relatively traditional feature representing a transitional stage in the direction of the virtual, but essentially linguistic descriptions of the nouveau roman and the nouveau roman—textual productivity, reflections on writing, and so on. French authors apparently neglected the influence exerted by Borges’s works on the development of literature starting in the fifties. Whatever the case, the features that most attracted European authors—and most repelled the members of certain Latin American circles—were the sustained employment of several codes and the often misunderstood metatextual playfulness of Borgesian discourse. In my view, both features constitute the core of his work. In general terms, the analysis of Borges’s “literariness” was neglected. For decades, it was considered blasphemous to describe the “literary playfulness” of a text or of its signifier without attributing it a “deeper meaning.”

These tendencies seem to have been altered by the spread of semiotics in Ibero-American studies, and by the new approach to Borges’s texts from the point of view of the debate on postmodernism. Similarly, it has been retrospectively observed, for example, that the philosophical enterprises of authors such as Lacan, Foucault, and Derrida are as postmodern as are those of Lyotard and Vattimo.

In my opinion, it is problematic that a considerable amount of the work which addresses so-called intertextuality in fact consists of traditional descriptions of the text’s sources instead of semiotic analyses of its signifier. Observing that Borges cites, or implies the existence of, certain sources while refusing to explain their possible function within the text in which they appear does not take us very far. The description of intertexts is often limited to a mere list of external textual sequences, usually identified arbitrarily by means of the critic’s specific literary knowledge.

Other theoreticians define Borges’s works as postmodern either by emphasizing the forms of mimetic representation—as if postmodernism could be simply explained, in a pars pro toto fashion, by means of the “rediscovery of narrative mimesis”—or by focusing on the notion of discursive plurality. Unfortunately, it has not been noted that postmodernism was originally a North American cultural phenomenon dating from the sixties. It includes a vast range of cultural products, such as pop art, Westerns, and pornography. Neither has there been a critique of the available categories used to define what belongs or does not belong to postmodernity but to outlined. In any case, a difference should be established between the current categories and Ibero-American postmodernism as defined by Federico de Onís in the thirties.

In a few of my previous studies, I considered several aspects of postmodernity in European and Latin American theatre, as well as in Latin American narrative. My purpose was to build a basic inter-subjective common ground on which the dis-
cussion about postmodernity could be established. I referred specifically to Borges in *Postmodernidad y Latinoamérica (con un modelo para la narrativa postmoderna)*, which was published in several journals beginning in 1990. The following are the most important features of Borgesian discourse as analyzed in these studies:

1. The organization of signs and the ambiguous interaction between reality and fiction, and the relationship between object-language and metalanguage.

2. Presentation and development of the features that characterize Borges's work and that, in a certain sense, foreshadow basic tenets of the poetics of the *nouveau roman* and the *nouveau nouveau roman*. Examples of these features are textual productivity, the notion of writing as rereading, the dissolution of characters and of the narrator's identity, the metadiscursive and fictional levels, the revelation of fiction as fiction, and the double interaction between "object-discourse" and "metadiscourse," a feature that is shared with certain discourses of the *nouveau roman*—especially Robbe-Grillet's works—and with the *Tel Quel* group.


My description of Borges's works is rooted in the following assumptions:

A. Borgesian discourse establishes a new form of aesthetics. His texts develop their own "defictionalization"—that is, the story is always revealed as an invention and no attempt is made to "make it concrete." Borgesian discourse evinces pluricodification, thus anticipating the notion of "double codification," identified by Fiedler in the sixties as a characteristic of the North American postmodern novel.

Within this context, Borgesian discourse can be described in the following terms:

A.1. By means of the rhizome, a phenomenon extending far beyond that of intertext or pulimpsest.

A.2. By means of deconstruction.

A.3. By means of *mise en abyme*, understood in the two senses specified by Gide: first, as a thematic treatment of the organization of the story (Borges, however, introduces a difference, since he emphasizes the diegetic organization of the signifier instead of that of the story); second, as the allusion to narrative procedures. Finally, the Borgesian *mise en abyme* also satisfies the meaning provided by authors of the *nouveau roman*, the *nouveau nouveau roman*, and the *roman Tel Quel*—that is, the destruction of the semantic level in a deconstructionist relationship with well-established genres.

A.4. By means of the habitual, virtual, or real dissolution of the narrator understood as a mediating category, a phenomenon that also affects the characters. It is
thus possible to destroy the dual relationship between the "I-narrator" and the "Iactant," or to dispense the I-narrator into several I-narrators that may or may not be identified. The same applies to the "He-narrator" (i.e., the third-person narrator). We also observe a blurring of limits between the characters and the narrator, or between Borges the author and his narrators. Through these structure-dissolving techniques, the text becomes—at least virtually—anonymous and is reduced to itself. It is in this sense that Borges precedes the theories of the nouveau roman and the Tel Quel group regarding the self-generating nature of texts. The author becomes a "scriptor" intent on prompting the reader to act as a co-author, since the reader must continue to play the rhizomorphous game presented by the author and the narrator, thus establishing a parallel between the processes of writing and reading. Just as Borges concludes, from his reading of Kafka, that a writer is primarily a reader, it could be added that a reader is also a co-author.

B. Borgesian discourse deconstructs signifieds into signifiers. It is not a question of the search for sense—for a deep message—but of the search itself. The reader contemplates a true "adventurous journey" through several systems of signs. Repetition through time has eroded these systems' denotative capacity in such a manner that the only possibilities left are, first, that of looking for other containers of meaning and, second, that of radically turning the process into a search for pure signifiers. These signifiers are frequently employed in conjunction with "hook-acting" signifieds, which are afterwards revealed as semantically empty, since they are weakly codified.

It is obvious that in the pursuit and perception of these paradigms lies at least one of the most important methods for interpreting Borges's work: the discovery of its internal codification and its external decodification, which the author articulates at both the "object-discursive" and the "metadiscursive" levels.

C. Borges created a new paradigm in twentieth-century literature. Literature is no longer considered a "mimesis of reality," but a "mimesis of literature" and, specifically, a multiplication of codes organized according to the principles of the rhizome. Borges thus forces readers to change their mode of reception. Traditional and coherent stories, mirrors of reality, and messages are not to be expected; rather, the text must be understood as its own reality, which is immanent in the period of reading. Its structure is a labyrinthine web containing an indeterminate number of well-known, little-known, unknown, or invented texts, which are valued by the culture's system—but not by Borges—as "universal," "trivial," or other categories. The addressee may accept this challenge by tracing back to specific references to people or works, quotations, and allusions; he or she may also let the flow of signifiers carry him or her away, and feel the attraction of a search which is inscribed within the text. Beyond his own personal taste, Borges does not seem to acknowledge distinctions between genres or objectifying evaluations of literature. For him, objectivity belongs only to signs—never to "works"—to phrases conceived of as motivating units. In this sense, he is a minimalist and a practi-
tioner of fragmentariness. His readerly activity turns him into a producer of texts, rather than the opposite. His reading makes him a mediator between multiple signs, thus creating a rhizomorphic system.

Past literatures are activated through Borges the author by the text’s implied reader. However, no attempt is made to provide the quoted text with a new and current sense in the realm of either production or reception of the text. Neither is the goal to reinterpret or to reconstruct these past texts, activities which were essential in the reception theory elaborated by the school of Constance. Texts are reproduced in a radically fragmentary manner. They function simply as a base on which to build a new text, which often bears no resemblance to the employed sequence. In my opinion, this is the core of Borges’s poetics, the idea that led him to the notion that all texts have already been written and that his own work is a repetition of other written works, whether known or unknown to him, and a counterpart to these previous texts. This position is not merely a Borgesian flourish, but the basis of his literary system, in which a new theory of reception, distinct from the one that has so far been academically developed, is posited.

Rather than mere content, Borges extracts structure from his sources, but the structure is placed at a different level and thus is transformed. When he generates an idea, each source seems to have only one sense; that is why he reveals his sources, which, whatever their type, always appear as fiction within the fiction.

D. Borges’s postmodernity is based on his narrative techniques understood as a discursive plurality.

Besides the features mentioned above, postmodernity is characterized by the following terms: “deconstruction,” “rhizome,” the “metadiscursive game,” “inter-culturality,” “historicity,” “cognitive reception,” “ludic experience,” “heterogeneity,” “subjectivity,” “re-creativity,” “radical particularity,” “diversity,” and, in sum, “universal unity.” One could add other features, such as minimalism, irony, humor, integrational fragmentation, collage, and dissolution of the separation between fiction and criticism, between art and non-art, between reality and fiction and, virtually, between the author and the reader.

1. TEXTUAL PRODUCTION AND THE NARRATOR’S METAMORPHOSIS: “EXTERNAL FICTION” AND “INTERNAL FICTION” AS LABYRINTHS

If the reader constantly stops reading in order to trace the quoted texts and the narrator’s allusions, it can be said that Borges is placing the reader in a situation similar to that of the writer, who uses intertexts as literary digressions. This technique becomes manifest when the reader starts decodifying the quotations—in the case of texts and segments which actually exist—even if the identification does not help him or her. This method can be described as a collage or a literary
montage; one must not understand both terms strictly in the pictorial sense, since the text lacks any element emphasizing simultaneity. Rather, the terms describe a collage and a syntagmatic montage that, although apparently coherent, never produce a causal sense. Pictorial simultaneity has been replaced by syntagmatic non-causality, in a process that ceaselessly tends toward the paradigmatization and rhizomatization of its terms and toward semantic-pragmatic destabilization.

In his short stories, Borges presents apparently traditional stories and structures, frequently built upon double external and internal fictional levels, reminiscent of the structure employed in the Thousand and One Nights. Within this articulation, an I-narrator (often called Borges) and/or a He-narrator act as mediators, assuring us that what is being told did actually happen (it might be added in passing that this type of technique is a quotation from the tradition of story-telling, especially in fantastic tales and first-person novels). In combination with this strategy, Borges deploys other techniques: footnotes, the "discovered manuscript," quotations from literary or scientific journals which include the exact dates, pages, and publication dates, and the mention of key situations given as real and transformed by the narrator of the "external fiction" into his true narrative goal to be presented to the reader. Through the use of all of these techniques, the narrator gives the impression that he is a chronicler who is presenting a report on something that has actually happened. This impression is enhanced by metadiscursive remarks. The overwhelming deluge of quotations, provided by a convincing narrator, create — especially when the reader is unable to control it — the dissolution of the separation between reality and fiction. In this manner, the names of people, countries, cities, and regions appear, whether they are real or not, as both real and purely fictional texts, and eventually as mere signs.

I will clarify the theories described thus far in the following examples.

Example 1: “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius”

The "external fiction" of this story begins with the following explanations:

I owe the discovery of Uqbar to the conjunction of a mirror and an encyclopedia. The unnerving mirror hung at the end of a corridor in a villa on Calle Gaona, in Ramos Mejía; the misleading encyclopedia goes by the name of The Anglo American Cyclopaedia (New York, 1917), and is a literal if inadequate reprint of the 1902 Encyclopædia Britannica. The whole affair happened some five years ago. Biyo Casares had dined with me that night [...](Ficciones, 17)

The notes appeared to fix precisely the frontiers of Uqbar. [...]. We read [...] that the literature of Uqbar was fantastic in character, and that its epics and legends never referred to reality, but to the two imaginary regions of Mleinas and Tlön. (19)
The "external fiction" concludes with further explanations and additions:

Postscript of 1947. I reprint the foregoing article just as it appeared in the Anthology of Fantastic Literature, 1940, omitting no more than some figures of speech, and a kind of summing up, which now strikes me as frivolous. So many things have happened since that date [...] I will confine myself to putting them down. (30)

In March, 1941, a manuscript letter by Gunnar Efsjord came to light in a volume of Hinton, which had belonged to Herbert Ashe. The envelope bore the postmark of Ouro Preto. The letter cleared up entirely the mystery of Tlön. (30)

About 1942, events began to speed up. [...] the Princess of Faustigny Lucinge had received her silver table service. Out of the recesses of a crate [...] fine immobile pieces were emerging [...] The metal case was concave. The letters on the dial corresponded to those of one of the alphabets of Tlön. Such was the first intrusion of the fantastic world into the real one. [...] the second [...] [was] a shining metal cone [...] (32–33)

Here I conclude the personal part of my narrative. [...] It is enough to recall or to mention subsequent events [...] About 1944, a reporter [...] uncovered, in a Memphis library, the forty volumes of the First Encyclopædia of Tlön. (33)

The "external fiction" begins with an L-narrator who, by mentioning Bioy Casares, reveals himself to be Borges. He informs us of the genesis of the story he is going to tell. The L-narrator's position is retrospective, since he tells the story five years after the dinner at the "quinta" in the calle Gaona. A mirror and an encyclopedia are the starting points. Mirrors are defined as monstrous, which leads Bioy Casares to remember a sentence by one of the heterarchs from Qubr, which he had read in The Anglo American Cyclopaedia (New York, 1917). Immediately, Borges and Bioy Casares begin to search for the article, which, after a series of difficulties, they will find. It is crucial that the encyclopedia is fictitious and that Qubr is a product of the imagination. In the article, Tlön is mentioned, and identified as a planet invented by the inhabitants of Qubr (this is a case of "double fictionality").

The search becomes prominent when Borges and Bioy unsuccessfullyly consult volumes XLVI and XLVII of the set of The Anglo American Cyclopaedia in the quinta. Later on, they find a trace in volume XXVI, in which they read:

Copulation and mirrors are abominable. [...] For one of those gnostics, the visible universe was an illusion or, more precisely, a sophism. Mirrors and fatherhood are abominable because they multiply and extend it. (18)
A few days later, Borges unsuccessfully consults an *Erkunde* by Ritter. The search comes to an end when Biyö discovers his volume XXVI, bound with false covers and with the letters “Tor-Ups” on its back; that is, the article “Uqbar,” presumably, is missing. The reason is that the volume in the “quinta” set has 917 pages, whereas the one that Biyö brings has 921 pages, and thus includes the article in question. This article includes additional bibliographic indications, such as Silas Haslam’s *History of the Land Called Uqbar* (1874) and Johannes Valentine Andreae’s *Lesbare uns lesenswerte Bemerkungen über das Land Ukkbar in Klein-Asien* (1641).

At the end of the “external fiction,” the editor–I-narrator informs us that he has reprinted his article on Tlön and Uqbar “just as it appeared in the *Anthology of Fantasic Literature*, 1940,” in which an account is given about the origin of the encyclopedia and its fictional country. The dates of the *Antología* and the “Posdata,” together with those noted in the “internal fiction,” are important. After Herbert Ashe’s death in 1937, the I-narrator discovers volume XI of the *First Encyclopaedia of Tlön* in Brazil, about which he had heard “two years since” (21). That means that the dinner with Biyö took place in 1935. Five years later, in 1940, the narrator publishes the article on Tlön, which is the actual year in which Borges and Adolfo Biyö Casares published their *Antología de la literatura fantástica*, and in which Borges’s story first appeared, in *Sier* magazine. The short story was later reprinted in *The Garden of Forking Paths* (1941) and in the first edition of *Ficciones* (1944). It is also in 1944 that the complete set of the *First Encyclopaedia of Tlön* is “accidentally” found. Alien to all these dates is the “Posdata” of 1947, which, as a fiction within the fiction, does not refer to the article as printed in 1940, 1941, or 1944. It must have been added later, after the series of “discoveries” about the article ranging from 1941 to sometime after 1944. Borges is confronting us with the philological task of fixing the authorship, original dates, and printing dates of the discovered texts. The discoveries between 1941 and 1947 create a textual labyrinth that is finally explained in a letter by Gunnar Eifjord which was found in a book by Hinton that belonged to Herbert Ashe (this is a perfect example of the Borgesian labyrinth of people and authors). In the letter, Uqbar is described as the product of an invention directed by a secret society in the seventeenth century. Their original intention—that of creating a country and, later, a planet—was taken up again in 1824 in Memphis, and the complete final edition of the encyclopedia was not ready until 1914. Afterwards, the imaginary planet of Tlön emerges in the “reality of the fiction” in the form of several objects that were alluded to in the planet’s encyclopedia and that now seem to have achieved real existence. In 1944, a journalist discovers the encyclopedia in Nashville, Tennessee. Tlön is thus revealed as a fiction within the fiction.

The “internal fiction” corresponds with the summary of the contents of volume XI, in which Tlön is described as a planet of idealists. There are accounts of, among other things, its philosophy, language, and literature and of the creation of objects by means of thought (the so-called *hrunir*). The entire summary is interspersed with quotations from real critics or philosophers, such as Leibniz, Hume, Berkeley, and Russell.
Example 2: The Immortal One

In The Immortal One, the "external fiction" is first constituted by the situationality of that which is narrated, then by a third-person narrator, an omniscient chronicler, and finally by an I-narrator.

Beginning of "external fiction"/constitutive metadiscourse:

He-narrator/I-narrator/editor-translator:

In London, in the beginning of June 1929, the antiquarian Joseph Cartaphilus de Esmirna offered the Princess of Lucigne the six smaller volumes (1715–1720) of Pope's Iliad. The Princess acquired them; she exchanged a few words with him upon receiving them. He was, as she tells us, a consumed and earthy man who had gray eyes and a gray beard, with singularly undefined features. He managed to speak various languages with fluidity and ignorance; in only a few minutes he switched from French to English and from English into an enigmatic combination of Spanish from Salónica and Portuguese from Macau. In October, the Princess overheard a passenger on the Zeus that Cartaphilus had died at sea while returning to Smyrna, and that he had been buried on the island of Ios. In the last volume of the Iliad she found this manuscript. The original is written in English and abounds in Latinisms. The version that we offer is literal. (Labyrinth, 105)\textsuperscript{11}

End of "external fiction"/deconstructionist "metadiscourse":

a) The "I-narrator"/character:

[The troglodytes were the Immortal Ones [...]. Homer referred to those things [...]] I passed through new kingdoms, new empires [...]. I am mortal once again, I replicated myself, I am now like all men. That night, I slept until dawn. [...]

[...]

[...] After two years' time, I have inspected these pages. I am certain they reflect the truth, but in the first chapters, and even in certain paragraphs of the others, I seem to perceive something false.

The history I have narrated seems to be unreal because in it are mixed the events of two different men.

[... ] Flaminio Rufus [... ] Homer [... ] there it is written that I fought at Stamford bridge [... ] the narrator does not linger over warlike deeds [...]

[... ]
When the end draws near, there no longer remain any remembered images; only words remain... I have been Homer. *Labyrinths*, 112–118)

b) The “First-person narrator”/character/narrator/author/Cartaphilus/Borges:

*Postscript* (1950). Among the commentaries elicited by the preceding publication, the most curious, if not the most urbane, is biblically entitled *A Coat of Many Colors* (Manchester, 1948) and is the work of the most tenacious pen of Doctor Nahum Cordovero. It comprises some one hundred pages. The author speaks of the Greek centos, of the centos of Late Latinity, of Ben Jonson, who defined his contemporaries with bits of Seneca, of the Virgilius evangelizans of Alexander Ross, of the artifices of George Moore and of Eliot and, finally, of “the narrative attributed to the unique dealer Joseph Cartaphilus.” He denounces, in the first chapter, brief interpolations from Pliny (*Historia naturalis*, V, 8); in the second, from Thomas de Quincey (*Writings*, III, 439); in the third, from an epistle of Descartes to the ambassador Pierre Chanut; in the fourth, from Bernard Shaw (*Back to Methuselah*, V). He infers from these intrusions or thefts that the whole document is apocryphal.

In my opinion, such a conclusion is inadmissible. “When the end draws near,” wrote Cartaphilus, “there no longer remain any remembered images; only words remain.” Words, displaced and mutilated words, words of others, were the poor pitance left him by the hours and the centuries. *Labyrinths*, 118)

We have, then, (1) a narrator who plays the role of reader-translator (first mediator); (2) the Princess as discoverer of the manuscript (second mediator); (3) Joseph Cartaphilus, the antiquarian (third mediator) (Did you know that the manuscript is there? Was this one written by him?); (4) as Part II informs us (p. 536), the author of the text is Marco Flamino Rufo (fourth mediator), who has in turn transformed himself into an Immortal (parts II and III); (5) one of the Immortals is Homer and is declared to be the equivalent of the “first-person narrator” (*I*, Marco Flamino Rufo, Part V, p. 543), which is explicitly confirmed by the “first-person narrator” (Part V, p. 544), who is the one in charge of the text (and is thus the fifth mediator).

It is stated in *Posdata* 1950 that the “first-person narrator” is Cartaphilus, since the “third-person narrator,” who transforms himself into an anonymous “first-person narrator” (“It is my understanding”), attributes the words of the “first-person narrator” to Cartaphilus (*I*, Marco Flamino Rufo, Part V, pp. 543–544) (*Posdata* 1950, p. 544).
The new "first-person narrator" joins the "third-person narrator" from the beginning of the narration and ends with a sentence which is an interpretation of the epigraph attributed to Francis Bacon (Essays LVIII), which does not form part of the "external" or "internal" "fiction." Rather, it pertains to the authorial level, and so it pertains to Borges. As such, all the narrations return to their origin: Borges. It is he who uses craft, the ludic, metatextual game, to transmit his more diverse ideas/conceptions.

As we have seen, we have a Janus-headed narrator; in other words, he is atomized into various narrators:

**BORGES**

[M.F. Rufo = Immortal = Homer = Cartophilus = "First-person/Third-person Narrator"]

"Internal Fiction": the voyage of adventures:

1. After intensely asking about the river of immortality, the "first-person narrator" begins his search (534).
2. So as to realize his endeavors, he hires an army of mercenaries who experience the harshness of the desert in their trip through it. The soldiers see all kinds of monstrosities and discover the barbarians.
3. After his soldiers have been decimated and have deserted, the "first-person narrator," alias Flaminio Rufo, wanders until he finds the city of the pyramids and towers (535), where, beaten down by fatigue, he loses consciousness/lucidity and dreams of a labyrinth and a bucket of water that he cannot reach.
4. Upon waking, he finds himself tied up in a niche in the rocks, where he contemplates the city of the Immortals and dedicates a long description to it (535). The barbarians, gray characters in a state of ecstasy and absolute passivity, are truly Immortals who have not mastered language, but have mastered signs and live in a meditative state (538–539).
5. Upon drinking from the fountain, Flaminio Rufo becomes an Immortal and falls into a state of delirium after pronouncing a Greek phrase ("The rich Trojans of Zelea that drink the black water of Esepo [. . .]").
6. Upon waking for the second time, the first-person narrator begins a second voyage, a "micro-voyage" around the city, which is characterized by labyrinths, eternal galleries with no exit, inversely constructed, incomplete stairs (537), a highly heterogeneous architectonic structure.
7. The "first-person narrator" sets off on a third voyage to discover other kingdoms (541), and on the way he drinks from another river and is converted back into a mortal around 1792.
8. A year later, the first-person narrator writes and revises the manuscript describing his voyage. Even though he has discreetly lived through everything stated, something unbelievable still persists in the text.
The voyage in “internal fiction” is equivalent to that in “external fiction,” as their common denominator is the “labyrinthine search” which does not lead to a final destination: the manuscript is declared to be unreal (questionable) and written by a collective conscience. That which is described has originated from the dreams and delirium of the “first-person narrator.” The texts cited in Posdata, to which we will return later, clarify only certain technical aspects of the narration. What has been for the “first-person narrator” of “internal fiction” adventures and dreams, the immortal and mortal being, has been the text for the “First-person/Third-person narrator of external fiction.” The voyage through the desert, especially the trip around the immortal city, is found in metonymic relation to the words that Borges works with in the books.

**Example 3a: The Garden of Forking Paths**

The “external fiction” in this text is set up by an anonymous I-narrator who reveals himself retrospectively only at the beginning of the story. He does not need to add his own commentaries at the end, since the “external fiction” is explained by the development of the “internal fiction.” The starting point is page 242 of Liddell Hart’s *History of the European War*, in which there is mention of a British military attack during World War I that was postponed from July 24 to July 29, 1916, because of heavy rainfall. This version of the events is put into question by a report—from which two pages are missing—written by Dr. Yu Tsun, former professor of English at the Hochschule in Tsingao.

The I-narrator, Dr. Yu Tsun, a relative of Ts’ui Pên (the author of the novel *The Garden of Forking Paths*), controls the “internal fiction.” He is a spy working for the Germans who kills Stephen Albert in a town called Ashgrove. When the papers publish the news about the murder, the name of the victim reveals to the German secret service the name of the town that is scheduled to be attacked. After ensuring delivery of this communication, Dr. Yu Tsun is caught and later executed by the English secret service.

A large portion of this story constitutes a poetics of Borgesian writing—an aspect that I will discuss below. This circumstance is established not only by a metadiscourse, but by the fact that Ts’ui Pên, the author of the novel *The Garden of Forking Paths*, is, in a certain sense, Borges himself.

**Example 3b: Ibn Hakkan al-Bokhari, Dead in his Labyrinth**

The “external fiction” begins with a conversation between Dunraven and his friend Unwin in 1914. The former tells the latter of an episode that happened during his childhood: an Arab leader was killed by his cousin Zaid in a labyrinthine house in Pentreath. The “external fiction” ends with the analysis of the narration, which, in the opinion of Unwin, is not convincing and lacks verisimilitude. Unwin then proposes a different version, which both he and Dunraven accept.
Once again, this is a case of the birth and deconstruction of a fiction, which is confirmed by Allaby, the director of the school, who considers Ibn Hakkan’s version within the “internal fiction” “fantastic.” Unwin notes that the basic structure comes from the myth of the Minotaur and from the genre of mystery novels.

The editor explains in the postscript to the El Alph collection—dated May 13, 1949—that the story is a variation on “The Two Kings and their Two Labyrinths,” which had been added by the copiers of One Thousand and One Nights. One should not neglect the epigraph from the Koran XXIX, 40, which relates the terms “house” and “spider” through the act of “building”—that is, erecting and composing in a labyrinthine fashion. This is how Borges reveals his metadiscursive game, his method of writing and his poetics, rendered absolutely transparent by his own explication of the text. He thus avoids the propensity to search for the profound or hidden elements, for the allegory in the textual game.12

The “internal fiction”—the first version, as told by Dunraven, which is also the one that the assumed Ibn Hakkan tells Allaby, and the one that Allaby tells the narrator—can be summarized as follows:

After a popular uprising, a tyrannical and daring king escapes together with his cousin Zaid, who is a coward. They bring a treasure with them. In the night, while Zaid peacefully sleeps, Ibn Hakkan dreams of a net of snakes suffocating him, which, in reality, is a cobweb lightly touching his body. He wakes up, kills Zaid and Zaid’s servant, and destroys the former’s face with a stone.

While he flees, he dreams that Zaid has condemned him to be chased and killed. Ibn Hakkan builds a labyrinth-house on a rock overlooking the bay and paints it crimson.

One day, Zaid appears and kills the lion, the slave, and al-Bokhari, destroying all of their faces.

The second version—Unwin’s—is a rewriting of the first one that corrects several gaps in “narrative logic,” thus revealing the narrative traps, which may have been overlooked by the reader but not by Unwin—the primary addressee of the story—and which generate some suspicion. For him, it is not the story but the way in which Dunraven has narrated the story that is an invention.

The first thing that he finds is that Ibn Hakkan does not kill Zaid; rather, Zaid runs away with a part of the treasure while Ibn Hakkan sleeps. Subsequently, Zaid pretends that he is Ibn Hakkan. The reason for this change of identity is that Zaid was reputed to be a coward, which troubled him and did not let him either fall asleep or kill Ibn Hakkan. Zaid builds the house in a prominent area, and he paints it crimson in order to attract al-Bokhari and kill him. Al-Bokhari reaches Pentreath, Zaid lures him into his trap and kills him, as well as the lion and the slave. He destroys all of their faces so that the change of identity may not be noticed; if he had disfigured only one of the murdered, it would have raised suspicions. After that, Zaid runs away.

The treatment of the question of identity and difference causes the two stories to be built upon “rhizomorphic correspondences.” The labyrinth is mythologically
present in the story of the Minotaur; the net corresponds with the network of runners in the Minotaur’s cave and with Ariadne’s thread, both of which coincide with the net of runners in Zaid’s labyrinth-house and with the net of spiders in al-Bokhari’s dream (which is directly caused by the light grazing of a spider-web). These “nets” are also equivalent to the net of different solutions to a crime available to a detective in a murder mystery. On the other hand, they are also the nets of agents transmitting the message: Zaid, Allaby, Dunraven, Unwin, and the text’s editor. They are equally the potential for variation inherent in Unwin’s version and, finally, the author’s itinerary through the narrative adventure and the reader’s path through the reading adventure. On the basis of this set of correspondences, Zaid may turn into Ibn Hakkam and vice versa. Only Zaid knows that he dreamt he was a king. In his own right, the narrator turns into a reader and vice versa.

One of the senses of the term “net” is “rhizome,” which expresses not imitation or similarity between two nets united by a common signifier, but the rhizome-specific principle of “non-parallel” lines. This meaning of “net” generates the narration and dissolves several identities, including the narrator’s.

In Borges’s short stories, “external” and “internal” fictions do not play a traditional role. They neither make the narrative framework stable nor try to explain what has just been narrated. Rather, they create at the level of the signifier a labyrinth that misleads the reader by forcing him or her to adopt a strong and radically active readerly attitude while at the same time deconstructing his or her own narration and erasing its narrative character. The transformation of the narrator is a means to effectively abolish the separation between fiction and reality, between producer and addressee of the text, inasmuch as the narrator is always a reader who edits, or informs of, a given text—this factor is neatly exemplified by “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Terrítorius.” Borges never ceases to write about the roles of both communicational instances: that of the author and that of the reader.

2. INTERTEXT, PALIMPSEST, RHIZOME

Before reviewing Borges, it is necessary to review the terms in the above heading, as they have acquired different meanings since Kristeva coined them.

Kristeva 1 first takes the writings of Bakhtin as her motivation, and from them the term or concept of “dialogism,” which has little or nothing to do with the earlier concept of intertextuality, defined as “mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d’un autre texte. À la place de la notion d’intersubjectivité s’installe celle d’intertextualité, et le langage poétique se lit, au moins, comme double.”

This discussion appears to arrive at a primary culmination in the work by G. Genette, Palimpsestes, in which he starts with five categories based on the term transformation that drives at the constitution of “hypertexts,” which in turn discard their relation to “hypotexts.” The five categories which appear are:
1. **Intertextuality** = "relation de coprésence entre deux ou plusieurs textes [. . .] par la présence effective d'un texte dans un autre; ex.: citation, plagiarism, allusion."

The criterion is of the external text type: the relation between Text A and Text B, between hypotext (= Reference text: A) and hypertext (= new text which takes a previous text as reference: B).

2. **Paratextuality** = "relation généralement moins explicite et plus distante, que [. . .] le texte proprement dit entretient avec [. . .] son paratexte: titre, sous-titre, intertitres, préface, postfaces, avertissement, avant-propos [. . .] notes marginales, commentaires," and so on. It deals with an "avant-texte," a "pre-text" (schema, project, etc.).

The criterion is the "internal text." Parts of a text, such as préface, title, postface, epigraph, special types of texts within the text—for example, in "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," the verses taken from *Hamlet*.

3. **Metatextuality** = "type de transcendance textuelle . . . relation . . . de commentaire, que unit un texte à un autre texte dont il parle, sans nécessairement le citer [. . .] sans le nommer"—for example, Hegel in his *Phenomenology* includes Diderot's *Le Neveu de Rameau*.

4. **Architextuality** = "relation tout à fait muette, que n'articule [. . .] qu'une mention paratextuelle [. . .] ou [. . .] infratextuelle"—for example, poetry, essay, novel, and so on.

The criterion is the "external text," which deals with relations among genres and literary types. For example, one finds this phenomenon in Borges when he suggestively plays with elements from political novels or historical, fantastic, or regionalist short stories/novels.

And finally,

5. **Hypertextuality** = "toute relation unissant un texte B (= hypotexte) à un texte antérieur A (= hypotexte)," where a previous text is not inserted as a commentary, but in "second degree" form. Hypotexts and hypertexts also may be scientific. Text B does not discuss Text A, but includes it, thus making A part of B; it results in a transformation.

The criterion is the "external text." The hypertext is usually fictional, which is to say that it is derived from another fictional text. Not all intertextuality is hypertextuality, and each hypertext may be read in its totality, as a text with autonomous significance. Each hypertext signifies an elaboration, a project: "faire du neuf avec du vieux."

A new function superimposes itself onto an older one and the dissonance between the two is what constitutes the new work. Hypertextuality is a perpetual circulation of texts.

This project reveals a palimpsest attitude, an imposition of the ludic: "accomplissement intellectuel et divertissement." The palimpsest is a "littérature livrèshe, de second degré."
According to Genette, the serious transformation is the most important of all hypertextual practices, due to its vast historical field and its varied possibilities. Genette posits that the intertextual work is always a work which deals with texts as unities unto themselves, not as mere allusions or ideological "echoes." This thereby discards the terms "transformation" and "imitation."

Departing from this base and considering the international discussion concerning the present subject, I propose the following definitions and redefinitions as the first objective for an adequate model of Borges's works. I indicate that Genette's category 5 is practically the same as category 1: it is the form by which intertextuality is constituted (operatively):

I define hypertextuality etymologically, in the sense of minor intensity. Here it is minor functional intensity, which we separate from a mere relation, such as the mention of a name, a title, a word, and so on.

I define hypertextuality as an intertextual work, a transformation which presupposes a major or minor codification by the author of the text and the major or minor possibility of its decodification by the reader. This definition discards the terms "transformation" and "imitation."

Instead of Genette's hypotext, I employ the term "pre-text," and I replace hypertext with "posttext."

I would like to refer to the result which emerges from the relation between a pretext and a posttext—in other words, the intertextual work—as intertext. I reserve the term "intratext" for the relations within a determined text and define it as such: when, for example, Borges explains the beginning of a story or explains its (pseudo) origins at the end. Intratext may be metatextual or objetotextual, which is to say, it may discuss the text or refer to anecdotes.

I summarize the material in the following schema. I also indicate that a para-text may be given in relation to internal or external texts. The verses from Hamlet at the beginning of El Aleph refer to a work outside of the posttext; its possible function in the posttext forms an intratext (see fig. 5.1).

Outside of the rhizome, what we find to be the most definitive in describing the narrative method of Borges within the categories developed by Genette "are additive oulipism or additive contamination" and "autopastiche." Genette defines the first one as:

Oulipisme/contamination . . . techniques de mixage, contamination additives et substitutives. La forme la plus traditionnelle (préoulipienne) de la contamination additive est le centon, qui consiste à prélever un vers ça et là pour constituer un ensemble aussi cohérent que possible.
... transformation ludique. Le garant de lucidité est ici caractère purement "machinel" du principe transformatrice, et donc fortuit de résultat. C'est le hasard qui opère, aucune intention sémantique n'y préside, rien de "tendancieux" ni de prémédité. Dans la parodie classique (et moderne), le "jeu" consiste à détourner un texte de sa signification initial vers une autre application connue d'avance, et à laquelle il faut l'adapter soigneusement... La parodie est un jeu d'adresse; l'oulipisme est un jeu de hasard, comme la roulette. Mais... cette récréation hasardeuse ne peut manquer longtemps de devenir récréation, car la transformation d'un texte produit toujours un autre texte, et donc un autre sens.

He defines the second category in the following way:

L'autopastiche: Lorsqu'un auteur accentue son idiolecte en multipliant ou en exagérant les traits caractéristiques, il est tentant (et courant) de le taxer, ou plus exactement de leindre de le soupçonner d'autopastiche ironique, ou comme on dit plus couramment, d'"autoparodie."
I find the “pseudo-conclusion,” or “fictive conclusion,” simulated from an imaginary text, to be of central importance in Borges's work. This may be defined as the synthesis of indirect repetition and textual commentary.

I would like to define the term deconstruction in the following way. I use Genette’s definition of palimpsest as a basic concept related to intertextuality, as well as to deconstruction: the intellectual endeavor of reading a text from its deep-seated structure, which is to say, reading a text in a linear fashion, also taking into account what the author was thinking. This sheds light on the motivation for its composition and its relation to the epistemologies of different time frames. To read the “palimpsest way” is to be involved in deconstruction: to discover the metatextuality of a text, its epistemological transgressions. Deconstruction is to read the text in light of its time frame; it is to read with the text and against the text. We may define this reading/activity as an epistemological semiotics.

On a certain level, postmodern deconstruction is a superimposed reading, a para-reading, whose objective is to use other texts as the basis for motivation until one reaches the point of forgetting or eliminating the point of reference. Deconstruction is to read the text with mistrust, to put everything into question; it is to explore the most remote recourse or possibility so as not to judge, but to offer up a hypothesis. It is a reading which privileges difference—which is related to the discovery of ruptures, evasions, zero semiotic positions. Postmodern deconstruction tries to subjugate metaphysical binaries, oppositions such as “interior (soul-breath-word-thought-logos) vs. exterior (body-writing-material),” which began with Platonism and continued with Rousseau and even Saussure. It does not seek out the “pure idea,” but, rather, its “différence”—that is, its original impurity (Heidegger/Levinas). This focuses on the decentralization of the subject in favor of transformations against a totalitarian structure. In this theory, thought, like speech, is treated as a game of infinite substitutions within a limited totality. Derrida develops his thought in a radical manner in Glas (1974), La vérité en peinture (1978), La carte postale de Socrates à Freud et au-delà (1980), and Parages (1986), for which he was accused of “charlatanry.”

Returning to Borges, he resorts to the method of palimpsest in the sense mentioned above. He treats it as a ludic game of extratextual, motivating structures which apparently employ certain pre-texts and use diverse types of textual insertions, which employ other texts and authors of varied works and different time frames. The attitude is palimpsest/deconstructionist, but it appears that only pre-text is used. Palimpsest does not lead us to a version, transformation, or reversal of the given themes; rather, it creates a text that cannot be reduced to an already codified structure, for if it is separated from the traditional course of palimpsest (which always presupposes a transformation of codified structures), we will find ourselves in a cul-de-sac. Nor is the original text used as an actualized, newly concretized rereading. This is also what follows in regard to the posttext. It does not produce a new signified (an intertext) in the inserted syntagmatic space, nor does it connect the signified of the pre-text within the new context; rather, the signifying structure is what is used. This is clearly illustrated in Borges’s stories, which
resist an interpretation on the basis of the signified, thereby leaving the impression of emptiness and radical segmentation.

According to my assessment, Borges takes the forms of palimpsest and intertext to the limit—that is, to their irreconcilability—by means of a radical heterogeneity, fragmentation, and a parallelism. Palimpsest and intertext presuppose a literary mimesis—that is, a copy—a principle of unity that appears heterogeneous but is not, just as the different branches and bifurcations of a tree are not. What we do see as a clear procedure is a strong tendency toward the rhizome—that is, toward a type of organization in which an element finds itself connected with another of a very different structure, producing an ahierarchal, disunited, open, and ever-developing proliferation. Speaking metaphorically, we have a network of knots from which emerge roots that connect themselves to other knots. It is not the relationship of signifier/signified that matters, but the type of relationship at the level of the signifier. In other words, the significance of the syntagm does not matter; what matters is how it is connected. Borges's literature likes to lead us to believe that it is mimetic (Cervantes accomplished this in Don Quijote), or that it imitates literature (Don Quijote also achieves this). In reality it only cites the world and literature, producing virtually rhizomorphic texts which are a subtle deconstruction of the cited models, not a parody of them, which was the system of deconstruction in Don Quijote.

In my view, Borges carries the techniques of the palimpsest and the intertext to their limits by making both recognizable through the use of radical heterogeneity, fragmentation, and a lack of parallelism. Both palimpsest and intertext presuppose a mimetic notion of literature—that is, the notion of the copy, a principle of unity which, despite appearances, is not heterogeneous in the same way that the different branches and bifurcations of a tree are unique. What one finds indeed is a strong tendency to the "rhizome," a kind of organization in which one element is connected with another belonging to a very different structure, thus producing a non-hierarchical, disjointed, open, and ever-developing proliferation. In graphic terms, there is a network of knots out of which spring roots that are connected to other knots. In these connections, it is not the signifier—signified relation that is important, but the relations at the level of the signifier: the question is not what the signified of the segment is, but how the segment is connected. Borges's literature pretends that it imitates the world, but, like Cervantes's Don Quijote, it does something else. It also pretends that, again like Don Quijote, it imitates literature. However, Borges's literature merely quotes from the world and from literature, thus producing virtually rhizomorphic texts that subtly deconstruct the quoted models instead of parodying them, as Cervantes did according to Don Quijote's deconstructive principle.

Deleuze and Guattari define the rhizome through six principles: "connection," "heterogeneity," "multiplicity," "nonsignifying rupture," "cartography," and "decalcomania." The first two principles refer to the proliferation of the rhizome in
all dimensions of n-I, to its changes in shape, its accidental quality, and to its refusal to form genealogical trees, dualities, or deep structures. Rhizomes are chains of different codifications and of different biological, economic, political, or cultural systems. The third feature ("multiplicity") is understood to be the absence of an object and a subject—one can only apprehend a rhizome through determination, quantity, and dimension. In symbolic terms, the rhizome is a network, a fabric in which only lines with no supracodification exist. Rhizomatic lines of discourse are unique and simple, since they totally cover the dimension of the rhizome and need no further additions. Deleuze and Guattari describe the ideal book as one endowed with a page-long plan in which the totality of a vast variety of elements (experiences, historical determinations, concepts, individuals, groups, and social formations) could be put together.

This notion is perfectly exemplified by Borges's "The Analytic Language of John Wilkins," mentioned by Foucault as the starting point for his famous *Order of Things* (xxv-xxiv). Borges's text includes a reference to a Chinese encyclopedia in which a set of heterogeneous items has been assembled:

> In its remote pages it is written that animals are divided into: (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies. (Obras completas II, 86)

We cannot consider here the previous or the following paragraphs, which further intensify the radical nature of multiplicity. Borges's work is shaped as a mere sketch, as the representation of certain "writing materials" which, in fact, are the writing or narration themselves.

The fourth principle introduces the possibility of interrupting or destroying a rhizome and the impossibility of having dualities. Rhizomes "determinatize" prominent cultural items and "reterritorialize" them within the rhizomorphic system. There is no imitation or similarity, but an explosion of at least two heterogeneous series consisting of a single rhizome and not subjected to a higher system; for example, the crocodile does not adopt the shape of a tree trunk and the chameleon does not take the color of its skin from its environment. These animals do not imitate or reproduce; rather, they paint the world in their colors. They "produce" rhizomes; they produce worlds.

Criteria five and six highlight the absence of a genetic axis, a deep structure, and objective units. The rhizome is a card of many entries, not a "copy of." It is open to any dimension, it is productive rather than reproductive; it springs from performance rather than from competence.

The theory of rhizomes is an utopia of postmodern philosophy, led by the desire to go beyond "metadiscourses," duality, and hierarchical systems. This utopia may
be attempted, but not achieved—or at least in the case in science. As presented by authors such as Lyotard and Vattimo, it is a virtual possibility in philosophy, as it is in art and literature.

Returning to Borges's texts, a few examples will show how he replaces traditional forms of palimpsest and intertextuality. In “The Garden of Forking Paths,” we can identify several roots branching from a single rhizome:

a': the British attack in 1916 (a military event);
b': in connection with this, the events in a case of espionage;
c': Dr. Yu Tsun's version of these events;
d': Dr. Yu Tsun's visit to Stephen Albert;
e': Ts'ui Pên's text, which is also a theory of textual production and of the possibilities inherent in reading at the metadiscursive level. At the same time, it is a theory of labyrinths or of rhizomatic or temporal structures. In sum: a theory of what literature may be.

In the beginning, Dr. Yu Tsun believes that the labyrinthine structure of his ancestor's book could be described as a circular structure similar to that in The Thousand and One Nights. According to this notion, one must reject certain possibilities when making specific choices (“In all fiction, when a man is faced with alternatives he chooses one at the expense of the others” [Ficciones, 98]). The methods of textual production and reception proper to Dr. Yu Tsun are traditional and derive from the principle of the genealogical tree. That is why he speaks of the evolution or inheritance of a text, which can be preserved, restored, updated, and, finally, understood by means of the palimpsest: “I also imagined a Platonic hereditary work, passed on from father to son, to which each individual would add a new chapter or correct, with pious care, the work of his elders” (97).

After his failure to interpret his ancestor's work, Dr. Yu Tsun realizes that Ts'ui Pên's principle of composition is “simultaneous,” or, in our terms, nonparallel and rhizomorphous: “He thus creates various futures, various times which start others that will in their turn branch out and bifurcate in other times. This is the cause of the contradictions in the novel” (98).

Hence the infinite possibilities of combination of events and endings. Terms that usually stand opposed can now coexist: “In Ts'ui Pên's work, all the possible solutions occur, each one being the point of departure for other bifurcations. Sometimes the pathways of this labyrinth converge. For example, you come to this house; but in other possible pasts you are my enemy; in others my friend” (98). The expression “each [solution] being the point of departure for other bifurcations” shows that, in a non-causal way, each knot produces other knots and bifurcations.

Albert's observations about Dr. Yu Tsun's ancestor show that, for him, this text is a masterpiece, even though the novel has traditionally been undervalued as a literary genre. If Ts'ui Pên chose to write a novel, it was because he was a brilliant
man of letters, and not merely a novelist, thus reaching beyond given genres and structures of classification. The chosen themes (metaphysics, mysticism, philosophy) were pretexts for him to engage in another topic—time, which, being "simultaneous" or "non-parallel," obeys rhizomorphic principles.

The rhizome can be detected at two different levels: encoded in a series of military and espionage events, on the one hand, and in a theory of writing and non-metaphysical thought, on the other (the mention of Plato is revealing in the latter case). These two levels are connected in a non-parallel manner after being deterritorialized. In the "external fiction" the situation is similar: the military attack initially has no connection with the visit to Stephen Albert. It is suggested that the agent working for Germany wants to escape the imminent danger after having been discovered. Equally, his ancestor's work has no connection with the texts mentioned at the beginning. For the agent, the labyrinth/rhizome consists of both escaping and sending the information; for Ts'ui Pên, it is his book; for Albert, it is his interpretation of the book; and for the reader, it is detecting and understanding the system of the signifier devoid of its signified. A parallel is established: Dr. Yu Tsun and Ts'ui Pên are the producers of the internal fiction regarding the events and the text, while Borges's and Ts'ui Pên's texts play that role at the metadiscursive level. On the opposite pole of communication, Dr. Yu Tsun and the reader are the addressees of the "internal fiction" and/or the "external fiction." In the process, the deconstruction affects not only the literary genres of espionage and war novels, but also the text's structure, as is the case in The One Thousand and One Nights. All of these structures are mentioned as hypothetical starting points in order to be discarded. The cited texts offer no help either in interpreting the signified or in fixing a signifier—they are merely quotations that demonstrate the opposite of what they say. These structures do not reverse or alter the signifieds/signifiers, which were present in the books as insinuations; rather, they form a rhizome, something new, a unique and unrepeatable self-negating system.

In "Death and the Compass," Borges reveals the loose and unconnected materials that he employs: "I have woven it, and it holds: the materials are a dead writer on heresies, a compass, an eighteenth-century sect, a Greek word, a dagger, the rhombus of a paint shop" (139).

In "Theme of the Traitor and Hero," Borges connects "Chesterton's mysteries" with "Leibniz's pre-established harmony" to compose his text. "Story of the Warrior and the Captive" begins with a Latin epitaph, attributed to B. Croce, about a military event, which means that this starting text is also of a critical nature. According to the narrator, in History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, XLV, 177–688, Gibbon also describes this event about a Lombard warrior who defects during the siege of Ravenna and dies while defending the Roman city, which he had previously attacked on the barbarian side. The second pillar of the text—the story of an English woman turned indigenous—is told to Borges by his grandmother. The relation—or, rather, the non-parallel connection between both sto-
Borges explains the mechanism thus:

The figure of the barbarian who embraced the cause of Ravenna, the figure of the European woman who chose the wasteland, may seem antagonistic. And yet, both were swept away by a secret impulse, an impulse more profound than reason, and both heeded this impulse, which they would not have known how to justify. Perhaps, the stories I have related are one single story. The obverse and the reverse of this coin are, for God, the same. (*Labyrinths*, 130–131)

In “The Babylon Lottery,” the lottery-like character of Borges’s textual organization is stressed: “Such is the symbolic scheme. In reality, the number of drawings is infinite. No decision is final, all diversify into others” (*Ficciones*, 70).

The fact that the quoted texts are useless at the level of the signified and become merely a skeleton at the level of the signifier is exemplified by the mention of Johannes Valentinus Andreae (1586–1654) in “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius.” Borges attributes to him *Lesebare und lesenswerthe Bemerkungen über das Land Ukkbar in Klein-Asien* (19).

Texts are never quoted in order to be inserted at the level of the signified or to be recalled, which means that the possibility of a reception understood as a new concretion is rejected. This is evident in “Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quijote” and in “Averroes’s Search.” In the former text, Menard undertakes a remake of *Don Quijote*. Two methods are open to him: the first is to try to bring the text up to date, but the distance in time and the loss of the text’s determining factors do not allow it. The second is to copy the work word by word, which, although apparently producing a tautology or a copy, creates a new text once it has been inserted in the present tense of writing: in contemporary time, textual signifiers produce completely different signifieds. The text is totally new, and eventually destroys the original work belonging to Cervantes:

The initial method he conceived was relatively simple: to know Spanish well, to re-embrace the Catholic faith, to fight against Moors and Turks, to forget European history between 1602 and 1918, and to be Miguel de Cervantes. Pierre Menard studied this procedure (I know that he arrived at a rather faithful handling of seventeenth-century Spanish) but rejected it as too easy. Rather because it was impossible, the reader will say! I agree, but the undertaking was impossible from the start, and of all the possible means of carrying it out, this one was the least interesting. To be, in the twentieth century, a popular novelist of the seventeenth seemed to him a diminution. To be, in some way, Cervantes [ . . . ]
seemed to him less arduous [. . .] than to continue being Pierre
Menard and to arrive at Don Quixote through the experiences of
Pierre Menard. (49)

The I-narrator uses a letter by Menard to reconstruct his method, but also fails.
What remains is the introduction of a new literary method based on the palimpsest,
ambiguity, error, anachronism, and, ultimately, the generating principles of
the rhizome: "Menard (perhaps without wishing it) has enriched, by means of a
new technique, the hesitant and rudimentary art of reading: the technique is one
of deliberate anachronism and erroneous attributions" (54). The I-narrator speaks
here both of the act of the reading and of textual production, since the terms
"anachronism" and "attributions" were previously mentioned by the author.

In "Averroes’ Search," the Arab philosopher tries to translate the terms "comedia"
and "tragedia" in Aristotle’s Poetics, but fails, as his cultural system does
not include these terms. Neither can the I-narrator figure out who Averroes really
is: "I felt that Averroes, wanting to imagine what a drama is without ever having
suspected what a theater is, was no more absurd than I, wanting to imagine Aver-
roes" (Labyrinths, 155).

These mechanisms turn Borges into a postmodern avant la lettre who creates a
new form of deconstruction in which the literary referent, and even its motivat-
ing, disappear. Thus emerges a new text, but, unlike Don Quixote, its literary
referent is never clearly defined. Borges is not properly an intertextual author;
rather, he imitates and quotes intertextuality, in the same way that he quotes the
"reality vs. fiction" polarity or the mechanisms of fantastic literature.

3. "OBJECT-DISCOURSE" AND "METADISCOURSE,"
OR, THE CANCELLATION OF THE
"REALITY VS. FICTION" OPPOSITION

Moreover, I would like to use some examples to demonstrate that many of
Borges’s texts, not only the works compiled in Ficciones and El Aleph, possess a
double codification within the total structure of the text: at the level of "object-
discourse" of the narrated account, and at the level of "metadiscourse." These
discourses consist of particular observations regarding the text in question, along
with general questions concerning the type of literature. I will categorize the dif-
ferent examples of "metadiscourse" into three groups: the "text within the text"
which arises from the proceedings of textual organization, the "text within the
text" as textual producer, and the "text within the text" as thematicization of tex-
tual reception.

The "I-narrator" of The Immortal comments on the "internal fiction" in the text
written about his experiences. His commentary forms part of the "object-dis-
course" as well as the "metadiscourse," since he tells us about the "contamination"
of his history with unreal facts derived from poets. He qualifies his history as “fantastic,” and states that its structural beginning lies in the “Centón.”

When the “I-narrator” tells us about his dream, which focuses on an indistinguishable, horrific labyrinth, filled with pseudo-symmetries so as to deliberately confuse people, corridors with no exit, windows that are out of reach, doors that lead to a cell or a well, inverse stairs that lead to the sky, and so on, he is also discussing the rhizomorphic processes of his work (diverse manuscripts, authors, themes) and of the reader’s experience. On a more general level, he qualifies the text as a production of signs, in which there is no difference between real and unreal: “I can no longer distinguish whether this or that detail is a transcription of reality or of the forms which designed my nights.”

The city of the immortals (= “object-discourse”) is equivalent to the book, and is qualified as such:

   ...a chaos of heterogeneous words, the body of a tiger or a bull, in which teeth, organs, and heads monstrously germinated, conjugating and loathing each other, they may very well be like images.

The troglodyte (“object-discourse”) is the equivalent of the writer (“metadiscourse”) and his writing is “barbaric,” which reflects the strangeness with which the reader receives the narrative discourse. This is why the “first-person narrator” wants to teach the impatient barbarian (= the relationship between Borges and the reader):

   The man designed them, looked at them, and corrected them. He suddenly erased them with the palm of his hand and his fore-arm, as if the game were frustrating him. [... ] that night I realized the purpose of teaching him to recognize, and perhaps repeat some words.

“To trace,” “to look,” and “to correct” are terms which do more than reveal part of the production. They also reveal the reader’s intentions in regards to comprehending the text, as illustrated in the following passage:

   I thought that Argos and I participated in different universes; I thought that our perceptions were the same, but that Argos combined them in a different way and constructed different objects with them; I thought that objects did not exist for him, rather, a vertiginous and continuous game of very brief impressions. I thought of a world without memory, without time.

The situation represented the difficulty encountered in the relationship of producer and recipient with respect to the novelty of that which is narrated (“same perceptions vs. combination/different construction”).
The "object-discourse" remains hermetic; it appears to resist an allegorical interpretation of semantic weight. It takes on the characteristics of pre-text for the rhizomorphic semiotic game, in which the structure is like that of a wheel, not circular, but without beginning and without end, where one element engenders another, without determining the other, without ever reaching unity.

In The Theologian, the narrator characterizes the writings of Juan de Panonia as "vast and almost inextricable periods, disturbed by punctuation marks, where negligence and syntax errors appeared to be forms of disdain. From the cacophony he made a polished, universal instrument" reflected in reading the beginning of a text or the text at face value, which is later discovered to be the rhizome. The only pleasure left for the recipient seems to be the mere discovery of citation, how it is reflected in the character of Panonia, and what it establishes: that his writings come from other writings. The conclusion is that the text "did not seem to be written by a concrete person, rather by any man, or maybe by all men," which accentuates collective textual productivity in the face of an individualized one which calls attention to originality and newness.

We find a final example in the passage in "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" in which Borges and Bicho Casares describe the characteristics of the article from the encyclopedia about Uqbar ("object-discourse") which are those of the story itself ("metadiscourse"): We carefully read the article. The passage that Bicho remembered was possibly the only surprising one. The rest seemed the same, adjusted to fit the general tone of the work and (naturally), a little boring. Rereading it, under its rigorous writing we discovered a fundamental vagueness. We only recognized three of the fourteen names ambiguously interspersed in the geographic part of the text. [. . .] We only recognized one name from the historical names the impostor Esmerdis the Magician, probably used as a metaphor. The note appeared to delineate the border of Uqbar, but its nebulous points of reference were rivers and craters and chains of the same region.

In reality, the text is coherent and convincing. Why can't a recipient believe that The Anglo-American Cyclopedia exists? Furthermore, why should he doubt that Uqbar exists? It could be the ancient name of a city that exists today. Outside of this, there is a massive citation of texts, places, and authors which functions to give credence to that mentioned above. It is clear that the narrator reveals the fictive nature of the account in another place; in the beginning he sustains that The Anglo-American Cyclopedia is "fallacious," stemming from a republication of the Encyclopaedia Brittanica. Later on, the geographical places and current persons, or post quem that are easily described as mere fiction.
The language and literature section was brief. Only one memorable detail: it noted that the literature from Uqbar was fantastic in character and that its epics and legends never referred to reality, but to the imaginary regions of Mlepas and Tlön.16

In this passage, Borges refers to his own text as a pure invention, as fantastic, thereby giving us the instrument by which to understand his interpretation.

I now had in my hands a great methodical fragment of the entire history of an unknown planet, with its architectures and cards, with the awe of its mythologies and the rumor of its languages, with its emperors and oceans, with its minerals and birds and fish, with its algebra and fire, with its theological and metaphysical controversies. Everything articulated, coherent, lacking, visible doctrinal purpose or parodic tone.

The fact that all philosophy is first and foremost a dialectical game, a Philosophie des Als Ob, has contributed in its multiplication. Incredible systems abound, but of pleasant architecture or the sensational type. The metaphysicists of Tlön do not search for the truth, nor even verisimilitude: they search for wonder. They judge metaphysics to be a branch from fantastic literature. They know that a system is nothing more than the subordination of every aspect of the universe by any other object.

Books are also different. Fictional books only work with one argument, with all its imaginable permutations.17

In this case we have a “text within a text” in the story “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius,” given that the content of the fantastic encyclopedia is equivalent to the content of the “internal fiction,” thereby discovering it as fantastic. Not only in this story, but in “The Lottery in Babylonia,” “An Examination of the Work of Herbert Quain,” “The Library of Babel,” “The Garden of Forking Paths,” and “The Form of the Sword” do we find a great number of “metadiscourses” which constantly comment on the “object-discourse.”18

4. ANTICIPATING THE NOUVEAU ROMAN, THE NOUVEAU NOUVEAU ROMAN, AND TEL QUEL

This analysis is primarily intended to be an interpretation of the system of Borges’s short stories on the basis of their signifiers. It also reveals that Borges an-
ticipated some central ideas of the *nouveau roman*, the *nouveau nouveau roman*, and *Tel Quel*, together with some features of postmodernity.

The eclectic activity of perceiving several systems is the core of Borges's aesthetics, as it relates to both the producer and the recipient of the text. The producer is the addressee who turns his or her experience as a perceiver into writing, thus reproducing reading by means of a rhizomorphous organization. The reader may also reproduce this game, but he or she can also remain at the level of immanent readings or trace the text back playfully as a "literary detective" would. When searching for clues at the level of the signified, one will encounter disappointment. When engaged in a labyrinthine signifier-oriented search, one will experience a pleasurable adventure through several systems that cannot be reduced to a coded suprasystem. The narrator dissolves between the hinges as a result of the rhizomorphous quality of his writing; he also reveals the "secret" of his text by means of a "metadiscourse" which interprets the "discourse-object" in a continuous "text-within-the-text" act of description. Borges goes beyond intertextual practices and the aleatory techniques of the *nouveau roman*, both of which presuppose a unified system of signs. He shifts from the straightforward palimpsest of "Pierre Menard" to the rhizome in "The Garden of Forking Paths." Literature thus achieves the epitome of its own referential powers and autonomy, and is confronted with reality, understood now as merely a quotation, and with other texts, which are deconstructed.

5. BORGES'S POSTMODERNITY

Rather than writing on the "reality vs. fiction" opposition, Borges dispenses with the former part of the dichotomy and divides the latter into a "mimesis of fiction vs. fiction" confrontation. This is why his short stories are always the result of a (pseudo)intertextual activity. The reality that is taken for granted is frequently one that was created by other texts; hence the fact that Borges's texts cannot be properly described as fantastic according to Todorov's categories. The stories in *Ficciones* and *The Aleph* must be viewed as a "quotation" of the opposition between reality and fiction and as a "mimesis of fiction." Literature, and not reality, is now the referent, which is constituted by signs. In this sense, Borges's stories are not usually ambiguous regarding the traditional "reality vs. fiction" opposition. At best, they may be taken to belong to what Todorov terms the "marvelous fantastic" or the "strange fantastic."

The term "Fantastic," as proposed by Todorov in a general fashion, is not valid. If applied to Borges, its sense must be changed: "The fantastic would thus be equivalent to "literature" (i.e., built, invented, a structure of words, texts, names, referents, quotes). In this sense, the fantastic involves the dissolution of the referent called "reality" as a basic element of literature, which now becomes a quote of other texts."
As I observed above, postmodernity is a phenomenon that began in the sixties in the United States and was later exported to Europe and Latin America, primarily in the seventies. Chronologically, Borges does not belong to postmodernity; systematically, it is different, for his stories really anticipate the phenomenon. This is why, after examining several forms of knowledge and art that existed prior to postmodernity, one can identify authors who already "thought" in that particular direction. Borges is not only a predecessor of postmodernity, but also—as I hope to have shown in my analysis—a postmodern author in the most genuine sense of the term.

After examining several theories of intertextuality and a few Borgesian stories ("Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," "The Garden of Forking Paths," "Story of the Warrior and the Captive," "Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote") we reach the conclusion that Borges is not, strictly speaking, an intertextual author. Rather, he quotes and deconstructs the principles of intertextuality, which are replaced by the notion of the rhizome. If intertextuality is understood to be based on the principle of transformation, the intertextual operation will be possible only if one can detect in the new text a lexeme (the author's name and/or the title of a work, even a poetologic term), a sequence or a series of sequences (full or partial quotations taken from a work), or a structure (a sequence of agents, characters, or narrative modes). These intertextual insertions may be effected through direct or indirect imitation, through parodies or transvestitism, or through complementation, distortion, or negation of the previous text. In any case, the inserted unity must play a role in the new text. Borges does not usually follow the method in this sense. In most cases, his abundant quotations are simply eclectic mentions with a single purpose: to become motivating structures of writing that retrieve an idea often unconnected to the quoted passage. The texts alluded to by Borges frequently share the features of his own discourse: they are eclectic, fragmentary, miniature, and esoteric. They mix erudition and dilettantism, elevated and colloquial language, metaphysics, physics, theological allusions, and more. As his quotations are the result of his readings, so the act of writing is treated as a mere appendage to his readerly activities.

I will end by summarizing the main features of Borges's postmodern textual techniques classified according to either the type of discourse or the narrative mode. The list of types of discourse includes:

a) Literary discourse: deconstructive intertextual games, quotations from other authors of fiction or from anonymous fictional texts: Homer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Flaubert, Joyce, Valéry, Chesterton, Kafka, The Arabian Nights, D'Annunzio (these quotations are not restricted to Western culture and systems).

c) The discourse of philosophy, metaphysics, scientific theory, or logic: quotations of, and references to, philosophers such as Lull, Leibniz, Descartes, Berkeley, Hegel, Spengler, and Kant.
d) Theological discourse: Saint Augustine and the debates on the existence of God and the structure of the universe.
e) Mystic/religious discourse ("The Theologians," "The God's Script").
f) Philological discourse: "Averroes' Search," quotes from the Revista de Filología Española or from the NRF, encyclopedias, maps, and so on.
g) Genre-bound discourses, such as the essay or literary discourse ("An Examination of the Work of Herbert Quain").
i) The discourse of adventure stories ("The South," "The End," "Ibn Hakkan al-Bokhari, Dead in His Labyrinth").
j) (Pseudo)realist discourse ("The South," "The End").
k) The discourse of (pseudo)ordinary life: quotes from newspapers and magazines.
m) Narrative discourse full of parody and humor.
n) The discourse of history.

At the level of the narrative modes one can detect:

a) A scientific tone—or, rather, a mimesis of science conceived of as a game superseding nineteenth-century realism, which was in fact a scientific mimesis taken seriously: quotations from philological journals, and from authors and texts both existent and nonexistent.
b) An omniscient author.
c) A coherent fabula, with well-defined locations, times, and characters which eventually are displaced by deconstruction, masks, dissolution, and diffuseness.
d) Ambiguity and resistance to interpretation.
e) Unresolved allusions.
f) Self-deconstruction and the deconstruction of created signifieds.
g) Autobiographical allusions.
h) A full mixture of reality and fiction lacking ontologic implications.
i) Reflections on writing and narrative.
j) Pseudo-local color; pseudo-neocostumbrism and pseudo-realism.
k) Myth, located between history and language: semiotization, dissolution, dissemination of the myth.
1) The dissolution of the third-person narrator, who gets lost among the contradictions of a first-person voice: use of several identities and of no identity, narrator/character double status, in relation to himself or unrelated.

m) Collective quality and repetition: the disappearance of the creator and of the myth of the genius, the text viewed as the origin of productivity.

n) The reader as an active co-author: decoding, second-degree deconstruction.

Deconstruction, eclectic rhizomorphous games, paralogic or aparallel structures, the non-hierarchization of used systems, the dissolution of the narrator, and thus of the virtual identification between narrator and addressee, the mention of the author Borges as a fictional character, quotations of a vast array of texts with varying degrees of intrinsic quality: these features help to cancel and to refute ontological categories such as “reality vs. fiction” and art vs. non-art, and blur the limits between literature and criticism, thereby turning Fiedler's notion of the “double codification” into a multiscodification. The form of Borges's discourse is radically open, heterogeneous, intercultural, ironic, humorous, and full of parody. His minimalist, fragmentary, and idiosyncratic thought promotes the universal dimension of discourse, which, in his case, abolishes the frontiers between languages and nationalities.

The often-debated question of Borges's “Latin American features” must then be included in a larger, universal system of signs, which, in the long term, is the most durable aspect of cultures. This semiotic universality is what has prompted the erroneous labeling of Borges as a “European” author or his exclusion from Latin American culture. This situation is absurd, especially if one considers that Borges is probably the only internationally renowned Latin American author to have lived in his native country, with the exception of the period between 1914 and 1919, almost until his death (which, as is well known, was in Geneva). Borges was always faithful in his consideration of Latin America as part of Western culture and to his view of universal culture as open to all. This, in itself, is a highly postmodern attitude.

Translated by José García and Christina Lloyd

NOTES

This is a translation of an edited version of a longer work originally published in two parts: “El productor ‘rizomórfico’ y el lector como ‘detectivo literario’: la aventura de los signos a la postmodernidad del discurso borgesiano (intertextualidad-palimpsesto-rizoma-deconstruction,” in Karl Alfred Blüher and Alfonso de Toro, eds., Jorge Luis Borges: Procedimientos literarios y bases epistemológicas (Frankfurt: Verlag Klaus Dieter Vervuert, 1992),
3. It is important to note that Ficciónes was translated into French by P. Devroeye in 1951. In addition, between 1923 and 1955 (that is, before the nouveau roman achieved popularity) several important authors wrote works on Borges, most of them in French and/or in France, which were published in well-known literary journals and magazines. These authors were later to study the nouveau roman, thus making the annivers of French authors and criticism all the more striking. Some of these early French studies were R. M. Albéret, "J. L. Borges ou les deux bouts du monde," Affinités 2 (1953): 84, 85, 92; P. Bénichou, "Kublai Khan, Coleridge y Borges," Sur 236 (1955): 57–61; M. Brion, "D’un autre hémi-sphère," Le Monde (26 Mar. 1952); and J. L. Borges et ses labyrinthes," Le Monde (18 Aug. 1954); Roger Caillou, "Soldat de la liberté," Opéra (30 Jan. 1952); M. Carrouges, "Le gai savoir de Jorge Luis Borges," Presse 13 (1952): 47–49; Max Daireaux, Panorama des Littératures Contemporaines (Paris: Kna, 1930); A. Hoog, "Au delà de l’enigme. Jorge Luis Borges: Ficciónes," Carillon (26 Mar. 1952); R. Kemp, "La vie des livres. Vériés et Ficções," Les Nouvelles Littéraires (20 Mar. 1952); and M. Nadeau, "Un écrivain déroutant et savoureux: J. L. Borges," L’Observateur 94 (28 Feb. 1952).
6. Regarding postmodernism in the context of Hispanic culture, see Federico de Onís, Antología de la poesía española e hispanoamericana (Madrid: [Hernando], 1934); Octavio Corvalán, El postmodernismo, la literatura hispanoamericana entre dos guerras mundiales (New York: Las Américas Publishing Co., 1961); Pedro Salinas, "El cine y el bulo: apuntes para


8. See note 4.

9. This is why Borges’s short stories can hardly be viewed as “fantastic” according to Todorov’s epistemologic definition in Introduction à la littérature fantastique (Paris: Seuil/Points, 1970). Such a definition is grounded precisely on the vagueness or ambiguity derived from the opposition between “fiction” and “reality.” In this respect, see Alfonso de Toro, "Überlegungen zur Textsorte 'Fantastik' oder Borges und die Negation des Fantastischen. Rhetorische Simulation, 'dirigerter Zufall' und semantisches Skandalon," in Alfonso de Toro et al., eds., Fantastik (Leipzig: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1996), 11–74.

10. Borges states clearly in the preface to Peces (ed. Anthony Kerrigan [New York: Grove Press, 1962]) that "a better course of procedure is to pretend that these books already exist, and then offer a résumé, a commentary. Thus proceeded Carlyle in Sartor Resartus, Thos Butler in The Fair Haven. These are works which suffer the imperfection of being themselves books, and of being no less tautological than the others. More reasonable, more inapt, more indolent, I have preferred to write notes upon imaginary books" (15–16). This is why I think that Borges does not foreshadow the reception theory as systematized by the Constance school, as Jauss notes; rather, he proposes a form of reception which, beginning with a word contained in past works, can produce an absolutely new text. Consequently, literature from the past is irrecoverable, as Pierre Menard shows. It would be more precise to observe, as Jauss himself notes in the same work, that Borges inaugurates the theory of intertextuality, palimpsest, and deconstruction, although he turns these methods into rhizomatic techniques.


12. Allegory is a classic and well-known mode of interpretation in Borgesian research, as in virtually every study by Aizpiri. The present analysis intends to show that Borges either opposes semantic allegory continuously or destroys it after evoking it, thus making an arbitrary exercise of any kind of semantic reading that is superimposed onto the literal one.

13. The expression "non-parallel lines" is used by Deluze and Guattari from Chauvin’s studies; see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Rhizome (Berlin: Merve Verlag, 1977). It describes the relation between two beings which, although they may have common parts, evolve in a completely different way. Examples are the presence of certain animal genes in the human body, and the AIDS virus, which was spread among a certain type of monkey before it expanded to human beings, thus affecting the human, but not the monkey’s, organism.


15. M. Bakhtin, Literature und Karneval: Zur Romantheorie und Lachkultur (München: Ullstein, 1969); idem, Ästhetik des Wortes (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979). The Bakhtinian term is based on the "plurality of voices" (heteroglossia) or the polyphony of the novel, and has two points: (1) dialogism, understood as the open and free debate between divergent opinions within the text, and (2) monologism, understood as the security and establishment of authority or tradition. These voices may be directed toward objects or actions, or exercised between narrator and characters or among characters themselves, thus synthesizing the ideology of a certain time frame. Forms of polyphonic prose are irony, parody, the processes of distancing (ostmanenie), subtle polemics, and replicas. These processes relativize the word, the message, which, in turn, loses its position as absolute truth; canonized truths disappear. The term "dialogism" corresponds with this, along with the "perspective" of modern narratology, and has nothing to do with "intertextuality" created by Kristeva, which refers to the relation between two or more texts.


20. Ibid., 294–297.


23. According to botany, the rhizome is a subterranean bulb, similar in appearance to a root, but it has membraneous leaves and embryonic seedlings which generally lie in the horizontal position, like the common lily.
26. Ibid., 538.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 538–539.
29. Ibid., 539.
30. Ibid., 538: “Moreover, none of the forms were the same, which excluded or distanced the possibility of their being symbolic.”
31. Ibid., 540.
32. Ibid., 551.
33. Ibid., 552. Cf. also “Tiôn, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius” in Borges, Obras Completas, vol. 1, 439. “The idea of plagiarism does not exist: it has been established that all work belongs to only one author, who is not temporal and is anonymous. Criticism insists on inventing authors: it elects two dissimilar works—the Tao Te King and 1001 Nights, let’s say, and attributes them to the same writer and later determines the psychology of that interesting homme de lettres . . .”
34. Greek name of the Persian prince Bardíya, second child of Cyrus, whose throat was cut by his brother Cambises II.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., 434, 436, 439.
38. Ibid., 459–480, 496.