INTRODUCTION

THE ARGENTINE WRITERS, TRADITION, AND WORLD LITERATURE: BORGES AND CORTÁZAR

"We must believe that the universe is our birthright"[1] (1999a: 427), Jorge Luis Borges concludes his 1951 essay "The Argentine Writer and Tradition", which had a major impact on at least three different fields: Argentine and Latin American literary studies, comparative literature, and, more recently, world literature. In 2024, we celebrate 125 years since Borges, and 110 years since Julio Cortázar were born to this worldly birthright.

But if we are to believe the author of *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf, whom both Borges and Cortázar admired, "great poets never die; they are continuing presences" (2015: 82). For there are some "practitioners of life," Woolf writes in *Orlando*, whom "we know to be dead, though they walk among us; some are not yet born, though they go through the forms of life; others are hundreds of years old though they call themselves thirty-six" (1928: 305). As the translator of *Orlando*, which he called "Woolf's most intense work and one of the most singular and maddening of our era"[2] (1999b: 174), Borges would agree with Woolf that "whatever the *Dictionary of National Biography* may say," "the true length of a person's life […] is always a matter of dispute" (Woolf 1928: 305-306). It is no different for Borges and Cortázar, two major writers whose world vision goes beyond their time and makes them more alive than many of our contemporaries even now.

Borges's powerful neo-Stoic statement about the universe as a *birthright* was born from a fiery local debate on what being an Argentine writer meant. Two decades later, little had changed locally in terms of the dynamics between local and worldly or "foreign" that seemed to be at odds, and Cortazar's biting response, worthy of his surrealist allegiance, came this time from afar: Paris, 1969. As he remarked then, "we're in dire need of revolutionaries of literature, not of literates of the revolution"[3] (Cortázar 1971: 76). Cortázar concludes that revolutionary literature of the kind that transcends parochial locality goes beyond realistic depictions of social and political events

[1] "Debemos pensar que nuestro patrimonio es el universo" (Borges 1974: 273-274)

[2] "sin duda la [novela] más intensa de Virginia Woolf y una de más singulares y desesperantes de nuestra época" (Borges 1985: 123)

[3] "estamos necesitando más que nunca […] los revolucionarios de la literatura más que los literatos de la revolución"

*Unless otherwise noted, all translations of original Spanish texts cited in the footnotes are our own when their English versions appear in the body of the text.

and deals with "the entire human reality, where, as Hamlet tells Horatio, there are more things in heaven and earth than there are dreamed of in his philosophy"[4] (1971: 77).

Borges and Cortázar's theoretical ideas about locality, circulation, and belonging were prophetic of the current development of our comparative and world literary studies. As Dominique Jullien has argued in *Borges, Buddhism and World Literature*, Borges was able to "formulate a morphological model of narrative circulation that serves both as a reading principle […] and a writing practice" that resonates with David Damrosch's theories of world literature that de-centre the text and bring back the transformative power of circulation and rereading in different contexts (2019: xi). Cortázar's view on exilic literature as a form of world literature (Cortázar 1994a) has found resonance in Galin Tihanov's theory about world literature: the significance and creative power of exile can be seen in the crucial role it played in the rise of "modern literary theory and comparative literature as disciplines" in the interwar years (Tihanov 2012: 8). In his turn, in the recent *Comparing the Literatures* (2020), David Damrosch dedicates an entire chapter to the exilic figures that changed forever the face of comparative and then world literature, most notably Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach.

Conversely, Borges and Cortázar's revolutionary power doesn't extend only into their future, with the impact they had on Argentine and world literature and literary studies, but also into their literary past, as both were powerful rereaders of (pre)modern literature which they recirculated through their own literary practice, from comparative mythology and ancient religious texts to the visionary and eschatological Biblical texts.

The fourteen essays we've invited for this special issue of *Beoiberística* reflect critically on the impact of two of the most important writers of the 20th century, whose work and intellectual trajectories raise some of the most important issues in world literary studies today.

These can be grouped into four categories:

1. forms of world-making and belonging
2. stories of circulation
3. translation as the afterlife of texts, and
4. rereading as a form of enriching the past through the eyes of the present.

1. The Argentine writers and their worlds

How far away is home? Is home a given, real space, or an imaginary, emotional one, conquered with great pains over time, retrospectively, as Kafka believed about our own past? In 1980, Borges echoed Kafka's words: "the only thing we have is the past, and the past is an act of faith […] the past is our treasure" (Borges 2013).

Andrei Tarkovsky, the great Russian filmmaker, confessed that it was only abroad that he understood what it was to be Russian, as well as what home is. In the early 1980s, Tarkovsky went to Italy to scout for locations for his next film, *Nostalghia*. Little did he know how prophetic the

[4] "la realidad total del hombre que, como se lo dijo Hamlet a Horacio, tiene más cosas en el cielo y en la tierra de lo que imagina su filosofía"

film, about a trip to Italy by a Russian writer ironically named Andrei, who would never return home, would be of his own life. Following decades of conflicts with the Soviet censors who criticized his films for being too non-political and too religious, Tarkovsky finally decides to remain abroad, in Italy and France. So when *Nostalghia* was released at Cannes in 1983, Tarkovsky reflected that "*Nostalghia* was conceived, filmed, and produced in Italy, but it is the most Russian of my films." (Aspesi 1983) So home can be born abroad, no matter whether *abroad* means a physical spatial distance or being abroad in one's own country – a feeling all too familiar to the author of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Milan Kundera.

Borges and Cortázar each represent one of these two notions of imagining home from abroad. While Borges remained physically in Argentina, he conceived of his cosmopolitan identity by distancing himself from the growing nationalism that praised "local color", a case in point being his 1951 essay "The Argentinian Writer and Tradition". What made Borges feel that his home should be the world was a very specific understanding of the relationship between literature and justice that fed into what Mariano Siskind calls "a cosmopolitan right". This right, Siskind uncovers, "must be read in relation to the liberal philosophico-political tradition that extends itself from John Stuart Mill's 'On Liberty' (1859) to Isaiah Berlin's 'Two Concepts of Liberty" (1958)" ("'Tenemos derecho a esa tradición:' El escritor cosmopolita y el derecho liberal"). Cortázar, on the other hand, discovers what it means to be Argentinian during his exile in France. "Writing and conceptualizing his Latin Americanism from France, where he was living, Cortázar's work offers us interesting ways to understand a changing world", writes Olga Lobo. His works redefine the individual in a way that transcends both personal and national identity to open onto "other worlds, other possibilities for *being in the world*," as Lobo concludes in her essay "¿Ser Argentino es estar lejos? *Lados y mañanas* de Julio Cortázar."

Even though it's become a commonplace to oppose Borges's apparent non-political stance to Cortázar's political engagement, their literary practice shows differently. As sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has shown in *The Rules of Art*, even the most autonomous position-taking is political, albeit obliquely. Borges's own (literary and cultural) politics can best be understood by comparing it to the so-called "non-political" or "apolitical" literature produced by writers from the Soviet countries, where to be apolitical meant to *oppose* the official regime, and therefore it *was* political. Similarly, while comparing Borges and Danilo Kiš's anti-nationalist positions, Eugenio López Arriazu writes that "Kiš's rejection of Sartre's art engagé and Borges's defense of an apolitical conservatism are closely related to their poetics." While Borges knows that the individual cannot understand the complex labyrinthine machinery of the world and hence sees it all as a dream, Kiš, a Jew whose father converted him to Christianity just before the start of WWII, lives with the vision of "a nightmarish future that prevents him from waking up from Auschwitz and Kolyma." ("Literaturnost y antinacionalismo en las poéticas de J.L. Borges y D. Kiš"). For someone who felt himself all his life to be a Jew, as Borges openly admitted on a number of occasions, politics was never too far nor a matter of indifference:

> I have done my best to be a Jew. […] if we belong to Western civilization then all of us, despite the many adventures of the blood, all of us are Greeks and Jews. And if we are Christians, then of course we also belong to the Bible and to the Jews. (Borges 2013)

López Arriazu is right: Borges's dreamlike world isn't far from the nightmare that killed Kiš's family in Auschwitz.

Kiš's writing is very much the work of a writer in exile, both as a form of Jewish exile and also as a form of his own chosen exile in France in the last years of his life. Cortázar, too, is born as a writer in exile, as Adriana A. Bocchino observes. Going beyond the inescapable nightmare that history and the world can be for Kiš and Borges, Bocchino argues that "Cortázar's work emerges at a paradigm shift: from an avant-garde time when he still trusts in the possibility of action through words to a time when he turns skeptically to postmodernity" ("Hacerse autor desde el exilio: Julio Cortázar entre *Rayuela* y *Libro de Manuel*").

In an essay "América Latina: exilio y literatura", which in translation to English echoes Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* with its "Fellowship of the Ring," Cortázar speaks of a "Fellowship of Exile": "I believe that we writers in exile have the means to transcend the uprooting and separation imposed upon us by the dictatorships, to return in our own unique way the blows we suffer collectively each time another writer is exiled."[5] (Cortázar 1994b: 172) One powerful way to return these blows remains literature, a force that can correct, change, and sometimes replace altogether the world as we know it.

2. Stories of circulation

Circulation through translation is one of the factors that turn a literary work into *world* literature. The current dominant notion of circulation in world literature studies is confined to a Marxist understanding of the object that is created by, rather than preexists, a global economic market. But literary practice shows us otherwise. Writers have always read extensively beyond texts written in their native language, relying heavily on translations. The history of translation is as old as the practice of what today we call *literature*, even though its routes of circulation are less obvious, less visible, and less controlled before the existence of an international literary market.

Borges is a case in point. He was such a voracious reader that his readings could fill by themselves the infinite space of the heaven-library he dreamed of. Borges's essays and literary texts often openly or obliquely thematize multiple forms of premodern and early modern circulation of books that are world literature even in the absence of a global economic market. They are world literature through the world *vision* they put forth. This world vision isn't dependent on our modern scientific and geographical discoveries, but rather on what is understood philosophically, religiously, scientifically, at some point in history to be the *world*.

Circulation is made visible through literary history. In turn, literary history relies on the notion of irreversible, progressive, secularized modern time, and the notion of unidirectional influence, from the past toward the present. But Borges's notion of time differs significantly. As he put it in a talk he gave at Columbia University in 1980, "Time is the essential riddle." For

[5] "creo que las condiciones están dadas entre nosotros, los escritores exiliados, para superar el desgarramiento, el desgarramiento que nos imponen las dictaduras, y devolver a nuestra manera específica el golpe que nos inflige cada nuevo exilio" (Cortázar 1994a: 165)

Borges, time seems to be one and the same as the world: "I think of the world as a riddle. And the one beautiful thing about it is that it can't be solved" (April 1980, MIT, in *Borges at Eighty*, 2013). Consequently, "My memory is chiefly of books. In fact, I hardly remember my own life. I can give you no dates. I know that I have traveled in some seventeen or eighteen countries, but I can't tell you the order of my travels. I can't tell you how long I was in one place or another. The whole thing is a jumble of division, of images. So that it seems that we are falling back on books" (Borges 2013).

Unsurprisingly, Borges's notion of time as space comes from a non-secularized premodern worldview. In the essay "Stories about Stories: A Borgesian Take on Premodern Circulation" Dominique Jullien posits that "the East-West circulation of premodern tales offer a good point of entry into the current anxieties about the 'presentism' of contemporary world literature theories. In this context, Borges's writings prove to be especially rewarding, offering us not only a powerful re-reading of premodern literature, but also pathways for conceptualizing premodern circulation." Jullien shows that a variety of Borges's stories "offer both a metatextually productive illustration of current, often aporetical debates about global literary circulation, and creative strategies for a renewal of literary practice by returning to minor and/or archaic forms."

But there is always more than meets the eye when it comes to Borges's premodern notion of time. "I was brought up, let's say, hearing the English Bible over and over again. And then, I have done my best to be a Jew. I may have failed," concludes Borges ironically in a lecture from 1980 in the USA. Michael Makarovsky proves that Borges's doubt is unfounded. In his essay "Precursors and Their Borges: Premodern Sculpting in Modern Time," Makarovsky shows that Borges "strives to provide an alternative to the linear, irreversible, and secularized time of the modern world;" by going back to a premodern "ethical dimension of time. Jewish ideas played an important, though not the only, role in shaping Borges's vision of condensed time, as did, more generally, his lifelong sympathetic observation of the unique historical destiny of the Jewish people." As Makarovsky concludes, "the formalist tendency in recent scholarship to 'translate' Borges's Jewish theme into a dehistoricized and essentialized language of literary tropes, a sophisticated mind game that bears no relation to actual (Jewish) history, often comes at the cost of turning a blind eye to the ethical dimension of Borges's intellectual project".

Maria Dabija's essay "The Garden of Intersecting Paths: Jorge Luis Borges and his Visionary Intertexts" shows that, apart from its clear debt to Jewish culture, Borges's Aleph draws also on "a medieval source that has been overlooked in scholarship on Borges: the allegorical poem *Le Roman de la Rose*." Despite Borges's constant criticism of allegory as form, "he owes it much more than he would like to admit. In both Borges's poetry and fiction, his lifelong obsession with rose symbolism is tied to de Lorris and de Meun's poem." Turning also to "two other sources that had a great influence on Borges's thinking: T.S. Eliot's cycle of poems *Four Quartets* and H.G. Wells's short story 'The Door in the Wall'," Dabija concludes that "[t]he (re)discovery of this literary tradition should provide new insight into Borges's attitude towards allegorical method, questions of me-mory, and the nature of the visionary experience itself."

"I owe many things to the Jews," reflects Borges in 1980. "I have also dabbled in the Kabbalah, I wrote a poem on the Golem, and I have written many poems on Israel." (Borges 2013) We could add here Borges' lifelong engagement with Jewish culture via one of his favorite writers:

Franz Kafka. In his essay "Kafka and Borges in 'The Secret Miracle,'" Efraín Kristal shows that the protagonist of Borges's "The Secret Miracle," set in Prague during the first days of Czechoslovakia's occupation by the Nazis, "is a fictional amalgam of Kafka's biography and Borges' own." Bringing forth the explosive historical context in Europe and Argentina that inspired the story, Kristal reveals that "the punishment of the guiltless" is a major theme that Borges shares with Kafka.

"Many a time I think of myself as a Jew," Borges says, "but I wonder whether I have the right to think so. It may be wishful thinking" (Borges 2013). The subtle irony that accompanies the very notion of not having the right to think himself so *is* itself Jewish. Raised an Egyptian, Moses comes to learn he is a Jew. God calls him to lead his people out of slavery:

> "Now go to the king! I am sending you to lead my people out of his country."
> But Moses said, "Who am I to go to the king and lead your people out of Egypt?"
> God replied, "I will be with you. And you will know that I am the one who sent you, when you worship me on this mountain after you have led my people out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:10-12)

But before learning of his true Jewish nature, Moses identifies with his enslaved brothers when he rebels against the killing of the guiltless Jew by an Egyptian guard. As he saw the enslaved Jew unjustly killed, Moses might have thought to himself: "Many a time I think of myself as a Jew, but I wonder whether I have the right to think so. It may be wishful thinking."

3. Translation, the afterlife of texts

In his 1923 essay "The Translator's Task," Walter Benjamin writes that "a translation proceeds from the original. Indeed, not so much from its life as from its 'afterlife' or 'survival'" (2012: 76). Since then, Benjamin's notion of translation as the afterlife of a text has become a major principle on which two recent disciplines are built: world literature and translation studies. As early as 2003 when David Damrosch published the manifesto of the discipline, *What Is World Literature?*, translation is the second of three pillars on which his definition rests: "world literature is writing that gains in translation" (2003: 281). Similarly, in the field of translation studies, Lawrence Venuti proposes a hermeneutic model of translation which "understands translation as an interpretive act" (Venuti 2021: 166). Like any good interpretation, translation enriches the original and at the same time radically transforms it by rewriting and reinscribing it within a different linguistic, literary, cultural, political, and historical context. As such, Benjamin's concept of translation as the afterlife of a text turned out to have itself an impressive afterlife.

One such example is the Japanese poet Takahashi Mutsuo's adaptations of Borges's haikus and tankas into *The Song Scroll of the Mansion of Fictions* (*Denkiteiginsō* 傳奇亭吟草). Manuel Azuaje-Alamo's essay "*That admirable lack of Orientalism:* Jorge Luis Borges's translations into Japanese as self-orientalizing acts in *The Song Scroll of the Mansion of Fictions*" examines "Jorge Luis Borges's approach to translation and its implications within the context of Orientalism and literary authenticity". Azuaje-Alamo considers "Borges's adaptations of Japanese poetic forms, like haikus and tankas, as inherently translational, composed in Spanish but reflecting an imagined

Japanese source." Takahashi's translation of Borges's Japanese forms shows an "interplay between adaptation and cultural recontextualization that Borges himself made into one of the themes of his literature." Through Takahashi's adaptations, "Borges's haikus […] achieve a new dimension of fidelity—not to the original text but to the aesthetic and cultural ethos of Japanese poetry."

But the afterlife of a text isn't devoid of trials, and many of its aspects remain invisible, as was until recently the translator's own position. While Lawrence Venuti told this story in his seminal *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (1995, 2008), many others remain untold. The sociology of translation inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's sociology of the literary field was born to tell these stories and make visible the invisible network of agents that make possible – or impossible – the translation of a text. The work of Pascale Casanova and Gisèle Sapiro brought Bourdieu's method to the field of world literature to reveal the complex network comprised of literary agents, marketing specialists, editors, publishers, institutions – each with their own politics and specific interests as well as biases – that feed into the extraliterary process behind a translation, affecting its course and sometimes its very own life.

Esther Allen's position paper, "*Borges* and Borges" tells a fascinating, behind-the-scenes translator's story about Allen's own experience as she tried to embark on a translation of Adolfo Bioy Casares' *Borges* (Ediciones Destino, 2006). This attempt has been constantly undermined by the then-current holder of the rights for Borges's estate, Borges's widow, María Kodama. Based on Bioy Casares' diary entries, whose contents belong both to him and to Borges, the book "problematizes and undermines legal concepts of originality, authorship, ownership, and selfhood." Esther Allen calls attention to questions of "intellectual property" that "are rarely the focus of literary scholarship, but […] they are fundamental to any real understanding of how literature circulates globally, particularly during the decades since Borges's passing. The ever-expanding legal framework that makes literature a heritable asset to be monopolized for nearly a century after a writer's death […] has also placed a distance between Borges's work, Bioy's work, and *Borges* that is a disservice to scholarship and literary history."

Today, the afterlife of a text in translation isn't a given but a right that one must conquer, sometimes with the same considerable efforts Kafka spoke of when it came to conquering his own past.

4. The Argentine writers and their readers today

"A writer is waiting for his own work. I think a writer is being changed all the time by his output" (Borges 2013). Here Borges reiterates T.S. Eliot's argument from his 1919 essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent": it's not only the past that influences the present, but also the present that influences the past. Our object of study – literature – is constantly in the making, ever enriched by rereadings. The more strongly they speak to our present literary, intellectual, or political concerns, the more alive they are. Virginia Woolf was right. Borges and Cortázar are "continuing presences," even though they are no longer with us.

Read from the present's concerns about the pitfalls of globalization, Zhang Longxi believes that "Borges [is] our contemporary". Challenging Michel Foucault's reading of Borges's invented "Chinese encyclopedia" as a symbol of the absolute Other, Zhang shows that Borges's imaginary China is a metaphor for Borges' stance that privileges similarities rather than stark oppositions. The latter accentuate divides that are potentially explosive ethically and politically. Zhang concludes that "Given the tension, conflict and regional wars we see in our world today, Borges's advice to focus on our affinities and points of contact with all other human beings is particularly important."

Already in 1969, Cortázar senses, in his turn, some of the advantages of the future globalization, including increased mobility. As Cortázar sees it, this mobility is a powerful way to reduce the inequalities of literary resources between central and (semi)peripheral cultures. In a text called "Literatura en la revolución y revolución en la literatura," written in Paris in December 1969, Cortázar observes that "[t]here is nothing foreign in [today's] literary techniques"[6] (1971: 40). As Cortázar saw it, circulation of writers in the world as well as the almost simultaneous translations of original books make any discussion about complexes of inferiority and superiority a thing of the past. Although perhaps too quick to declare victory, Cortázar rightly sensed that the power structures in world literary space were significantly changing.

Living in Paris for half of his life, Cortázar learned a lot from the surrealists' finding the revolutionary potential in different peripheral forms, particularly the objective chance of surrealist collective games like *cadavre exquis* that could be played either by writing or drawing on a piece of paper without seeing what the previous player had contributed. The results were surrealist texts or drawings that puzzled the reader or viewer. In his turn, Cortázar developed what Susana Gómez calls a specific "poetics of perplexity" that "comes from using what's been cast aside." Cortázar confessed that he discovered this effect of perplexity through the surrealist visual practices, and especially photography: "[a photographer] knows how to choose by chance and there's where surrealism comes into play. It has always seemed marvelous to me that someone can photograph two or three incongruous elements, for example, the standing figure of a man who, by some effect of light and shade projected onto the ground, appears to be a great black cat. On a profound level, I am producing literature, I am photographing a metaphor: a man whose shadow is a cat" (Garfield 1983). Through a series of close readings from *Last Round* and *Around the Day in Eighty Worlds*, Gómez analyzes their effect of perplexity that defines Cortázar's creative process.

As Cortázar remembers late in life, as a kid, he always wanted to travel, so he dreamed of being a sailor: "Jules Verne is to blame. Since childhood, travel has been an objective in life. When I was ten years old I told my mother that I wanted to be a sailor." (Garfield 1983) Even though he didn't become a sailor himself, his writings sailed throughout the world, each time becoming something different. A trip worthy of Jules Verne. In "Imágenes de Julio Cortázar: Un abordaje de la recepción crítica de su obra," Lisandro Relva tells the fascinating story of the travels of Cortázar's works. The reception of Cortázar's work, as Relva demonstrates, oscillates between the mythologized image of the writer as a politically committed author and intellectual, and new,

[6] "ya no hay nada foráneo en las técnicas literarias"

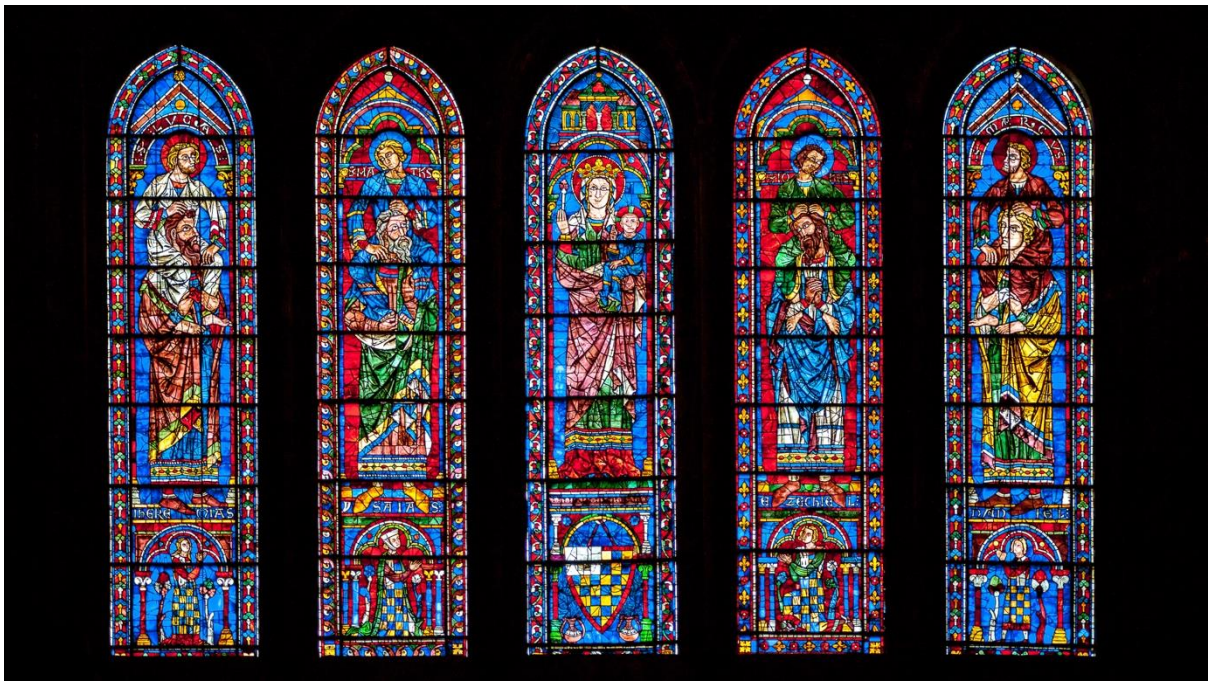
fresh interpretations of the less-explored aspects of his work. According to Relva, the contemporary readings allow to overcome the bipolar portrayal of Cortázar's persona—such as viewing an early, depoliticized Cortázar versus a revolutionary, politically driven one—and opens space for new perspectives.

More than our contemporaries, Borges and Cortázar turn out to be visionaries. In today's world, when AI poses a great "challenge to the traditional conception of art as an authentic and unique human activity," "artificial intelligence and its creative achievements in the field of literature question the very foundations of human art," writes Ksenija Vraneš. In her essay "Artificial Intelligence and the Challenge to Human Literature: Revisiting Borges and Cortázar," Vraneš shows how their works prompt us to rethink notions like *author* and *biography* in revolutionary ways that anticipate the recent developments of AI and ultimately question our notion of *creativity*.

That vast emporium, the past

Where do Borges and Cortázar get their insights? How can works written at least half a century ago speak to our contemporary concerns, as well as anticipate a future that's still blurred to many of us?

In the 13th century Gothic Cathedral of Chartres, under the rose window of the south transept that shows Christ in Majesty from the Book of Revelation 4:1-11, there are five lancets, four of which illustrate the four evangelists Luke, Matthew, John, and Mark as young men sitting on the shoulders of the prophetic giants of the Old Testament, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, respectively. The visual story told in these lancets is a secret message from Bernard of Chartres, chancellor of the School of Chartres, that was recorded by John of Salisbury, a 12th century bishop of Chartres, in *The Metalogicon*: "Bernard of Chartres used to compare us to [puny] dwarfs perched on the shoulders of giants. He pointed out that we see more and farther than our predecessors, not because we have keener vision or greater height, but because we are lifted up and borne aloft on their gigantic stature." (*The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury* 1971: 167)



The Gothic Cathedral of Chartres, the rose window of the south transept, 13th century.

Borges and Cortázar knew this, which is why they were so well read in the deep history of literature. As their readers, we know all too well that "every time we reread a book that book is slightly different and we are slightly different also. So I think we can fall back safely on that vast emporium, the past. I hope I shall keep on finding my way into it" (Borges 2013).

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We are delighted that the first special issue of *Beoiberística* marks the significant anniversaries of Jorge Luis Borges and Julio Cortázar's births, offering a well-deserved and long-overdue tribute to these iconic and world-renowned Argentine writers. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to this issue, especially the past and present editors who paved the way for us, and to the editorial board for embracing our vision and providing unwavering support throughout its realization. Our heartfelt thanks go to the authors from Latin America, the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific who honored us with exceptional contributions. As the essays included here show, Borges and Cortázar continue to live on, creating a microcosm that invites ongoing reading and reflection on their works. We are profoundly grateful to our reviewers for their meticulous reading and the generous time and effort they invested to make this special issue truly outstanding. Special thanks are also due to our colleague Jenny Teresa Perdomo González for her careful proofreading. We hope the readers will enjoy the essays that follow just as much as we've enjoyed preparing them.

Delia Ungureanu & Ksenija Vraneš
Editors of the Special Issue

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