

Literary Philosophers

Borges, Calvino, Eco

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Borges's "Pierre Menard": Philosophy or Literature?¹

In a letter to his wife, to whom he dedicated the Eighth Symphony, Mahler wrote:

It is a peculiarity of the interpretation of works of art that *the rational element in them (that which is soluble by reason) is almost never their true reality*, but only a veil which hides their form. Insofar as a soul needs a body—which there is no disputing—an artist is bound to derive the means of creation from the natural world. But the chief thing is still the artistic conception. . . . [In *Faust*] everything points with growing mastery toward his final supreme moment—which, *though beyond expression, touches the very heart of feeling.*²

Mahler's point concerns what is peculiar to works of art: They defy rationality and expression. By this, I take him to mean that works of art are not reducible to ideas and, therefore, cannot be effectively translated.

If works of art are idiosyncratic in this way, then it would be expected that this is also what distinguishes them from works of philosophy. Whereas art is irreducible to ideas and defies translation, philosophy is reducible to ideas and can be translated.

This is the standard modernist view of philosophy and art—and, by extension, of literature—which has been one of the points of attack by postmodernists. The argument is not just that art and literature are irreducible to ideas and therefore untranslatable, but that there is no distinction in this respect between art and literature on the one hand and philosophy on the other. Philosophy is also art.³

Postmodernism has found a receptive audience in Latin America, particularly in literary circles and especially on this point. Indeed, the view that there is no distinction between literature, in particular, and philosophy is often treated as dogma. I quote from a recent source: "[I]n fact, there is no substantial difference between philosophical discourse and literary discourse" in spite of "the boundaries that have been traditionally claimed to separate both discourses."⁴

sary conditions, in context, of knowing philosophical works. This is one of the important elements of distinction between my position and the standard modernist view and has significant implications that I shall point out later.

Texts and Works

Let me begin by introducing a distinction between works and texts. This is, of course, a much disputed topic. Because I have no space to engage in a discussion of the relative merits of various current views in this matter, I shall proceed instead by presenting my own position.¹⁰ This will not be sufficient to establish it fully, but I hope it will at least clarify how I use it to articulate my view concerning the nature of literary and philosophical works and texts. A text is a group of entities used as signs, selected, arranged, and intended by an author to convey a specific meaning to an audience in a certain context.¹¹ The entities in question can be of any sort. They can be ink marks on a piece of paper, sculpted pieces of ice, carvings on stone, designs on sand, sounds uttered by humans or produced by mechanical devices, actions, mental images, and so on. These entities, considered by themselves, are not a text. They become a text only when they are used by an author to convey some specific meaning to an audience in a certain context. Ontologically, this means that a text amounts to these entities considered in relation to a specific meaning. The marks on the paper on which I am writing, for example, are not a text unless someone mentally connects them to a specific meaning. The situation is very much like that of a stone used as a paperweight. The stone becomes the paperweight only when someone thinks of it as a paperweight or uses it as a paperweight.

A work, on the contrary, is the meaning of certain texts. Not all texts have meanings that qualify as works. "The cat is on the mat" is a text as judged by the definition given, but no one thinks of its meaning as a work. By contrast, *Don Quixote* is both a text and a work. On the difficult question of which texts have corresponding works, and which do not, there is much disagreement in the literature. The matter does not seem to depend on length, style, authorship, or the degree of effort involved in the production of the text. Fortunately, there is no need to resolve the question at this juncture.¹² The pertinent point for us is that texts and works are not the same thing: A text is a group of entities considered in relation to a specific meaning, whereas works are the meanings of certain texts. I leave the notion of meaning open, for what I am going to say later does not depend on any particular conception of meaning.

In the case we are discussing here, namely, "Pierre Menard," the text is the marks on the page I am looking at, the sounds I hear when someone reads "Pierre Menard" to me, certain images I imagine when I think about the marks on the page or the sounds uttered by someone reading, and so on, as

An author who, more than any other, is cited as proof of the absence of boundaries between philosophy and literature is Jorge Luis Borges.⁵ And with reason, for Borges is widely known outside the Hispanic world and it would be very difficult to claim that his thought is not philosophical. The short story, "Pierre Menard, the Author of the *Quixote*," in particular seems to address a set of very interesting and even profound philosophical questions. Indeed, many authors from different philosophical traditions have used it as a point of departure for discussions that are generally regarded as philosophical. We need mention only Michel Foucault and, more recently and from a different philosophical tradition, Gregory Currie, to give credibility to this claim.⁶ I wish, then, to address the question of the distinction between philosophy and literature in the context of Borges and particularly "Pierre Menard." Is "Pierre Menard" philosophy or literature? And, more generally, what distinguishes philosophy and literature if, indeed, there is a distinction between the two?⁷

To ask these two questions in the way I have done, however, is confusing, for the terms "philosophy" and "literature" are used in ordinary language to mean a variety of things. It is common to speak of philosophy, for example, as a discipline of learning, as an activity, as the thought of an author, and so on.⁸ And we find a similar variety of meanings for the term "literature." Moreover, because our ultimate aim is to establish whether Borges' "Pierre Menard" is philosophy or literature, and "Pierre Menard" is both a work and a text, to facilitate our task I propose to reformulate the general question we are trying to answer as follows: What distinguishes literary works from philosophical works and literary texts from philosophical texts? The more specific question about Borges turns out something like this: Is Borges' "Pierre Menard" a work of philosophy or of literature, and is it a philosophical or a literary text?

My thesis about Borges' "Pierre Menard" in particular is that it is a literary work and text rather than a philosophical one. My thesis about philosophy and literature in general is that literary works are distinguished from philosophical ones in that their conditions of identity include the texts through which they are expressed. Moreover, literary texts are distinguished from philosophical ones in that their conditions of identity concerning conditions of works and texts, is not logically the same as the question concerning means that in principle, knowing a work or text may entail certain conditions that are not part of the identity conditions of the work or text, and vice versa. And the same could be said concerning the conditions of their production. But I shall argue that some of the conditions of identity of literary works that are not conditions of identity of philosophical ones are nonetheless neces-

long as the marks, sounds, or images in question are considered as signs intended to convey a specific meaning. In contrast, the work "Pierre Menard" is the meaning those marks, sounds, or images are intended to convey.

This way of looking at texts and works, by the way, allows us to understand one of the main points Borges makes in "Pierre Menard." We can say that the entities that constitute the texts of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and Pierre Menard's *Don Quixote* are the same, but the work of Cervantes and the work of Pierre Menard are different.¹³ Indeed, as Borges so well puts it: "The Cervantes text and the Menard text are verbally identical, but the second is almost infinitely richer."¹⁴ This point will be relevant later, as we shall see.

Three Popular Views on Philosophy and Literature

Philosophers have not shied away from giving answers to the more general question concerning the distinction between philosophy and literature we have posed. Indeed, the number and variety of opinions in this matter are staggering and the positions frequently conflicting. In part this reflects a general confusion about the nature of literature, if not also about the nature of philosophy. It is not surprising to find claims to the effect that what distinguishes literature from other disciplines is that it is concerned with life whereas others claim that it is not about life but about itself.¹⁵ Again, some authors claim that literature is about reality, contradicting others who say that literature is always fictional.¹⁶ Others make a distinction in terms of the noncognitive nature of literature.¹⁷ And more recently some have argued that literature, *qua* text, refers only to other texts or to itself (self-referential view), whereas others object that literature is not about texts at all but about nontextual reality.¹⁸ These and other views of literature are used to contrast it with philosophy. For example, the literary concern with life is contrasted with the philosophical concern with ideas; and the fictional character of literature is set against the nonfictional character of philosophy;¹⁹ philosophy, some say, is concerned with truth whereas literature is not,²⁰ whereas others argue just the opposite.²¹ Today, however, I ignore most of the many views that have been offered in this matter, limiting the discussion to three answers that are widely held but that appear to be inadequate. I discuss these because their inadequacy and popularity may have helped to undermine the belief in the distinction between philosophy and literature. The first I call the *institutional view*; the second, the *interpretational view*; and the third, the *particularist view*. After I present these views, I turn to the position I favor.

The *institutional view* may be presented as follows: There is no feature or set of features common to literary works and texts that distinguishes them from philosophical works and texts. Indeed, the same work or text has at different times been considered literary or philosophical, so it would be futile

to attempt to find this distinction in anything that characterizes the work or text itself. Literary and philosophical works and texts are cultural creations, and it is the culture that creates them that determines how they are regarded. Moreover, because this kind of task is usually left to an institutionalized segment of society, it is clear that it is the institution in question that determines, through its members, whether particular works and texts are literary or philosophical.²² Hence, whether "Pierre Menard" is a literary or philosophical work or text depends on the institution or institutions in society that determine such questions and, to know the answer to the question, we need go no further than to pose the question to well-established members of the pertinent institution who are known for their agreement with institutional views. In fact, because the question has to do with philosophy, we might just as well ask any bona fide philosopher or literary critic whether Borges's "Pierre Menard" is a literary or philosophical work or text.

I suspect, however, that if we were to follow the procedure just suggested, we would get as many different answers to the question as persons asked. Some would answer yes, some no, some both, and some neither, but in all cases there would be so many qualifications that it would be difficult to find full agreement between any two answers. But perhaps this is unfair to the institutional view. Perhaps it is not bona fide philosophers, or literary critics, who should be asked. And yet, if not them, then who should be asked? Moreover, who determines who should be asked? Indeed, I suspect that if we were to pose these questions to the readers of this essay we would again receive as many different answers to them as we would receive concerning the earlier question.

I imagine that by now the thrust of my objection is clear: The institutional view leads to a vicious circle or an infinite regress. It does so because it does not identify the feature or set of features that makes something literary or philosophical. To say that it is philosophers and literary critics who determine what is literary or philosophical is either to postpone the question, which can again be asked and postponed *ad infinitum*, or to force us to return to literary and philosophical works and texts. But neither of these paths leads to closure. The institutional view is very popular today, and is favored by many of the most fashionable and well-established philosophers and literary critics in connection with various issues that have to do with aesthetics, but it certainly does not help us answer the particular question we are seeking to answer here.

The second view I wish to consider briefly here is the *interpretational view*. According to it, literary works and texts are distinguished from philosophical ones because the meaning of the first is never completely clear—there are always ambiguities in them—whereas philosophical works and texts, like scientific ones, do not have this feature. *Don Quixote*, for example, is literary and not philosophical because there can never be a definitive interpretation

writer these days, and some would even say that his works are not very good, but preference or even quality should not be confused with nature. It would be hard to deny Pope a place in English letters and to consider his works not literary.

On the other hand, even the most universalist and abstract philosophers frequently engage in story telling to illustrate their claims or even to raise questions that otherwise would be very difficult to raise. Indeed, in certain areas of philosophy such as the philosophy of law, cases are never too far from the discussion and often direct it.²⁵ In short, it makes no sense to say that the distinction between philosophy and literature amounts to a distinction in terms of the abstract and universal on one hand and the concrete and particular on the other.

Clearly there are serious problems with the three theories of the distinction between literary and philosophical works and texts we have examined. Does this mean, then, that the postmodernist position is correct? Is there no distinction between philosophy and literature because in fact philosophy is literature?

Literary and Philosophical Texts and Works

The answers to both questions are negative; the postmodernist position is not correct and there is a distinction between works and texts of literature on the one hand and works and texts of philosophy on the other. A literary work is distinguished from a philosophical one in that its conditions of identity include the text of which it is the meaning. This is to say that the signs of which the text is composed, the entities of which these signs are constituted, and the arrangements of the signs and the entities that constitute the signs are essential to the literary work in question. This is the reason why no work of literature can ever be, strictly speaking, translated. It is in the nature of a literary work that the text that expresses it be essential to it. This is not the case with philosophical works. It should not really matter whether I read Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in German or English (in fact, many believe it is better to read it in English). What should matter is that I get the ideas. The work is not essentially related to German, whereas Shakespeare's *Hamlet* could have been written only in English and Cervantes' *Don Quixote* could have been written only in Spanish.

Note, however, that the impossibility of translation may have various origins and, therefore, it is possible that a philosophical, and indeed even a scientific, work may not be translatable, but if it is not—and this is my contention—it would not be because the conditions of identity include its particular. There are many examples that could be cited to substantiate these claims. Much Enlightenment literature, for example, ignores the concrete and particular. Think of Alexander Pope. True, he is not a very popular

of it; there can never be interpretative closure with respect to it. Philosophical texts and works, by contrast, have definite and unambiguous meanings that can be identified.

This is a well-entrenched view of the distinction between literary works and texts and philosophical ones. I heard it expressed for the first time in high school many more years ago than I would like to acknowledge, and have heard it voiced repeatedly ever since. Naturally, this view has also found its way into professional discussions of this issue.²³ Moreover, it has some backing from experience, for it looks as if, indeed, most literary works and texts have the kind of openness to interpretation that this position confers on them.

The problem this position encounters is not so much with what it holds concerning literary works and texts, but with what it holds concerning philosophical ones, for it cannot easily be claimed with a straight face that philosophical works and texts have definitive interpretations and lack ambiguity and openness. It is perhaps *prima facie* possible to argue that some scientific works and texts are this way, but can we really say the same concerning philosophical ones? Do not interpreters of Aristotelian works and texts, for example, argue endlessly about what Aristotle meant by them? Consider the meetings of the American Philosophical Association. How many different interpretations of Aristotle's works and texts are presented every year in them? And what about Plato? In short, ambiguity and openness of meaning do not seem to be demarcating criteria between philosophical and literary works and texts.

The third view is the *particularist*. It finds the distinction between philosophical texts and works on the one hand and literary texts and works on the other in that the content of the first is abstract and universal whereas the content of the second is concrete and particular. Philosophy deals with common experience whereas literature deals with individual experience. This is why literature always tells a story or presents a picture from an individual point of view. Philosophy, on the contrary, never tells a story and always seeks a perspective common to everyone.

Again, this is an often repeated position, and one that appears to have some basis in experience.²⁴ Novels and short stories, for example, always deal with individual lives and events. And even poetry, so the argument goes, when not concerned with individual lives or events, is nonetheless concerned with personal experiences.

Now, it is quite true that much literature is like this, but it is false that all literature is so. Moreover, it is also true that much philosophy is abstract and universal, but again it is false that all philosophy excludes the concrete and particular. There are many examples that could be cited to substantiate these claims. Much Enlightenment literature, for example, ignores the concrete and particular. Think of Alexander Pope. True, he is not a very popular

So much, then, for the distinction between literary and philosophical works. Now we can turn to the distinction between a literary text and a philosophical one. But this proves not to be difficult: A literary text is a text that is essential to the work it expresses, whereas a philosophical text is not essential to the work it expresses.

But perhaps I have gone too fast. After all, I have just stated my view and have not given any arguments for it. I could be wrong in holding that literary texts and works are distinguishable from philosophical ones. And even if not wrong about this, I could be wrong about the basis of the distinction. After all, there are plenty of philosophers who do hold, or have held, both views.

To provide the kind of substantiation that this objection implies would take more space than I have at my disposal here, but I do need to say something in response to it. As a compromise, I will offer some evidence to support my position, even if limited and sketchy.

First, let me point out that those who oppose the distinction between philosophical and literary works and texts do so from at least two different perspectives. According to some, philosophical and literary works and texts are not distinguishable from each other because all philosophical works and texts are also literary works and texts. The distinction between them is artificial and based on a misunderstanding of the nature of works and texts. This is the kind of position that is quite popular these days in certain philosophical circles. All works and texts, and particularly philosophical ones, are to be viewed as literary or aesthetic ones; they are aesthetic or literary artifacts.²⁷

Others, however, although also rejecting the distinction between philosophical and literary works and texts, do so because they hold that all works and texts are philosophical to the extent that they express ideas and philosophy is about ideas. Thus there is really no essential distinction between philosophical and literary works and texts, but not because philosophical texts are literary, but rather because literary texts are philosophical. This kind of position is not very popular these days, but echoes of it can be found in the history of philosophy beginning with Plato and his followers.²⁸

Now, what evidence can be supplied against these positions? I offer three pieces of evidence. The first is that in practice we do make distinctions between at least some philosophical and literary works and texts and we treat them differently. That is, what we do with philosophical works and texts differs from what we do with works and texts we regard as literary. This is a kind of pragmatic argument. The *Critique of Pure Reason* is studied in different academic departments, by different specialists, and in different ways than *Hamlet*. We do act as if these works and texts were quite different in function and aim, and we use them for different purposes. Moreover, when we study them, we apply different methodologies to them. In the case of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, historians of philosophy and philosophers are concerned with the understanding of the ideas it proposes, with the argu-

ments it provides, and with the truth value of the ideas and the validity and soundness of the arguments it contains. We do pay attention to the language and the way Kant expresses himself, but the study of this language and the way Kant uses it is secondary to the main purpose of the study, which is determining the cognitive meaning and value of what Kant said. On the contrary, what we do with *Hamlet* is quite different. Here there may still be some concern about ideas, but there is no concern about arguments. No literary critic I know has ever tried to apply logic to discourses contained in the play. Moreover, the overriding preoccupation seems to be with the overall significance of the work and text. And by significance I mean the impact of the text on ourselves, others, society, and culture.²⁹

Still, it is obvious that although we do use at least philosophical and literary texts and works in different ways, we could be wrong about this. Someone could argue that we do so simply because we are following certain modernist traditions and customs well entrenched in our society, and that there is nothing in the works or texts themselves that justifies the different ways in which we treat them.

To this I respond with a second piece of evidence, namely, the case of poetry. Here is a kind of work or text that seems clearly to fit the distinction I have drawn between philosophical and literary texts and works. There are aspects of a poem that make it quite different from prose, and although some philosophy has been presented in poetic form, most philosophy has not. The fact is that poetry involves certain structures, punctuation, and rhythm that stand out in contrast with the form of expression generally used in philosophical texts and works. Moreover, it seems that in poetry, such factors are as essential for the identity of the work or text as the ideas expressed by the text.

But even if this piece of evidence were to convince us that at least poetic works and texts can be distinguished from philosophical ones, in that poetic texts are essential to works, whereas this is not so with philosophical ones, the problem we still face is that not all literary works and texts are poetic. So what do we make of prose works and texts that are literary? How are we to distinguish them from philosophical ones, and vice versa?

My contention is that there is still a sense in which the identity of prose literary works depends on the texts they express, a fact that does not apply to philosophical works and that also affects the identity conditions of literary texts and works. The reason is not controversial. Indeed, it is generally accepted that the majority of terms that constitute the vocabularies of different languages are not equivalent in meaning or function. Still, many people would hold that in a large number of cases formulas can be found in one language that would get across the meaning of the terms used in the other language. My point is that this is possible in principle in the case of philosophical works, but that it can never be in the case of literary works. But

we may ask, why is this so? What are the differences between literary and philosophical texts and works that make literary meaning to be dependant on the text, whereas this is not so for philosophical meaning?

There are many differences at stake here, but I shall refer only to five to make my point. Consider first the nature of the vocabulary used in literary and philosophical texts, how that vocabulary is used, and how the meaning of that vocabulary is treated. Philosophical vocabulary is overwhelmingly technical. This does not mean only that the terms used in philosophy are not generally used in ordinary discourse, whether spoken or written. It means that even when terms that are commonly used are employed by philosophers, most of these terms acquire meanings different from those involved in common usage.³⁰ Moreover, even when the meanings are not changed completely, philosophers circumscribe and limit the meanings of the terms they use. A word such as "substance," for example, which is commonly used in ordinary English, is a technical term in philosophy. Indeed, it is a technical term for most philosophers who use it, because they determine a particular sense in which they use it. The terms used in ordinary language, on the other hand, have meanings that are frequently open-ended both because there are no strict criteria for their use and because their connotations vary. So much, then, for philosophy.

The situation with literature is very different from that in philosophy. In literary works and texts, terms are used primarily in an ordinary sense and their open-endedness is usually regarded as a good thing. Writers of literature do not generally define their terms or explain what they mean. They thrive on suggestion and connotation, leaving much leeway for the audience.

This brings me to a second difference that explains why the text is necessarily a part of the identity conditions of the work in literature but not so in philosophy. Most terms used in philosophy are rare, not because they do not occur frequently in common speech—if that were the case many pieces of literature would be indistinguishable from philosophy insofar as they too use words not commonly used in everyday speech—but because they are abstract terms, which have meanings not directly related to common human experience. By contrast, literature is precisely founded on common expertise, which is one reason why the appeal of most literature is broad and takes little for granted in audiences and why some philosophers have been led to believe that it is in the nature of literature to be about common experience, as we saw earlier.

The order of the words is also very important in literature, because literature aims to cause a certain effect on audiences that does not consist in the pure intellectual grasp of ideas. Literature is highly rhetorical. Each language has developed certain syntactical structures that produce certain effects in the audience that speaks the language of the text and that are impossible or

Latin text was intended.

The audience plays a very special role in the case of literary works and texts.³¹ The Latin periodic sentence, the epitome of elegance in that language, is generally a failure in English. In Latin, it is not only a sign of elegance, but is intended to produce a certain effect. Reading these clauses and subclauses, not yet having arrived at the verb that puts it all together, is supposed to develop a sense of anticipation in the reader that culminates in the grasp of meaning and in the relief that is achieved when the verb is reached at the end. In English, it is impossible to put the verb at the end of a sentence in most cases, and the use of long periods of subordinated clauses, instead of causing anticipation, tends to produce confusion and frustration in audiences. A translation from Latin, then, that tries to reproduce the Latin period in English is bound to have an entirely different effect on the English audience than the Latin had on the original Latin audience for which the

This brings me to style. Style is largely a matter of word choice, syntax, and punctuation. But style also depends very much on historical circumstances. Consider, for example, that a literary piece may be regarded as having an archaic style at a certain time, but as not having it at another time. A book written in the twentieth century in the style of Cervantes is considered archaic, but a book Cervantes wrote in the seventeenth is not considered to have an archaic style.³² Style is always historically relative. It is also contextual insofar as it is relative to an audience. Now style is of the essence in literature. The style of an author is fundamental to the consideration of the author and his or her work. But this is not so important, and some would say not important at all, when it comes to philosophy. What matters in philosophy is not the style of the author or the piece in question, but the philosophy, that is, the ideas the piece contains or, if you will, the claims it makes.³³ In this sense, although a text of philosophy may have a certain style, generally the work has little to do with it. This is a reason why the elements constitutive of texts are not part of the identity conditions of works of philosophy, whereas they are in a literary work.

Of course, it may be argued that because philosophy is expressed in texts, there is no way of avoiding style. And indeed, there are some philosophers who have insisted that the only way to present philosophy is in a particular format. This was certainly the case with Plato, for whom the proper philosophical form of discourse was the dialogue.³⁴ And many other philosophers' writings can be and are characterized stylistically, for example, Russell and Hume. Indeed, even those philosophers who avoid stylistic peculiarities, like Aquinas, can be said to have a certain style that is clear or obscure, direct or indirect, and so on. Moreover, they use certain genres in their writing, such as the article form, the *quaestio* form, the commentary, and so on, and genre is bound up with style even if it is not the same thing. So it is difficult to argue that philosophy does not care for style, although it can be argued that it does

Still, the point I am making is not that philosophical writing lacks style, or even that the style is always unrelated to meaning. My point is that philosophers do not generally think that what they are doing is essentially related to the style they use. Of course, not all philosophers have thought this way. The mentioned case of Plato is a clear exception. But this attitude is rather the exception than the rule.³⁵

Finally, let me turn to the use of cultural symbols and icons. In literature, these are most important; they are essential for both the work and the text of literature. These symbols and icons are particular to a society and are supposed to speak to us in ways that are not always expressible in discourse. But this is not generally the case with philosophy. The language of philosophy is supposed to be transcultural and universal. Philosophers aim to communicate with the whole world independently of elements peculiar to particular cultures.

"Pierre Menard"

All this sounds too general and theoretical, so an illustration is in order. Let us take a look at "Pierre Menard" and see whether it can put some flesh on the bones of my theory. To avoid the accusation that I concentrate only on certain passages of the text that particularly suit my view, I shall simply turn to the first two sentences of it to show how a translation of "Pierre Menard" into English does not do justice to the text or work "Pierre Menard" in Spanish. The point of all this will be to show that in "Pierre Menard" in particular, and in all literary texts and works in general, elements of the text are essential to the meaning.

In the very first sentence of the translation I am using, there are at least three English words that fail to carry the full meaning of the words in Spanish.³⁶ The full sentence reads as follows:

La obra visible que ha dejado este novelista es de fácil y breve enumeración.

The *visible* work left by this novelist is easily and briefly enumerated.

The first two words of the English translation that create difficulties are "easily" and "briefly"; they translate *fácil* and *breve*. The Spanish words in question are adjectives whereas the English words are adverbs. This changes the force of what is being said in subtle ways. For one thing is to do something in a certain way—the adverbial modification—and another is to have something that is easy and brief. There is also a problem with the word "easily" insofar as the English term has no negative connotation. If anything, it has a positive one: to do something easily is a good thing. But in Spanish to say that something is *fácil* sometimes carries the notion that in English is expressed by the term "facile." Things that are *fácil* are not always good

things. Now, insofar as Borges is one of the greatest ironists of the Spanish language, it would be expected that for him words such as *fácil* will carry all possible ambiguity.

Another word that creates difficulty is "enumerated," which translates the Spanish *enumeración*. The English term is a verb form, but the Spanish term is a substantive. This again paints a different picture for us, we might even say a different ontological picture. In one case, an action, or the remains of an action at least, are involved; in the other, we have a more substantial entity. But this is not all, for again the connotations of the English and Spanish terms are different, first because the use of the Spanish term in a context such as this is not unusual. Indeed, the very term *enumeración* in Spanish is not an unusual term. But "enumeration" is rare and rather pedantic in English. When was the last time you said that you were enumerating anything? For English speakers, this is a word of foreign origin, a learned term derived from Latin; they prefer to count, not enumerate. We, in Spanish, *enumeramos* as much as *contamos* (the counterpart of "counting").

The second sentence also presents us with difficulties.

Son por lo tanto, imperdonables las omisiones y adiciones perpetradas por Madame Henri Bachelier en un catálogo falaz que cierto diario cuya tendencia protestante no es un secreto ha tenido la desconsideración de inferir a sus deplorables lectores—si bien éstos son pocos y calvinistas, cuando no masones y circuncisos.

Impardonable, therefore, are the omissions and additions perpetrated by Madame Henri Bachelier in a fallacious catalogue which a certain daily, whose *Protestant* tendency is no secret, has had the inconsideration to inflict upon its deplorable readers—though these be few and Calvinist, if not Masonic and circumcised.

The first area of difficulty with this sentence is its length: it is approximately six lines long, depending on the type that is used. This, by English standards, is an abomination. But by Spanish standards, which often derive from Latin, it is not particularly long. Moreover, in English, the sentence is rather convoluted and confusing, calling for certain modifications in the translation—note, for example, the addition of a comma after "secret." For a Spanish audience, on the contrary, the sentence is quite elegant, revealing the dexterity in the language that one would expect in the writer of the piece.

The second source of difficulty concerns the first word in the sentence. The first word in the English translation is "Impardonable" and in Spanish it is *Son*. The emphases of the two sentences, then, are quite different. In English, the character of the omissions and additions is paramount; the position of the adjective suggests that this is a great fault. In Spanish, the use of

The particular thesis concerning the work "Pierre Menard" is that it is literary because its text is part of its identity conditions, with the result that it cannot be successfully translated. Its translations are more or less close approximations, rather than faithful renderings of the original. Moreover, the text of "Pierre Menard" is literary because the work it expresses depends on it essentially.

At this point two questions arise: First, is this anything more than the stale, Platonic-based, position that philosophy is independent of the medium in which it is presented, whereas literature is not?²⁷ Second, is not the criterion for philosophy being used so strong that most of what we call philosophy is left out? These are good questions that must be addressed if my view can claim any originality and credibility.

The answer to the first question is that, indeed, my position has much in common with the position described, provided that position is understood clearly. However, even then, there are elements in my position that do not coincide with it. I do not claim, for example, as some Platonists do, that the ideas philosophy is all about are independent from the texts that express them in the sense that their ontological status is independent of those texts. Perhaps they are, but nothing I have said requires such a claim. My position is more modest. I merely claim that philosophical works, unlike literary ones, are not supposed to be tied to particular texts. In principle, philosophical works, unlike literary ones, ought to be able to be presented or expressed, or conveyed, if you wish, through different texts, and the different texts should not alter their identity as works. In short, the translation of philosophical works into other languages should be possible, whereas it should never be possible for a literary work.²⁸ Indeed, the styles and genres used by philosophers are usually those that make possible translation, whereas the literary forms and structures so bound up with their meaning that any attempt at translating becomes impossible. The philosophical text, then, is not entirely superfluous or merely instrumental to the work. It is essential insofar as a certain type of text is conducive to the independence of the work, whereas others are not.

Moreover, no work does or can exist unless there is a text that expresses it, and this is quite contrary to the Platonic position. To my knowledge, there are no works, ideas, meanings, or the like floating around anywhere.

Finally, I hope it is quite obvious that the elements that constitute texts are essential both for philosophical and literary texts. German words are essential to the text of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, just as Spanish words are essential to the text of *Don Quixote*. But German words are not necessary for the work *Critique of Pure Reason*, whereas Spanish words are for the work *Don Quixote*. Particular literary contents are inseparable from particular forms; particular philosophical contents should be separable in principle from particular forms, even though they are not separable from all forms.

the form of the verb "to be" at the beginning suggests no such force, particularly because in Spanish *imperdonables* could have been placed first. Of course, the English translator had to place "Impardonable" at the beginning, for he could not very well have begun with "Are," not so much because it is ungrammatical as because it is inelegant, and this sentence is, without doubt, intended to be "elegant."

The word "fallacious" in English creates a different problem, for although it does accurately translate the word *falaz*, the latter is a more common word in Spanish and one whose connotation is not as technical and narrow as fallacious. Generally, when people use "fallacious" in English, they are thinking of arguments of some sort, but in Spanish the word *falaz* is often used to mean simply false or incorrect. The translation of *desconsideracion* by "inconsideration" also poses problems. *Desconsideracion* is a rather common word in Spanish, but the English cognate is rare. Again, it smacks of learning and pedantry. Finally, there is the subjunctive translation of *son* as "be." Borges is saying that the readers are in fact few, etc., but the subjunctive introduces a certain hesitation that is missing in the original text.

In short, the translation of "Pierre Menard" we have before us misses much that is essential to the work of the Spanish text. And yet, the translation is very good indeed. In many ways, it is so good that it cannot be improved. Now, if we were trying to be faithful merely to the ideas expressed by the text, I am sure we could find circumlocutions that would do the trick. Or we could add learned notes that would make it possible for us to understand precisely what the Spanish says. But if we do this, we lose "Pierre Menard"; we lose tone, emphasis, irony, rhythm, and particular connotations, to mention just a few essential elements to it. Indeed, to do this would be like putting a commentary or gloss in place of "Pierre Menard," or to use another example, to put St. John of the Cross' *Commentary on the Spiritual Canticle* in place of the *Spiritual Canticle*. And this will not do, which suggests that "Pierre Menard" is a literary text and work rather than a philosophical one. But is this right and, more important still, is the general thesis of the distinction between philosophical texts and works, and literary texts and works, that I have presented defensible?

Identity, Identification, and Causation

According to my thesis, the difference between literary works and philosophical works is that for the former the texts that express them are part of their identity conditions, whereas for the latter they are not. With respect to are literary in that philosophical texts do not have corresponding works in which the texts are part of the identity conditions of the works, whereas literary texts do.

The answer to the second question, namely, Is not your criterion of philosophy so strong that most of what we call philosophy is left out?, is as follows: If applied strictly, the criterion I have suggested appears to disqualify much that is considered philosophy and make it literature. Indeed, as stated at the beginning, I believe this is one of the reasons some philosophers wish to see philosophy as literature. If we were to apply strictly the criterion I have suggested, we might have to leave out of the philosophical canon many works that are part of it. Out would go such works as Pascal's *Pensées*, Montaigne's *Essays*, and even perhaps Descartes' *Discourse on Method* and Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. And not only this, but we might have to develop a technically precise language to be used in all philosophical texts. Yet I do not think any of us, except for a very small group of ideological purists, would want to do this. The time of the Vienna Circle and the search for an ideal scientific language in philosophy is over, at least for the moment. So what do we do?

Part of the problem arises because so far we have not distinguished between identity, identification, and causation. Thus far, I have been speaking of conditions of identity, and these conditions concern the identity of philosophical and literary texts and works considered apart from the knowledge we may have of those texts and works and the causes that bring them about. But we can also speak of the conditions under which we know philosophical and literary texts and works and of the conditions under which they are produced. The distinction between identity, identification, and causation is standard, and I trust does not need much elaboration. I assume that the conditions of being X, the conditions of knowing X, and the conditions of there being an X are not necessarily the same. One thing is to be human, another to know that something is human, and still another to cause something human.

The application of this distinction to philosophical texts and works allows us to draw certain important inferences. First, by keeping causal conditions separate from conditions of identity and identification, we can understand how the distinction between literary works and texts can still be made in terms of the character of the texts and works themselves in spite of the fact that the causes that produce them include factors other than the texts and works. Consider that a text is a human artifact. A text is a group of entities used as signs, which are selected, arranged, and intended by an author to convey a specific meaning to an audience in a certain context. This means, of course, that a text is causally dependent on its author, audience, and context. It depends on the author because the author is the one who does the using, selecting, arranging, and intending. It depends on the audience at least insofar as the audience is the target of the communication and, therefore, determines to some extent the choices the author makes (its dependence on the audience may actually be stronger, but this is another issue). And it depends on the context because the context alters the conditions of recep-

tivity for the text. The entities that constitute a text by themselves are not a text. The lines, sounds, and whatever that an author uses to compose a text are by themselves not a text. To be a text they have to be used for a definite purpose that is related to an audience and a context. This means that the conditions of the existence of a text involve factors outside the text, for a text does not come to be by itself. The conditions of being a text and the conditions required to bring a text into being are not the same. And something similar can be said about meaning. The meaning of a text is determined by factors that are other than the entities that constitute the text, for the meaning is not naturally tied to those entities. It becomes tied to them through the use the author and the audience make of it in context.³⁹

This has important consequences for the issue we are addressing here. It entails that the distinction between literary and philosophical texts and works in general, and of particular literary and philosophical texts and works, can be made in terms of the texts and works themselves. But it also allows us to hold that these distinctions are caused by what authors and audiences do in particular contexts. For it is the uses and practices of authors and audiences that are responsible for texts and works and for the connection between particular meanings and the entities that constitute the texts. That the identity conditions of the meaning (i.e., works) of certain texts necessarily includes reference to the entities that constitute the texts, whereas in others it does not, is a result of the actions of authors and audiences in context. Moreover, that there are some texts that express works like these, and others that do not, again is a result of the actions of authors and audiences in context. But this does not reduce the conditions of identity of texts and works to their causes. It is a mistake, then, to reject the distinction between philosophical and literary texts and works based on the consideration of their character because texts and works are artifacts, that is, the results of human activity and design. The conditions that make a coat hanger what it is are logically independent of the fact that someone invented and made the coat hanger.

Now let us turn to the distinction between identity and identification. This distinction is important for our purposes because, when applied to texts and works, it explains how, although it is essential for the *identity* of a literary work to include the corresponding text and this is not so for a philosophical one, there is no reason why the conditions of the *knowledge* of a philosophical work cannot include precisely the conditions of identity of a literary work, at least in some cases. Indeed, I propose that they do for many reasons, at least three of which I would like to mention. First, many philosophical claims and issues are too profound and abstract to be grasped without heuristic devices that make them clear. We need to give them flesh and blood, as it were; that is, we need to make them concrete in order to render them intelligible. Second, humans are not mere rational faculties; they are complex entities with passions and feelings. This make-up influences their capacity to under-

stand, so that often they need to have their feelings and emotions moved in order for them to understand. Third, all works are known through texts, and texts are made up of linguistic entities and structures that are cultural in nature, and this has repercussions for our understanding.

In short, the conditions of our knowledge of philosophical works include textual elements, for without some of these elements we might not be able to know them at all, or if we are, at least we might not be able to know them effectively. So although philosophical works do not in principle include these conditions among their conditions of identity, they can and often do include them among the conditions of their being known.

This looks fine at first sight, for it amounts to a distinction between a philosophical work and how we know it. But there is a difficulty. The philosophical work, as I have proposed, is the meaning of a certain text, and now we have found that in order to know the philosophical work, the text must include elements that are characteristic of literary rather than philosophical texts. Moreover, because every literary text expresses a literary work, it turns out that those philosophical works that require the inclusion of literary devices in their texts in order to be known entail the existence of literary works as well as texts.

Consider Descartes' *Discourse on Method*. If what has been said is correct, then in Descartes' *Discourse on Method* we have (1) a work of philosophy, (2) a text of philosophy, (3) a work of literature, and (4) a text of literature. This creates two problems, one of which is ontological. Now it appears that Descartes' *Discourse on Method* is two works and two texts rather than one work and one text. The other problem is epistemological: We cannot easily determine who is to separate them or how they are to be separated. In the face of these difficulties, why not give up the whole thing? Why not go with the postmodernists or the Platonists after all?

At least two responses can be given to the ontological difficulty. One, which I call the Two-Text/Two-Work Alternative, is that to say that Descartes' *Discourse on Method* is two works and two texts is not such a bad thing after all. The philosophical work is a certain meaning that does not include a text among its conditions of identity. The philosophical text is the text whose meaning the philosophical work is. The literary work is a certain meaning that includes a text among its conditions of identity. And the literary text is the text whose meaning the literary work is. Presumably, then, only the philosophical work is translatable; the literary one is not. This sounds a bit strange, but it does make sense to this extent: It allows us to maintain that there is something about the *Discourse on Method* that is translatable and something that is not. And this is, indeed, something that anyone familiar with the French text knows quite well. Moreover, it allows us to hold that what is translatable is the philosophy, whereas what is not is the literature. And this, again, makes sense in terms of our common intuitions and practices.

A second response, which I call the One-Text/One-Work Alternative, is that there are in fact only one work and one text in Descartes' *Discourse on Method*, for the literary textual devices required for the knowledge of the philosophical work are merely ancillary and do not form part of the identity conditions of a separate literary work. And, of course, if there is no literary work, there is no literary text. This ancillary relationship is similar to the relationship that exists between an English sentence written on a white paper and the color of the ink in which it is written. The color is black in order to make the sentence visible, but the color is not part of the sentence or its meaning.

This response has at least two advantages over the first: It is more economical and it solves the epistemological problem we raised. If there are not two works and two texts, then we need not devise a way of distinguishing them. All the same, even if we adopt this second alternative, we are still left with an epistemological problem, albeit a different one. For how can we tell when we have a philosophical work expressed by a philosophical text accompanied by literary devices, or a literary work and a literary text? That is, how can we tell when the literary devices are not essential to the work and when they are? The answer is that it is probably a matter of degree. There are some works that have so little relation to anything textual that clearly they are philosophical. This is the case of Suárez's *Metaphysical Disputations* and Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. At the other extreme there are some works that are so tightly related to their texts that clearly they are literary. This is the case of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and St. John of the Cross' *Spiritual Canticle*. So what is accidental and what is essential in these? It does not really make sense that the ideas of a work such as Shakespeare's *Hamlet* are accidental, and only the textual elements are essential to the work. Moreover, there are many works that fall in between, and here it is not clear whether we have a philosophical work or a literary one. This is the case of Montaigne's *Essays* and Pascal's *Pensées*. Surely, this does not undermine the distinction we have drawn between the literary and the philosophical, just as the existence of gray does not undermine the distinction between black and white, although it does put into question the One-Text/One-Work Alternative.

What should we say about Borges's "Pierre Menard," then? Is it like Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, or Montaigne's *Essays*? I tend to think it is more like Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but this is not an uncontested conclusion. I am not absolutely certain of it. And if I am right, it turns out that there are two works "Pierre Menard," the literary, which we have, and the philosophical, which is implicit in, or part of, the literary. The first is the "Pierre Menard" that includes elements of its text as essential; the second is one concerned only about ideas and translatable. And we also have two texts: the literary, which corresponds to the literary work and that we have; and the philosophical, which is the text that expresses the philosophical work. The

philosophical work is implicit in the literary one, and therefore produced by Borges, but the philosophical text is what readers interested in the philosophy in "Pierre Menard" construct.⁴⁰ But I am quite certain of at least two things as a result of the foregoing reflections, and regardless of whether one adopts the Two-Text/Two-Work Alternative or the One-Text/One-Work Alternative: First, the uncertainty about the literary or philosophical nature of "Pierre Menard" does not undermine the distinction between philosophical works and texts on the one hand and literary ones on the other. And second, we need not reject the distinction between philosophy and literature in order to make room in the philosophical canon for such works and texts as Montaigne's *Essays* or Pascal's *Pensées*.⁴¹

Notes

1. A shorter, and in some important ways, different version of this essay appeared in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 59, no. 1 (Winter 2001), pp. 45–57.
2. Quoted by Jack Diether, in "Notes to the Program," Carnegie Hall, Tuesday Evening, November 4, 1997, p. 19.
3. Still another view of this relation sees philosophy as sharing a method of knowledge with both literature and science. This is why it is not possible to distinguish philosophy from literature strictly speaking. See Christiane Schildknecht, "Entre la ciencia y la literatura: Formas literarias de la filosofía," trans. José M. González García, in *Figuras del logos: Entre la filosofía y la literatura*, ed., María Teresa López de la Vieja (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994), pp. 21–40.
4. José Luis Gómez Martínez, "Posmodernidad, discurso antrópico y ensayística latinoamericana. Entrevista," *Dissens, Revista Internacional de Pensamiento Latinoamericano* 2 (1996), pp. 46 and 45. In the Anglo-American world, similar views have been expressed by Richard Rorty and others. See Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Hussocks, Sussex: Harvester, 1982), pp. 92–93, and the essay by Knight in this volume.
5. Gómez Martínez, p. 45; Pedro Lange-Churrión and Eduardo Mendieta, "Philosophy and Literature: The Latin American Case," *Dissens* 2 (1996), pp. 37–40.
6. Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 113–138; and Gregory Currie, "Work and Text," *Mind* 100 (1991), pp. 325–339.
7. Keep in mind, then, that in this essay I am staying away from several other questions that are under discussion today concerning philosophy and literature. For example, I will not discuss issues concerned with the morality, value, or use of literature, or questions that have to do with the cognitive or noncognitive nature of the knowledge we derive from literary texts. These are issues that have received considerable attention recently. See, for example, Martha Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge: Essays in Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
8. For other uses, see the essays by Irwin and Knight in this volume.
9. For other attempts at distinguishing literary texts and works from philosophical ones, and at exploring the relations between philosophy and literature, see, for example, S. Halliwell, "Philosophy and Literature: Settling a Quarrel?" *Philosophical Investigations* 16, no. 1 (1993), pp. 6–16; George Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974); Susan L. Anderson, "Philosophy and Fiction," *Metaphilosophy* 23, no. 3 (1992), p. 207; Peter Lamarque and Stein H. Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), chapters 15 and 16; Anthony Quinton, *The Divergence of the Twain: Poet's Philosophy and Philosopher's Philosophy* (Warwick: University of Warwick, 1985); Mark Edmundson, *Literature against Philosophy, Plato to Derrida: A Defense of Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and the essay by Irwin in this volume.
10. For a discussion of other views, see Jorge J. E. Gracia, *A Theory of Textuality: The Logic and Epistemology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 59–70.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
12. For some suggestions in this direction, see *ibid.*, pp. 59–70.
13. "Same" applies to the type, not tokens, of course.
14. In the new translation by Andrew Hurley, in Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), p. 94.
15. Cf. Stephen Halliwell, "Philosophy and Literature: Settling a Quarrel?," pp. 7, 12, and 13.
16. Cf. Daniel Innerarity defends the fictional nature of literature in "La verdad de las mentiras: Reflexiones sobre filosofía y literatura," *Diálogo Filosófico* 24 (1992), pp. 367–380.
17. For the controversy, see J. R. Searle, "The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse," in *Expression and Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 58–75. For the basis of the noncognitive position, see G. Frege, "On Sense and Reference," in *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. and trans. P. Geach and M. Black (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952). Opposing the noncognitivists is G. Gabriel, "Sobre el significado en la literatura y el valor cognitivo de la ficción," trans. María Teresa López de la Vieja, in *Figuras del logos*, ed. María Teresa López de la Vieja, pp. 57–68.
18. See Halliwell, "Philosophy and Literature: Settling a Quarrel?," pp. 7, 12, and 13, and Innerarity, "La verdad de las mentiras."
19. Innerarity, "La verdad de las mentiras."
20. See Halliwell, "Philosophy and Literature: Settling a Quarrel?," pp. 6, 7, and 15–16, and Susan L. Anderson, "Philosophy and Fiction," *Metaphilosophy* 23, no. 3 (1992), p. 207.
21. See Ermanno Bencivenga's essay in this volume. Note that his position is complex and involves the notion of liberation as well.
22. For a defense of the institutional view of art in general, see George Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974).
23. Most recently in Anderson, "Philosophy and Fiction," p. 207.
24. Cf. Halliwell, "Philosophy and Literature," pp. 6, 7, and 15–16. The position that philosophy is about universals and not about individuals goes back at least to Aristotle and the conception of science he presented in *Posterior Analytics* I.
25. For various ways in which fiction is used in philosophy, see Anderson, "Philosophy and Fiction," pp. 204–207.
26. Carolyn Korsmeyer and Lois Parkinson-Zamora suggested to me that perhaps it would be better to speak of paraphrase rather than translation here. The suggestion is intriguing, but I am not convinced it works. My point is that there are things we call translations of literary works, but they are not strictly speaking translations, but rather more or less close approximations. Translations of literary works are works different from the originals that share some of the same properties of the originals. And their authors are the translators, not the original authors. Thus the author of the English translation of the *Coplas por la muerte de su padre* of

40. Henry Sussman raised the intriguing question, which I cannot take up here, of the status of the philosophical work in literary works: Are they works as such, or are they fragments?
 41. I would like to express my appreciation to the audience present at a session of the Capen Symposium where I read a version of this essay for their questions and objections. I am particularly grateful to William Eggington, Peter Hare, Anthony Cascardi, Henry Sussman, Carolyn Korsmeyer, Lois Parkinson Zamora, and Rosemary Feal.

Jorge Manrique is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, not Manrique, even though Longfellow tried very hard to duplicate the work of Manrique.
 27. Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Plato and the Poets," in *Dialogue and Dialectic: Eight Hermeneutical Studies in Plato*, trans. F. Christopher Smith (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 46 ff., and "Goethe and Philosophy," in *Literature and Philosophy in Dialogue: Essays in German Literary Theory*, trans. Robert H. Paslick (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 18-19.

28. Cf. Renford Bambrough, "Literature and Philosophy," in *Wisdom: Twelve Essays*, ed. Renford Bambrough (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974), pp. 274-292.
 29. Cf. E. D. Hirsch, Jr., "Objective Interpretation," *PMLA* 75 (1960), pp. 463-479, and also Gracia, *A Theory of Textuality*, pp. 18-19.
 30. This has led some philosophers, such as Deleuze, to claim that it is in the nature of philosophy to create concepts. See his "The Conditions of the Question: What Is Philosophy?" *Critical Inquiry* 17 (1981), pp. 471-473.

31. Arthur C. Danto, "Philosophy as/and/of Literature," in *Literature and the Question of Philosophy*, ed. Anthony Cascardi (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p. 7. Danto goes too far, however, when he argues that literature, in contrast with philosophy, is a kind of mirror, and finds its subject only when it is read (p. 19). First, it is not just literary texts that require an audience, all texts do; second, that texts require an audience does not mean that they are about the audience. For my discussion of these issues, see Jorge J. E. Gracia, *Texts: Ontological Status, Identity, Author Audience* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), chapter 4.

32. A point made by Borges in "Pierre Menard," p. 94 in the translation cited earlier. Indeed, some argue that it is precisely the opposition to style that distinguishes philosophy from literature. Cf. Dalia Judovitz, "Philosophy and Poetry: The Difference between Them in Plato and Descartes," in *Literature and the Question of Philosophy*, ed. Anthony J. Cascardi (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp. 24-51.

33. Some have gone so far as to argue not only that philosophy has style, but that its style and that of literature are similar. Cf. Tom Conley, "A Trace of Style," in *Displacement: Derrida and After*, ed. Mark Krupnick (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), p. 79.
 34. Plato, *Phaedrus* 276-277a.
 35. Some have gone so far as to argue not only that philosophy has style, but that its widely available. The terms emphasized in the translation were also emphasized in the Spanish original.

36. I am using the following edition and translation: "Pierre Menard, Autor del *Quijote*," in *Fronsa completa* (Barcelona: Bruguera, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 425-433; "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quijote*," in *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*, eds. Donald Yates and James E. Irby (New York: New Directions Books, 1964), pp. 36-44. I use this older translation for this analysis because it is the most the Spanish original.
 37. Plato, *Republic* 601a-b. Some literary people agree to the extent that they believe literature is not about ideas. Recent textualists accept this, but the position goes back to much earlier times. Danto quotes a text from Flaubert to this effect (Danto, "Philosophy as/and/of Literature," p. 13).

38. Note that this does not imply a disagreement with Nussbaum's view that "if the writing is well done"—and I think this applies to both literature and philosophy—"a paraphrase in every different form and style will not, in general, express the same conception." See Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, p. 3.
 39. The role of use and practice in this context is discussed by Lamarque and Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature*, particularly chapters 2, 10, and 17. See also my defense of cultural function as determining textual meaning in Gracia, *A Theory of*