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... to pretend that those books already exist ...

Feigned Intertextuality in the (latin)American literature after 1940

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## English Summary

In a preface from his collection of short stories “Jardín de senderos que se bifurcan”, Jorge Luis Borges states that it is a laborious madness to write novels hundreds of pages long when you could simply pretend these books already exist and then refer to them in short summaries. The stories following the preface proceed to implement this thought by referring to and quoting from numerous fictitious textual sources, pretending they exist. Borges, who indicates this feigned intertextuality, may be one of the masters of this textual trickery, but he is by far not the only writer operating with it — feigned intertextuality populates numerous texts in world history.

The present book offers a systematic examination of this procedure and explores the fantastic, parodistic and fiction-generating effects it unfolds in reception through analyses of the works of Borges, Adolfo Bioy Casares, Vladimir Nabokov, and Roberto Bolaño. The study is based on the assumption that feigned references carry specific properties through their oscillation between the factual and the fictional, properties that make them particularly interesting for a number of genres and texts.

A theoretical consideration of the procedure will initially look at how feigned intertextuality can be defined and, more importantly, how it works in the reception, playing on assumptions the reader makes based on learned pacts between text and reader. This will constitute the base for concrete analyses of feigned intertextuality in specific texts.

Looking at Borges’ “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius” and “Jardín de senderos que se bifurcan” as well as Bioy Casares’ “La trama celeste” and *La invención de Morel*, one can observe to what extent the uncanny, reality-unsettling properties of fictitious references are functionalized in fantastic texts. The analysis also sets out to shed light on a question that accompanies the entire OEuvre of these authors: Can these texts really be understood as fantastic? As they create fantastic moments

even though no friction between realistic and miraculous worldview is observable on the level of *histoire*, they elude the classical genre definitions of Caillois, Todorov, and also Alazraki. The specific fantastic of this literature from the La Plata region unfolds around the invented textual sources.

In Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and Bolaño's *La literatura nazi en América*, each of which builds excessively on fictional references in its own way, the parodic potentials of fictional references are especially exploited. The analyses of the two texts, which stand in the tradition of science parodies, explore not only the parodistic characteristics of fictitious references but also the question what text type they belong to: Can a text written in imitation of a factual text type such as the critical edition (*Pale Fire*) or the literary lexicon (*La literatura nazi en América*) produce an overarching narrative and thus be called a "novel"? How do the real and the fictitious, the factual and the fictional, relate to each other here?

Finally, in Borges's "Examen de la obra de Herbert Quain" as well as Bolaño's *Los sinsabores del verdadero policía* and *2666*, it becomes apparent how differently fictional references can be used for text genesis. While the replacement of 500-page novels by a few lines of *résumés* in Borges is part of a concise writing style, in Bolaño they form the basis of proliferating texts.

An exemplary survey of text contributions in Internet forums, magazine articles and artists' books that take the feigned textual sources and elaborate on them will show how they pick up this potential of text genesis and thus grant the fictional texts a place in the real.

What the authors considered in this study have in common, apart from the use of fictitious references, is that they cannot be assigned to any national literature in the narrower sense, but all of them, as *poetae docti* from the American "periphery", look to the hegemonic cultural heritage of Europe. Following on from the textual analyses, therefore, the last thought to be elaborated is one suggested by the authors' biographies and the imitative movement of faked intertextuality: do faked references represent a specific form of mimicry that can be deployed as a kind of counter-writing in the sense of postcolonial literary theory? In other words, do the texts considered here enter into a specific relationship with the hegemonic European discourse of culture and knowledge through the faked references?