

[illegible]

A NEW DON QUIXOTE

The builders of the library were great masters.¹

One day he rose from his armchair, and went to his library in search of a book.² At the foot of the stairway there was a cell, and then a library, and then a sort of cabinet, or private study, filled with instruments of magic.³ The next five floors are devoted to eating, resting and socializing: they contain dining rooms—with a variety of privacies—kitchens, lounges, even a library.⁴ He had a well selected little library.⁵ There is, in every well-made library, a Hell where live the books that must not be read.⁶ In Pierre Menard's library there is no trace of such a work.⁷ Borges, less of an idealist, decided that his library was like the universe—and one understands then why he never felt the need to leave it.⁸ Even in this case, as Borges warned us, the library would contain the autobiographies of angels and a detailed history of the future.⁹ When it was announced that the library contained all books, the first reaction was unbounded joy.¹⁰ The true hero of the library of Babel is not the library itself but its Reader, a new Don Quixote, on the move, adventurous, restlessly inventive, alchemically combinatory, capable of overcoming the windmills he makes rotate ad infinitum.¹¹ Those examples allowed a librarian of genius to discover the fundamental law of the library.¹²

The library is a sphere whose exact centre is any hexagon and whose circumference is unattainable.¹³

I declare that the library is endless.¹⁴

In all the library, there are no two identical books.¹⁵

The library is unlimited but periodic.¹⁶

On a shelf in the library are very old books that tell of another past than the one the dreamer has known.¹⁷

You see, our library is not like others.¹⁸ "So the plan of the library reproduces the map of the world?"¹⁹ If a library of the year 3000 came into our hands today, we could not understand its contents.²⁰ No one ever leaves the world, but anyone can easily exit the library; we can enter objects infinitely, a book is quickly finished.²¹ Signore professore dottore Eco, what a library you have!²² "I shall be glad to have the library to myself as soon as may be."²³

¹ Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*. ² Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*.

³ Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*. ⁴ Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious*

New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan. ⁵ Victor Hugo, *Les*

Misérables. ⁶ Maurice Blanchot, *The Book to Come*. ⁷ Jorge Luis Borges,

Collected Fictions. ⁸ Umberto Eco, *On Literature*. ⁹ Umberto Eco,

On Literature. ¹⁰ Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*. ¹¹ Umberto

Eco, *On Literature*. ¹² Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*. ¹³ Jorge

Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*. ¹⁴ Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*. ¹⁵ Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*. ¹⁶ Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*. ¹⁷ Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*. ¹⁸ Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*. ¹⁹ Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*. ²⁰ F.A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty*. ²¹ Michel Serres, *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies*. ²² Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan*. ²³ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*.

OPENING NOTE

Welcome.

Please give us a moment to set the stage and introduce our intentions. We would like to talk about *information* and *architecture*, not by saying a lot, but by playing an *Informational Instrument*. Books will be our actors. They will talk while we play the instrument. To put it in different terms: while playing, we will set an atmosphere and articulate characters for their speeches and conversations. Their character will be spelt out in synthetic characters. The setting and the spelling out is a space where we host and meet the books.

Plentiful Play consists of two plays, staged in inverted manners. Together they form an infinite spiral. The third element is a *Canzoniere* of poems scattered throughout the text. It sets the tone and maintains the atmosphere in *Play Among Books*.

The first play talks about *information* in an intimate way, by going from the spectrality of concepts towards their articulations in books, from *Xenotheka* towards *Bibliotheka*. It is a birth of the galaxy, a constitution of *Xenotheka*. It is composed of four acts. The second play seeks for architecture in the infinite flow of books by approaching it in *atom-letters*. The play goes from the flow towards a subtle articulation of characters and concepts, from *Bibliotheka* towards a new *Xenotheka*. Its finale is a gathering for six characters, each of whom gives an atmospheric architectonic speech.

A *Canzoniere*, whose original title was *Bundles of Strange Things*, is a collection of four generic poems spread throughout the text. Each poem encrypts one of the main interests and concerns of the *Play Among Books*.

Before immersing yourself in the *Plentiful Play*, we suggest you read the *Prolegomena to an Informational Instrument* in the Appendix and get familiar with its promise, nature, mechanics, and elements.

Thank you.

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The curtain rises.