

**Topological Time in *Proyecto Nocilla* [Nocilla Project] and *Postpoesía* [Post-poetry] (and a brief comment on the Exonovel)**

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**0.1 Contorting the Materials**

I'm interested in archeology in a broad sense of the word. I'm interested in past occurrences becoming present. As we shall see, I think that archeology, in an extended sense of the word, appears in all of my literature. And though I never think in terms of technology when I write poetry, narrative, or even essays—I'm not guided by predetermined standards but by more or less analogous impulses—unconsciously at work are models I've seen in places like television, the Internet, scientific knowledge or publicity: models common to what might be called a society of consumption and contemporary information. Before, following the Romantic model, the author was someone locked away in a cell, emitting enlightenment that always emanated from some kind of superior knowledge. But with today's abundance of information, it's impossible to be learned in anything. We authors receive informational input that we recycle for our own benefit, to later cast an aesthetic result out to a sea of information; the process seems more like the flow of feedback return than a linear projection. That's why, when I create a piece, I'm interested in the contemporary, because when I sit down to write I don't think, "I'm a writer, and I'm going to write." Rather, I sit down at my keyboard and I recycle all that information from low and high culture—terms that are themselves already anachronistic—without worrying about what material I'm using or its spatial and temporal origins, or, of course, its prestige, as I theorized in my essay *Postpoesía, hacia un nuevo paradigma* (*Post-poetry: Toward a New Paradigm*) a finalist for the 2009 Anagrama essay prize. That is, I allow myself to be guided by the idea

**Hybrid Storyspaces: Redefining the Critical Enterprise in Twenty-First Century Hispanic Literature**

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of pragmatism. I'd like to quote a paragraph from one of the champions of pragmatism, Richard Rorty, from his book *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*:

The method [of pragmatism] is to redescribe lots and lots of things in new ways, until you have created a pattern of linguistic behavior which will tempt the rising generation to adopt it, thereby causing them to look for appropriate new forms of nonlinguistic behavior. . . . This sort of philosophy [of poetry, I would say] does not work piece-by-piece, analyzing concept after concept, or testing thesis after thesis. Rather, it works holistically and pragmatically. It says things like 'try thinking of it this way'—or more specifically—'try to ignore the apparently futile traditional questions by substituting the following new and possibly interesting questions' [we would say, try to ignore the apparently futile traditional poetics by substituting the following new and possibly interesting questions]. . . . It does not argue for this suggestion on the basis of antecedent criteria common to the old and new language games. For just insofar as the new language really is new, there will be no such criteria. (9)

I think that Richard Rorty's words are reflected in all of my poetic anthologies, as well as in my trilogy of novels that form the *Proyecto Nocilla* trilogy, or even, as I noted before, in my approach to essayistic texts, which I conceptualize as theoretical texts that contain both contrastable facts as well as an arbitrary component, what we could call a blurry, poetic zone, or—why not—fiction. The academic text is often confused with the essay. They don't have anything to do with each other. The academic text, characterized by a hypothetical deductive reasoning, supported by ample documentation belonging exclusively to its own corpus, with perfectly referenced technical footnotes, and possessing a style easily recognizable to the reader, is an attempt to apply the scientific method to a field—literature—in which the scientific method proper has no place, or only has a place as metaphor, but never as a *credible* method of investigation. In effect, the academic text, what we commonly call a *paper*, requires a series of norms and controls that are foreign to me because they bureaucratize the way thought is formed and even thought itself, which must be familiar with the rules applied. I respect these academic texts tremendously, and I make use of them when the occasion calls for it, but I don't compose them nor do they interest me, except in specific cases where I shake them up, take them out of context, to construct my own poetics.

By contrast, the essay, as I understand it, is a totally distinct kind of text in which, as the very name indicates, a solution is assayed, though it is known from the beginning to be impossible to find; we could say that the essay accepts at the outset that it will never be able to fully explore the limits

of what it proposes. It tends more toward speculation than to a thesis, thereby becoming something akin to the poem or to artifice. Of all the definitions of intelligence, the one that most interests me can be stated as follows: “the faculty by which we are capable of realizing that we are facing something more intelligent than ourselves.” In this sense, I’m interested in the essay because it knows that the extent of its application and purpose is far greater than what it can achieve. It is conscious of the depth of its field from the very beginning, in general contrast to the academic text, which often presents itself as being at least as intelligent as that which it seeks to name and/or unravel. In other words, the essay does not presume to discover anything, but to construct a network of concepts and connections that did not exist beforehand. It constructs a poetic account of a reality non-existent until that very moment, while the academic text uses techniques and devices proper to a scientific discourse that posits the presence of a solid object of knowledge. I don’t think that a credible artifact can exist today unless it contains, within itself, a refutation of its own discourse as a self-conscious parody, because we no longer believe people or things that define themselves as an absolute; there are novels, but not *The Novel*; essays, but not *The Essay*; poems, but not *The Poem*. To offer just a few examples, in referring to essays I’m thinking of everything from Nietzsche’s classic texts (visionary speculation) to the polemics of Guattari and Deleuze—in which we never know where theory ends and poetic speculation begins—including those that David Foster Wallace wrote in his day (the story-essay) and certain stories by Borges. Science starts with certain axioms that, like systems of reference, already define their limits. On the contrary, poetry starts with a more or less calculated arbitrariness in order to seek axioms that it never finds. I like to permute these operations, to invert them, making a sort of poetry out of science, and a false science out of poetry, permuting their functions to create a blurry, ill-defined artifact. Of course, I don’t carry out this process as if it were preprogrammed, but as a spontaneous way of constructing fictions and contemplating the contemporary.

I conceive of contemporary reality as a television full of channels that we choose and mix together to find a poetic thread with which to weave our work. Or rather, we might understand history as a supermarket in which we select products one by one to assemble our own shopping carts. This is because I like to compare what I do, on the one hand, with a sort of archeology of the present (in which are naturally included both the present and the supposed futures that always necessarily refer to the present; it is only possible to speak of the present) and, on the other hand, with the image of what today constitutes the Internet as an example of a space in which disparate and dissimilar materials are superimposed and occupy the same present. Even when my works do not directly discuss the Internet, the Web is implied in them because it’s integrated into my life, as it is in everyone’s; it is our landscape. As Borges said, in the Koran there are no camels, which

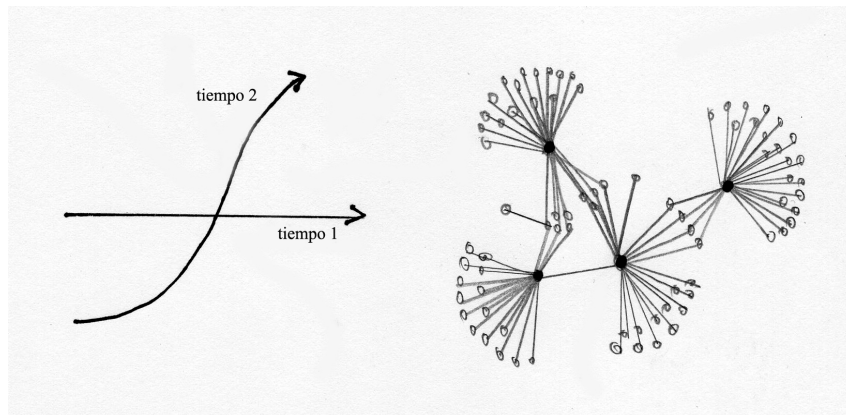
proves that the Koran was written by an Arab—only tourists would talk about camels. (Naturally, I don't mean to suggest that novels and poetic anthologies that feature the Internet explicitly have not perfectly interiorized the digital universe). Even in such a case—that is, when my work does not specifically cite the Internet, or at least no more so than it cites cows, chewing gum, T.V. shows, and rabbits—I do think that there may be a similar topography between part of my literature and the Internet, in regards to structure and relations, which, as we shall see, will bring us to my conception of time.

My approach to creating a work, be it textual or visual (for the latter, refer to various pieces on my blog, *El hombre que salió de la tarta* [*The Man Who Emerged from Cake*], or the movie *Proyecto Nocilla* [*Nocilla Project*], available on the same blog), is similar to what I have described before as an essay: specifically, one method that comes to me habitually and spontaneously is the epiphany. I don't seek ends but beginnings. To say it in just a few words: I do not arrive at something via discourse, but rather I find myself with things that propose a discourse—I develop them, then leave them and go on to something else, and everything gradually adds up to a final text. On occasion, this has the advantage that an object proposes absurd discourses that, when properly combined, generate an interesting text or artifact.

## 0.2. Relational Space (Not Time) on the Web

The majority of studies dealing with literary works themselves—or with the very concept of what constitutes literature—are less often articulated around the idea of space than that of time. To a certain extent, this is logical. Tradition can only consider an object worthy of study if time is anchored in it, if History, whose substratum is time, has legitimized it. A work that cannot be understood within the time of Literature does not exist, nor does a work that cannot be analyzed according to temporal parameters. I think that this method, a very useful one for studying products in History, tends to fail or lose strength when we attempt to apply it both to works found online as well as to the Web itself because, as I see it, what characterizes the Internet is not time, but space. The “offline” temporal model is based on the relationships between objects united by chronological or vectorial time, but online objects are related or “stuck” together by another kind of glue: the relationships offered by links in a topological space. And I'm not only referring to the links that we're accustomed to using online to surf from one site to another, but also to the very spatial associations generated between the parts of a single work, the work we see on the screen in real time. And that difference, both temporal and spatial, is the one between “telling a

story” (a technique more proper to the offline world) and “constructing a story” (a technique more common online). For example, when we analyze blogs according to their nature, their justification, their sense, or their legitimacy as a truly effective means of transmitting “valuable” information, we frequently compare them to diaries, memories, or the epistolary genre, which are all models based on time. In my opinion, we shouldn’t make these comparisons because blogs belong to another realm, another space, in which temporal analyses tend to fail. A blog is fundamentally a space—a spatial object made for a determined space—of information internally related by very diverse associations, ranging from the semantic to the visual, emitted instantly and simultaneously, that are related more to certain types of “spaces” than to the flux of time. What unites elements online is not a vector of time but a Web within a space, be it the real space of the screen or another conceptual space. If we were to illustrate the glue of both the offline and online worlds, for the former there would have to be a thermodynamic vector and for latter, a Web that creates its own topological and relational order.



**Figure 1.** Left: symbolic representation of the intersection of linear times.  
Right: Topological (spatial) representation of an online model.

Naturally, in each realm there is both time and space, since space cannot exist if time does not, but I think that the most useful model for the study and representation of each is the temporal one for the analog world and the spatial one for the digital world. If we look closely, the majority of online works are founded on almost exclusively conceptual relations; they belong to a “space of concepts.” In the case of ad hoc literary works “made” for the Internet with a dry and fragmented structure on the first level, visual materials on the second, and, on the third level, links that take us to other

sites, in each of these steps time has only intervened as a subordinate agent, as a mere inert agent and not as a *provocative agent*. The nearest example I can find outside of the digital world is the encyclopedia. It's clear that encyclopedias are artifacts that do not belong to the History of Literature, nor to the History of Science, nor to the History of Ideas, and consequently, nor to the History of Time, because they are organized according to an abstract space, none other than the alphabetical index—this and only this is the *relational space* within an encyclopedia. The encyclopedia is an unclassifiable object but for its alphabetical order: this is its glue, its guiding and abstract space. Because time naturally exists in it, we can talk about the temporal in the encyclopedia, but it's not relevant or substantial; nor, of course, does the use of the encyclopedia within this parameter provide the possibilities offered by its use via the Alphabetical Index *space*. On the Internet, this kind of relational space becomes much richer, to such an extent that the question of whether or not time exists in a digital space becomes less important.

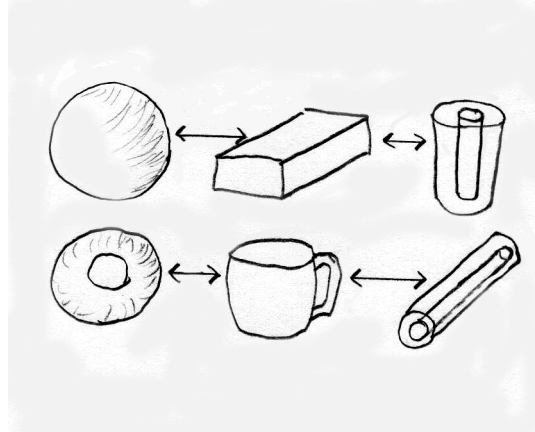
We could think of the Internet as a vast collection of materials organized by their own initially strange relationships, like an analysis that sees human culture as something from another planet. Something of this sort was realized in the *Martian Museum of Terrestrial Art* (Barbican Art Gallery, London, March 2008). This exhibit, commissioned by Lydia Lee of the United States and Francesco Manacorda of Italy, considered how a Martian archeologist, having recently arrived to our planet, would analyze/organize the History of (Human) Art and set out to make a Museum of Earthling Art, without knowing anything about what's happened here. The resulting connections are unthinkable for us. The objects create links amongst themselves that aren't from the Time of Art History; rather, they are unions from another sort of Space. For a Martian archeologist who doesn't know anything about us, human civilization is without History; that is, it is not driven by Time but is instead compressed into a pure present; it is pure Space. This might be expressed as follows:

Strange groups of objects and novel juxtapositions are thus formed, in a certain fashion parodying how Western anthropologists have interpreted, from their particular perspective, those cultures lacking history. In this so-called Martian museum, the artifacts are displayed according to the function or use attributed to them, sometimes absurdly so. They are classified by broad categories like kinship and relations, magic and belief, ritual and communication, and then grouped into subcategories such as ancestor worship, relics and spirits, ceremonial objects, and cultural contacts. Exhibited in this way are masks, clothing, and objects used in supposed earthling ceremonies. Forms of exchange—like gift-giving—are documented, as are apparent attempts at communication with beings from other planets. In the section

dedicated to ancestry, the Martian anthropologists explain that humans believe that the dead have not died entirely, and that their spirits affect subsequent generations either negatively or positively. (Westcott)<sup>1</sup>

In this way, I suggest that the short-story “Mutaciones” (*El hacedor [de Borges]* Remake), as a text outside the network which, however, functions as a network of conceptual space, through the synergy of its three parts. First, a remake via Google Earth of the famous walk that Robert Smithson took through Passaic, New Jersey in 1967 (“Un Recorrido Por los Monumentos de Passaic, 2009”); second, a walk around the nuclear plant Asco in Tarragona, Spain following the radioactive leak that took place on 2008 (“Un Recorrido Por los Monumentos de Ascó”); and third, a trip to the island Lisca Bianca, where Michelangelo Antonioni filmed *La aventura*, to topograph (through a viewing of the film on an iPhone) the steps taken by each of the actors (“Un Recorrido Por Los Monumentos de La Aventura”).

This initially strange layout, this way of organizing materials, ultimately has to do with the problem of translation. What is this importation of objects or ideas, if not a translation from the concrete sense of an object to another sense, via the new relationship established between the materials? To take something and leave it in another container is to translate it, to give it a new semantics that, far from relating to time, multiplies space through the applied trans-coding. We read according to a code and all of the sudden this code changes. To translate is to lose certain pieces of information and generate new ones. To gain one thing, something else is lost along the way. As I understand it, this is what mathematicians call *topology*: the discipline that studies not the measurement of objects and their distances, but rather the constant transformation of objects, their continuous distortion to the point that they appear totally different, even if they are the same thing topologically. The classic example is the donut that, when distorted, becomes a mug. From a topological standpoint they are the same object, since both have just one hole. Nevertheless, the appearance has changed, one thing has been “translated” to another in such a way that they are no longer the same thing. Topologically, I am the same as when I was born—my body has the same holes—but I look different; for one thing, every fifteen years all the cells of the body (except for certain classes of cells in the brain and eyes) are renewed; they die off completely and become other cells.



**Figure 2.** Various Topological Transformations.

This is all related to my literature—including the essayistic genre—since my books, if I correctly understand them, combine new materials with familiar ones, distorting original or second-generation products, throwing them off balance, altering them and plugging them into new currents that are almost never temporal but spatial, in the sense that we’re using the word space. I am increasingly convinced that my literature, seen *a posteriori*, does not tell any story (time) but rather constructs a story in spatial relationships. In modernity, the utopian vision tried to connect man to the machine (the cyborg dream is fundamentally modern, and Newton had already spoken of the World as a Machine, but one connected to God instead of man), and a machine principally “tells a story,” generates a story, while its basic processes are related to time, or to the efficiency of its components by virtue of its temporal development. In late postmodernity, the utopian horizon is the Internet; the human being wants to merge with a Global Internet, and networks do not deal with time but with topologies and spaces.<sup>2</sup>

## 1. Topological Time

I’ll now return to an idea of time that first came to me via the works and texts of North American artist Robert Smithson, one of the founders of Land Art and Conceptual Art in the late 1960s and early 1970s, who in turn got his idea of temporality from anthropologist Lévi Strauss’s texts *The Savage Mind* (1961) and *Myth and Meaning* (1972).

The concept of time that can be usefully applied to my needs does not admit the existence of progress, at least not in the conventional sense of the word “progress.” We often think that the people and civilizations that came before us weren’t as advanced and sophisticated in thought as we are, but



perhaps this is not so. Maybe primitive man was as intelligent and sophisticated as we are today. Indeed, the more time that passes, the better we understand the past. That is, both the passage of time and our own development bring us closer to primitive man, not farther from him. If primitive man were less sophisticated than we are, the passage of time would drive us apart rather than bring us together. This is one of the central ideas through which I visualize and relate the materials at my disposal. Please do not misunderstand me as defending the widespread cultural primitivism of the early twentieth century—nothing could be further from my intention—rather, my idea is that time does not advance along a straight line; in effect, I understand time as the superimposing and intertwining of layers of historical moments. Or like a balloon that expands as its surface incorporates and updates everything that has happened up until then. In artworks, time is not vectorial. Each point in History is a superimposition of all of History. I am particularly interested in the idea of “topological time” set forth by the Californian George Kubler in his book *Shape of Time*. He distinguishes topological time from biological time, and from chronologically vectorial or Hegelian time.

As I understand it, “topological time” looks for associations between objects, ideas, or entities existing simultaneously in a present moment, forming a system, even if some of these objects, ideas, or entities have been around for centuries while others are barely a minute old (a concept that can be partially represented by Guattari and Deleuze’s idea of the rhizome). Things evolve via slightly mutated copies and replicas that connect to each other in what we today call networks. Both genetically and anthropologically speaking, the human being is a copy machine that makes changes and errors upon copying. The eye primarily copies. A newborn primarily copies. A computer primarily copies. And with these copies come interesting mutations. Objects also evolve via errors. The error is a source of interesting changes; a network of errors can give rise to many solutions.<sup>3</sup>

All of these connected objects, ideas or entities, be they originals, copies, or errors, old or new, coexist on the Internet, a physical and symbolic space in which time really seems to be the sum of all times, of all the layers of time. This is one of the places where the “topological time” to which I referred earlier takes shape. The screen is continuously refreshed without harm to or loss of material (apart from when the hard drive crashes) so that we can arrive to a place of “topological time” through successive layers of existing archives.

I think that the Internet—and this is one of the points I’ve been driving at—is a contemporary archeology. That’s why I began by saying that I’m interested in archeology, because I perceive this characteristic in my work as well. I see the online network as a great Container of Time in which time has been paradoxically erased. As I said, for me, anything that came from a remote past and has survived to the present day is just as contemporary as an

object from the latest generation, since topological time, the time of relationships, copies, and reinterpretations, makes everything present. For me, this type of time is the very essence of the Internet and perhaps of my literature too, though unintentionally. As I have said, the Internet has no greater relevance to my work than do cows, telephones, or ballpoint pens.

Another way of visualizing this image is as follows: the Internet is in fact an ocean into which we throw things—some sink to the bottom, others float, and still others remain suspended between the bottom and the surface—but all are taken up by currents that we cannot control. And the position of the objects on the bottom, at the surface, or in between does not depend on when we threw them in, nor on how old or new they are, but on a characteristic of each object that has nothing to do with time; that is, density. If we were to take a snapshot of a single instant in this ocean, we wouldn't see the chronological time of what we've tossed in, but rather a topology that relates the objects, a topological time (see Fig. 1. Right: a topological [not temporal] representation between the objects in the sea).

We start from the premise that Nature does not exist, that Nature is a myth forged over the course of many centuries and galvanized as Mother, as entity, in Romanticism. Its aesthetic dimension exists as landscape, and its factual dimension exists as agriculture. However, in terms of the classic notion of Nature, we could think of it as that which we commonly call Nature. This was followed by a second notion of Nature starting in the nineteenth century that saw the city as a new and legitimate habitat for so-called modern societies. Now we find ourselves within a third type of Nature: the Internet, and by extension, the society of information. But it so happens—and this is the most interesting point—that we are still savages in this Third Nature; we are genuine primitives in a cosmos still being created; we are lost within a cosmogony without even realizing it.

In our current age, the indefinability of things is what abounds on the Internet: it's not that there are territories separated by borders, but rather that the entire Internet itself is a border. And, as at all borders, on the Internet there are conditions for a hybrid space, not a pure one, so that the new, the experience of constant experiment, may emerge. I feel the same way regarding my books: I don't exactly know what they are or what they are about, and that's why I like them—because of everything I just said about the Internet. On the other hand, the Internet is almost horizontal, and nearly rhizomatic. High and low cultures are not mixed up together but they do enter in symbiosis.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, we find ourselves in a privileged time. We can do whatever we want on the Internet and, where there's talent, do it well. This now seems to be the state of the Internet, our container for topological, superimposed time. There are neither future objects nor past ones; everything belongs to the same time: The Great Archive.

This is a clear example of Fragment 124 of Heraclitus: “The fairest universe is but a heap of rubbish piled up at random,” which also allows us to reinforce the idea that while the ancient and the contemporary are not the same, they do come into contact. That apparently harmful state of disorder and entropy is actually very beneficial: we now know that any complex system, a system that develops not as an organization but as an organism, is alive because within disorder and entropy there exists a means for generating new organisms.

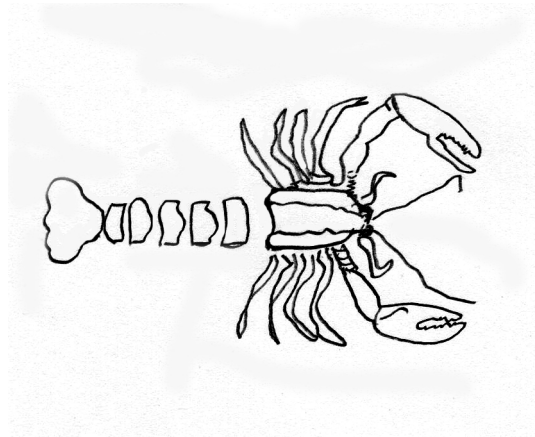
The Internet is definitely still in an age of innocence, for now. Almost anything imaginable is possible.

Of course, all of these ruins of pure present that constitute the Internet are related neither to the romantic ruins, which are necessarily nostalgic, nor to futurist versions, which are the same thing as the Romantic ruins, merely projected to the future, but to ruins of the pure present, a paradox which is already in itself highly provocative on a creative and poetic level. For these reasons, I’m interested in what Nicolas Bourriaud has just called the *Altermodern*, which has nothing to do with early twentieth-century modernity.

Bourriaud defines it as a step beyond postmodernity. In altermodernity, thanks to the globalization that the Internet has entailed, artists lack roots that are well-defined in an identity fashion, which offers much freedom. To put it another way, their roots are personal and created by the artists themselves as they grow and explore. We are nomads in the space of the Internet, and it’s easy to regard our roots as the sum of all the places near and far, new and old, that we’ve seen and visited thanks to the mobility provided by computers. Nicolas Bourriaud calls these contemporary artists *Radicants*, a term that alludes to the kind of climbing plants, such as ivies, that grow along walls, leaving their roots behind as they ascend and creating new ones to hold onto the wall. They are not roots, but small, mutant adhesions. Aesthetic nomadism.

### **Exonovel, A Working Concept**

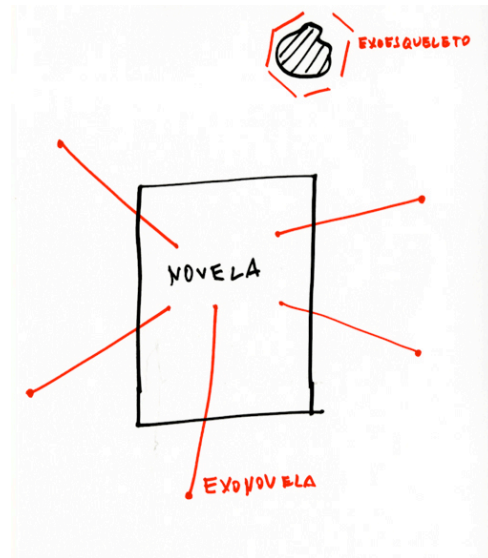
The exoskeleton is the external skeleton that fully covers the body of arthropod animals (arachnids, insects, crustaceans, myriapods, and other related groups) and serves protective, respiratory, or mechanical functions, providing the necessary support for the efficiency of the muscular system. The excrement secreted by corals, which is often mineralized, is also known as an exoskeleton. (“Exoskeleton”)



**Figure 3.** Exoskeleton.

Building on this basic concept, we can attempt an initial definition of the Exonovel: “that which sustains a novel, providing internal solidity and protection, without which the novel itself is not possible.”

The Internet is a rather interesting contemporary example of the Exonovel. Let’s imagine a novel, on paper, that gives the necessary Internet addresses so that we can find other important components of the novel that require a different medium and a different language. This already happens; I think many of us do it or have done it in our books. It’s like an extension of the footnote, but one that refers us to a Web site rather than to such-and-such text or encyclopedia. Besides having the advantage of immediate access, this type of dislocated footnote can be more than just a mere reference—we can make it a component of the plot. In this way, the novel utilizes not just other media, but, more importantly, other languages in an Exonovel separated from the body of the novel.



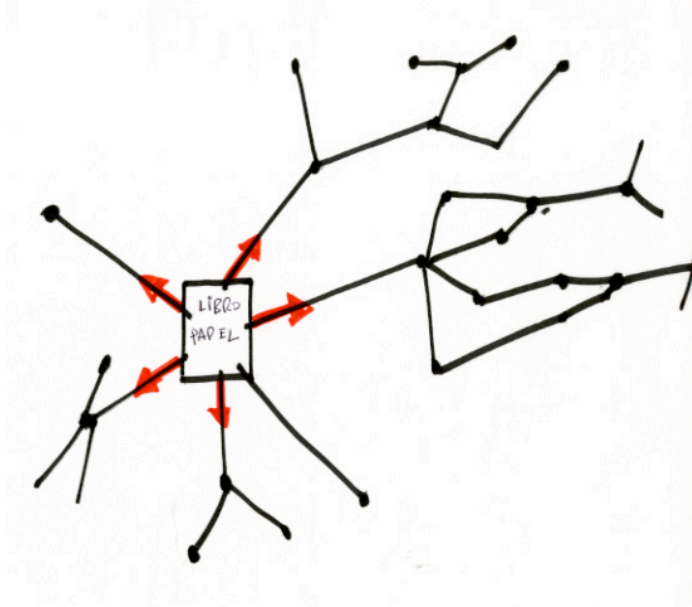
**Figure 4.** Different materials in an Exonovel: separated from the body of the novel, but giving consistency to it.

This Exonovel can be composed of diverse materials, including blogs created by the author specifically for the novel, or blogs written independently of the novel beforehand—such a case would constitute an act of appropriation, as the term is understood in the visual arts.

We could create other webs to support the novel, such as YouTube videos made expressly for this purpose, using previously unpublished material or reworking material already online. Or we could create Facebook profiles for characters in the novel, and even link these with profiles of real people who would automatically become part of the fiction—they too would be characters. There are many possibilities. In addition, the novel itself could evolve if the author left these blogs, Facebook profiles, and videos open for the reader (or non-reader) to write comments and add their own touches or even subplots. We would then enter in a realm that's become known as Fanfiction.<sup>5</sup> It is thus a sort of Exonovel that becomes more complex as more materials are added.

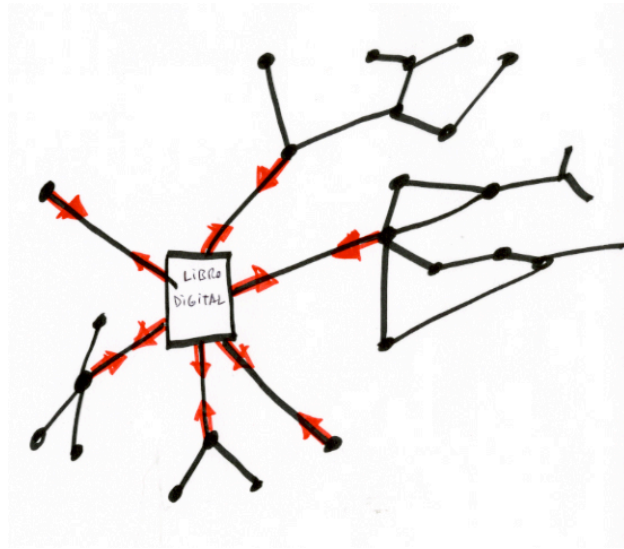
The model that this Exonovel follows is that of a protective shell on the outside of the book's body, but it is dislocated. It is conceptually similar to the exoskeleton of certain corals, which is composed of its own excretions and is almost entirely separate from the coral itself. On the other hand, in terms of a book, where we're limited to listing on paper the links that you should visit on the computer, it's very clear that the book is the absolute center of reference for the novel, and only with the information provided in

the book can you access the Exonovel on the Internet. The book on paper is the absolute reference of the work.



**Figure 5.** The book on paper is the absolute reference of the work.  
The direction of information runs only in one way: from the book to the Internet.

If the book is digital (which is still in development today), we would have a sort of e-book that allows for direct Internet links in real time, as well as the insertion of videos and sounds on the screen itself. The textual matrix would no longer exist; it wouldn't be the absolute reference for the novel, because we would find ourselves in the typical configuration of the Internet, which has no center, or rather, the center is wherever the user is situated at any given moment. It would flow in both directions.



**Figure 6.** In a digital book (“tablets”), the information flows in both ways. It’s a real interactivity.

A simile: The reader typically has only one perspective of a book, like a theatergoer seated in a single spot watching the whole play take place in a rectangular set. Film was like this too, in its origins. In the late-nineteenth century, Méliès, the cinematographic genius of France, introduced the idea that film is spectacle and not just document. He is famous for inventing the earliest special effects, and he is remembered above all for his well-known piece *A Trip to the Moon*. He staged and filmed all of his movies in this way, from a single front perspective, as if it were theater. The camera was the equivalent of the spectator. It didn’t even occur to him—it was beyond his own perspective and cosmovision—to move the camera with which he was filming. Only the characters in the film moved, and so, as we have said, the camera was the same as a theatergoer, the camera itself was a spectator.

But at the beginning of the twentieth century, someone realized that the camera could film moving along with the actors, going behind them, with shots and reverse shots, as if to say: we’re going to cover all the points of view so that spectators can move with the camera, so that they are ubiquitous and mobile; we’re going to lift them out of their theater seats and put them in the set itself so that they see what is behind it. This seems an acceptable simile for what the novel could be when expanded to the Internet with its corresponding Exonovel. Not content that the reader be a single person in a theater seat, the novel could displace itself with new systems and media provided by the Internet. If taken all the way, it is a tremendously

ambitious idea that (in my opinion) when sufficiently developed, will replace what film is today and what architecture was in its day—I'm referring to an artistic medium capable of encompassing and transforming all other artistic practices. It's an idea rooted in the Baroque, the idea of filling it all up, occupying all available space, exhausting all technical possibilities—the idea not of movement alone but of accelerated movement.

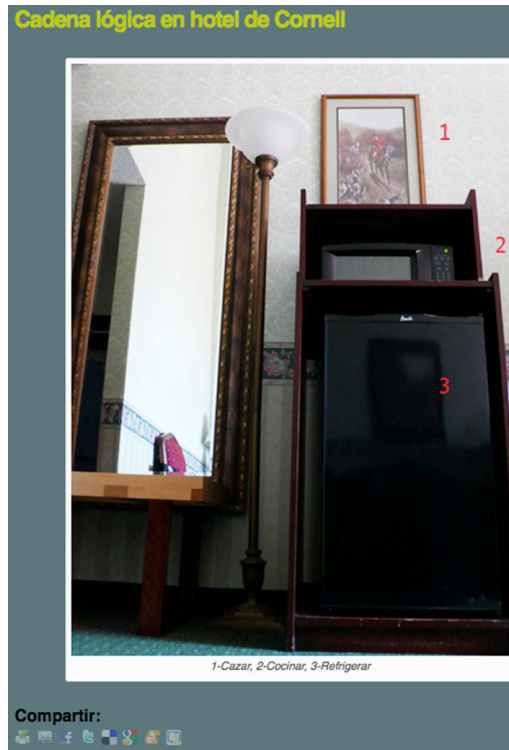
## Notes

1. This has a certain precedent in Borges's short story "El idioma analítico de John Wilkins" ("The Analytical Language of John Wilkins"), in which objects on Earth are organized according to totally strange classifications:

These ambiguities, redundancies, and deficiencies recall those that Dr. Franz Kuhn attributed to a certain Chinese encyclopedia entitled *Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge*. On those remote pages, it is written that animals are divided into (a) those belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed ones, (c) those that are trained, (d) suckling pigs, (e) mermaids, (f) fabulous ones, (g) stray dogs, (h) those included in this classification, (i) those that tremble as if mad, (j) innumerable ones, (k) those drawn with a very fine camel's hair brush, (l) etcetera, (m) those that have just broken a vase, (n) those that resemble flies from a distance.

It was this story precisely that Foucault used to develop his concept of Heterotopia, a space that establishes relationships between objects that are initially unrelatable in a clear way, and even less relatable through chronological time. An example of spatial relationships in "Cadena lógica en un hotel del Cornell" ("Chain of Logic in a Cornell Hotel"), a work posted on my blog, *El hombre que salió de la tarta*:

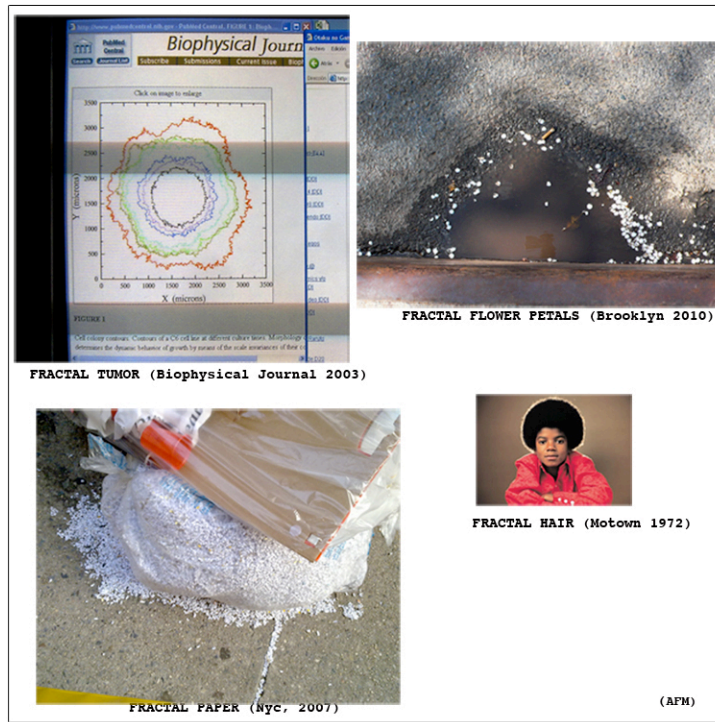




**Figure 1n.** Logic chain at a Cornell Hotel: 1-Hunt, 2-Cook, 3-Refrigerate.

Had an alien arrived to my hotel room intending to study the customs of the human race, it might have thought that on planet Earth, hunting paintings are placed over microwaves, which in turn are on top of refrigerators, because the animals pass “directly” from the painting to the microwave and from there to the fridge. In such a layout, time intervenes only in a tangential way—what’s important are the new spatial relationships among the objects. If we break these relations, the whole piece no longer makes sense.

Let’s look at a final example of spatial relationships. “Fractal Time/Fractal Zone” consists of a mathematical representation of a tumor’s growth—which is fractal—and three objects whose outlines recall this growth: some flower petals fallen from a tree into a puddle; scattered paper circles escaped from a broken garbage bag on a Manhattan sidewalk; and the contour of Michael Jackson’s hair. The semantic relations between the parts are organized across their own networks in space.



**Figure 2n.** Fractal Time/ Fractal Zone.

Tumor, petals, mathematics, paper, hairstyle, fractal, Biophysical Journal, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Motown, sidewalk, asphalt, screen, vinyl, etc. are all united by relationships that have nothing to do with time, creating their own semantic and metaphoric network.

2. “Late postmodernity” is a term I usually use in *Postpoesía*, as an equivalent to Bourriaud’s “Altermodernity.”
3. Moreover, the Internet is still a culturally sexless territory. It still lacks the categories of class and sex that will surely appear with time, as happens in all cultures. I don’t think enough attention is paid to the fact that the Internet is, for now, an asexual entity. Obviously, I’m not referring to the presence of content preferred by one sex or another, but rather to the fact that online modes and behaviors generally lack a sex. Some time will have to pass before the sexes are defined and one of them is segregated, followed by a revolution to liberate that sex and even the possibility of sex changes or new categories of sex.
4. See:  
[www.elpais.com/articulo/semana/Apologia/error/elpepuculbab/20080202elpbabese\\_1/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/semana/Apologia/error/elpepuculbab/20080202elpbabese_1/Tes).
5. See:  
[www.elpais.com/articulo/semana/fanfictions/Centro/Tiempos/elpepuculbab/20081213elpbabese\\_21/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/semana/fanfictions/Centro/Tiempos/elpepuculbab/20081213elpbabese_21/Tes).

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