

## **Some notes on drawing and reading in the form of a common place book**

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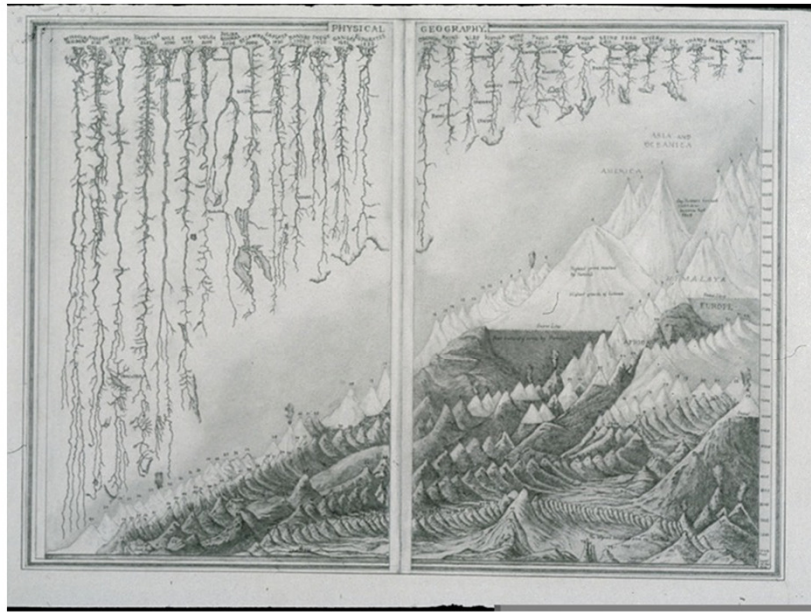
See <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html>

# Penny McCarthy

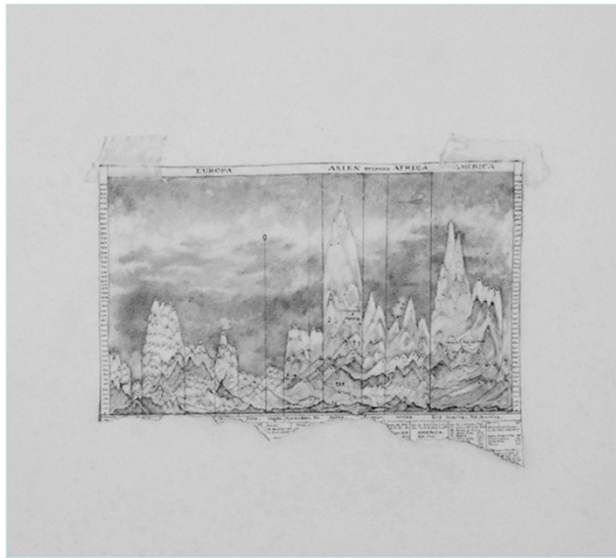
some notes on drawing and reading

*this world dense with writing  
that surrounds us on all sides*

Italo Calvino, *If on a Winters Night a Traveller*  
(London, Secker and Warburg), 1981, p.43



1. Geography Book  
*pencil on paper*



## 2. Important Mountains

*pencil on paper*

Reading the history of a place in this way is like diving down through layers of time. These books of apparent facts are for me so thick with human nature that I would want them to accompany me into the next world, these comforting sentences of certainty.

A paranoid, they say, is someone with all the facts.

In his story *The Aleph*, Borges would have us believe that there is a place where everything can be seen simultaneously. Having seen the Aleph, the narrator weeps because his eyes had seen

‘that terrible secret, hypothetical object whose name has been usurped by men but which no man has ever looked upon: the inconceivable universe.’

The narrator cannot leave the house where the Aleph is because he needs it for his work. Setting down his words he thinks is hopeless as his ambition is to reconcile the simultaneous and the successive, what he saw was ‘simultaneous’ but he fails because what he writes is successive ‘because language is successive’.

2. I am aware of certain recurring themes such as loss and exile that inevitably arise from descriptions of searching and discovery and from maps and charts. I think that in my choice of source there is an attempt to discover the hidden connections that bind human thought to the wider

world. The use of the pencil transcription allows a psychic subtext to lie beneath the source material as if the pages are haunted or invaded by my hand or the presence of my reading. As if you can only read them through my eyes or over my shoulder.

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*animals are divided into: (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies.*

Jorges Luis Borges, *John Wilkins' Analytical Language*, in *Selected Non Fictions* (ed. Eliot Weinberger), (New York, Viking) 1999, p.231



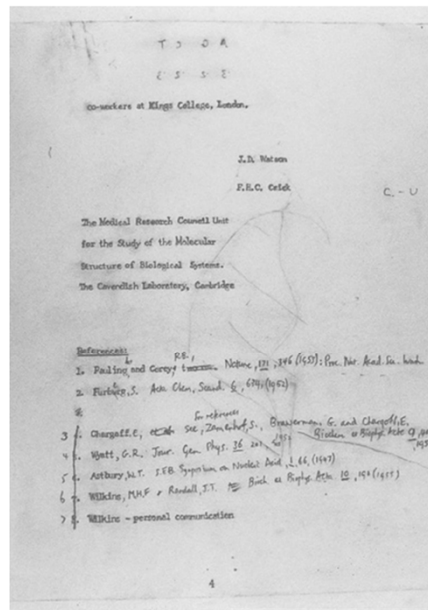
3. Lullaby Constellation (for Walter Benjamin)  
*wall drawing, South London Gallery*



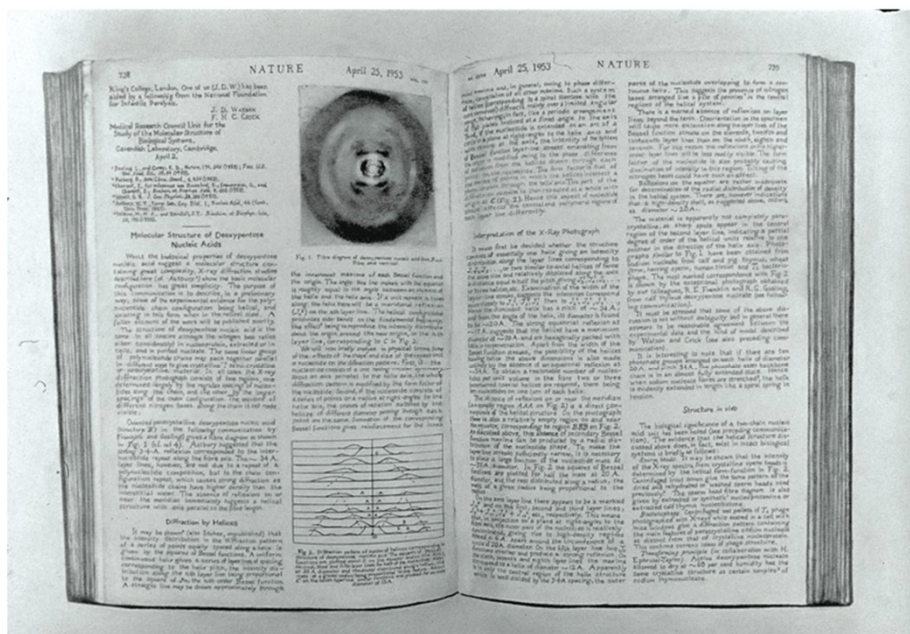
Pauling and Corey have recently proposed a structure for nucleic acid. They were kind enough to make their manuscript available to us in advance of publication. In our opinion their structure is unsatisfactory for two reasons:

- We wish to put forward a radically different structure for the salt of hexaphosphoric acid ( $H_6P_6O_{21}$ ). This structure has two helical chains of nucleic acid around the fibre axis. The two chains (but not their bases) are related by a glide symmetry to this axis. Both chains follow right-handed helices, but owing to the axial sequence of the atoms in the two chains run to opposite directions. Each chain loosely resembles B-DNA model. Is that is, the bases are on the outside of the helix and the phosphates on the interior. There is a residue on each chain every 3.4 Å in the 2 direction. We have assumed <sup>(see previous page)</sup> the base pairs to be  $C \rightarrow G$ ,  $T \rightarrow A$ ,  $A \rightarrow T$ ,  $G \rightarrow C$ . The separation in the two helical strands (on one strand) at angle of  $90^\circ$  between adjacent residues on each chain, that is, after 36 Å. One must expect therefore that this structure would be formed in vitro under suitable conditions. The distance of a phosphorus atom from the fibre axis is 30 Å. It is assumed <sup>(see previous page)</sup> that all phosphate groups will be linked in pairs like  $H_2PO_4^-$  &  $HPO_4^{2-}$  as well as different ratios will be broken if water left! As the phosphates are near the middle chain there can also be two nucleotides.

*pencil on paper*



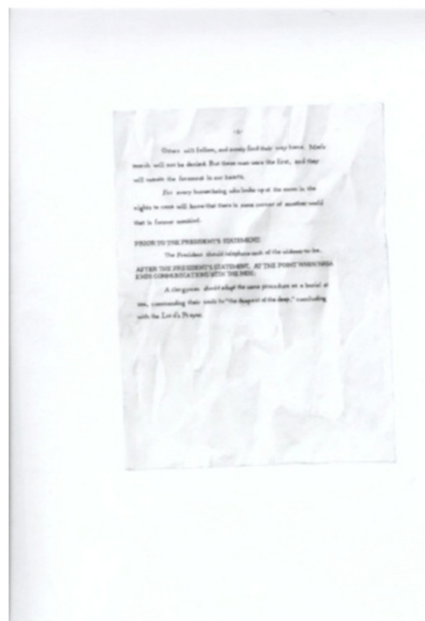
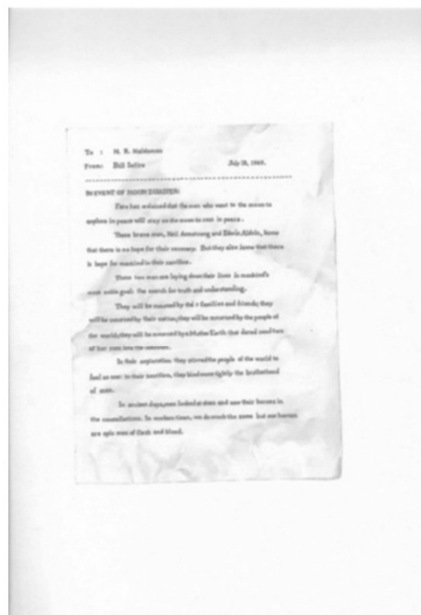
4.First Draft (Last Page)  
detail, one section of six, *pencil on paper*



5. Nature No. 4352, 25th April, 1953 (detail)  
pencil on paper

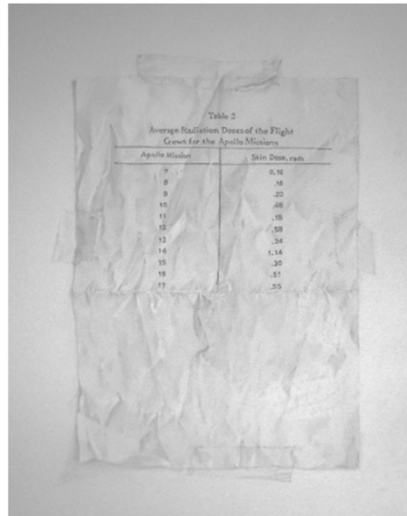


6. Art History Book  
*pencil on paper*



## 7. Lost in Space Scenarios

*pencil on paper*



Apollo Mission	Skin Dose, rads
7	0.16
8	.16
9	.22
10	.68
11	.18
12	.59
13	.34
14	1.14
15	.30
16	.81
17	.55

8. Astronaut's Radiation Exposure Chart (Apollo 13)  
*pencil on paper*

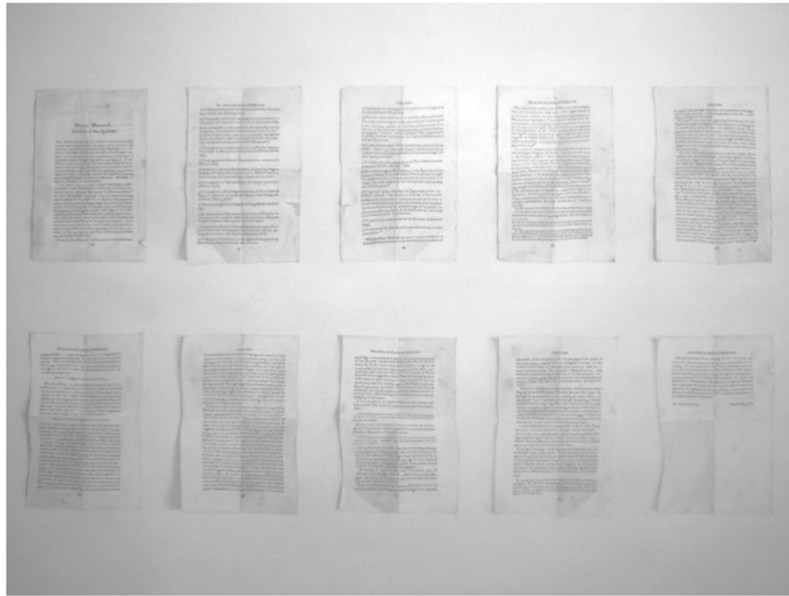


9. Hades, California  
*print*

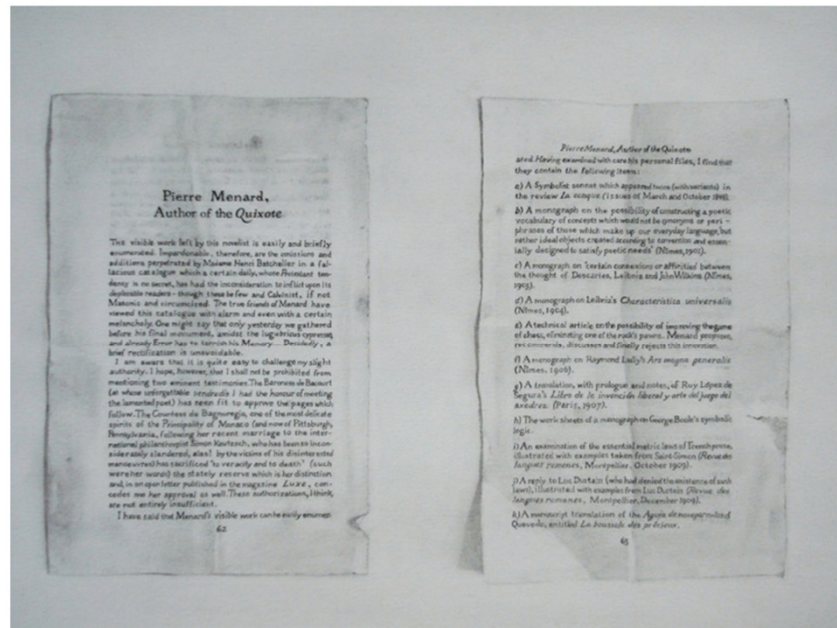


10.Colosseum  
*pencil on paper*

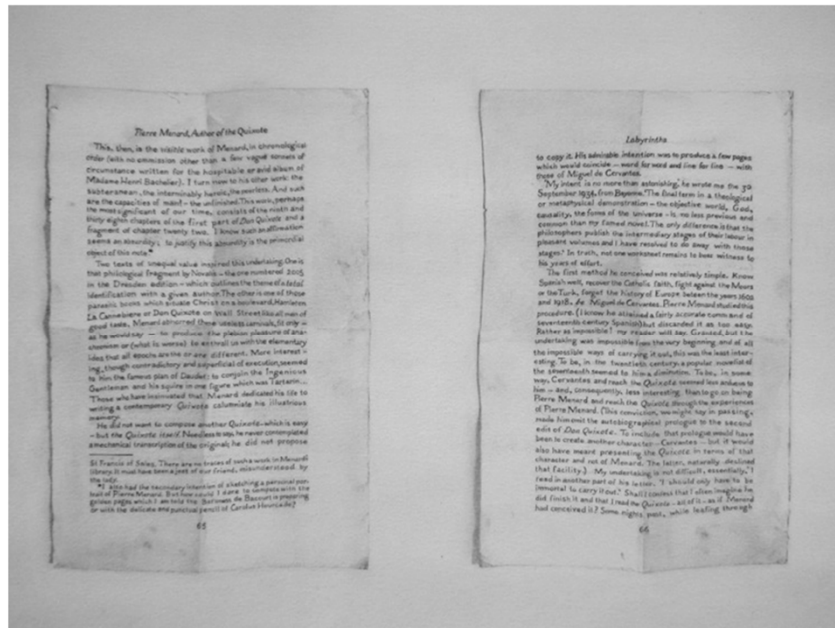




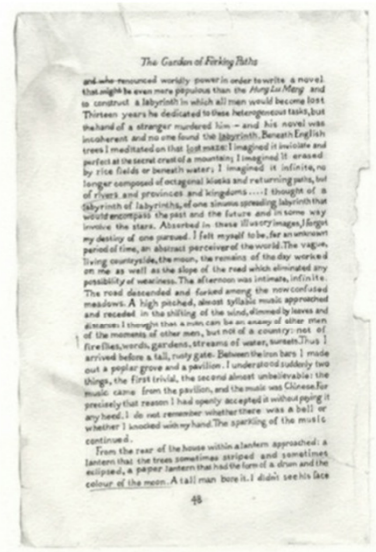
11. Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote  
*pencil on paper*



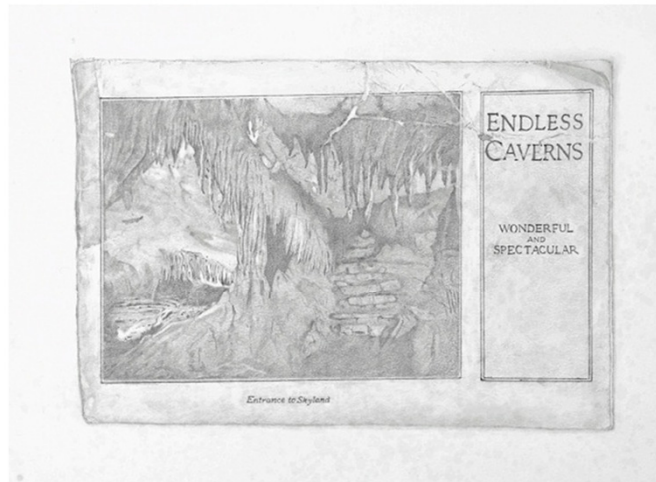
Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote (detail)



Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote (detail)



12. Labyrinth  
pencil on paper



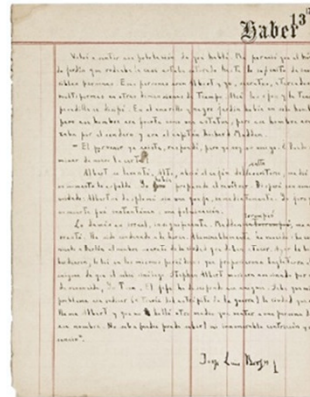
13. Endless Caverns  
*pencil on paper*



14. Chimera  
*pencil on paper*

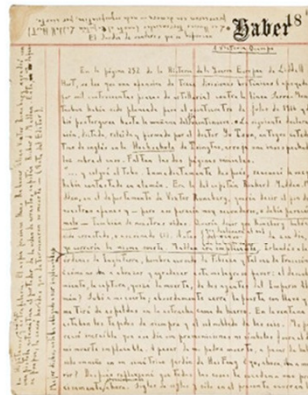


15. Vesuvius  
*paint on paper*

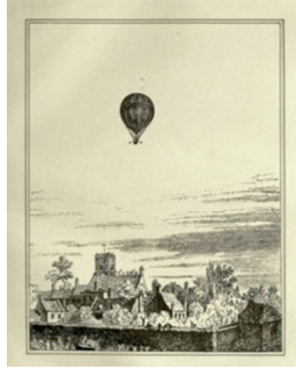


## 16. Babel 13 (The Garden of Forking Paths) Fake/Copy

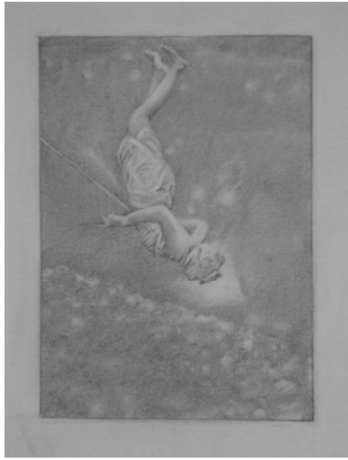




Babel 18 (The Garden of Forking Paths)  
Fake/Copy



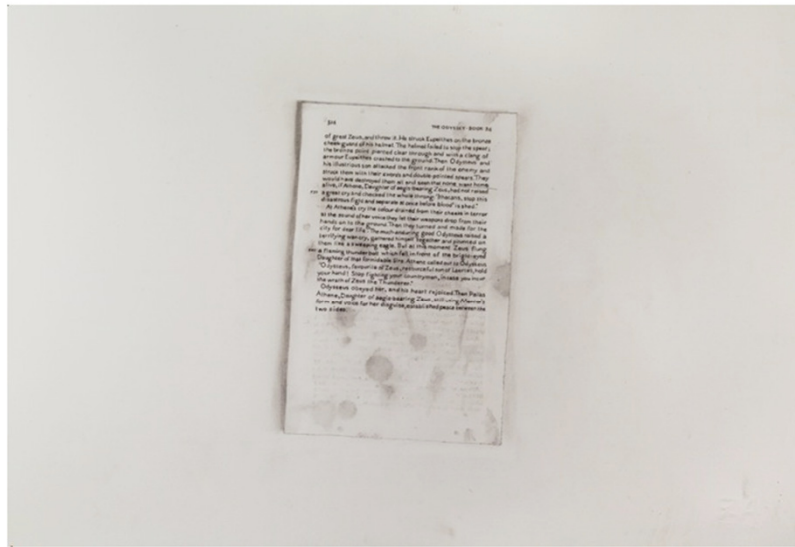
17. Balloon (observation effect)



18. Pearl Diver  
*pencil on paper*

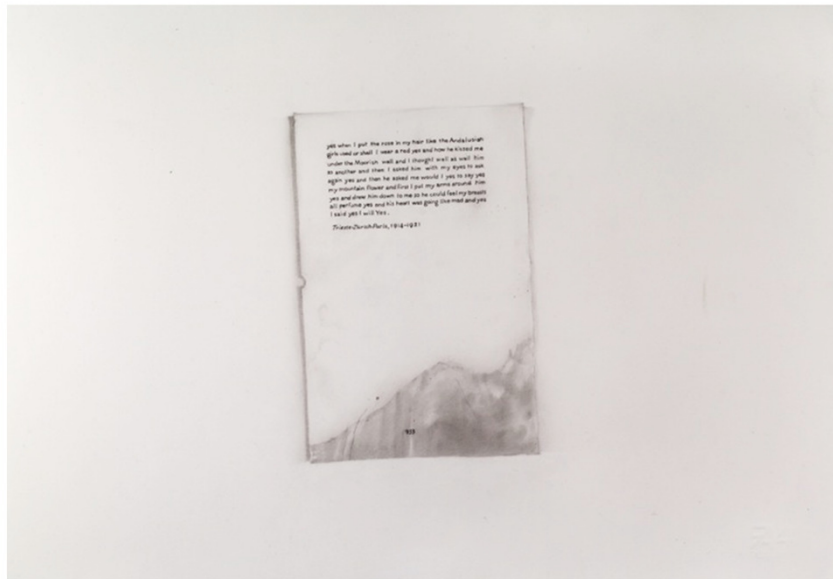


**No index entries found. Fog (Venice)**



19. The Odyssey (Penelope section, final page)  
*pencil on paper*

Venice is a Penelope of a city the water weaves paths at night, undoing them all day with no Odysseus in sight, only sea.



20. Ulysses (final page)  
*pencil on paper*

### **On Exactitude in Science**

...In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no other Relic of the Disciplines of Geography.

Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*, translated by Andrew Hurley.

Final Page



