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## Time Theory in the Short Fiction of Jorge Luis Borges: The Language of "Reality"

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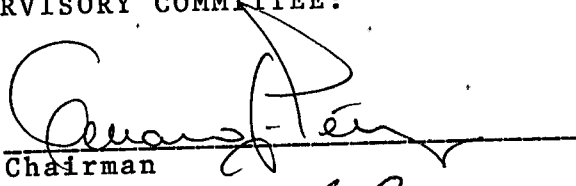
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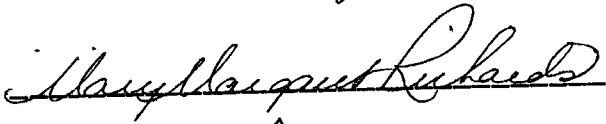
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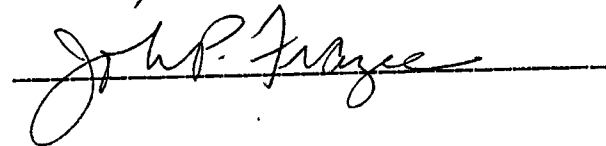
TIME THEORY IN THE SHORT FICTION OF JORGE LUIS BORGES:  
THE LANGUAGE OF "REALITY"

APPROVED BY SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

  
Chairman

  
Graduate Faculty Representative





TIME THEORY IN THE SHORT FICTION OF JORGE LUIS BORGES:  
THE LANGUAGE OF "REALITY"

by

LYN LAMKIN

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Faculty of Literature

The University of Texas of the Permian Basin

in Partial Fulfillment

of Requirements

for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS OF THE PERMIAN BASIN

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## ABSTRACT

Time boundaries delimit mankind's concerns while subtly affecting the perspective men have on all ontological questions. However, Jorge Luis Borges' short fiction develops an atemporal perspective that denies the distinctions of a past, present, and future, obscuring traditional human conceptions of time and reality. He repetitively uses cycles and labyrinths as spatial metaphors for time to emphasize man's inability to escape the maze of existence and to define a final reality that he can order. Borges' fiction suggests that only by trying to understand what exists beyond our universe in an unknowable, infinite time continuum can human reality be ordered or its order be understood. Yet for all Borges' attempts to distort and nullify time, he must finally accept that a greater, absolute logic of time asserts itself in the universe.

Abolishing the conventional and arbitrary divisions man has placed on time does not deny the existence of time or its influence on mankind. Rather than nullifying time in his fiction, Borges' metaphors for time become themselves an expression of a time continuum. Borges will never be able to decipher the continuum, but nonetheless, this continuum forces its logic back on the universe that he projects in his fiction. The

reader's first impression of his short fiction is that time disintegrates within his metaphorical devices. Instead, the logic of time reflects new realities continuously in new time frames into infinity. Despite the fact that this concept of reality offers no final answers about man's existence in time, Borges concludes that some absolute reality does exist outside the human's ability to explain it.