

# Project\_3.edited.docx

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### Project 3

#### Part 1

The theme of "The Garden of Forking Paths" by Jorge Luis Borges is that time is infinite. He wants to establish a visual idea of time rather than just an abstract one in "The Garden of Forking Paths." In this approach, he tries to give Ts'ui Pen's spatial conception of time, which entails an immeasurable concept of time that flows in diverse directions. I chose this theme because the narrative spends much time attempting to create a longitudinal comparison for time. That is to say, Borges is attempting to visualize a nonfigurative, non-visual concept such as time. In reality, "the garden of forking pathways" is exactly that. It is a paradigm, or model, to assist us visualize Ts'ui Pen's eternally branching, extending network of time. Another significant subject in Borges' writing is the question of the infinite.

In addition, as bizarre as it may seem, Einstein, Schrodinger, and his cat, as well as the theoretical physicists who continued in their footsteps, have made this model a realistic way of seeing the world. [By the way, Hugh Everett III, a scientist, proposed the "...many-worlds interpretation" of quantum technicalities in 1957, while Borges' fiction depicted the same notion in 1941. Furthermore, Yu Tsun's unshakable faith in fate is perfectly consistent with Ts'ui Pen's time model. If all conceivable occurrences must occur at some point in time, then the incidents of his time are destined to occur because they do not occur at any other moment.

Yu Tsun loses track of time as he strolls over the tangle of pathways that directs him to <sup>2</sup> Dr. Albert's residence. "For an undetermined period, I felt cut off from the world, an abstract spectator.... Going down the gently sloping road I could not feel fatigued. The evening was at once intimate and infinite" (Borges, 20). The maze appears to be an endless realm in which time has stopped. Similarly, what else do we recognize that questioned Newton's universal and uniform notion of time? Einstein, of course. It is plain to see how this narrative captivated the interest of several quantum physicists. "...Differing from Newton and Schopenhauer, your ancestor did not think of time as absolute and uniform. He believed it an infinite series of times, in a dizzily growing, ever-spreading network of diverging, converging and parallel times" (Borges, 57).

Moreover, this theme is supported by the fact that "The Garden of Forking Paths is a huge mystery, or fable, whose topic is time," Dr. Stephen Albert tells Yu Tsun. Borges also appears to be indicating that time is a significant subject in the short story "The Garden of Forking Paths." "...Everything occurs to a guy precisely now," Yu Tsun perceives early in the tale. Things happen throughout millennia, and only in the present" (Borges, 37). Yu Tsun employs this to portray time linearly.

On the contrary, humans see time as a categorization of existing moments. However, after having a fill of the moment, it has gone. As a result, the past has no more reality than the future. Both exist only in man's mind: the past belongs to the recollection domain and the future to the region of imagination. However, the linearity of time is called into question after Yu Tsun arrived at Albert's home. Yu Tsun's progenitor, according to Albert, "did not believe in a consistent, absolute time." He held the belief in an endless number of periods, in a tangle of differing, convergent, and comparable times that grew and grew.

To conclude, the time has been proven to be infinite in this narration since every present, pasts, and futures exist at the same moment in this temporal structure. Furthermore, every choice a person makes results in a different future. These options fork, implying that time isn't a straight line but instead a web or network of opportunities. The picture of the labyrinth, which is conceived of as a fork in time instead of space, hints to Albert that he must reconsider his understanding of time.

## Part 2

"A Madman's Diary" by Lu Xun reflects the influence of the individuals' customs and social behavior in its theme of tradition, cannibalism, Darwinism, and mental illness. The author questions the traditional ways of living. The madman's sickness compels him to break out of culturally accepted behavioral norms. It frees him, enabling him for perhaps the first stage in life to see properly. He sees through the mask of cultural tradition and examines the core of it. "...He simply used the pretext of feeling my pulse to see how fat I was" (24). the insane observe a succession of odd actions among his neighbors and family members. Everyone, including the youngsters, stares at him and shuns him. Chinese Traditional culture was rife with social exclusion. Chinese residents thought that by tolerating improper conduct, they were saving themselves from shame. By excluding those who did not fit in, ostracism aimed to deter people from acting differently than the norm.

In addition, "A Madman's Diary" examines cannibalism from the perspective of Chinese history. Cannibalism has a long history in China, dating back 8,000 years. Human flesh was eaten for several purposes, including masculine vigor and the treatment of various diseases. An old Confucianism notion that a child should chop off and fry a piece of their flesh to heal a dying parent was one of the historical examples of cannibalism. This custom stemmed from Confucian

ideology's belief in a child's devotion to their parents. The madman considers all cannibalism cases and the convict who was slain and devoured in a nearby hamlet. These ideas depict the influence of customs and social roles on the behavior of individuals within the story.

Because of his condition, the lunatic grows delusional, believing his neighbors and family members conspiring to kill and devour him. Even the youngsters appear to have picked up on their parents' cannibalism. "...They must have learned this from their parents!" (Lu Xun, 28) This fact depicts the importance of customs, traditions, and heritage in their culture. However, he looks at historical examples of cannibalism as well as Confucius' writings. He ponders how insane it is for people to continue to do things the same way they have been done for millennia. He asks for a break from tradition to save the children. "... The eyes of the fish were white and hard, and its mouth was open" (33). through this reasoning, the same customs and traditions transform him.

Similarly, the madman ponders the necessity to adapt and evolve rather than clinging to self-destructive customs like cannibalism. The madman investigates how certain humans evolved from reptiles to humans by following the evolutionary chain. Others refuse to adapt and continue to act in a reptile manner. The cannibals are among the reptiles who have survived. The lunatic realizes that those who remain cannibals would continue to consume and dread being devoured by other cannibals. "... They will all be consumed eventually, and there will not be any left. The only way to save the children is to save the children" (Lu Xun, 47).

Lu Xun was up in a conventional, affluent, and prestigious household (his grandpa was a Beijing government member), and he had a pleasant upbringing. On the other hand, his grandpa was condemned to prison for examination fraud in 1893, and his father fell sick. The family's reputation deteriorated, and their neighborhood and relatives looked down on them. This act is

considered to have had a significant impact on his work, characterized by pessimism and sensitivity.

In conclusion, analytical reading of Lu Xun's "Diary of a Madman," a seminal book in modern Chinese writing, reveals the necessity to rethink contemporary Chinese literature history and use modernity as a historicizing term, which influences the perspective of the narration. Rather than being dismissed as mere realism fiction, the modern theory demonstrates how Lu Xun's tale consistently and ingeniously elucidates a modernist sensitivity of time and a modernist philosophy of language. The Madman's Madness designates a new, antagonistic symbolic order and conduct and expresses a profoundly modern consciousness in its rupture with conventional socialism. This iconic work of deconstructive interpretation, which was at the vanguard of the historical New Culture trend, concurrently offers a critical and productive discursive technique. Finally, modernism necessitates understanding modernity as both a particular historical perspective and a worldwide condition.

**Works Cited**

Borges, Jorge Luis. *The Garden of Forking Paths*. Penguin Classics, 2018.

Xun, Lu. *Diary of a Madman*. University Of Hawaii Press, 2021.

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