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IBERIAN AND LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

*Adolfo Bioy Casares*

*Borges, Fiction and Art*

EDITED BY KARL POSSO



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# Series Editors' Foreword

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Over recent decades the traditional 'languages and literatures' model in Spanish departments in universities in the United Kingdom has been superseded by a contextual, interdisciplinary and 'area studies' approach to the study of the culture, history, society and politics of the Hispanic and Lusophone worlds – categories that extend far beyond the confines of the Iberian Peninsula, not only in Latin America but also to Spanish-speaking and Lusophone Africa.

In response to these dynamic trends in research priorities and curriculum development, this series is designed to present both disciplinary and interdisciplinary research within the general field of Iberian and Latin American Studies, particularly studies that explore all aspects of Cultural Production (inter alia literature, film, music, dance, sport) in Spanish, Portuguese, Basque, Catalan, Galician and indigenous languages of Latin America. The series also aims to publish research in the History and Politics of the Hispanic and Lusophone worlds, at the level of both the region and the nation-state, as well as on Cultural Studies that explore the shifting terrains of gender, sexual, racial and postcolonial identities in those same regions.



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Karl Posso



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# Note on translations

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Published translations have been referred to where possible; otherwise, translations are the authors' own. The translated titles of works which are not available in English appear uncapitalized.



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## Introduction

# Rethinking Adolfo Bioy Casares

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KARL POSSO

Bioy was really and secretly the master.

Jorge Luis Borges (1970, p. 40)

In September 2001, as Argentina came to a standstill amidst one of the worst economic crises in history, *La Nación* – the country’s only daily broadsheet – in association with Grupo Planeta – the largest publishing group in Latin America and Spain – came up with what was perhaps a rather characteristic display of cultural nationalism: it decided to launch its ‘Biblioteca Argentina’ (‘Argentinian library’), an elegantly presented collection of ‘affordable’ hardbacks comprising twenty-six iconic works of ‘contemporary’ national literature. The aim was to reinvigorate the so-called Argentinian tradition of engaging with its own pioneering literary culture by making ‘works of significance’ accessible to all.<sup>1</sup> Although the public were unlikely to be investing or indulging in cultural products such as highbrow literary classics at a time of economic austerity and national emergency, it is possible to see here a conservative newspaper’s overwhelming desire to stoke feelings of cultural belonging and patriotic pride in the face of adversity. (That said, its series cannot be accused of showing a political bias as it includes works such as Tomás Eloy Martínez’s *La novela de Perón* (1985; *The Perón Novel*) and Ricardo Piglia’s *Respiración artificial* (1980; *Artificial Respiration*.) What is most interesting is that when the ‘Biblioteca Argentina’ was announced by *La Nación*, it did so by producing a lengthy paean on the importance of the works selected to be volumes one and two in the series (both issued on 14 September 2001): Adolfo Bioy Casares’s *Diario de la guerra del cerdo* (1969; *Diary of the War of the Pig*) and Jorge Luis Borges’s *El informe de Brodie* (1970; *Brodie’s Report*) – ‘outstanding’ works by ‘two masters of the nation’s literature’. Leading this cast of key contemporary Argentinian authors, and preceding the country’s most famous twentieth-century writer, not to mention its greatest literary export, was his long-time collaborator, Adolfo Bioy

Casares: presented alongside, rather than subsumed into, the Borgesian oeuvre and mythos (Figure 1).<sup>2</sup>

Given the socio-political context in 2001, it was unwittingly prescient and ironic that *La Nación* inaugurated the 'Biblioteca Argentina' collection with its erstwhile contributor's novel about youth waging war in the streets of Buenos Aires against the gerontocracy. His narrative foreshadows to some extent the urban chaos that unfolded during the *corralito* (meaning 'playpen') – the desperate economic measures taken by the Argentinian government that left most citizens unable to access their bank accounts. Although often read as a condemnation of senseless intolerance, *Diario de la guerra del cerdo* can also be interpreted as a somewhat muffled allegorical critique of incipient juvenile revolt – possibly Peronist or Marxist, but probably both – in Argentina in the late 1960s, which was then under the military dictatorship of Juan Carlos Onganía (see Villordo, 1983, p. 92; Blejmar's chapter in this volume). The novel – which had been adapted, somewhat unhappily, to film by Leopoldo Torre Nilsson in 1975 – may therefore be seen to reveal certain conservative sympathies from an aging, affluent author; and yet instead of inspiring the antagonism of the oppressed masses, be that in 1969 or 2001, the novel persistently proved to be a huge commercial success – print runs kept selling out (Cavallero, 2006, p. 90; Toro and Regazzoni, 2002, p. 307). Rather like Borges, vilified for being photographed with General Videla at the start of Argentina's 'Dirty War' in 1976, then resuscitated as the global star of Argentinian letters, with Bioy, albeit at a humbler level, evident conservatism – making him an apposite recipient of *La Nación*'s accolades – failed to prevent him from garnering popular admiration for his unconventional thought and outlandish narratives.<sup>3</sup> And yet, the fact that at the start of the twenty-first century Bioy was being promoted by a national newspaper as a bastion of Argentina's distinguished and inventive literary culture – what is more, placed at its forefront – might have struck some (academic circles) as a little surprising, given that, particularly in recent years, his works have not received the critical attention befitting someone in a position of such alleged prominence.

The debate about Bioy's cultural standing surged once again on 27 December 2010 when Raúl Puy, socialist member of the legislative assembly of Buenos Aires, and president of its Commission for Culture, announced that half of Eduardo Schiaffino Street in the capital's historic neighbourhood of Recoleta would be renamed in Bioy's honour.<sup>4</sup> Although the proposal was approved unanimously by the assembly, discussion on *La Nación*'s internet forum and on related Facebook pages the day after the decision was taken centred on whether the author deserved such an accolade. Whilst most people were very much in favour, there were a few voices of dissent questioning the literary consequence of the *flâneur* who had only succeeded in attaching himself to Borges 'como una remora' ('like a remora') – a

comment which was subsequently reported by other forum users as abuse (Juanef, 2010). This hasty dismissal of Bioy as a mere footnote in the history of Borges's development or influence, and the questioning of his literary and broader cultural import in Argentina are two of the issues addressed in this volume. The essays here examine the tensions which arise from Bioy's oeuvre being regarded as both canonical and contemporary, *démodé* yet enduringly avant-garde, not to mention both conservative and iconoclastic – in the process going some way towards redressing Bioy's latter-day neglect by critics.

### Repositioning Bioy

The work of Adolfo Bioy Casares (1914–99) is considered fundamental to the development of the fantastic genre in the River Plate region in the twentieth century (McMurray, 1988, p. 4; see also Anderson Imbert, 1966, p. 27; Bethell, 1998, p. 169; Oviedo, 2001, p. 39); and he is also frequently discussed in connection to the development of science fiction in Latin America (Lafon, 2009, pp. 7–8; Lockhart, 2004, pp. 29–32; Sawyer and Wright, 2011, p. 190). Bioy's writing foreshadows the Spanish American 'new narrative', that is, the experimental prose of the so-called 'Boom' writers of the 1960s, and the influence of his meticulous plotting alongside that of his life-long friend and literary partner, Jorge Luis Borges, has been detected in major contemporary Latin American writers such as Ricardo Piglia, Roberto Bolaño, Carmen Boullosa, Leonardo Padura Fuentes and Guillermo Martínez (Boullosa, 2007; Peñate Rivero, 2002, pp. 556–60; Rodríguez Pérsico, 2004, pp. 133, 237; Ruiz Ortega, 2007; Sender, 2009). Further afield, Bioy's works have had an impact on other areas of the arts, such as film-making, as will be discussed later. Currently though, in the English-speaking world, beyond academic circles, Bioy is most frequently discussed under the category of 'neglected authors' – in the past few years he has been described as unjustly undervalued on BBC Radio 4 and in the *New York Review of Books*, to cite but two examples (Barber, 2009; Cabrera Infante *et al.*, 1999; MacGregor, 2007; *The Neglected Books Page*, 2010).

That within the English-speaking world Bioy is considered canonical in the context of fiction of the Americas, however, is not in doubt: he is included in high-school and college reference series such as *Masterplots* (Kellman, 2000) and *Notable Latino Writers* (Kellman, 2006), and his non-fiction is included in *The Oxford Book of Latin American Essays* (Stavans, 1997). And yet, although his works are available in English, there has never been a comprehensive volume which addresses them critically for an English-speaking audience. What *Adolfo Bioy Casares: Borges, Fiction and Art* seeks to do, therefore, is complement and enhance the extant

Spanish-language bibliography on Bioy, challenging the relative critical neglect from which his works have suffered in recent years. Such disregard is largely down to Bioy being persistently overshadowed through his link with Borges (Barrera, 2001, p. 73; Hernández, 2006, pp. 85–6). Bioy's considerable oeuvre – including eight acknowledged novels and some nine collections of short stories, as well as the ongoing posthumous publications of his extensive 'commonplace'-style volumes of jottings and memoirs – merits serious consideration beyond this partly self-inflicted public role as Boswell to Borges's Johnson (Gallagher, 2007; Posse, 1999).

Bioy was encouraged to take an interest in intellectual and literary matters from an early age; his parents, who belonged to the Buenos Aires *haut monde*, urged him to engage with visiting intellectuals. The Mexican writer and philosopher Alfonso Reyes, for example, was a regular visitor to their house in Avenida Quintana – other visitors included Luigi Pirandello, Maurice Blondel and Paul Langevin. During their brief correspondence, Reyes told the teenage Bioy to purge his prose of verbiage and the banal, and this became a perennial preoccupation for him (Gliemmo, 1998, p. 46; Ruiz, 2003, pp. 78–93; Saavedra, 1993, pp. 22–3). By the end of his life, Bioy had a considerable reputation in Latin America, Europe and the USA. José María Aznar, the then Spanish Prime Minister, visited the 1990 Premio Cervantes laureate at his home on 21 April 1997 (see Iglesias and Arias, 2002, pp. 84–6). Prior to this, Bioy had been awarded the Gran Premio de Honor ('great honorary prize') of the SADE (Sociedad Argentina de Escritores; 'society of Argentinian writers') in 1975, the *Légion d'honneur* ('legion of honour') in 1981, and Italy's Premio Mondello in 1984. The re-publishing of many of his works in Spain in the 1980s (by Seix Barral and Alianza), the Cervantes award, and the publication and re-publication of most of his novels in English and French, all of which led to the diffusion of his work to a wider public, also began a critical effort to re-evaluate his writing.<sup>5</sup> During the 1990s though, when he was in his late seventies and early eighties, perhaps spurred on by literary awards, and perhaps by zealous, indiscriminating acolytes, not to mention growing financial concerns, Bioy published a few ill-considered works – including the novellas *Un campeón desparejo* (1993; 'an inconsistent champion') and *De un mundo a otro* (1998; 'from one world to another') – which came to cast a deleterious shadow over his previous literary achievements. Although his death in 1999 once again led to a flurry of critical and commemorative publications, the appearance in 2006 of the Borges-focused selection of his diary extracts served to entomb any serious critical assessment of the author: amongst other things, *Borges* is an unwitting monument to Bioy as Boswell, or as current web-based detractors would have it, as 'remora'.

Bioy is usually situated within the triangle he formed at home with his wife, the writer Silvina Ocampo, and Borges – united in their intermittent

rebellion against the imposing Victoria Ocampo and her revered literary magazine *Sur* ('south') (Figures 2 and 3). The connection with Borges and Ocampo, both of whom were older, makes it easy to associate Bioy with their generation, and to forget that he was the exact contemporary of Julio Cortázar. In his 'Diario para un cuento' (1982; 'Diary for a Story'), Cortázar confesses that he covets Bioy's ability to open narratives and distance narrators from protagonists in order to open up spaces for seeming objectivity and also for his skilful humorous descant.<sup>6</sup> Bioy also merits a mention in Cortázar's key novel *Rayuela* (1963; *Hopscotch*), where he is the subject of intellectual wrangling (1988, pp. 383–4). Such ambivalent homage is indicative of Bioy's uncertain status in Argentina. Cortázar admires Bioy's self-effacing humour – for which he accords him a place in the pantheon of Argentinian literature. This admiration though, is communicated through curiously backhanded compliments in *La vuelta al día en ochenta mundos* (1967; *Around the Day in Eighty Worlds*) where he praises the efficacy of Bioy's humour whilst implying a derivative alignment with English-language models. He talks of Bioy's 'liviana eficacia' ('light efficiency'), which may be read positively as a light narrative touch, but perhaps also negatively as a notion of qualified or superficial success; and in saying that his literature can go much further than that of the nation's grandiloquent writers, and that it acknowledges its own limitations, he seems to suggest that Bioy exceeds his peers, but also that he does not always realize his own potential (1967, p. 54). Similar judgements are made more explicitly by the contemporary Argentinian writer Leopoldo Brizuela, and by Argentinian poet Alejandra Pizarnik, in whose dreams Bioy and Ocampo are reduced to ciphers for the literary establishment (Brizuela, 2009; Pizarnik, 2005, pp. 66, 464). In contrast, Alberto Giordano (2006), who concedes the declining quality of Bioy's final works, challenges Pizarnik's 'insidious' remarks about the 'lack of plenitude' in Bioy's writing by re-reading the aesthetic simplicity the author actively courted. It is such dismissals – tacit or explicit – of Bioy's work that this volume seeks to question, re-evaluating his place in Argentinian literature and beyond.

Countering Cortázar and others' faint praise of Bioy is Roberto Bolaño. In *El gaucho insufrible* (2003; *The Insufferable Gaucho*) Bolaño includes the libellous essay, 'Los mitos de Chtulhu' [*sic*] ('The Myths of Cthulhu') on the state of literature in Spanish: he rails against mass demand for immediately intelligible narratives and against contemporary writers and celebrity culture. Bioy is one of few writers to receive approbation inasmuch as he is spared Bolaño's vitriol. It is also worth recalling here Alfred MacAdam's classic and provocative interpretation of Bioy's novel *Plan de evasión* (1945; *A Plan for Escape*) in *Modern Latin American Narratives: The Dreams of Reason* (1977). MacAdam compares Bioy to Cortázar, to the latter's detriment; for although Bioy's works are said to present more superficially

comprehensible narratives which ‘might be taken for science fiction’, in reality, they are more complex ‘metaphors on metaphor, metaliterary texts designed to show what literature is’ (1977, p. 43; see also Hegi, 1990). MacAdam’s comparative readings will be referred to in more detail later. Where Cortázar expresses – albeit ambivalently – admiration for Bioy’s quietly telling humour, another leading Argentinian novelist of the period, Ernesto Sabato, praises his dexterity with ‘un idioma desnudo’ (Barone, 1996, p. 35; ‘bare language’). Indeed, an appreciation of clarity in prose was, Borges admits, Bioy’s gift to him (Bioy, 2006, p. 468). Bioy’s own language, while frequently displaying this pared-down quality, is also highly sensitive to register and idiomatic expression. Borges notes that capturing colloquial language is what Bioy does best (1955, p. 88) – and critics have focused on this aspect of Bioy’s work (Bastos, 1983; Camurati, 1983; Morris, 1988; Thornton, 1988). However, this use of specifically *porteño* (from Buenos Aires) idiom also occasionally caused confusion amongst peninsular readers (Bioy, 2001, p. 424).

Bioy’s fascination with language in its social context is indulged most fully in his *Diccionario del argentino exquisito* (‘dictionary of refined Argentinian terms’ or ‘dictionary for the refined Argentine’), which places itself in the tradition of Flaubert’s *Dictionnaire des idées reçues* (1870s; *Dictionary of Received Ideas*).<sup>7</sup> It was first published under the pseudonym Javier Miranda in 1971, then in three successively expanded editions under his own name in 1978, 1980 and 1990. This idiosyncratic dictionary detailing the pretentious language bandied around by Argentinian politicians and other public figures repays closer study since it affords insight into Bioy’s sensitivity to linguistic register and a snapshot of his social context in the 1970s and 1980s. At times, there is a nostalgia similar to that of Borges in stories like ‘El sur’ (1953; in *Ficciones*, 1956; ‘The South’) for a mythologized Argentinian past, for example when he asks why corner shops are no longer referred to as *almacenes* but as *despensas* (1990, p. 7). Elsewhere he hints at contemporary politics; in the 1978 prologue he says that it is incumbent upon everyone to restore common sense in a world prone to madness. The entries where politics are explicit reveal his personal scepticism and detachment: *aglutinar* (‘to unite’) is defined as a Peronist imperative (p. 13); *oligarca* (‘oligarch’) as someone who no longer belongs in government (p. 87), and there are various playful references to communism, Onganía’s regime (p. 89) and the processes of national re-structuring (p. 106). As a barometer of social transformation, the dictionary includes many words or phatic expressions which appeared extraordinary then but have since become pedestrian – this includes basic psychoanalytical terminology: words such as *estresado* (p. 51; ‘stressed’) and *tensionado* (p. 116; ‘tense’). The dictionary is of a time when political correctness as well as globalization and green issues were poised to take off in Argentina, hence his inclusion of *marginado* (p. 79;

‘marginalized’), *medio ambiente* (p. 80; ‘environment’), *globalidad* (p. 59; ‘global nature’) and *privatización* (p. 99; ‘privatization’). This fascination for language spilled over into his commonplace books – his various memoirs and diaries like *Unos días en el Brasil* (‘a few days in Brazil’) – where he comments on the clash between modernity and baroque expression (2010, p. 26) – *En viaje (1967)* (1997b; ‘travels (1967)’) and *Borges*, and the anthologies of jottings such as *De jardines ajenos* (1997a; ‘on other people’s gardens’) and *Descanso de caminantes* (2001; ‘travellers’ rest’). Habitual note-taking on language usage is seen as an important means of finding ideas for narrative projects.

### Writing and influence

The extensive commonplace books, with their vastly diverse material, are nevertheless peripheral to Bioy’s most important work, his short stories and novels. Although he was anxious to dismiss his early experimental fiction, it is interesting to see the embryonic presence of later works’ leitmotifs in the juvenilia. As suggested by Noemí Ulla, the social, cultural as well as scientific and critical matrix of ideas, practices and techniques that constitute photography are an integral part of Bioy’s aesthetic from the beginning (2005, pp. 163–81). This fundamental theme can be traced back to the stories of *17 disparos contra lo porvenir* (1933; ‘seventeen shots against the future’), which was published under the pseudonym Martín Sacastrú (see Bioy, 1996). ‘Amoríos con mucamas’ (‘affairs with maids’) from this collection looks at how photography fixes and distorts relationships with those close to us. This is linked to amorous encounters which already display the trademark pattern of inconstancy which characterize Bioy’s later works. *Caos* (1934; ‘chaos’) – a miscellany of rather verbose exercises in creative writing – likewise introduces themes that he returns to later in life, such as inventions and future transformation, travel, alterity and parallel worlds, belying the critical consensus that his final works move away from earlier obsessions (Pellicer, 2008, pp. 762–3; Podlubne, 2004, p. 212).

The story ‘La duda en el espacio’ (‘the doubt in space’), included in *Caos*, for instance, centres around travel to another planet, encounters with alien beings and a patriotic welcome home; that is, the zany extraterrestrial elements found in stories such as ‘La trama celeste’ (1948; ‘The Celestial Plot’), ‘El calamar opta por su tinta’ (1962; ‘The Squid in Its Own Ink’), ‘Oswalt Henry, viajero’ (1997c; ‘Oswalt Henry, traveller’), and his final novel, *De un mundo a otro*. The protagonist of ‘La duda en el espacio’ questions whether his ambulant experiences are actual or oneiric (1934, p. 117), foreshadowing the typical ambiguities of Bioy’s mature style – in *De un mundo a otro* the possibilities encompass the actual, the oneiric and the cinematographic.

This story also portends the outcomes of Borges's 'El sur' and Cortázar's 'La noche boca arriba' (1956; 'The Night Face Up'), both published some twenty years later. Bioy's protagonist explicitly muses: '¿Estoy muriendo en el fondo lejano a donde van a morir las estrellas caídas, o estoy muriendo en una cama del manicomio?' (1934, p. 124; 'Am I dying in the distant depths where shooting stars go to die, or in bed in an asylum?'), whereas Borges's protagonist implicitly hovers between death in a *gaucho* duel or in a sanatorium. Bioy thus inserts himself early on into a clearly defined fantastic tradition, and heralds its continuation in the drowsy – hypnopompic – undecidability of works such as those of Cortázar in the 1950s and 1960s.

*La nueva tormenta o La vida múltiple de Juan Ruteno* (1935; 'the new storm or Juan Ruteno's multiple life') is stylistically eclectic, at times recalling surrealistic dialogues in the Federico García Lorca vein, but also the atmosphere of Victoria Ocampo's *La laguna de los nenúfares* (1926; 'the lake of water lilies'), and the ending – with a boy returned to sitting in the sun with his mother in Palermo after a series of fantastic adventures – is reminiscent of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865). The characters and setting are also similar to those we come to associate with the writing of Silvina Ocampo (she and Bioy had met the year before) in terms of childhood fantasy and nostalgia. The fourth book within *La nueva tormenta* involves the eponymous Juan Ruteno as a voyeur obsessed with a couple in a curtained double phaeton. The mysterious shrouded carriage recalls the dream scene in María Luisa Bombal's principal narrative from *La última niebla* (1934; 'The Final Mist'), published the year before. Unlike Bombal's protagonist who finds in her mysterious lover a *raison d'être*, but passes from contentment with enigma to anxiety for proof of his actual existence beyond her fantasy world, Bioy's Ruteno is anxious to leave the woman's silence unchecked. He preserves her mystery, keeping any knowledge of her at arm's length; his desire is to experience the new at its most intense, whilst disconnecting himself from external reality. In this perhaps coincidental cameo of a dream scene in the wood involving a puzzling carriage we can see Bioy beginning to shape his own detached hero figures – explored in this volume in Henighan's chapter – in counterpoint to contemporary novels. This early narrative of attraction and irretrievable uncommunicativeness also prefigures what was to become Bioy's most influential work, *La invención de Morel* (1940; *The Invention of Morel*).

*La invención de Morel* is the story of a pursued political exile on a deserted island who falls in love with a *trompe l'oeil* woman. Bioy's virtual woman, Faustine, endures indifferently as the three-dimensional effect of a scientist cum technological-artist's – the eponymous Morel's – fiendish attempt to achieve immortality within a conjugal *locus amoenus* through celluloid. Morel, it transpires, had recorded Faustine together with a group of his

friends during a week on the island and it is this recording, repeated *ad infinitum* by a tide-operated projector, which the fugitive encounters. For most critics it is this novella – awarded the 1941 Municipal Prize for Literature of the City of Buenos Aires – which earned Bioy his place within the Argentinian canon (Anon., 1941; Cavallero, 2006, p. 41; Block de Behar, 2003, pp. 31–54; Mignolo, 1984, p. 482). John Updike, in *The New Yorker* in 1986, writes about *La invención de Morel* as the piece that made Bioy a significant literary figure outside his homeland. (The first translation of the novel appeared in France in 1952, and an English translation followed in 1964. Since then, the novel has been translated into most major languages.<sup>8</sup>) Updike goes on to claim that this is the ‘prime text’ for what was to become the transnational literary ‘counter-revolution’ now labelled ‘Borgesian’ – namely, that which pitted a literature of reasoned imagination against the rambling psychological novel; he also identifies the novella as ‘the Latin-American fantasy’ which first drew the attention of postmodern theorists such as Alain Robbe-Grillet (1986, pp. 104–6). Read at the end of the twentieth century, he states, the narrative entertains in the manner of dated science fiction:

Wells’ Time Machine was a late-Victorian gewgaw, a ‘glittering metallic framework’ with parts of nickel and ivory and crystal, a kind of idealized elevator cage, and Alfred Jarry went into futuristic raptures over the then newest thing, the bicycle. Bioy Casares, as of 1940, was understandably struck by the inventions of the motion-picture projector and the phonograph, which preserve reality as seen and heard. (Updike, 1986, p. 105)

However, the charm of the new led Bioy to produce more than just a fictive extrapolation of recent technological innovation – he anticipated the invention of holography – given that it induced philosophical reflections which far outstripped any ‘futuristic rapture’. In *La invención de Morel* photography and images are contemplated in relation to the machinations of power, and montage becomes a gratifying metaphor through which Bioy comments on the illusory nature of love: physical proximity or visible togetherness never surmounts the insularity of being. The legacy of Bioy’s narratively charged comments on film and being in this text is considerable in terms of scope and import: the novella has influenced, and continues to inspire, both highbrow art and popular cultural production, and it has occasionally coloured the lexicon of film theory and cinema studies.<sup>9</sup> It is worth considering briefly here some of the works which have evolved out of readings of the fable of Morel’s demonic photography.

As is to be expected, given the subject matter, various film adaptations of *La invención de Morel* have been attempted; these include: Claude-Jean Bonnardot’s film for television (France, 1967); Emidio Greco’s Italian version (1974), and more recently, Andrés García Franco’s short (Mexico,