Although an encounter between Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) and Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935) seems unlikely, the possibility is real enough. During May and June in 1924, Borges, a few months shy of his twenty-fifth birthday, visited for six weeks with his parents and sister the city of Lisbon, city that Pessoa, then thirty-six years old, had been living in ever since he returned from South Africa in September, 1905. The first to have entertained the idea of their meeting was Emir Rodríguez Monegal, who wrote of them sitting in the Brasileira do Chiado (399)\(^2\)–one of the cafés in the Portuguese capital that Pessoa and other fellow writers frequented. More

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1 I wish to express my gratitude to Daniel Henri-Pageaux, my supervisor at the time, for his generosity, scholarship and guidance. I also want to thank Susan Margaret Brown for her thorough revision and comments, as well as acknowledge the following people who have helped at different stages of this study: Claudia J. Fischer, Helena Buescu, María Kodama, Laura Rosato, Cristina Piña, George Monteiro, Onésimo T. Almeida, Jerónimo Pizarro, Daniel Balderston, José Barreto, Carlos Pittella-Leite and Vasco Rosa.

2 Rodríguez Monegal gives 1923 as the year in which Borges visited Lisbon (399).
recently, Daniel Balderston pictured them conversing in an English that would have sounded somewhat antiquated to contemporary ears though entirely in keeping with the bookish English in which both of them were also at home (169).³

Very little is known about what Borges actually did during those six weeks in Lisbon. Aside from mentioning in his Autobiographical Essay, five decades later, that he had “many memories of Genova, Zurich, Nîmes, Córdoba, and Lisbon,” he remains silent on the matter (The Aleph 223-24). We do know, however, that before his voyage back to Buenos Aires on the Dutch ship Orania on June 30th, the Borges family stayed in the Hotel Francfort do Rossio (Baccaro 237; 375), located in the same building as the Irmãos Unidos restaurant; curiously enough, this was where Borges met António Ferro—the youngest member of the Orpheu circle which in 1915 had used this establishment as the meeting point for the literary magazine that would launch Portuguese modernism.⁴

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3 Ever since Rodríguez Monegal’s article (399-406), other critics have fictionalized the encounter. See, for example, works by Teresa Rita Lopes, Vasco Graça Moura, and Patrick Quillier. For the letter Borges sent to Pessoa for the fiftieth anniversary of his death, upon the request of José Blanco, see Blanco (173-78). A brief comparative study between Borges and Pessoa may be found in Ferrari and Pizarro (91-92).

4 In an interview with Carvalho de Montezuma in 1971 Borges recalled the following: “Meus pais instalaram-se num hotel que ou ficava nos Restauradores ou na Praça do Rossio. Do que tenho absoluta certeza é que ficava mesmo no centro de Lisboa. O nome do hotel não o lembro mais. Foi, então, que me surgiu nesse hotel um jovem da minha idade. Não sei como nos conhecemos. Sei que foi no hotel e desde o primeiro contacto ficámos amigos. Chamava-se António Ferro. Todos os dias aparecia no hotel e todos os dias conversávamos. De literatura, claro. De modernismo, de vanguardismo e de outros ‘ismos’. Ficámos ainda a dever a António Ferro a sugestão para visitar outros pontos de Portugal, dignos de interesse turístico. Sei que visitei com meus pais e minha irmã locais como Sintra, Cascais, Alcobãa, Praia da Nazaré, Batalha, Coimbra, Luso, Buçaco, Figueira da Foz... Não me lembro os nomes de outras terras. Não, não sei se fomos ao Porto. Mas como recordo bem a António Ferro, muito vivo, muito gentil, muito imaginativo! Não posso recordar Portugal sem recordar António Ferro. O único escritor português deste século XX que conheci, tratei e estimei” (14) [I quote from the continuation of the article published 15 April 1971]. In a different interview regarding the period preceding Orpheu, Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues said: “Naquele tempo, um grupo de amigos reunia-se quase todas as noites no restaurante Irmãos Unidos, no Rossio: Fernando Pessoa, Mário de Sá-Carneiro, Santa Rita Pintor, José Pacheco, Luís de Montalvor, Alfredo Guisado, Almada Negreiros e eu. Dali nasceu a necessidade de uma revista” (“Diálogo” 3). Information obtained from the Exposição Orpheu 100 Anos – “Nós, os de Orpheu”, organized at the Fernado Pessoa House during 2015 by Antonio Cardiello, Silvia Costa and Jerônimo Pizarro. See
If we examine Pessoa at this particular juncture in time in terms of his literary production, the projects he was pursuing, and the people with whom he was corresponding, one observation in particular seems worth mentioning. It is his correspondence with the Spanish poet Adriano del Valle, with a letter dated June 1st, 1924. The missive itself reveals nothing special, but the fact of their short yet intense epistolary relationship is noteworthy because Borges and del Valle were then close friends.

Since no proof of an encounter or even awareness of the two poets exists, I will refrain from offering one more imaginary physical encounter and frame my investigation in terms of something they shared a common admiration for, something that may well lie at the heart of any significant link between Pessoa and Borges—namely, their ongoing relationship with English as voracious readers and, in Pessoa’s case, as a poet as well. The unequalled importance of the English language and the unrivaled impact of its literature upon both cannot be overstated. Each possessed a personal library largely comprised of non-contemporary Anglophone authors, many of whom would exert a deep influence during their formative years.

John Milton (1608-1674) was one such author.

Recent research in Borges’s private library has revealed that his collection of books by and about Milton was larger and more diverse than the items listed in the pioneer work by Rosato and Álvarez (242-43). These new findings show that Borges was keenly interested not only in Milton the poet but as a prose writer as well: the man and his thought, including his political views and his disputes with contemporary authorities.

https://www.academia.edu/12537767/Exposição_Orpheu_100_anos_Nós_os_de_Orpheu

5 The correspondence between Pessoa and del Valle extends from August 31st 1923 to November 10th 1924. During this period they exchanged at least fourteen letters (ten signed by Pessoa and four by del Valle): “Si consideramos que Adriano pudo descubrir el nombre de Pessoa en 1922, cuando ambos colaboran en la revista Contemporânea, y aunque tengamos certeza de los días mencionados de 1923 como los del encuentro personal, no existen indicios definitivos a la hora de intentar calibrar cuándo se acaba la amistad entre ambos poetas” (cf. Sáez Delgado 111-47 [112]).

6 One of the signs of this friendship is the dedication of “Himno del Mar,” the first poem Borges published in his lifetime. The poem appeared in Grecia, a Spanish magazine directed by del Valle (cf. TR 1: 24).

7 The following are some of the books by and on Milton extant in Borges’s private library: (1) John Milton, Aeropagitica: A Speech for the Liberty of Unlicenced Printing, London,
In *Milton’s Areopagitica and Other Prose Works*, for example, a copy Borges likely acquired in 1945, marginalia point to the latter.


In italics the two passages inscribed in Borges’s own hand. The first was taken from “Of Reformation in England and the Causes that Hitherto have Hindered it:” “Whether, think ye, would she approve still to dote upon immeasurable, innumerable, and therefore unnecessary and unmerciful volumes, choosing rather to err with the specious name of the fathers” (76). The second one was taken from “An Apology for Smectymnuus:” “And long it was not after, when I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourable things; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men, or famous cities, unless he
Although Pessoa was not oblivious to some of Milton’s political involvements, his engagement with the author of *Paradise Lost* remained primarily within the realm of poetry—as his fragments and poems, readings and markings in books by and on Milton well demonstrate. From very early on what he seems to have admired most is Milton’s technical mastery of the sonnet and the architecture of the long poem (cf. *Apreciações literárias* 183-84)–the “magia rhythmica” of his verse.

Milton has long been praised for his metrical skill. In his book *Milton’s Prosody*, which Pessoa first read in 1904 during his last year of high school, the English poet Robert Bridges states, “rhythm is always ready to follow his thought; a habit with him so essential to his style and so carefully trained, that a motive…could hardly have been passed over without some exceptional treatment” (27). The following unpublished fragment may very well have been inspired by Pessoa’s reading of the essay “Milton” by Matthew Arnold—originally delivered a year prior to the publication of Bridges’s study, in 1888 (56-68).

9 There is an unpublished document in Pessoa’s archive headed “Pol[ítica]” where we read: “Salmasio e Milton, ambos latinistas, e o primeiro um erudito e o segundo um dos maiores poetas do mundo, envolveram-se numa discussão politica à roda da execução de Carlos I de Inglaterra–Salmasio atacando-a, defendendo-a Milton” (National Library of Portugal / Archive 3, 92L-95). There exists another unpublished version in the following manuscript (National Library of Portugal / Archive 3, 92L-84) datable from 1932. I thank José Barreto for the latter information.

10 “Rescrevamos a *Iliada* na fórma de uma chronica medieval, e será uma boa chronica medieval – mais nada. Dispamos o Paraiso Perdido da magia rhythmica de Milton, e será uma narrativa de fantasia theologica, tedienta e fruste (National Library of Portugal / Archive 3, 144-66 to 68; cf. *Poemas completos de Alberto Caeiro* 274). For other fragments on Milton’s versification qualities see *Apreciações literárias* (2013) and Ferrari, *Meter and Rhythm* 76-79. *The Poetical Works of John Milton* is a book Pessoa studied in Durban, as some of the marginalia suggest. Regarding his markings and marginalia connected to metrics in this book see Ferrari, *Meter and Rhythm* appendix IV. The interlinear translations of parts of *Paradise Lost* were done in Lisbon.

11 Arnold had advanced the following observation: “Milton, of all our English race, is by his diction and rhythm the one artist of the highest rank in the great style whom we have; this I take as requiring no discussion, this I take as certain” (63). Part of this passage is marked in the copy extant in Pessoa’s private library. In this passage Arnold compared Milton and Shakespeare. We know that this reading inspired Pessoa to write other fragments. In one of them he tells us: “Milton, and not Shakespeare, is the great
Although recognizing its greatness, Pessoa left few markings in the margins of *Samson Agonistes*—a dramatic poem that lacked “visão dramatica,” a defect he attributed to Milton in general (*Páginas* 323-25). The Greek form chosen for the dramatic poem as well as the handling of it, on the other hand, were features that Pessoa found praiseworthy (*Páginas* 323-25). As for Samson, the blind hero, this was no arbitrary choice for Milton:

Youth desires and age achieves. No great poetry can be written in youth [because] no great poetry exists except by the understanding; it is in youth that great poetry is felt, it will be acted when youth is past, & the soul past feeling it. Milton has nowhere greater poetry than in *Samson Agonistes*.12

(=National Library of Portugal / Archive 3, 14⁴-50)

Fig. 2. National Library of Portugal / Archive 3, 14⁴-50. Detail.

12 A mark of doubt was handwritten underneath the word “age.” The symbol ∴ stands for “because.” There is one variant in the manuscript: “will” for “shall.”

13 The fact that Pessoa seems to have regarded Shakespeare as the greater dramatist (cf. *Apreciações* 91), did not stop him from expressing Milton’s superiority in other ways, as the following fragments indicate: “Milton, and not Shakespeare, is the great type, the model for poets, not now but always” (*Apreciações* 181); “When, towards the end of ages, Christianity will have long gone to that vale of darkness where all creeds follow all men, the great power of Milton will stand for it before eternity...His life was given to art, as a thing from him of small price. Every verse he wrote bears the full force of his dedicated will” (cf. *Apreciações* 184). In addition, one of Pessoa’s prose projects for the heteronymic poet Ricardo Reis is entitled “Milton maior do que Shakespeare,” the purpose of which would be twofold: to argue that writing an epic poem is more difficult than a drama and to claim Milton’s superiority as verse “constructor” (cf. *Apreciações* 181-83).
something Borges knew all too well and, unlike Pessoa, prompted him to reflection.

In his Introducción a la literatura inglesa, written in collaboration with María Esther Vásquez and published in 1965, we read: “Sansón el luchador, publicada en 1671, es acaso la obra maestra de Milton” (OCC 825). Years later, in “La ceguera,” the last conference included in Siete noches, Borges draws a parallel between Milton’s fate and Samson’s:

Milton pensó en el parecido de los destinos, ya que él, como Sansón, había sido el hombre fuerte finalmente vencido. Estaba ciego. Y escribió aquellos versos que siempre, según Landor, suelen puntuarse mal, y que realmente tendrían que ser: Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with the slaves […]. Es como si las desdichas fueran acumulándose sobre Sansón. (OC 3: 283)

In the subsequent paragraph, Borges recalls Milton’s own blindness, quoting the second line of Sonnet XIX, traditionally known as “On His Blindness”: “in this dark world and wide” (OC 3: 283).

By the end of 1955 blindness had almost completely overcome Borges and from that point on it would increasingly become one of his literary obsessions. Except for the poem “Ariosto y los árabes” (OP 150-53), dated from 1943, the seven other instances of Milton’s name appearing in Borges’s poetry are connected to blindness: “Del infierno y del cielo,” 1943 (OP 184); “El otro,” 1960 (OP 213); “Una rosa y Milton,” 1963 (OP 214); “Un ciego,” 1975 (OP 455); “Los destinos,” 1976 (TR 3: 205); “Leones,” 1977 (OP 528); “A cierta isla,” 1981 (OP 626).

“Reading Milton,” dated May 4th, 1920, is a 40-line poem that opens thus: “The sacred silence of the sea, / The warm-left summer sunset earth,—/ Neither of them is full
Neither the focus on blindness as a leitmotif nor the referencing of autobiographical occurrences—both found in some of Borges’s sonnets and traceable to Milton’s sonnets—are featured in Pessoa’s sonnets. Even in the sonnet “On Death,” (discussed further on) where Milton’s “On His Blindness” is one of its sources (cf. Monteiro 46), this will not be the case. Rather, Milton would offer the young aspiring poet invaluable insight into specific metrical elements, as I suggested in a previous study on the ode. But there was more.

Early traces in Pessoa’s copy of The Poetical Works of John Milton, brought from Durban, show that the reading of Milton’s verse may have stirred in him the impulse for one of his first experiences with self-fragmentation. In the years 1903-1910, prior to the creation of the heteronyms, Pessoa assigned books to some of the literary figures he continued to invent. Part of the drive behind this book-assigning program was the establishment of a lineage as well as the formation of distinctive writing-readers—that is, fictitious writers using the material they read for the creation of their new texts. What becomes more systematic with Alexander Search, the most prolific English fictitious author in Pessoa’s repertoire, presents itself in embryonic form in Charles Robert Anon and other early figures (cf. Eu Sou Uma Antologia 126-56, 227-48). In other words, these initial fictitious authors had not ripened into the fullness of Alexander Search insofar as they did not possess, as he did, the following attributes: (1) the variety either in number of titles or in topics, genres, languages; (2) the widespread influ-

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16 A feature that seventeenth century authors such as Milton introduced into the sonnet (Martens 241).

17 At the conference “Fernando Pessoa’s English Poetry” held at the Fernando Pessoa House on July 3rd, 2014, Richard Zenith argued that Alexander Search is the son of Shelley, particularly the Shelley of the poem “Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude.” More recently, in a conversation, Susan Margaret Brown has suggested a further connection to Shelley, his description of the companion in the 617-line poem “Julian and Maddalo” (cf. lines 46-52 and Search’s sonnet “Blind Eagle”).

18 For a detailed analysis of the Miltonic ode in Pessoa/Anon’s English production see Ferrari, “Genetic Criticism.”
ence of books assigned traceable to individual projects and writings; (3) signature as a mark of ownership. The ambiguity of this last feature is particularly significant in the case of Anon in *The Poetical Works of John Milton* (17), where we find one of the earliest fictitious inscriptions *in the margins* of a book in Pessoa’s private library:

That this is *not* a mark of ownership, as it clearly is in the case of other books where Anon’s signature appears *on the flyleaf* and/or *title page* (cf. *Eu Sou Uma Antologia* 152-53), may point to Pessoa’s awareness of an aesthetic feature in Milton—the “stimulating” and “evocative” use of proper names, as Pessoa stated later in life. The initials of Anon in the margins of *Paradise Lost* seem to testify to this, as I will explain.

On July 7th 1905, under the name of Charles Robert Anon, Pessoa sent a letter to *The Natal Review* including political sonnets that dealt with different aspects of the Anglo-Boer and the Russo-Japanese wars (cf. *Poemas Ingleses* 9, 301-04 and Helgesson 30-46). The idea of expressing political views in sonnet form had not been done before Milton, and it was only with his example that such a precedent was set. In the thirty-three sonnets he published in his lifetime, his comments on state policy as well as problems he personally underwent during Cromwell’s Commonwealth found a place in this poetic form for the first time (White 167). One could say that the sonnets sent to the South African review were Miltonic for Anon, both by virtue of the form adhered to (Italian sonnet: an octave followed by a

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19 Around 1916, more than a decade after these marginalia, Pessoa wrote: “Já aqui se notam os caracteristcos fundamentaes do genio miltonico. Já aqui se vêem a majestade do stylo, o seu rhythmo severo e sereno, o uso dos nomes proprios como estimulo, evocativo como rhythmico, para a imaginação, o final, absolutamente calmo, como é de quem segue a grande tradição dos gregos” (19-95; *Páginas* 323-25).
sestet), and the reference to current political events. Pessoa/Anon explored the sonnet as a weapon, as a way of taking a political stance. It is likely that he used the pseudonym\textsuperscript{20} of Charles Robert Anon (an English name) in order to protect himself within a tightly knit community at a time when criticism of British interests would not have been welcome. It is worth noting that Anon also signs non-political Miltonic sonnets.

Borges was equally drawn to the sonnet form, but preferred the English sonnet (three quatrains and a final couplet) over Pessoa/Anon’s choice of the Italian.\textsuperscript{21} Furthermore, Borges employed the form for purposes quite different from those of Pessoa. Concerning political events, for example, Borges paid heed to past occurrences, and among his sonnets we find instances of Milton’s influence in the way his meditations on such events are often personalized (fictionalized) and in the manner that at least one of his narrated circumstances (blindness) is autobiographical.

Many of the sonnets reflect Borges’s long-standing fascination with the male attributes of courage and bravery. “A la efigie de un capitán de los ejércitos de Cromwell” can be read either in connection with Milton’s Sonnet XVI, a celebration of Cromwell’s military prowess, or Milton’s Sonnet XVIII, where Cromwell emerges as “a man who has gone too far perhaps in shedding blood to achieve his ends” (White 169). In Borges’s hands, these historical events are culled for aesthetic purposes. Notice how this

\textsuperscript{20} Pessoa used this term at least as late as 1911-1913 with Frederich Wyatt (cf. National Library of Portugal / Archive 3, 133G-10\textsuperscript{20}). (For Frederick Wyatt see \textit{Eu Sou Uma Antologia} 359-70.) The literary term “heteronymismo” is a concept that he only formalized in 1928 and that distinguishes his works (\textit{obra orthónyma}) from that of the main fictional authors other than himself who came into being in about 1914 (viz., Alberto Caieiro, Ricardo Reis and Álvaro de Campos), each with his own literary and philosophical idiosyncrasies, personal traits (e.g., occupation, calligraphy and horoscope), diction and individual practice of poetic meter and poetic rhythm. Pessoa did not employ the term “heteronímia” (cf. \textit{Presença} 10). Pessoa makes use of the terms “heteronymismo” and “heteronymos” (without the accent) in the famous letter to Adolfo Casais Monteiro, dated 13 January 1935, in which he revealed to the critic the genesis of the heteronyms (\textit{Cartas} 251-59). Note that these categories as such only appeared around 1928. For the different nuances underlying this matter, see Pizarro, “Obras ortónimas” 73-98.

\textsuperscript{21} Both of Borges’s sonnets entitled “On His Blindness” were written in the English sonnet form. Pessoa’s Charles Robert Anon, Alexander Search, and Frederick Wyatt favored the Italian sonnet form. All of the sonnets that make up Pessoa’s \textit{35 Sonnets} were entirely written in the English sonnet form. The Portuguese poet left numerous English sonnets unattributed and unpublished. This entire corpus is currently being critically transcribed in collaboration with Carlos Pittella-Leite.
occurs in “A la efigie de un capitán de los ejércitos de Cromwell.” After introducing the god of war, “Marte,” Borges shifts to foregone eyes and a past behind darkness:

\[
\text{desde otra luz (desde otro siglo) miran} \\
\text{los ojos, que miraron las batallas.} \\
\text{[..........................]}
\]
\[
\text{detrás de la penumbra está Inglaterra, y el caballo y la gloria y tu jornada. (OP 135)}
\]

Reference to the two political sonnets by Milton mentioned above (Sonnets XVI and XVIII) appears on the back flyleaf of Borges’s personal copy of *The Poetical Works of John Milton*. The indications are in Leonor Acevedo de Borges’s handwriting, who read to him towards the end of the 1950s and until her death, in 1975. The third incipit is XIX, Milton’s famous sonnet “On His Blindness,” which inspired Borges, both in 1972 and 1985, to compose two different eponymous English sonnets (“On His Blindness”) where the lyric I is Borges himself. A close reading of the 1985 sonnet in particular shows how Milton’s presence went beyond the thematic level.

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[p|age] 435 – Cromwell, our chief of men...  
[p|age] 436 – Avenge O Lord...  
[page] 437 – A When I considered [sic] how my light is spent,  

Fig. 5. *The Poetical Works of John Milton*, 1958. Borges’s personal copy.  

National Library of Argentina.

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22 These notes were first transcribed by Laura Rosato and Germán Álvarez (243). I thank Rosato for her generosity in providing me this image. “Los libros incluidos en este catálogo pertenecieron a la biblioteca personal de Borges (en su mayoría) y se con-
In Milton’s autobiographical sonnet “On His Blindness,” the turn or volta at line 9 (from octave to sestet) is unusual. Generally, the octave ends with the conclusion of one idea, leading to another idea in the sestet. When poets break this rule, there is usually a meaningful reason. Accordingly, Milton’s beginning the sestet halfway through the last line of the octave in line 8 (“I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent”) with the verb “to prevent,”—which also means “to anticipate,”—heightens the impact of the turning point and thus further energizes the sonnet by creating unexpected meaning. Such a feat (i.e., avoidance of the strict division of sense in the poem between the octave and sestet) could only be achieved by a masterful understanding of the form and a skillful manipulation of its technical aspects.

Both Borges and Pessoa were aware of such Miltonic subtlety. In fact, Borges does something similar in the second sonnet entitled “On His Blindness” included in Los conjurados. With the turn before ending line 8 “y que acecha en el alba. Yo querría / ver una cara alguna vez” (OP 675) the desire to “ver una cara alguna vez” (line 9) in spite of that “terca neblina” (line 2), comes as an eruption and thus infuses an unexpected force. In Charles Robert Anon’s Miltonic sonnet, entitled “On Death” (death, like blindness, could be death in life; cf. Monteiero 46), the turn is not as uncommon since it occurs in line 9: “Nevertheless though sorrow rage and tear” (Cuadernos 148).23

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23 There may be a formal technical explanation for this. Anon’s Miltonic sonnets did not employ enjambment, one of Milton’s favorite devices learned from the Italian poet Giovanni Della Casa (1503-1556), who had distinguished himself by this from Petrarch, Milton’s model up to then (cf. Feldman and Robinson 7). Most lines in “On Death” are end-stopped lines. On the other hand, outside the final couplet made up of end-stop lines, both of Borges’s “On His Blindness” favor enjambment between the lines.
FINAL NOTE

In the preface to the book *El hacedor*, that includes the sonnet about Cromwell mentioned above, Borges recalls Milton’s hypallage—a literary device best explained as a transferred epithet or an unexpected rearrangement of two segments in a sentence or verse, as in:

> Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other heavens
> That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps [...]  
> *(The Poetical Works of John Milton 206)*

Here the Argentine poet has in mind lines 103-104 from Book IX of *Paradise Lost*, which act as a segue way to his quotation in Book VI (l. 268) of Vergil’s *Aeneid*: “Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram” (OP 115). These references are the threshold to *El hacedor*, a book written, or rather, dictated in partial darkness. When Borges returns in 1960 to the publication of poetry more than three decades after *Cuaderno San Martín*, the parallels he draws with Milton are unequivocal.

It should be abundantly clear by now that Milton has been absorbed in two distinctly different manners. While in various sonnets Borges draws a parallel between Milton’s fate and his own in terms of the blind poet, Pessoa’s early reading of Milton inspired him in a variety of ways. And Pessoa’s private library attests to this. That Milton’s role as a mentor provided him with useful instruction on technical matters of poetry is fairly evident from instances of Pessoa’s prose commentary on Milton as well as from the example of Charles Robert Anon, author of sonnets crafted in the Miltonic form and dealing with contemporary political events. Furthermore, the influence of the English bard on Pessoa’s system of fictitious authors extends beyond mere use of the sonnet for political commentary. In other words, Anon was not the only fictitious figure whose initials were inscribed in Pessoa’s personal copy of *The Poetical Works of John Milton*.

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24 In Bioy Casares’s diary for July 5th, 1958, we find the following anecdote: “Cuenta Borges que anoche su madre le leyó el sexto libro de la Eneida” (462). Bioy records their mentioning of Virgil’s famous hypallage on April 14th 1960 (621).

25 Pessoa composed other political English sonnets in the Italian form around 1906-1907, leaving them unattributed and unpublished. These sonnets were discussed by Carlos Pittella-Leite at the conference “Fernando Pessoa’s English Poetry” held at the Casa Fernando Pessoa on July 3rd, 2014. Cf. note 21.
On the back inside cover, among the names of “Milton” and “F Pessôa,” we read that of “Charles Search,” another fictitious author Pessoa created around 1908:

Most interesting are the crossed-out unpublished English verses written below these onomastic signature trials. The poem opens thus: “As storm on calm at length he spake & broke / the horrid silence with more horrid voice –.” Written in blank verse, like Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, these iambic pentameters echo the initial passage about Satan: “To whom th’ Arch-Enemy, / And thence in Heav’n call’d Satan, with bold words / Breaking the horrid silence thus began” (Book I, ll. 81-83, *Paradise Lost*). What is most telling here is neither the Miltonic diction nor the echoes of individual words but rather something more subtle. The lines chosen for Charles Search enact a voice in the process of *rupture* or breaking loose: a theme that not only possesses obvious parallels

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26 Pessoa decided to remove the circumflex from his name in early September 1916. Cf. *Cartas de Fernando Pessoa a Armando Côrtes-Rodrigues* (79).

27 Alexander and Charles Search were brothers. For a detailed description of both fictitious authors see *Eu Sou Uma Antologia* (227-48, 285-89).

28 While the surname Search makes the obvious connection as siblings, it is the context of Charles’s verse lines (i.e. the description of Satan about to break into speech) that reveals his deeper bond with Alexander, who made a written pact with Jacob Satan early
with Pessoa’s process of self-othering but is also further explored on the same flyleaf. On the bottom, divided by a horizontal line but possibly part of the same composition, we read: “Who am I? I am thyself / Myself. Thyself indeed, oh happy man, / Didst ever know that I am e’en thy self?”

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on in his career and whose poetry is obsessed with sin, darkness and death-in-life (cf. Eu Sou Uma Antologia 212-13, 227-48).
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