

The monstrous quality that runs through Borges's enumeration consists, on the contrary, in the fact that the common ground on which such meetings are possible has itself been destroyed.<sup>1</sup> What is impossible is not the propinquity of the things listed, but the very site on which their propinquity would be possible.<sup>2</sup> The animals '(i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush' – where could they ever meet, except in the immaterial sound of the voice pronouncing their enumeration, or on the page transcribing it?<sup>3</sup> Where else could they be juxtaposed except in the non-place of language?<sup>4</sup> Yet, though language can spread them before us, it can do so only in an unthinkable space.<sup>5</sup> The central category of animals 'included in the present classification', with its explicit reference to paradoxes we are familiar with, is indication enough that we shall never succeed in defining a stable relation of contained to container between each of these categories and that which includes them all: if all the animals divided up here can be placed without exception in one of the divisions of this list, then aren't all the other divisions to be found in that one division too?<sup>6</sup> And then again, in what space would that single, inclusive division have its existence?<sup>7</sup> Absurdity destroys the and of the enumeration by making impossible the in where the things enumerated would be divided up.<sup>8</sup> Borges adds no figure to the atlas of the impossible; nowhere does he strike the spark of poetic confrontation; he simply dispenses with the least obvious, but most compelling, of necessities; he<sup>6</sup> spread<sup>10</sup> does away with the site single, inclusive division<sup>11</sup>, the mute ground upon which it is possible for entities to be juxtaposed.<sup>6</sup> Yet<sup>10</sup> And then again<sup>11</sup>, though language can spread them before us, it can do so only in an unthinkable space.<sup>10</sup> A vanishing trick that is masked or, rather, laughably indicated by our alphabetical order, which is to be taken as the clue (the only visible one) to the enumerations of a Chinese encyclopaedia. . . .<sup>10</sup>

Foucault, M. (1989) *The Order of Things*. London: Routledge.

The central category of animals 'included in the present classification'<sup>3</sup>, with its explicit reference to paradoxes we are familiar with, is indication enough<sup>3</sup> the common ground<sup>4</sup> in one of the divisions of this list<sup>3</sup> as the visible clue<sup>5</sup>, that we shall never succeed in defining a stable relation of contained to container.<sup>3</sup> between each of these categories and that which includes them all: if all the animals divided up here can be placed without exception in one of the divisions of this list, then aren't all the other divisions to be found in that one division too? The<sup>4</sup> poetic<sup>6</sup> quality that runs through Borges's enumeration consists, on the contrary, in the fact that the common ground on which such meetings are possible has itself been<sup>4</sup> juxtaposed<sup>7</sup>. What is impossible is not the propinquity of the things listed, but the very site on which their propinquity would be possible.<sup>8</sup> The animals '(i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush' – where could they could<sup>9</sup> ever meet, except in the immaterial sound of the voice pronouncing their enumeration, or on the page transcribing it<sup>9</sup>.<sup>8</sup> Borges adds no figure to the atlas of the impossible; nowhere does<sup>6</sup> but<sup>8</sup> he strike the spark of poetic confrontation; he simply dispenses with the least obvious, but most compelling, of necessities; he<sup>6</sup> spread<sup>10</sup> does away with the site single, inclusive division<sup>11</sup>, the mute ground upon which it is possible for entities to be juxtaposed.<sup>6</sup> Yet<sup>10</sup> And then again<sup>11</sup>, though language can spread them before us, it can do so only in an unthinkable space.<sup>10</sup> A vanishing trick that is masked or, rather, laughably indicated by our alphabetical order, which is to be taken as the clue (the only visible one) to the enumerations of a Chinese encyclopaedia. . . .<sup>5</sup> Where else could they be juxtaposed except in the non-place of language?<sup>7</sup> Absurdity<sup>12</sup> destroys listed<sup>8</sup> the and of the enumeration by making impossible the in where the things enumerated would be divided up.<sup>12</sup>

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- 1 The word 'Human' in the title
- 2 The word 'Sciences' in the title
- 3 Sentence 6
- 4 Sentence 1
- 5 Sentence 10
- 6 Sentence 9
- 7 Sentence 4
- 8 Sentence 2
- 9 Sentence 3
- 10 Sentence 5
- 11 Sentence 7
- 12 Sentence 8