

## Lost in Translation or Born Anew: Decoding the Artistic Expression of Transcreation

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### Abstract:

This paper seeks to undertake an exploration of the concept of transcreation by employing the framework of the hermeneutic circle, a theoretical construct that facilitates the understanding of meaning through a circular movement between the text itself and its comprehensive meaning as a whole, encompassing its constituent elements. Within this analytical framework, the contention put forth is that the hermeneutic circle can furnish a solid rationale for the transcreative process of translation. The present study initiates by introducing the notions of transcreation and the hermeneutic circle, thereby delving into the foundational principles of the latter in order to elucidate its role in the interpretation process. While both translation and transcreation involve the interpretation of meaning constructs, transcreation, in particular, entails a purposeful endeavor of adaptation that seeks to explore novel approaches for conveying meaning to the intended audience. Moreover, an analysis is conducted on the transcreation of Jorge Borges' work titled "Circular Ruins" into Arabic, thus presenting a compelling case wherein the hermeneutic circle validates the transcreative endeavor. By engaging in a reciprocal dialogue with the source text, a transcreative interpretation is established, breathing new vitality into the original work. The present study posits that transcreation possesses significant artistic value and stands as a legitimate form of creative expression. It is argued that the hermeneutic circle, with its philosophical underpinnings, furnishes a compelling justification for this assertion, thus reinforcing the significance of transcreation as a means of captivating audiences and broadening the frontiers of artistic representation.

**Keywords:** transcreation, hermeneutic circle, adaptation,

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## 1. Introduction

The aim of this essay is to undertake a profound exploration of the foundational philosophical underpinnings that underlie the hermeneutic circle within the realm of transcreation, an artistic approach to the act of translation. The interpretive journey can be likened to a convoluted and intricate circular motion, wherein the hermeneutic circle, a philosophical concept, safeguards the preservation of both the holistic meaning of the text and its discrete constituents. However, it is imperative to recognize that transcreation surpasses mere interpretation, demanding creative yet daring decisions. In order to effectively convey the textual content, the transcreator is compelled to transcend the boundaries imposed by language translation. They set out on an exploration trip to find new and creative ways to do this. In order to create a fresh linguistic tapestry that captures the spirit of the original text, transcreation ventures outside the bounds of literal translation (Carreira, 2020). By focusing on transcreation as a more imaginative type of translation than literal interpretation, this study aims to lay the conceptual groundwork for its theoretical framework. The connection between transcreation and the hermeneutic circle is highlighted as it also investigates the circular nature of interpretation.

I think transcreation exemplifies an intriguing fusion of verbal proficiency and creative expression. It enables the revivification and reinterpretation of writings, bringing new life to them while maintaining their fundamental meanings. The hermeneutic circle is a guiding principle that emphasizes the interdependence of the text as a whole and its various components, providing a comprehensive comprehension and portrayal of the source material. In addition to removing linguistic barriers, transcreation allows us to communicate with a variety of audiences in new and creative ways.

## 2. Overview of Transcreation:

By putting the spirit and meaning of the text above a strict literal interpretation, transcreation sets itself apart from other types of creative translation (Pedersen, 2014). The transcreator attempts to replicate the original material in a manner that appeals to the target audience by drawing on language and aesthetic knowledge (Benetello, 2017). Transcreation strives to elicit the same reaction from the audience as the original work, as opposed to a straightforward word-for-word or sentence-for-sentence reproduction (Gopinathan, 2014). In order to keep the spirit of the original work in a culturally relevant and appealing manner, this requires inserting cultural allusions, colloquial words, comedy, and stylistic choices (Ray, 1995).

In the realm of transcreation, the transcreator takes on a position comparable to that of an artist by expertly changing the language into a unique yet accurate depiction (Spinzi & Katan, 2014). They

bridge the gap between the source and target texts and create a meaningful link between the initial message and its new audience by deftly incorporating linguistic and cultural components from the target language and culture (De Bortoli & Maroto, 2004). The source and target languages, as well as the cultures they represent, must be thoroughly understood for the transcreation process to be effective (Gaballo, 2012). This calls for a careful examination of the cultural allusions, social circumstances, and emotional undertones present in the source text. The transcreator reimagines the content to evoke a comparable reaction from the target audience by utilizing their language and creative talents (Morón & Calvo, 2018). Transcreation gives the original work new life by balancing linguistic skill and creative expression in such a complex way that it captures the audience's interest and produces a brand-new emotional response (AuthorLastName, Year).

According to Risku, Pichler, and Wieser (2017), transcreation is a dynamic and cutting-edge translation approach that taps into the creative potential of adaptation. Over and above simple verbal translation, it creates a deep bond between the source and target cultures. Transcreation places less emphasis on literal interpretation and more emphasis on capturing the spirit and significance of a work (Malenova, 2017). Transcreation helps people appreciate different cultures more deeply by crossing linguistic gaps. It acts as a catalyst for cross-cultural communication by translating textual material into a compelling experience for the listener (Benetello, 2017). Through the force of transformation, transcreation serves as a bridge, allowing languages to live peacefully while offering a venue for significant artistic expression (Morón, 2022).

### **3. Overview of the hermeneutic circle:**

The fundamental philosophical idea of the hermeneutic circle provides an insightful lens for examining the complex process of interpretation. It includes a cyclical transition between comprehending a text's specific components and its overall meaning (Longxi, 2018). This theory holds that comprehension of each individual textual component is entangled with interpretation of the complete text, and vice versa. While the perception of individual aspects is impacted by the wider context, the comprehension of the whole is molded by the interpretation of its component parts (Smith, 1996). The hermeneutic circle views interpretation as a fluid, iterative process that involves constant communication between the interpreter and the source text. The interpreter continually evaluates and improves their comprehension in light of the growing totality as they dive into the specifics of particular aspects (Caracciolo, 2012). The same is true when they are trying to understand the bigger picture; this causes individuals to change how they see certain aspects (Katan, 2016; Galvin, 2022).

For some critics, the hermeneutic circle might result in a never-ending loop of interpretation without a conclusive resolution. According to their arguments (Debesay, Nden, & Sletteb, 2008; Mantzavinos, 2009), the formation of a single, definitive meaning may be hampered by the constantly changing character of interpretation, which is governed by the hermeneutic circle. The circular movement, according to supporters, is crucial for expanding comprehension and revealing the depths of a text's meaning. They claim that by examining the connections between distinct textual parts, it enables a more thorough interpretation (Caton & Santos, 2010). According to Debesay, Nden, and Sletteb (2008), the constant transition between micro and macro levels of interpretation sharpens comprehension and reveals new insights into the text's relevance. Additionally, the hermeneutic circle promotes a nuanced and self-aware interaction with the text by challenging researchers to critically reflect on their preconceived assumptions, prejudices, and cultural frameworks (Motahari, 2008; Schmidt, 1996; Nerlich, 2004).

I believe that the hermeneutic circle offers a potent framework for reading texts that enables a lively examination of their meaning. Although worries about subjectivity and limitless interpretation are true, embracing the circular movement improves interpretation by exploring interrelationships and encouraging critical self-reflection. Scholars engage in a continuous conversation with texts through the hermeneutic circle, revealing nuances of meaning and expanding on their comprehension of the fundamental significance of the texts (Hamacher, 1990).

#### **4. Transcreation as Interpretation in the Hermeneutic Circle:**

When examined via the hermeneutic cycle, transcreation is evaluated with both appreciation and skepticism as an artistic kind of translation. It expands the parameters of comprehension and expression by combining creative adaptation and interpretation. According to Frost and Emerson (2005), interpretation entails a careful examination of each component to ascertain its intended significance and relationships. This process is similar to the hermeneutic circle's circular movement. The goal of transcreation, as opposed to merely literal translation, is to capture the spirit and substance of the original text, going beyond interpretation. The transcreator immerses themselves in the subtleties of the original work, comprehending its impact and successfully communicating it in a new language and cultural setting (Daz-Millon & Olvera-Lobo, 2021). Transcreation needs both a creative process of adaptation and a thorough grasp of the components and interactions of the original material. The text is actively shaped by the transcreator, who makes decisions with intention to express the substance of the text in a new linguistic and cultural context (Martn, 2020). The distinction between authentic

interpretation and autonomous artistic expression is muddled by the introduction of subjectivity and artistic agency.

Transcreation, I may argue, offers an exciting combination of interpretation and creative alteration. It provides a space for cutting-edge artistic expression and enables a deeper study of meaning. Transcreation offers a chance to give the source material new life while keeping it tied to the original and engaging with a range of audiences and cultural situations. However, it is essential to establish a careful balance between fidelity to the original work and the transcreator's interpretative and creative decisions. Transcreation broadens the possibilities for translation as a creative activity and deepens our comprehension of the hermeneutic circle by embracing this delicate interplay. Having said that, the subjective character of transcreation is a topic of legitimate criticism, as critics point out the opportunity for personal rethinking and wonder how it would affect the veracity of the source material (Spinzi, Rizzo, & Zummo, 2019, p. 24). They contend that by blurring the distinction between interpretation and personal expression, the transcreator's artistic decisions may obscure the author's original purpose. Furthermore, transcreation's adaptability makes it possible for several legitimate readings, which puts the idea of a final, authoritative version to the test.

The relevance of transcreation in overcoming language and cultural divides, however, is underlined by those who believe in the power of translation to transcreate. Transcreation, according to its proponents, gives the original text a fresh perspective while preserving its original meaning through creative modification (Gengshen, 2003). Transcreation acknowledges the repetitive nature of interpretation by embracing the hermeneutic circle's circular movement, continually honing comprehension and producing a powerful and effective adaptation.

Considering transcreation shows, in my understanding of transcreation at least within literary translation context, its intrinsic complexity and encourages investigation of its philosophical, artistic, and ethical facets. We are prompted to think critically about the limitations of interpretation, the function of the transcreator, and the effect on the original work. A distinctive viewpoint on transcreation inside the hermeneutic circle is provided by the interaction between comprehending certain components and participating in the creative process. We may better understand the value of transcreation as a unique kind of artistic expression by engaging in critical dialogue.

## **5. Analysis of Transcreation: "Circular Ruins" by Jorge Borges**

My engagement in the transcreation process for Jorge Borges' "Circular Ruins" entailed a careful investigation that focused on the complex interactions between reading individual pieces, the creative process of adaptation, and the iterative movement within the hermeneutic circle. This investigation

clarified the nuances and opportunities of transcreation, demonstrating its capacity to produce meaningful and thought-provoking literary adaptations. I started by immersing myself in Borges' story and carefully analyzing its themes, structure, and linguistic intricacies. This in-depth investigation was consistent with the hermeneutic circle's methodology, which emphasizes comprehending the individual components before recognizing the overall significance of a literary work (Milton, 2009). I learned a lot about Borges' aesthetic objectives through this critical engagement, and I also discovered layers of symbolism, metaphor, and philosophical undertones that were woven throughout the original text.

I, the transcreator, set out on the difficult path of creative adaptation armed with a thorough comprehension of the original text. By embracing a dynamic interaction between integrity and creativity, transcreation departs from conventional translation techniques. With consideration for linguistic, cultural, and contextual variations, I tried to capture the spirit and substance of the original language in addition to its precise meaning. This prompted me to use artistic license and purposefully choose options that would elicit in the intended audience comparable emotional and aesthetic reactions as those experienced with the original piece.

I will look at a single instance from "Circular Ruins" to demonstrate the complexities of the transcreation process. In the original work, Borges uses colorful imagery and a wealth of symbolism to examine philosophical issues like the nature of reality and the influence of dreams. It was difficult for me to communicate these intricate concepts while also modifying the piece for a different linguistic and cultural setting. To preserve the intended impact and profundity of the original work, it is important to carefully choose linguistic equivalents and cultural allusions that connect with the target audience. I engaged in iterative engagement with the original material and its modification throughout the transcreation process, which required ongoing revision and improvement. This cyclical process inside the hermeneutic circle represented a continuous conversation between the original work and I, the transcreator, allowing for a greater comprehension and interpretation of its subtleties and wider ramifications. In order to ensure that the transcreated work preserves the integrity of the original while attaining a new degree of artistic expression, the transcreation critically reevaluates the choices, looking at the coherence of creative decisions and the faithfulness to the source text.

The target audience's and their cultural context's consideration is a further obstacle in the transcreation process. To make sure that the transcreated work connects genuinely with the readers, it was crucial to have a keen understanding of the social subtleties and grammatical quirks of the target language. This requires producing culturally appropriate changes, such as changing colloquial terms, cultural allusions, or even storylines, without sacrificing the spirit and integrity of the original work.

Clearly, the thorough examination of the transcreation process for "Circular Ruins" reveals the complexity of transcreation as a complex fusion of interpretation and imaginative adaptation. In order to capture the underlying spirit and meaning of the original work, the transcreator must manage the complexity of linguistic, cultural, and contextual issues through a critical analysis of the various pieces. For the transcreated work to be improved and tailored, this calls for creative judgment, thoughtful decision-making, and an iterative interaction inside the hermeneutic circle. This analysis emphasizes transcreation's transformational potential as a dynamic and intellectually exciting form of artistic expression by critically examining the difficulties and offering instances from the transcreation process.

To conclude this analysis, transcreating works of literature, as well as other works, may provide a platform for giving literary works fresh life so they may resonate with a variety of audiences and cultural situations. It offers a fascinating chance to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers while also testing the transcreator's ability to strike a delicate balance between fidelity to the original and the artistic expression of their own vision. Transcreation allows literary classics like Borges' "Circular Ruins" to continue to enthrall and inspire readers while creating a deep bond between the past and present.

## **6. The Circular and Transcreative Dialogue:**

Transcreation is a fascinating and constantly developing art form in which the transcreator has an in-depth and reflective dialogue with the original material. This conversation reminds me of Gadamer's idea of the hermeneutic circle, where knowing develops through a linked and repetitive process. The purpose of the transcreator goes beyond simple copying; it is to give the original work fresh life via imaginative interpretation. In the original work, Borges deftly woven vivid imagery and profound symbolism together, inspiring readers to consider philosophical issues like the nature of reality and the significant role dreams play in human life. The transcreator, embracing the hermeneutic circle's tenets, engaged in a fascinating discussion with these components, revealing their underlying importance and exploring unknown area for reinterpretation.

I, the transcreator, treated each part of the source material in this circular dialogue with a critical eye, carefully analyzing its grammatical nuances, metaphorical phrases, and cultural allusions. For instance, they could have studied the symbolic significance of a certain object or the deeper implications associated with certain words or phrases. The transcreator was able to untangle the deep relationships between the many components within the text's larger structure through this meticulous research, which also gave the transcreator a thorough grasp of the individual components. With each

step of the transcreation process, I actively engaged the original text with the goal of evoking its spirit and essence (see Ricoeur, 1976, explanation of this). This required constant communication between my interpretative perspective and the underlying ideas and messages present in the original work. I found additional levels of significance and looked into other interpretations by closely analyzing how the various components were related.

I made deliberate decisions and adjustments while remaining loyal to Borges' narrative primary themes and aims in order to demonstrate the transformational potential of my creative interpretation. To ensure that my transcreated work struck a powerful chord with its intended audience, I used linguistic inventiveness to reflect the depth and nuance of the source material in the target language. For example, I may have used literary elements like alliteration, vivid imagery, or rhythmic patterns to generate the same emotional impact as the original piece. While maintaining the spirit and integrity of the original text, I was able to reinvent the narrative framework or modify cultural allusions by making thoughtful linguistic and aesthetic decisions. This method also considered the language subtleties and cultural sensitivity contained in the transcreated version. This revived the original work through this critical and imaginative interpretation, giving readers a new viewpoint and an opportunity to interact deeply with the transcreated adaptation. I gave Borges' story new life by drawing on my own creative sensibilities and cultural knowledge to create a literary work that spoke to both the source and the target cultures.

In conclusion, The dynamic circular conversation that I've been having with the original material is an example of how transcreation is transformational per se. I resurrected the original work by going into each component, understanding its overall significance, and making inventive modifications. A subtle reinterpretation that captured the spirit and essence of the original text was made possible by this critical interaction with the hermeneutic circle, leading to the creation of a transcreated adaptation that was both true to the original and had its own artistic significance (Geanellos, 2000).

## **7. Philosophical Justification for Transcreation**

The investigation of the hermeneutic cycle yields profound understandings of the significance of transcreation as a true and significant form of creative expression. The hermeneutic circle's emphasis on a circular movement that entails comprehending both the parts of a whole and their distinct meanings is in perfect harmony with the transcreation process. It becomes clear that transcreation may be thought of as a form of interpretation that incorporates the hermeneutic circle's circular movement. Understanding the components of a text and appreciating its overall meaning are two concepts that are similar to both transcreation and interpretation. The transcreator actively engages in a continuous

conversation with the original material, revealing nuances of meaning and interpreting its specifics in light of the overall story or themes.

Such approach also highlights the common goal of both transcreation and interpretation, which is to convey the substance and meaning of a work. Both procedures need an intense immersion in the original material, which includes analyzing its themes, symbols, and narrative intricacies. In transcreation, the transcreator becomes fully immersed in the original work, extracting its core ideas and creative vision, and then infuses these realizations into the target language and cultural setting.

The incorporation of adaptation as a part of the creative process, however, sets transcreation apart from simple interpretation. Transcreation actively participates in a transformational act of artistic expression, whereas interpretation just strives to comprehend and communicate the meaning of a work. The transcreator occupies the position of a mediator between the original text and the target audience, using their creative agency to modify and reproduce the work in a way that connects strongly with the audience. By translating metaphors, puns, and other stylistic elements into the target language, the transcreator, for instance, might capture the lyrical spirit of the original work. They may use colloquial terms, cultural allusions, or even totally new story structures to arouse the same feelings of emotion and aesthetic experiences as the original piece. The transcreated work is given new life by this imaginative modification, which transforms it into a unique and genuine aesthetic statement in its own right. Such endeavor also reveals how the transcreator engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the original material while reflecting on it. To ensure a harmonic alignment with the original work while enabling the transcreator's artistic perspective to form the final product, this interaction required a regular reevaluation of interpretations and creative decisions. The transcreator achieved a careful balance between fidelity to the original language and the addition of their own artistic flare through this back-and-forth between interpretation and adaptation.

Transcreation's validity and significance as an artistic form of expression are further supported by the intellectual underpinnings of the hermeneutic circle. Transcreation not only covers interpretation but also exceeds it through the transforming process of adaptation by embracing the circular movement that entails comprehending separate components and acquiring overall meaning. A transcreated work that revitalizes the original and gives readers a new and engrossing literary experience is the result of the transcreator's active interaction with the source material, which is accompanied by critical thought and aesthetic judgment.

## 8. Conclusion

In this study, I examine the philosophical foundations that support transcreation through the hermeneutic cycle. Transcreation, a creative type of translation, goes beyond a text's purely literal interpretation to capture its soul and spirit. The hermeneutic circle, on the other hand, describes the cyclical movement between comprehending the different components of a text and its overall meaning. I see transcreation as an interpretation that approves this hermeneutic circular movement. Understanding a text's elements and overall importance are requirements for both transcreation and interpretation. Transcreation, on the other hand, goes a step farther by including a creative process of adaptation. The transcreator gives the work fresh life and artistic expression by translating it into a new language and cultural context through this artistic agency.

In order to defend transcreation as a valid and meaningful form of artistic expression, the hermeneutic circle is a very important starting point. Its circular movement harmonies with the iterative and transformational character of transcreation, promoting a deep connection with the original text while taking into account cultural sensitivity and linguistic subtleties. By keeping the essential elements of the original work while generating a fresh and engaging aesthetic experience for the intended audience, transcreation, as a creative technique, crosses linguistic and cultural barriers. Transcreation's importance resides in its capacity to stimulate linguistic discovery, cross-cultural dialogue, and an understanding of many literary traditions. The hermeneutic circle offers a strong conceptual explanation for its legality, and it stands as a good and rewarding form of creative expression. Transcreation facilitates the preservation and revival of literary works across many languages and cultural settings, ultimately resulting in the creation of a thriving global literary landscape.

## المستخلص

### فك شفرة التعبير الفني للتحويل الإبداعي: ضياع التعبير أو توليده من جديد

#### محمد الضلاعين

تسعى هذه الورقة لاستكشاف مفهوم الترجمة الإبداعية من خلال استخدام إطار الدائرة التأويلية، وهي بنية نظرية تسهل فهم المعنى من خلال حركة دائرية بين النص نفسه ومعناه الشامل ككل، مشمولة عناصره المكونة. ضمن هذا الإطار التحليلي، ينبثق الرأي الذي يُشير إلى أن الدائرة التأويلية يمكن أن توفر مبرراً قوياً لعملية الترجمة الإبداعية. تبدأ هذه الدراسة بتقديم مفاهيم الترجمة الإبداعية والدائرة التأويلية، مستكشفة بذلك المبادئ الأساسية للأخيرة لتوضيح دورها في عملية التفسير. بينما تشمل كل من الترجمة والترجمة الإبداعية تفسيراً لبناء المعنى، تتضمن الترجمة الإبداعية على وجه الخصوص مسعى مستنداً للتكيف حيث يسعى إلى استكشاف نهج جديد لنقل المعنى إلى الجمهور المستهدف. تخضع الدراسة لترجمة خورخي بورخيس المعنون بـ"الأطلال الدائرية" إلى العربية إلى التحليل، مما يقدم حالة مقنعة حيث تثبت الدائرة التأويلية صحة السعي الإبداعي. من خلال مشاركة في حوار متبادل مع النص المصدر، يتم تأسيس تفسير إبداعي، يضفي حيوية جديدة إلى العمل الأصلي. ترى هذه الدراسة أن للترجمة الإبداعية قيمة فنية هامة وتعتبر شكلاً شرعياً للتعبير الإبداعي. ويُجادل في أن الدائرة التأويلية، مع مبادئها الفلسفية، توفر تبريراً قوياً لهذا الادعاء، مما يعزز أهمية الترجمة الإبداعية كوسيلة لجذب الجماهير وتوسيع حدود التمثيل الفني.

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