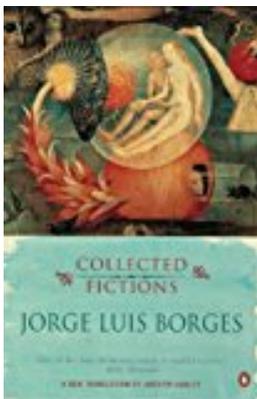


[PDF] Collected Fictions (Penguin Modern Classics Translated Texts)

Jorge Luis Borges, Andrew Hurley - pdf download free book



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Description:

Although Jorge Luis Borges published his first book in 1923--doing out his own money for a limited edition of *Fervor de Buenos Aires*--he remained in Argentinian obscurity for almost three decades. In 1951, however, appeared in French, followed soon after by an English translation. This collection, which included the cream of the author's short fictions, made it clear that Borges was a world-class (if highly unclassifiable) artist--a brilliant, lyrical miniaturist, who could pose the great questions of

existence on the head of pin. And by 1961, when he shared the French Prix Formentor with Samuel Beckett, he seemed suddenly to tower over a half-dozen literary cultures, the very exemplar of modernism with a human face.

By the time of his death in 1986, Borges had been granted old master status by almost everybody (except, alas, the gentlemen of the Swedish Academy). Yet his work remained dispersed among a half-dozen different collections, some of them increasingly hard to find. Andrew Hurley has done readers a great service, then, by collecting all the stories in a single, meticulously translated volume. It's a pleasure to be reminded that Borges's style--poetic, dreamlike, and compounded of innumerable small surprises--was already in place by 1935, when he published *A Universal History of Iniquity*: "The earth we inhabit is an error, an incompetent parody. Mirrors and paternity are abominable because they multiply and affirm it." (Incidentally, the thrifty author later recycled the second of these aphorisms in his classic bit of bookish metaphysics, "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Teris.") The glories of his middle period, of course, have hardly aged a day. "The Garden of the Forking Paths" remains the best deconstruction of the detective story ever written, even in the post- era, and "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*" puts the so-called death of the author in pointed, hilarious perspective.

But Hurley's omnibus also brings home exactly how consistent Borges remained in his concerns. As late as 1975, in "Avelino Arredondo," he was still asking (and occasionally even answering) the same riddles about time and its human repository, memory: "For the man in prison, or the blind man, time flows downstream as though down a slight decline. As he reached the midpoint of his reclusion, Arredondo more than once achieved that virtually timeless time. In the first patio there was a wellhead, and at the bottom, a cistern where a toad lived; it never occurred to Arredondo that it was the toad's time, bordering on eternity, that he sought." Throughout, Hurley's translation is crisp and assured (although this reader will always have a soft spot for "Funes, the Memorious" rather than "Funes, His Memory.") And thanks to his efforts, Borgesians will find no better--and no more pleasurable--rebuttal of the author's description of himself as "a shy sort of man who could not bring himself to write short stories." --*James Marcus* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly Undeniably one of the most influential writers to emerge in this century from Latin America or anywhere else, Borges (1899-1986) is best known for his short stories, all of which appear here for the first time in one volume, translated and annotated by University of Puerto Rico professor Hurley. Many of the stories return to the same set of images and themes that mark Borges's best known work: the code of ethics embraced by gauchos, knifefighters and outlaws; labyrinths; confrontations with one's doppelganger; and discoveries of artifacts from other worlds (an encyclopedia of a mysterious region in Iraq; a strange disc that has only one side and that gives a king his power; a menacing book that infinitely multiplies its own pages; fragmentary manuscripts that narrate otherworldly accounts of lands of the immortals). Less familiar are episodes that narrate the violent, sordid careers of pirates and outlaws like Billy the Kid (particularly in the early collection *A Universal History of Iniquity*) or attempts to dramatize the consciousness of Shakespeare or Homer. Elusive, erudite, melancholic, Borges's fiction will intrigue the general reader as well as the scholar. This is the first in a series of three new translations (including the *Collected Poems* and *Collected Nonfictions*, all timed to coincide with the centennial of the author's birth), which will offer an alternative to the extensive but very controversial collaborations between Borges and Norman Thomas di Giovanni. First serial rights to the *New Yorker*, the *New York Review of Books* and *Grand Street*.

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