

## Suggested Readings on Argentina

**BARNES, John.** *Evita: First Lady.*

**HEMMING, John.** *The Conquest of the Incas, 1970.*

**LYNCH, John.** *Spanish Colonial Administration, 1782-1810: The Intendant System in the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata.* London: University of London, Athlone Press, 1958.

**NOUZEILLES, Gabriela.** *The Argentina Reader – History, Culture, and Politics.*

**POTASH, R.A.** *The Army and Politics in Argentina 1928-1945, 1969; and The Army and Politics in Argentina 1945-62, 1980.*

**ROCK, David** *Argentina, 1516-1987, 1987.*

**ROCK, David** (ed.) *Argentina in the twentieth century, 1975.*

**ROCK, David** *Racking Argentina.* You can visit this web page to have an idea of how the 2001 crisis hit the country.

<http://www.newleftreview.net/NLR25104.shtml>

**SHUMWAY, Nicolas.** *The Invention of Argentina.*

## Readings on Peronism

**BRENNAN, James P.** (ed.) *Peronism and Argentina, 1998.*

**CIRIA, Alberto** *Flesh and Fantasy: The Many Faces of Evita (and Juan Peron', LARR, 18 (1983), 150-65.*

**CONNIFF, M.** (ed.) *Latin American Populism, 1982* - chapter by Marysa Navarro on Evita.

**POTASH, R. A.** *The Social Base of Peronism, HAHR, Feb. 1972*

**TAYLOR, Julie M.,** *Evita Peron: The Myths of a Woman, 1979*

## Argentine Literature

**ARLT, Roberto,** "Mad Toy"(El Juguete Rabioso)

[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0822329409/ref=pd\\_bxgy\\_text\\_1/103-2176662-3014233?v=glance&s=books&st=\\*](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0822329409/ref=pd_bxgy_text_1/103-2176662-3014233?v=glance&s=books&st=*)

**CORTAZAR, Julio,** "Hopscotch"

[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/0394752848/qid=1087581714/sr=1-4/ref=sr\\_1\\_4/103-2176662-3014233?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/0394752848/qid=1087581714/sr=1-4/ref=sr_1_4/103-2176662-3014233?v=glance&s=books)

**GUIRALDES, Ricardo**, “Don Segundo Sombra”

<http://www.ompersonal.com.ar/shortstories/donsegundosombra.htm>

**SARMIENTO, Domingo**, “Facundo”

<http://www.ompersonal.com.ar/shortstories/facundo.htm>

[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0140436774/qid=1087582463/sr=1-21/ref=sr\\_1\\_21/103-2176662-3014233?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0140436774/qid=1087582463/sr=1-21/ref=sr_1_21/103-2176662-3014233?v=glance&s=books)

## **Films**

Kamchatka – Argentina’s nomination for Best Foreign Film at the Academy Awards in 2003

La Historia Oficial – the effects fo the Guerra Sucia in Argentina

Valentin - by Alejandro Agresti

## **BORGES, Jorge Luis (1899-1986)**

Argentine poet, essayist, and short-story writer, whose tales of fantasy and dreamworlds are classics of the 20th-century world literature. Borges was profoundly influenced by European culture, English literature, and such thinkers as Berkeley, who argued that there is no material substance; the sensible world consists only of ideas, which exists for so long as they are perceived. Most of Borges's tales embrace universal themes - the often recurring circular labyrinth can be seen as a metaphor of life or a riddle which theme is time. Although Borges's name was mentioned in speculations about Nobel Prize, Borges never became a Nobel Laureate.

**"When the end draws near, there no longer remain any remembered images; only words remain. It is not strange that time should have confused the words that once represented me with those that were symbols of the fate of he who accompanied me for so many centuries. I have been Homer; shortly, I shall be On One, like Ulysses; shortly, I shall be all men; I shall be dead."**

(from 'The Immortal')

Jorge Luis Borges was born in Buenos Aires. His family included British ancestry and he learned English before Spanish. His father, of Italian, Jewish, and English heritage, was a lawyer and a psychology teacher, who demonstrated the paradoxes of Zeno on a chessboard for his son. In the large house was also a library and garden which enchanted Borges's imagination. Borges's mother was a translator; she lived far into her 90's. In 1914 the family moved to Geneva, where Borges learned French and German and received his B.A. from the Collège of Geneva. According to a story, Borges's father, worried about his son's sexual initiation, sent him to a prostitute in the red-light district area, the Place Dubourg de Four. There Borges started to think that his father was her "client". Borges's visit failed miserably and perhaps contributed to his lifelong difficulties with women.

After World War I the Borges family lived in Spain, where he was a member of avant-garde Ultraist literary group. His first poem, 'Hymn to the Sea,' written in the style of Walt Whitman, was published in the magazine *Grecia*. In 1921 Borges settled in Buenos Aires. There he started his career as a writer by publishing poems and essays in literary journals. Among his friends was the philosopher Macedonio Fernandez, whose dedication linguistic problems influenced his thought. Borges's first collection of poetry was FERVOR DE BUENOS AIRES (1923). He contributed to the avant-garde review *Martin Fierro*, and co-founded the journal *Proa* (1924-26). *Sur*, founded in 1931 by Borges's friend Victor Ocampo, became Argentina's most important literary journal. Borges was its chief contributor for decades. He also served as literary adviser for the publishing house Emecé Editores, worked as a literary editor of the *Saturday Color Magazine* of the tabloid newspaper *Crítica*, and wrote weekly columns for *El Hogar* from 1936 to 1939. As a critic Borges gained fame with interpretations of the Argentine classics. His writings displayed a deep knowledge of European and American literature, in particular for such writers as Poe, Stevenson, Kipling, Shaw, Chesterton, Whitman, Emerson, and Twain. He also translated Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, Henri Michaux's *A Barbarian in Asia*, Herman Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*, and William Faulkner's *The Wild Palms*.

Borges's father died in 1938, a great blow because the two had been unusually close. Borges also suffered a severe head wound. He developed a blood poisoning and nearly died. The experience freed in him deep forces of creativity, and at the hospital, where he spent several weeks, he wrote several of his most important stories. His first collection, EL JARDÍN DE SENDEROS QUE SE BIFURCAN (1941) was nominated for the National Literary Prize, but a lesser book was awarded, in spite of a special issue by *Sur*, in which a number of his friends and acquaintances expressed their support. Later collections include FICCIONES (1944), EL ALEPH (1949), and EL EL HACEDOR (1960). Borges's interest in fantasy was shared by another well-known Argentine writer of fiction, Adolfo Bioy Casares, with whom Borges coauthored under the pseudonym H. Bustos Domecq several collections of tales.

From 1937 Borges worked as a cataloguer at the Miguel Cane branch of the Buenos Aires Municipal Library. The job did not interest him and he usually disappeared into the basement to read (especially Kafka), write, and translate. The never-ending process of cataloguing inspired one of Borges's most famous short stories, 'The Library of Babel' (1941), in which the faithful catalog of the Library is supplemented with "thousands and thousands of false catalogs, the proof of the falsity of those false catalogs, a proof of the falsity of the *true* catalog". Borges spent nine years at the suburban library. He was fired in 1946 from his post by the Péron regime, and appointed poultry inspector for Buenos Aires Municipal Market, a position he declined.

Borges's political opinions were not considered inoffensive. As a sign of negative attention, an attempt was made to bomb the house where Borges lived with his mother. His sister was imprisoned and his mother was placed under house arrest. With the help of Miguel Cohen-Miller, a psychotherapist, Borges managed to overcome his shyness and he could accept lecture offers. Dr Cohen-Miller also noted that Borges was exaggerated sensitive, had guilt feeling and fear of sex. Later Estela Canto, whom Borges met in 1944, wrote in *Borges a contraluz* (1989), that Borges's attitude toward sex was one of "panic and terror".

In 1946 Borges took over the editorship of *Los Annales de Buenos Aires*, an academic magazine. After Peron's deposition in 1955 Borges became Director of the National Library. "I speak of God's splendid irony in granting me at once 800 000 book and darkness," Borges noted alluding to his now almost complete blindness. Borges also was professor of English literature at the University of Buenos Aires, and taught there from 1955 to 1970.

**"A librarian wearing dark glasses asked him: 'What are you looking for?' Hladik answered: 'I am looking for God.' The librarian said to him: 'God is in one of the letters on one of the pages of one of the four hundred thousand volumes of the Clementine. My fathers and the fathers of my fathers have searched for this letter; I have grown blind seeking it.'" (from 'The Secret Miracle')**

Borges shared the Prix Formentor with Samuel Beckett in 1961. After the death of his mother, his constant companion, Borges started his series of visits to countries all over the world, continuing traveling until his death. In 1967 Borges began a five-year period of collaboration with Norman Thomas di Giovanni, and gained new fame in the English-speaking world. When Juan Perón was again elected president in 1973, Borges resigned as director of the National Library. Despite his opposition to Perón and later to the junta, his support to liberal causes were considered too ambiguous. "If he thinks like a dinosaur, that has nothing to do with my thinking," said once the Chilean poet and Nobel Laureate Pablo Neruda. "He doesn't understand a thing about what's happening in the modern world, and he thinks I don't either." In 1980 Borges signed protests against the political repression and the "disappeared". In 1982 he condemned the Falkland Islands War - "Two bald men fighting over a comb" was his cited comment in the international media. Borges, who had long suffered from eye problems, was totally blind in his last decades. He had a congenital defect that had afflicted several generations on his father's side of the family. However, he continued to publish several books, among them *EL LIBRO DE LOS SERES IMAGINARIOS* (1967), *EL INFORME DE BRODIE* (1970), and *EL LIBRO DE ARENA* (1975). "I need books," he once said. "They mean everything to me." In New Orleans he developed a passion to jazz.

Borges moved in 1985 permanently to Geneva, Switzerland. There he died of liver cancer on June 14, 1986, and was buried at the old Pleinpalais Cemetery. Borges was married twice. In 1967 he married his old friend, the recently widowed Elsa Asteta Millán, whom he had met decades ago when she was just seventeen. The marriage lasted three years. After legal separation, Borges moved back in with his mother. His last years Borges lived with María Kodama, his assistant; they married on 22 April in 1986. The relationship brought much happiness in the authors life. Kodoma had earlier participated in Borges's Old English study group and earned doctorate in English from the University of Buenos Aires. In 1984 they produced an account of their journeys in different places of the world, with text by Borges and photographs by Kodoma.

Borges's fictional universe was born from his vast and esoteric readings in literature, philosophy, and theology. He sees man's search for meaning in an infinite universe as a fruitless effort. In the universe of energy, mass, and speed of light, Borges considers the central riddle time, not space. "He believed in an infinite series of times, in a growing, dizzying net of divergent, convergent and parallel times. This network of times which approached one another, forked, broke off, or were unaware of one another for centuries,

embraces *all* possibilities of time." The theological speculations of Gnosticism and the Cabala gave ideas for many of his plots. Borges has told in an interview that when he was a boy, he found an engraving of the seven wonders of the world, one of which portrayed a circular labyrinth. It frightened him and the maze has been one of his recurrent nightmares. "Almost instantly, I understood: 'The garden of forking paths' was the chaotic novel; the phrase 'the various futures (not to all)' suggested to me the forking in time, not in space. A broad rereading of the work confirmed the theory. In all fictional works, each time a man is confronted with several alternatives, he chooses one and eliminates the others; in the fiction of Ts'ui Pên, he chooses - simultaneously - all of them. He *creates*, in this way, diverse futures, diverse time which themselves also proliferate and fork." (from 'The Garden of Forking Paths')

Another recurrent image is the mirror, which reflects different identities. The idea for the short story 'Borges y yo' was came from the double, who was looking at him - the *alter ego*, the other I. There is a well-known man, who writes his stories, a name in some biographical dictionary, and the real person. "So my life is a point-counterpoint, a kind of fugue, and a falling away - and everything winds up being lost to me, and everything falls into oblivion, or into the hands of the other man."

Influenced by the English philosopher George Berkeley (1685-1753), Borges played with the idea that concrete reality may consist only of mental perceptions. The "real world" is only one possible in the infinite series of realities. These themes were examined among others in the classical short stories 'The Garden of Forking Paths' and 'Death and the Compass', in which Borges showed his fondness of detective formula. In the story the calm, rational detective and adventurer Erik Lönnrot (referring to the philologist/poet [Elias Lönnrot](#), 1802-1884, the collector of [Kalevala](#) poems) finds himself trapped in cryptographic labyrinths in a fantastical city, while attempting to solve a series of crimes. However, Borges's Lönnrot has more in common with C. Auguste Dupin, Sherlock Holmes and Father Brown and their amazing powers of deduction than with the Finnish namesake, who traveled in the northwest Russia to collected ancient poems. The *Kalevala* was created by Lönnrot, edited from poems of his own and a number of separate poems and poem-fragments he had received from rune-singers. In similar way, Erik Lönnrot creates a coherent story from a series of crimes by interpreting cryptic messages and filling the holes with his own insights. Detective stories bring order into chaos. "In this chaotic era of ours," said Borges, "one thing is has humbly maintained the classic virtues: the detective story. For a detective story cannot be understood without a beginning, middle, and end... I would say in defense of the detective novel that it needs no defense; though now read with a certain disdain, it is safeguarding order in an era of disorder." ('The Detective Story', 1978)

In 'The Library of Babel' the symmetrically structured library represents the universe as it is conceived by rational man, and the library's illegible books refers to man's ignorance. In 'Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius' Borges invented a whole other universe based on an imaginary encyclopedia. The narrator states, that 'Tlön is surely a labyrinth, but it is a labyrinth devised by men, a labyrinth destined to be deciphered by men.'

As an essayist Borges drew on his European education and brought attention to ancient philosophers and mystics, Jewish cabbalist and gnostics, French poets, Cervantes, Dante, Schopenhauer, and above all such English writers as Shakespeare, John Milton, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Thomas De Quincey, H.G. Wells, and G.K. Chesterton. His key books

were DISCUSIÓN (1932), HISTORIA DE LA ETERNIDAD (1936), and OTRAS INQUISICIONES (1952). When many Latin American writers dealt with political or social subjects, Borges focused on eternal questions and the literary heritage of the world. However, Borges has criticized his friend [Pablo Neruda](#), a politically highly visible author, for denouncing all the South American dictators except Juan Perón, Borges's own arch-enemy. "Perón was then in power. It seems that Neruda had a lawsuit pending with his publisher in Buenos Aires. That publisher, as you probably know, has always been his principal source of income." (Jorge Luis Borges: *Conversations*, ed. by Richard Burgin, 1998)

**For further reading:** *La expresión de la irrealidad en la obra de Jorge Luis Borges* by A.M. Barrenechea (1957); *Borges, the Labyrinth Maker* by María Ana Barrenechea (1965); *La prosa narrativa de Jorge Luis Borges* by J. Alazraki (1968); *Borges el poeta* by G. Sucre (1968); *Paper Tigers: the Ideal Fictions of Jorge Luis Borges* by J. Sturrock (1977); *Jorge Luis Borges* by G.R. McMurray (1980), *Jorge Luis Borges* by Donald Yates (1985); *The Aleph Weaver* by Edna Aizenberg (1984); *Jorge Luis Borges*, ed. by Harold Bloom (1986); *The Poetry and Poetics of Jorge Luis Borges* by Paul Cheselka (1986); *Borges a contraluz* by Estela Canto (1989); *A Concordance to the Works of Jorge Luis Borges 1899-1986* by Rob Isbister and Peter Standish (1992); *Jorge Luis Borges* by Beatriz Sarle (1993); *A Dictionary of Borges* by Evelyn Fishburn and Psiche Hughes (1990); *Jorge Luis Borges: Conversations*, ed. by Richard Burgin (1998); *Borges and His Fiction* by Gene H. Bell-Villada (1999) - **Suom.:** Suomeksi on myös ilmestynyt Pentti Saaritsan kääntämä läpileikkaus kirjailijan runotuotannosta 1923-1985 teoksessa *Peilin edessä ja takana* (1999).- **See Magic Realism:** [García Márquez](#), [Salman Rushdie](#) - **Links:** [Great Science-Fiction & Fantasy Works](#) - [miBorges.com](#) - [A comprehensive Borges page by Martín Hadis](#)

#### **Selected works:**

- FERVOR DE BUENOS AIRES, 1923
- LUNA DE ENFRENTÉ, 1923
- INQUISICIONES, 1925
- EL TAMAÑO DE MI ESPERANZA, 1926
- EL IDIOMA DE LOS ARGENTINOS, 1928
- CUADERNOS SAN MARTÍN, 1929
- EVARISTO CARRIEGO, 1930
- DISCUSIÓN, 1932
- LAS KENNIGAR, 1933
- HISTORIA UNIVERSAL DE LA INFAMIA, 1935 - A Universal History of Infamy
- HISTORIA DE LA ETERNIDAD, 1936 - History of Etenity
- trans.: Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, 1937
- trans.: Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, 1937
- ed.: Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, 1938
- trans.: William Faulkner's *The Wild Palms*, 1941
- SIX PROBLEMS FOR DON ISIDRO PARODI, 1942 (with Bioy Casares under the pseudonym H. Bustos Domecq)

- EL JARDÍN DE SENDEROS QUE SE BIFURCAN, 1941 - Haarautuvien polkujen puutarha
- SEIS PROBLEMAS PARA DON ISIDRO PARODI, 1942 - Six Problems for Don Isidro Parodi
- EL JARDIN DE SENDEROS QUE SE BIFURCAN, 1942
- FICCIONES, 1944
- DOS FANTASÍAS MEMORABLES, 1946
- UN MODELO PARA LA MUERTE, 1946
- NUEVA REFUTACIÓN DEL TIEMPO, 1947
- ASPECTOS DE LA LITERARA GAUCHESCA, 1950
- LA MUERTE Y LA BRÚJULA, 1951
- ANTIGUAS LITERATURAS GERMÁNICAS, 1951 (with Delia Ingenieros)
- OTRAS INQUISICIONES 1937-1952, 1952 - Other Inquisitions, 1937-1952
- LOS ORILLEROS, 1955
- LEOPOLDO LUGONES, 1957
- OBRAS COMPLETAS, VIII 1954-60
- LIBRO DEL CIELO Y DEL INFIERNO, 1960
- EL HACEDOR, 1960 - The Doer/The Dreamtigers
- ANTOLOGÍA PERSONAL, 1961 - A Personal Anthology
- MACEDONIO FERNÁNDEZ, 1963
- EL OTRO, EL MISMO, 1964
- OBRAS COMPLETAS III, 1964
- PARA LAS SEIS CUERDAS, 1965
- INTRODUCCIÓN A LA LITERATURA INGLESA, 1965 (with María Esther Vásquez)
- LITERATURAS GERMÁNICAS MEDIAVALES, 1966 (with María Esther Vásquez)
- CRÓNICAS DE BUSTOS DOMECCQ, 1967 - Chronicles of Bustos Domeccq
- EL LIBRO DE LOS SERES IMAGINARIOS, 1967 - The Book of Imaginary Beings
- MUEVA ANTOLOGÍA PERRSONAL, 1968
- ELOGIO DE LA SOMBRA, 1969
- EL OTRO, EL MISMO, 1969
- EL INFORME DE BRODIE, 1970 - Dr. Brodie's Report - suom. Hiekkakirja
- EL CONGRESO, 1971
- EL ORO DE LOS TIGRES, 1972 - The Gold of Tigers
- Borges on Writing, 1973
- OBRAS COMPLETAS, 1974
- EL LIBRO DE ARENA, 1975 - The Book of Sand - suom. Hiekkakirja
- LA ROSA PROFUNDA, 1975
- PRÓLOGOS CON UN PRÓLOGO DE PRÓLOGOS, 1975
- LA MONEDA DE HIERRO, 1976
- LIBRO DE SUEÑOS, 1976
- ANDROGUÉ, 1977

- ASESINOS DE PAPEL, 1977
- HISTORIA DE LA NOCHE, 1977
- LA ROSA DE PARACELSO, 1977
- TIGRES AZULES, 1977
- OBRAS COMPLETAS EN COLABORACIÓN, 1979
- PROSA COMPLETA, 1980
- screenplay: *The Intruder*, dir. by Carlos Hugo Christiansen, 1980
- SIETE NOCHES, 1980 - Seven Nights
- LA CIFRA, 1981
- NUEVE ENSAYOS DANTESCOS, 1982
- VEINTICINCO AGOSTO, 1983
- OBRA POETICA, 1923-1977, 1983
- Y OTROS CUENTOS, 1983
- LOS CONJURADOS, 1985
- TEXTOS CAUTIVOS, 1986
- EL ALEPH BORGIANO, 1987
- BORGES, EL JUDAISMO E ISRAEL, 1988
- BIBLIOTECA PERSONAL, 1988
- OBRAS COMPLETAS, 1989 (2 vols.)
- Selected Poems, 1998
- Collected Fictions, 1998
- Selected Non-Fictions, 1999