

BookImaginaryBeings

The Urth list — 6 messages, 3 voices, 16 Apr 1998

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m.driussi — 16 Apr 1998, 22:12

Reply: Item #2870989 from URTH at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET#

Xury,

FWIW & IMHO, all of THE BOOK OF IMAGINARY BEINGS is essential reading for those more than superficially interested in TBOTNS. Period, end of report.

=mantis=

Pedro Jorge Romero — 16 Apr 1998, 23:11 · follows m.driussi

FWIW & IMHO, all of THE BOOK OF IMAGINARY BEINGS is essential reading for those more than superficially interested in TBOTNS. Period, end of report.

I have read TBOIB in Spanish but the Spanish translator of TBOTNS, that I read in English and then checked in Spanish, obviously didn't because he got a few things wrong.

Best

Pedro Jorge

William H. Ansley — 16 Apr 1998, 21:15 · follows Pedro Jorge Romero

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Oh, don't pick on the poor guy. Just imagine his horror after he had started the translation in earnest and truly realized the magnitude of the task he had taken on for the first time.

William Ansley

m.driussi — 17 Apr 1998, 01:47 · follows William H. Ansley

Reply: Item #8579609 from URTH at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET01#

Pedro Jorge,

I have never read TBOIB in Spanish (that is to say, ELDLSI, "El libro de los seres imaginarios"), but I have seen incredible differences in a few English language editions. I don't know which

English language edition would be considered the best--I only know first hand how much some of them differ. (Borges was fluent in English, at least conversationally, if I remember correctly? Wolfe wrote a poem and an essay talking about how frustrated he felt for Borges who was visiting the US and had to deal with Americans practicing their high school Spanish upon him when he [Borges] was speaking to them in English.)

For example, my 1987 edition (Penguin paperback "Revised, enlarged and translated by Norman Thomas di Giovanni in collaboration with the author (1969)"; reprinted with revisions 1974; reprinted 1980, 1984, 1987) has some charm, it also has some hideous typos that seem to have come from primitive optical scanning output which was never proof read by human eyes.

Like this case, from the entry under "The Monster Acheron":

"!n [sic] the tenth book of the _Odyssey_ . . . "

It is difficult for me to imagine a copy editor who would mistake "!" for "I" . . .

Some editions gloss the ancient authors in modern English; others maintain (or fabricate?) an ancient patina, like this gem regarding the Crocotta:

"Pliny writes (VIII, 21) that the Crocotta is an animal `ingendred betwixt a dog and a Wolfe [sic]"

Well, no--Pliny was writing in Latin, wasn't he? So this citation, this gem, would seem to be from a medieval English translation. From Latin to medieval English to modern Spanish, then back to medieval English again?!

Then again, all this textual variation seems so very "Borgesian" in itself!

=mantis=

Pedro Jorge Romero — 17 Apr 1998, 06:19 · follows m.driussi

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Oh, don't pick on the poor guy. Just imagine his horror after he had started the translation in earnest and truly realized the magnitude of the task he had taken on for the first time.

Well, I am a translator too, and I can realize that perfectly well (when you make a mistake it is there, printed in a book, for everybody to see).

Best

Pedro Jorge

Pedro Jorge Romero — 17 Apr 1998, 06:24 · follows Pedro Jorge Romero

I have never read TBOIB in Spanish (that is to say, ELDLSI, "El libro de los seres imaginarios"), but I have seen incredible differences in a few English language editions. I don't know which English language edition would be considered the best--I only know first hand how much some of them differ. (Borges was fluent in English, at least conversationally, if I remember correctly? Wolfe wrote a poem and an essay talking about how frustrated he felt for Borges who was visiting the US and had to deal with Americans practicing their high school Spanish upon him when he [Borges] was speaking to them in English.)

There should be an edition co-translated by Borges and Norman Thomas Di'Giovanni (I am not sure of this name). That was considered the canonical English language edition.

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That one. The Spanish original is full of tipos too.

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Then again, all this textual variation seems so very "Borgesian" in itself!

Most of those things with translations are supposed to be done on purpose. And I know that in the translation they went back to the sources it that was in English.

Best

Pedro Jorge