

Roberto Arlt: a brief bibliographic introduction

Abstract: A selective, commented overview of Arlt's main texts in the various genres: their earliest and most recent editions; criticism and commentary.

Keywords: Argentine cultural history, Arlt bibliography.

Resumo: Uma revisão seletiva e comentada dos principais textos de Arlt em vários gêneros: suas edições antigas e as mais recentes; crítica e comentários.

Palavras-chave: história cultural da Argentina, bibliografia de Arlt.

In this essay, the intention is not to repeat the bibliographic work that has already been done, but rather to provide a brief thematic overview of Arlt's work and its criticism, and key references to more comprehensive bibliographic sources. In the first section, we see the major role that the contributors to this volume have in Arltian scholarship: they have written no fewer than five full-length studies, as well as numerous editions of, and articles about, Arlt's life and work.

The second focus is on the writings which were published in Arlt's lifetime: here the novels inevitably dominate the picture, although his short narrative, theatre, journalism and travel writing are represented. Following on from this, there is brief consideration of some examples of criticism written by Arlt's contemporaries, dating to his lifetime or shortly afterwards. It was at the end of the 1950s that Arlt's work began to be read widely, and during the 1960s that Arltian criticism evolved and diversified significantly: these developments are discussed in a separate essay, "Roberto Arlt y los años sesenta: crítica y recepción". Thereafter, there are sections devoted to: critical editions of the main novels; major compilations of the narrative; full-length studies in Spanish, from 1970; recent collections of journalism; the theatre; biographies; bibliographies (this is the reference point for articles and essays, which are not separately listed); archive; translations into English; full-length studies in English. Finally, there is a cultural-historical section, comprising a selection of works in which discussion of Arlt's work is lo-

cated within broader contexts. Criticism in and translation into Portuguese are the subject of a separate essay, “Roberto Arlt, do *arrabal porteño* à academia brasileira”.

Criticism and editions of Arlt’s work, by contributors to this volume

José Amícola

Astrología y fascismo en la obra de Arlt. Buenos Aires: Weimar Ediciones, 1984.

2ª. edición de la misma obra, revisada y aumentada con un epílogo: Rosario: Beatriz Viterbo Editora, 1994.

“Elogio de la razón y la locura” en edición crítica de *Los siete locos-Los lanzallamas* de R. Arlt. París: ALLCA XX-Colección Archivos, 2000, pp. 676-686.

“Los magos del mal”, artículo originariamente aparecido en *La Razón Cultural* (Buenos Aires), el 1º. de setiembre de 1985, y reimpresso en edición crítica de *Los siete locos-Los lanzallamas* de R.Arlt. París: ALLCA XX-Colección Archivos, 2000, pp. 820-3.

Viviana Gelado

“O coloquialismo urbano rio-platense como forma de valorização do popular”, in *Poéticas da transgressão: vanguarda e cultura popular nos anos 20 na América Latina*. Rio de Janeiro: 7Letras; São Paulo: FAPESP; São Carlos: EdUFSCAR, 2006, pp. 197-285.

“La oralidad como forma de cuestionamiento de la institución literaria en la producción rioplatense de la década del veinte”. *Río de la Plata* nº 29-30; Actas del IX Congreso Internacional del CELCIRP (2004/2006), pp. 253-67.

Rita Gnutzmann

Roberto Arlt o el arte del calidoscopio. Vitoria: Universidad del País Vasco, 1984.

Roberto Arlt: innovación y compromiso. La obra narrativa y periodística. Lleida: AEELH/Universitat de Lleida, 2004. As well as offering new material, this work includes – and gives full bibliographic details of – versions of some nine articles and essays, published between 1987-2000.

"Roberto Arlt: tres aspectos de su narrativa". *Iberomania*, nº 4 (1975-80), pp. 115-36.

"Roberto Arlt y la literatura de situaciones límites". *Memoria del XX Congreso del Instituto Internacional de Literatura Iberoamericana*. Budapest, 1981, pp. 391-403.

"La zona de angustia de Roberto Arlt". *Hispanamérica*, nº 36 (1983), pp. 21-34.

"Roberto Arlt: redescubrimiento de un pionero". *Letras de Deusto*, XVI, nº 35, September-December, 1986, pp. 153-9.

"La renovación de la narrativa argentina: Roberto Arlt". *Mundáiz*, July-December, 1986, pp. 55-67.

"Roberto Arlt. *El amor brujo* o la destrucción de los mitos". *Anales de Literatura Hispanoamericana*, nº 11, 1992, pp. 93-104.

"Homenaje a Arlt, Borges y Onetti de Ricardo Piglia". *Revista Iberoamericana*, nº 159, 1992, pp. 437-48.

"Bibliografía de Roberto Arlt". In Roberto Arlt, *Los siete locos. Los lanzallamas*, critical edition coordinated by Mario Goloboff. Paris: Archivos, 2000, pp. 849-65.

Roberto Arlt, *El juguete rabioso*. Edited, with prologue, by Rita Gnutzmann. Madrid: Cátedra, 1985.

Aguafuertes españolas. Prologue by Rita Gnutzmann. Madrid: Página, 1993.

Aguafuertes porteñas. Prologue by Rita Gnutzmann. Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 1995.

Paul Jordan

Roberto Arlt: A Narrative Journey. London: King's College London Hispanic Series, 2000.

The Author in the Office. Narrative writing in twentieth-century Argentina and Uruguay. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, Colección Támesis, 2006. In chapter 3, "The 1930s: From Social Criticism to Creative Disillusion". *El amor brujo* and *La isla desierta* are studied.

"'Pero lo que escribo no tiene nada que ver con lo que hace Arlt': la ficción de Onetti". *Estudios Filológicos*. Valdivia, Chile, nº 32, 1997, pp. 93-103.

"Roberto Arlt". In Verity Smith (ed), *Encyclopedia of Latin American Literature*. London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997, pp. 70-72.

"'But my writing has nothing to do with Arlt's': Trace and silence of Arlt in Onetti". In Gustavo San Román (ed), *Onetti and Others*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1999, pp. 65-81.

"La vecina orilla, 1930: Roberto Arlt viaja a Montevideo". *Río de la Plata* n° 29-30; Actas del IX Congreso Internacional del CELCIRP (2004/2006), pp. 281-6.

Carolina Miranda

Roberto Arlt: Translation and the Construction of Genre. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Hull, UK.

Pablo Rocca

"Arlt en Montevideo: los pasos perdidos". *Espacios de crítica y producción*. Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad de Buenos Aires, n° 27/28, Octubre-Noviembre, 2001, pp. 47-52.

Sylvia Saítta

El escritor en el bosque de ladrillos. Una biografía de Roberto Arlt. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2000; 325 pp.

"Desde la butaca: Roberto Arlt, crítico teatral". En Osvaldo Pellettieri (editor), *Roberto Arlt: Dramaturgia y Teatro Independiente*. Buenos Aires: Galerna/Fundación Roberto Arlt, 2000, pp. 111-125.

"Jorge Luis Borges, lector de Roberto Arlt". En Sandra Contreras y Martín Prieto (compiladores), *Los clásicos argentinos. Sarmiento – Hernández – Borges – Arlt*. Rosario: Editorial Municipal de Rosario, 2005, pp. 127-138.

"Roberto Arlt y las nuevas formas periodísticas". En *Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos*. Número dedicado a Roberto Arlt, Los complementarios/11, Madrid, Julio, 1993, pp. 59-69.

"Nuevos viajeros, otras miradas. Roberto Arlt en España". En *Hispanamérica. Revista de literatura*, año XXVIII, n° 82, Abril, 1999, pp. 35-43.

"Traiciones desviadas, ensoñaciones imposibles: los usos del folletín en Roberto Arlt". En *Iberoamericana. Lateinamerika. Spanien. Portugal*. 23, Jahrgang, 1999, n° 2, 1974, pp. 63-81.

"Rumo ao Brasil em primeira classe: Roberto Arlt no Rio de Janeiro". Tradução de Maria Paula Gurgel Ribeiro. En *Revista USP/Coordenadoria de Comunicação Social, Universidade de São Paulo*, n° 47, Setiembre, Octubre y Noviembre, 2000, pp. 116-120.

"La internacionalización de una mirada. Dos notas de Roberto Arlt publicadas en 'Al margen del cable' en *El Mundo*". En *Espacios*, n° 27/28, Octubre-Noviembre, 2001, pp. 30-35.

"Introducción" a AAVV, *Diez lecturas de Arlt. Ensayos seleccionados en el concurso sobre su vida y obra*. Buenos Aires: Fundación El Libro, 2000, pp. 11-16.

Roberto Arlt, *Aguafuertes Porteñas: Buenos Aires, vida cotidiana*. Prólogo, recopilación, notas y selección de textos inéditos, por Sylvia Saíta. Buenos Aires: Alianza, 1993. Reeditado por Losada, 2000.

Aguafuertes Porteñas: cultura y política. Prólogo, notas, recopilación y selección de textos inéditos, por Sylvia Saíta. Buenos Aires: Losada, 1994.

En el país del viento; Viaje a la Patagonia (1934). Prólogo y edición de Sylvia Saíta. Buenos Aires: Simurg, 1997.

Aguafuertes Gallegas y Asturianas. Prólogo y compilación de Sylvia Saíta. Buenos Aires: Losada, 1999.

Escuela de delincuencia. Aguafuertes. Selección y prólogo de Sylvia Saíta. Montevideo: Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, 2000.

Aguafuertes madriüeñas. Presagios de una guerra civil. Prólogo, compilación y notas de Sylvia Saíta. Buenos Aires: Losada, 2000.

Aguafuertes vascas. Prólogo, compilación y notas de Sylvia Saíta. Buenos Aires: Simurg, 2005.

Editions of Arlt's principal works, published in his lifetime

"Las ciencias ocultas en la ciudad de Buenos Aires". *Tribuna Libre*, n° 63, 28/1/1920.

"El Rengo". *Proa*, n° 8, March, 1925.

"El poeta parroquial". *Proa*, n° 10, May, 1925.

El juguete rabioso. Buenos Aires: Latina, 1926; Buenos Aires: Claridad, 1931.

Los siete locos. Buenos Aires: Rosso*, 1929; Buenos Aires: Claridad, 1931.

Los lanzallamas. Buenos Aires: Claridad, 1931.

El amor brujo. Buenos Aires: Rañó**, 1932.

Trescientos millones and *Prueba de amor*, with introductory essay, "El Teatro del Pueblo y 'Trescientos Millones'", by Cayetano Córdova Iturburu. Buenos Aires: Rañó, 1932.

El jorobadito. Buenos Aires: Anaconda, 1933.

Aguafuertes porteñas. Buenos Aires: Victoria, 1933.

Aguafuertes españolas. Buenos Aires: Rosso, 1936.

El criador de gorilas. Santiago de Chile: Zig-Zag, 1941.

Un viaje terrible, *Nuestra Novela*, n° 6, 11/7/1941.

* usually given as Latina; ** usually given as Victoria.

"El Rengo" and "El poeta parroquial" are chapters of *Vida puerca*, an early version of *El juguete rabioso*. While "El poeta parroquial" is omitted from *El juguete*, a modified "El Rengo" is part of the novel's fourth chapter (see Jordan, 2000: 72-89). The first edition of *El juguete* famously is dedicated to Ricardo Güiraldes, Arlt's mentor. It had a short print run of 1000 copies and was priced at \$2. After *Los siete locos* won the third prize in the Buenos Aires Concurso Municipal de Literatura, in 1930, Arlt was published by Claridad (the Boedo imprint), whose mission was to provide cheap, popular editions (Latina no longer existed, in any case). The Claridad edition of *El juguete* had a print run of 10,000, priced at \$0.50. Significantly, the dedication to Güiraldes disappears, and instead a "Nota Editorial", gives some background to Arlt and his writing. The 1931 editions of *Los siete locos* and *Los lanzallamas* were also of 10,000 copies, and priced at \$0.50 and \$0.60, respectively. Like Claridad, the Anaconda, Rañó/Victoria, and Rosso imprints were cheap, popular editions: if well cared for, these books can be conserved – but the paper is of poor quality, and they must be handled very little. The Latina edition of *El juguete rabioso*, by contrast, was printed on high quality "pluma de esparto" paper; my own copy, though showing some discoloration, may safely be handled and read, without fear of damage.

Some early critical responses in Argentina

Leónidas Barletta, “*El juguete rabioso*, por Roberto Arlt”; *Nosotros*. n° 211, December, 1926, pp. 553-4.

Cayetano Córdova Iturburu, “Un nuevo novelista argentino: Roberto Arlt”, *Revista Jurídica y de Ciencias Sociales*, May, 1932, pp. 30-58.

Lázaro Liacho, *Palabra de hombre*. Buenos Aires: Porter, 1934.

Conducta, n° 21, July-August, 1942.

Raúl Larra, *Roberto Arlt, el torturado*. Buenos Aires: Futuro, 1950; 5th edition, 1986.

Juan José Sebreli, “Inocencia y culpabilidad de Arlt”. *Sur*, n° 223, July-August, 1953, pp. 109-19.

Contorno, n° 2, May, 1954.

Nobody can doubt the importance of Barletta to the cultural life of Buenos Aires (among other activities he was the director of the Teatro del Pueblo). However, his enthusiastic *Boedista* review of *El juguete* is disingenuous: he would have us believe that the novel is spontaneous and natural, rather than an artefact of long gestation – and numerous identifiable literary influences. Córdova Iturburu has the honour of being the first critic to recognise Arlt’s potential greatness; Liacho, meanwhile, launches a savage (and ludicrous) attack on Arlt and *El amor brujo*. *Conducta* is a homage to Arlt, on his death. Among the contributors were old friends such as Roberto Mariani, the author of *Cuentos de la oficina*; Conrado Nalé Roxlo; and Leónidas Barletta.

We are, of course, immensely indebted to Raúl Larra for the 1950-1 Futuro editions of Arlt’s novels, short stories and *aguafuertes*. His *Roberto Arlt, el torturado*, is a sympathetic portrait of Arlt’s life, although as literary criticism it leaves much to be desired. The key to this is that Larra was wedded to a strict Marxist analysis and teleology. Basically, Arlt (and others, such as Barletta) according to Larra had their hearts in the right place, but (as yet) understood reality incorrectly, largely because of the nature of the moment in history when they lived: “Su inmadurez conceptual impregnada de anarquismo más temperamental que ideológico, responde en parte a la misma inmadurez del país” (1986: 37). David Viñas has written widely on Arlt – generally attacking him. Under the pseudonym J. J. Gorini, he contributed “Arlt y los comunistas” to *Contorno*. In this article, Viñas attacks Larra, who in a 1952 article, “Roberto Arlt es nuestro”, attempted to show Arlt’s

communist sympathies. Arlt, the undisciplined individualist, must, according to Viñas, be “de todos” (1954, p. 8). Of course, Viñas is not suggesting that Arlt’s work has values which transcend politics. On the contrary, this is internecine struggle on the left: Viñas denounces the supposed respectability that Arlt has acquired through the advocacy of Larra, a member of that (for Viñas) quintessentially bourgeois institution, the communist party.

Critical editions of the novels

El juguete rabioso: see Rita Gnutzmann, 1985.

Los siete locos: Madrid: Cátedra, 1992 (edited by Flora Guzmán).

Los siete locos. Los lanzallamas: Paris: Archivos, 2000 (coordinator, Mario Goloboff). Contributions by José Amícola and Rita Gnutzmann.

Major recent compilations of the narrative

Narrativa corta completa. 2 vols., ed. Domingo-Luis Hernández. La Laguna: Universidad de La Laguna, 1995. Volume 2 includes “El poeta parroquial” (1925); an extensive selection of *aguafuertes*, grouped thematically; various stories, autobiographies and essays.

Obra completa. 3 vols., introduction by Julio Cortázar. Buenos Aires: Lohlé, 1991. As well as the four novels, the two named collections of short stories, the two collections of *aguafuertes* (porteñas, españolas) and the plays, it contains the important, less well-known “Las ciencias ocultas en la ciudad de Buenos Aires” (1920) (vol. 1); “Un viaje terrible” (1941) and “Regreso” (date unknown) (vol. 2).

Cuentos completos. Ed. Gustavo Martín Garzo and David Viñas. Buenos Aires: Losada, 2002; contains the two named collections, plus 49 other stories.

Cuentos completos. Ed. Ricardio Piglia. Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe/Seix Barral, 1997.

Obra completa. 2 vols., introduction by David Viñas. Buenos Aires: Losada, 1997/8.

Main studies in Spanish (from 1970)

José Amícola (1984/1994).

Rose Corral, *El obsesivo circular de la ficción. Asedios a Los siete locos y Los lanzallamas de Roberto Arlt*. México: El Colegio de México/Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992.

Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos. Los Complementarios, nº 11, July, 1993.

Rita Gnutzmann (1984; 2004).

Ernesto Goldar, *Proceso a Roberto Arlt*. Buenos Aires: Plus Ultra, 1985.

Horacio González, *Arlt. Política y locura*. Buenos Aires: Colihue, 1996.

Eduardo González Lanuza, *Roberto Arlt*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1971.

Stasys Gostautas, *Buenos Aires y Arlt (Dostoievsky, Martínez Estrada y Scalabrini Ortiz)*. Madrid: Insula, 1977.

Diana Guerrero, *Roberto Arlt: el habitante solitario*. Buenos Aires: Granica, 1972; Buenos Aires: Catálogos, 1986.

Aden W. Hayes, *Roberto Arlt, la estrategia de su ficción*. London: Támesis, 1981.

Domingo-Luis Hernández, *Roberto Arlt. La sombra pronunciada*. Barcelona: Montesinos/Universidad de La Laguna, 1995.

José Morales Saravia and Barbara Schuchard (editors), *Roberto Arlt. Una modernidad argentina*. Madrid and Frankfurt: Iberoamericana/Vervuert, 2001. Contains an essay by Rita Gnutzmann.

Beatriz Pastor, *Roberto Arlt y la rebelión alienada*. Gaithersburg: Hispamérica, 1980.

Jorge Rivera, *Roberto Arlt: Los siete locos*. Buenos Aires: Hachette, 1986.

Ana María Zubieta, *El discurso narrativo arltiano. Intertextualidad, grotesco y utopía*. Buenos Aires: Hachette, 1987.

Collections of journalism (*aguafuertes*)

The late 1960s saw a number of compilations of Buenos Aires sketches (notably the three Edicom 1969 editions). However, the first useful analytical work is Daniel C. Scroggins, *Las aguafuertes porteñas de Roberto Arlt*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1981.

In recent years there have been many new editions and compilations of Argentine and Spanish *aguafuertes*: see Rita Gnutzmann (1993), Sylvia Saítta (1994-2005).

See also:

Aguafuertes uruguayas y otras páginas, edited by Omar Borré. Montevideo: Banda Oriental, 1996.

Al margen del cable. Crónicas publicadas en "El Nacional", México, 1937-41, edited by Rose Corral. Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 2003.

Obra completa, 2 vols., ed. David Viñas. Buenos Aires: Losada, 1998; volume 2 contains an extensive selection of *aguafuertes porteñas*, grouped thematically, and some Spanish and African *aguafuertes españolas*.

For a comprehensive list, see the bibliography in Rita Gnutzmann (2004).

The Theatre

Raúl H. Castagnino, *El teatro de Roberto Arlt*. La Plata: Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 1964; Buenos Aires: Nova, 1970.

Jorge Castro Vega, *Aproximación al teatro de Roberto Arlt: "La isla desierta"*. Montevideo: Túpac Amaru Editorial, 1988.

Osvaldo Pellettieri (ed), *El teatro y su crítica*. Buenos Aires: Galerna/Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad de Buenos Aires, 1998.

Roberto Arlt: dramaturgía y teatro independiente. Buenos Aires: Galerna/Fundación Roberto Arlt, 2000.

Mirta Arlt, "Roberto Arlt: Un creador creado por el Teatro Independiente" (paper read on 29/5/1990, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Teatro del Pueblo: now on <http://www.teatrodelpueblo.org.ar/dramaturgia/arlt001.htm>).

Various editions of the plays have prologues (see "Roberto Arlt y los años sesenta: crítica y recepción", and the bibliography in Rita Gnutzmann (2004)).

See also Miranda; Echenique (1962); *Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos* (1993); Morales Saravia and Schuchard (2001).

Biographies

There are at least four studies with a substantial biographic element, as well as various reminiscences by contemporaries such as Conrado Nalé Roxlo and Elías Castelnuovo. The mid-century account by Raúl Larra, Arlt's politically-engaged near-

contemporary, (1950) is interesting. Of the modern works, that by Sylvia Saïtta (2000) is the best.

Bibliographies

The most complete catalogue of work published during Arlt's lifetime (including dates for the many hundreds of *aguafuertes* and other newspaper articles) is in Sylvia Saïtta's biography (2000).

A useful historical guide to criticism is Omar Borré, *Arlt y la crítica* (1926-1990). Buenos Aires: América Libre, 1996.

Rita Gnutzmann (2000) for criticism and further bibliographies; Rita Gnutzmann (2004) for editions and translations.

Roberto Arlt en el Centro Virtual Cervantes: <http://cvc.cervantes.es/actcult/arlt>.

Archive

The Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Berlin, has an archive which includes manuscripts, letters and photographs: <http://www.iai.spk-berlin.de/biblioth/nachl/nachle.htm>.

Translations into English of *Los siete locos*

The Seven Madmen, translated by Naomi Lindstrom. Boston: Godine, 1984.

The Seven Madmen, translated by Nick Caistor. London: Serpent's Tail/ UNESCO Publishing, 1998.

Extended studies in English

Jack M. Flint, *The Prose Works of Roberto Arlt*. Durham: University of Durham, 1985.

Paul Jordan (2000).

Other works of interest

Articles, chapters and essays on Arlt's work are extremely numerous and, rather than attempt a selection, the reader is simply referred to Rita Gnutzmann's two bibliographies (2000/4). However, there are a number of important extended works, of various sorts, in which

Arlt's work is discussed and—implicitly or explicitly—contextualised.

Francine Masiello, *Lenguaje e ideología. Las escuelas argentinas de vanguardia*. Buenos Aires: Hachette, 1986.

Ricardo Piglia, *Respiración artificial*. Buenos Aires: Pomaire, 1980.

Prisión perpetua. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1988.

Beatriz Sarlo, *Una modernidad periférica: Buenos Aires 1920 y 1930*. Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión, 1988.

La imaginación técnica. Sueños modernos de la cultura argentina. Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión, 1992.

David Viñas and Eva Tabakián (general editors). *Historia social de la literatura argentina*, tomo 7 (editor Graciela Montaldo). *Yrigoyen entre Borges y Arlt*. Buenos Aires: Contrapunto, 1989.

* Abstract translated by Juliana Steil. Translation review by Thiago Blanch Pires.