



THESIS SUMMARY

Journey of writing through Alberto Girri's Works.

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In the recent years Girri's reappearance shows a sort of permanence in future generations. It was never said of Alberto Girri that "he's a bad writer," but that he's an inscrutable, hard and an intellectual writer. At the same time he has been entitled to be who had brought about a radical change in the poetry of Argentine. This work is an attempt of a study to show the intrinsic value of his work, not as a defense of the canon-greatness criterion- but as a reading; it is what Barthes would propose as the link with a kind of infinite text. (The pleasure of the text) For me, Girri's work "is the work of reference, the general mathesis, the mandala of the entire literary cosmogony [...] it is what comes to me, not what I call; it is not an "authority," it is, plainly a circular memory. This is what the inter-text is: the impossibility of living outside the infinite text. ^[1]

We understand the term journey as "the road to be done, marked by paths and delays: as a road in which the fate of desire is outlined, in the delicate and uncertain edge of language that indicates the imminence of reality." ^[2]

The purpose of this journey is to raise, to highlight the uniqueness of a poetic writing built between languages, the languages dialogue with each other, and in their polyphony we stop, trying to prove that there is where they communicate.

The designs of critical work are complex. They show a condensed plot that grants to hesitation and doubt games, suggestive and mysterious, clear and transparent. The poem, always vulnerable due to its specific linguistic mechanisms that expose a language to mortification until excess, exhibits the ups and downs of its own subjectivity, immediately putting in discussion the alleged uniqueness of a self that ensures the fulfillment of a statement.

The poetic, as an object is always vulnerable; it is captured and it is lost, and what remains is the hope that encourages it.

¹This article is an abstract of what a Doctoral Thesis is. About what the matter state was, we only include the following bibliographic which is chronological and it will not be classified following a precise genetic typography, because magazines reviews, prolongs of his books, essays in specialized magazines, critic books about the author, doctoral thesis are included. *They are listed below.*

² ROMANO SUED, Susana.— *Travesías. Estética, poética, traducción*. Córdoba, Foco cultural ed., 2003.

Therefore, we propose a systematic treatment of Girri texts, along with some reading and interpreting hypotheses and leading commentaries, paraphrases that can enlighten this complex and unique poetic, with the risks and uncertainties that a poetic text entails. A friendly search that receives and accepts what poetry has of mysterious, and in such recognition chooses to rely to the inescapable limits of an academy, thinking forward in the transmission.

The vast work of Girri (1919-1991) is one of the capital contributions to Argentine contemporary Literature. His production and his writer figure, which is outlined in his beginnings, both in the context of his generation and in the so called generation of the 40s, are due to be studied in their many aspects: his particular textuality, his writing affected by the constant harassment to and from other languages in the translation process, his vast metadiscourse and essays incursions, the projection onto the national literary horizon where his work has been displayed.

We emphasize the importance of the socio-historical context in which it stands, and that it dialogues with its contemporaries in the form of agreement or controversy, occupying a key place in the Argentine cultural field. The controversy with his contemporaries is clearly recorded in the dissimilar, opposite and almost irreconcilable evaluative positions that his work generate. This allows the reflections of a critical sector about his belonging to the 40s generation and about the socio-historical contextualization in which his work develops. ^[3]

The extensive development of Girri's writing (he publishes for nearly fifty years) leads us to consider his contemporaneous status: he belongs to all of us according to his writing moments. We understand that the epigraphic dimension, among many other functions, will performed the role of guidance counselor and of being capable to reveal his reading moments, creative poetry and it will define his belonging and / or relationship with his peers and contemporaries. The following words summarize our position on the contemporary concept:

[...] that inhabits the horizon of poetry at a given time, a trimmed like a frieze time to the critical eye which must be addressed with a perspective that transcends the focus of what is meant and be opened to hospitality ^[4]

We believe that a revalorization of the Girri's work and to emphasize the outstanding points that make it from which it was valued is needed. Since the seventies, some critical line would vary the approach that had prevailed until then. The attention that a critic as Enrique Pezzoni puts in the Girri's work will give encouragement to what began as a rescue of Girri's work after twenty years of its appearance.

³ Cantarovicci, J.(cfr. «Estado de la cuestión») quotes CambourgOcampo on the concept of generation, and contemporary; it takes into account the simultaneity in which the generation of 40's, the Martín Fierro association, the Sur one (*South*) and the *Contorno*(*Contour*) developed. The studies mentioned in the "Estado de Cuestión", the Cantarovicci J's.and the Pacella,C's.address these issuesROMANO SUED, Susana.— *Travesías. Estética, poética, traducción*. Córdoba, Foco cultural ed., 2003.

From this perspective it is important to make it clear the links that the girri's work has with the local and foreign poetic tradition, its connections and differences with poetry translation, especially of the period from 1946 to 1981. Thus, we find it necessary to place Girri's work in a broad intertextuality concept. The relevance of this concept, the mark that this practice prints on his writing is showed, explicitly and implicitly in the various genres he approached. The exploration of hypertext writing practices give rise to a reading that highlights the dialogical inter- and intra-generic relations, affected by the already mentioned translation and writing processes. Thus, a writing metawriting intertextuality program is configured, as a productive reception which confirms, in an exemplary manner, his work entitled "Diario de un Libro" (Journal of a book) (1972).^[5]

[...] I attempted, at the same time, to record the experience through schematics daily notes all that would be related to that book. The many avatars of the poems: Genesis, corrections, variants, characteristics of the themes, influences, language, techniques, judgments [...] I had to deal with what I had not noticed [...] pages remembered or read before, his own and others poems seeing from new angles, reflections on poetry and poetic language, mysteriously timely dialogues, aphorisms derived from ideas for poems, drafts of poems synthesized in apothegms.^[6]

[...] Human life, literature, projects and affectionate personal relationships are "a series of footnotes to a vast, obscure, unfinished masterpiece (Nabokov)."^[7]

These statements, which we will call "procedures and practices program", are the support of his poetic and they systematically spread with variations, nuances and exceptions, throughout his work. In his path, the poet shares his poetic production with the constant exercise of translation. We found in that combination a truly intercultural theory and practice of translation, since an overtaken takes place, meaning a discovery of multiple scriptural possibilities. In this space of tension created by the languages relation, the constitutive difference of cultures is preserved by considering the perspective of fidelity to the original and by the emergencies of the receiving universe. In this context, we mean a productive reception of the foreigner in the translation process, which allows replacing the disqualifying notion of the active reception influence. We understand that we deal with discoveries, rediscoveries, interchanges that the authors make on the works of others and that trigger critical and creative processes, detached from any passivity. The notion of intertextuality is revealed as a relevant category.^[8]

Moreover, a Girri doomed to criticism and criticisms doomed to Girri exist as continuous interchange points, difficult to separate at the time of their approach and description.

⁴ ROMANO SUED, Susan. «Crítica y hospitalidad. El canon y lo inclasificable en Sobre héroes y tumbas de Ernesto Sábato», en *Mal Estar*. Bs. As., núm. 7, 2008, pp. 9-10. ROMANO SUED, Susana.— *Travesías. Estética, poética, traducción*. Córdoba, Foco cultural ed., 2003.

⁵ It is always used unless explicit notification, the edition made by Corregidor, launched from 1955 to 1991, compiles Girri's work from 1946 to 1991 under the title *Obra Completa*.

⁶ GIRRI, Alberto.— *Diario de un libro*. Bs. As., ed. Sudamericana, 1972, p. 9.

⁷ *Ibid*, p.22. We translate: "[...] A series of footnotes of a vast and dark unfinished masterpiece.

On the one hand, the experience of translation in languages alternation (Italian, English, French, German, Oriental languages, although they are considered second-hand languages) and on the other hand, the proliferation of epigraphs in different languages along his entire work, bring out what has been one of his key features: the rewriting linked to translation, version, and tribute. This is why our work gives special emphasis on Girri as a translator and on Girri concerned about metatextuality and metapoetic issues. It will also be an inevitable consequence to address the role of autologous (there are several anthologies compiled by him and published by Sur) and along with the translator activity, with its subsequent ranking, both enroll Girri in the Borgesian tradition. ^[9]

Through a reading assignment and systematic analyzes we will reconstruct the girrian writing program, pillar of his vast work, which is configured as an extended trip. Hence the general title of this thesis, *A Writing Tour*, opened in large parts which we will call *estancias*, ^[10] with the inherent idea of its permanence in the transience, of movement with its arrests, turns, ups and downs that are deduct in the instances of discourse and that can account for certain language milestones: channels of the writing path.

In their creations and textual productions, according the receptive language the treatment of the original may be criticized by the partisan that watch how he translates from a normative perspective and checked what could be the translator movement from a degraded, unfaithful copy. From another position, now according with the point of view of how this textual translation functions in the work who translates his comings and goings with the language which is questioned, with models that arise from it, in many ways like literary authors of the original culture. Therefore, we are interested in his translations from the perspective of the receptive language (that is why we do not include the original language texts).

We will deal with the translation praxis, as it is one of Girri's praxis, but not of the various translation theories; in Girri, according to different processes it will have different definitions. In a first concern it will be focused on the searching of hypotexts which sustain a certain tradition; in the second one, the translation as rewriting.

We start from a definition of literary translation which believes that "to translate literature is to translate an interpretation of a literary work" and "The translation is interpretation as the literary text resulting from the act of translation is the result of the reception of the literary text which is the translation object." ^[11]

⁸ ROMANO SUED, Susana.— *La diáspora de la escritura*. Córdoba, Alfa, 1995.

⁹ ROMANO SUED, Susana.— «Traducción e identidad latinoamericana: mundos, textos, lenguas», en *Consuelo del lenguaje. Problemáticas de traducción*. Córdoba, Ferreira editor, 2005, p. 37.

¹⁰ Not in the sense given by Agamben (cf. Agamben, Giorgio. —*Estancias. La palabra y el fantasma en la cultura occidental*. Valencia, Pre-text, 1995) as a home or receptacle, essential core of XIII century poetry, that defended it, together with all the formal elements of the song, but rather in the sense of what the word names, in its usual meaning of room, bedroom, what is the shape of a house doorways, hallways, galleries, terms that allow us to access to certain topology of the unreal. We will agree that its association with poetic dwelling is suggestive, since the first epigraphs, primary in Girri's work, are from Dante and Petrarch.

¹¹ The quotations belong to Frank(1987) and Albaladejo (1992), quoted in ROMANO SUED, Susana. - *Una aproximación a la obra de Girri en su encadenamiento productivo con la obra de Benn*. Córdoba, Ed. Comunicarte (3rd Comparative Literatura Nacional Conference Acts), vol. ii, 1998.

Expanding these statements it is possible, then the following statement: if we consider the translation and to translate as the slippage of senses in the encounter between "original" texts and the subjectivity that the translator expressed in the movements into his mother tongue, a space of foreigner sources critical discourse shelter as cross intertextual writing is enabled (like Borges did). ^[12]

What we want to emphasize is that the whole girrian program of writing is intertextual and metaliterary. The effect of his translation work will be seen in the analysis of the selected poems that accompany Girri's tour in such a program, that will be described when such particular poems begin to appear. For analysis purpose we will stop in those poems considered as exemplary for their potential as they make in an extreme sense, the author's explorations of meaning.

We will see how, in the different estancias they have (the selection) a consistent and particular manner with the privileged language, the way in which Girri acts as autologous.

This is particularly true if one considers the role usually assigned to the anthologies, which is to provide overviews of certain literature, texts and authors, a fairly common practice in modern times. In this sense it can be said that they function as an art museums with the pieces of art they exposed: they preserve them, they show them and they exposed them.

Then, the anthology is a precise object of forming transfer, ie it transmit models, which can be reconstructed from the usual paratexts: the prologues, the lists of sources, footnotes, quotations apparatus, flyleaf and backs, epilogues, the layout and ordering of the materials.

The translators moves texts from one language to another; their interpretive perspectives become evident in their translations. In the same way the perspectives of the editors of anthologies also become evident, for example, the way of situating, ordering and arranging the texts. ^[13]

I will make the consideration of the anthology mostly from paratexts, which offer a highly productive access. ^[14] Paratexts are a real corpus of criteria and literary historiographical, canonical and of the anthologist and his time positions, which relevance is worth noting.

¹² ROMANO SUED, Susana. — *Travesías. Estética, poética, traducción*. Córdoba, Foco cultural ed., 2003.

¹³ ROMANO SUED, Susana. - «Imaginario letrado: memoria y traducción. Casos de Antología», "in *Escribas*(Magazine of the Philosophy and Humanities College, unc), no. 2,2003, p. 169-184. In translated authors in Argentina, can also be compare the vernacular reception of the time with the reception of such authors and literature in other countries, considering the delay, reviews, gender wrong cataloging, among others; it can be inquired, as well, if such reception matches or not the positive international reception of an author. As shown, there are many survey manners on socio-cultural and literary field that anthologies provide, so it is relevant to ask, exposed to a particular anthology, a complex question that guides the inquiry, such as: Is there an autologous who has included, in what anthology of what author in what text, in what anthology, in what translation and in what context? Surely both, the compiler and the managing editor, or the requesting party of the work, have a shared idea of anthology, probably determined by their own contemporaneity.

¹⁴ <paratextuality> defines everything that it surround close to the text (title, illustrations, cover, flaps, back covers, prolog, index, bibliography, appendices, footnotes, etc..), as useful accessory signals to study the pragmatic dimension of the work, the preliminary reading contract. (Cf. GENETTE, Gérard. —Palimpsestos. La literatura en segundo grado. Madrid, Taurus, 1989).

We propose to recognize Girri's translator task as a significant contribution to Argentinian literary opening towards the occident of the English language, with the consequent displacement of the previous vanguard paradigms and vernacular neo-Romanticism focused on French culture. Through this task the importance given to the context of production and reception is simultaneously highlighted.

We believe that inhabit its different estancias will allow us to rearrange his production emphasizing the detention and transit moments, from epigraphic marks and other constructive resources, always taking into account the linguistic varieties. Within this range, we assume that the epigraph put the reader in an off guard situation, in a suggestive linguistic instability area, due to establish, not without loss and reunion, interlocutions. Associations arising from languages hiatus will spread the reading through heterogeneous lanes which return and at the same time relaunch toward future prospects, which foster the expectation fueled by the promise of other words. Through these inscriptions, thresholds of an order beginning, there will follow books in which will proliferate intertextual links (citations and allusions) and paratextuals (epigraphs, titles, and others.). In a network of architextual relationships, poems and entries of a diar in a book (Diary of a book) (Diario de un Libro) will allow us to discover in Girri's textual production, the productive reception of different authors work. ^[15] Thus, we reach his writing program.

The journey of the tour include a critical practice, primary production and translation are considered on an equal footing as regards textual productivity. Thus, we will incorporate in the work analysis both the critical writings of Girri and the ones the critics wrote about the author. Our work, which is situated on the edge of the thesis and the essay, indulges what the work itself inspires, as an example of what a Diary of a book.... If a Diary of a book is presented as the encyclopedia of the author, we engaged in a dialogue with our own encyclopedia. The critic reflects on a work from his own encyclopedia. So he is becoming aware at different times and he begins to move, he joins the journey. ^[16] In Girri's own words. Externally, a work acquires some more reality when someone tries to describe it. However, the stigma that all description carries is the fatality of be considered incomplete. How can the private rules that the maker was inventing and hid be showed and detailed? ^[17]

In search of a unity criteria, ^[18] we will depart from the recurrent epigraph and other paratextual resources, since it has been possible to verify that there are procedures that are constantly repeated in Girri's textual production.

Epigraphs will play a textual function in two ways: as a writing mark and as a mark of the translation process that connects to a tradition that can never be completely

¹⁵ ROMANO SUED, Susana.— Una aproximación a la obra de Girri en su encadenamiento productivo con la obra de Gottfried Benn. Ob.cit., pp. 563-574. Applied to other poems, of our own selection, we verified that the same procedures are repeated.

¹⁶ Like the image of Heidegger that remains in us along the wood's path through the word Holzwege: woods, a walk along a fell path where the wood has not been gathered yet and obstruct the way; rocks, signs that are send to other places.

¹⁷ GIRRI, Alberto.—El motivo es el poema, en Obra poética VI. Bs. As., Corregidor, 1991, p.139.

¹⁸ «It is difficult to explain how unity manifest in Great Poets, with the exception of the possibility of saying that what each of them gives to us is Life itself, the World watched from a particular perspective, from a particular time by a particular man of that time [...] perhaps only one question may be enough (and then, the search of the necessary answer) to prove the existence of such unity in Girri's work: ¿Does each part of his work help to understand the other?, ¿Can his first books be understand from the last ones? »(ANANIA , Pablo. —« Tiempo Argentino » [2/1/1983], en GIRRI, Alberto.—Obra poética VI. Bs. As., Corregidor, 1991, p.220).

erased, lost, as a home place that hosts and anticipates other voices seeking to enter into the dialogue and take its place. An epigraphic style that invites to read a geography nominate by passages of portals that open to estancias, places to stay and abandonment. It is about capturing the passage, the intertextuality, opposed to a place as an eternal original settlement.

Due to support the poem along the three parts of the work, namely, in the three estancias, it has been carried out a selection of texts that- in our opinion- are exemplary, not only in relation to the different textual procedures that can be found in them but also to the reading strategy doomed to epigraphic inscriptions and / or other paratextual resources. This means that the three parts follow the general hypothesis of the work, but always concerning the dimension characteristic of his uniqueness and the derivations caused by simply traveling around the tour.

From the first one, each estancia is divided in a series of chapters which will deal with textual production that is considered primary: poems, poetry translations to Italian, and criticism of the author and the criticism make by Girri himself. There, we investigate in different sections, the various intertextual and metapoetic relations with their typical nuances that arise from the epigraphs, titles of books, poem books, poems, verses sustained in some reflective care, translations, all that coming together in a poetic setting.

In the "First estancia" the dominance of the classical and Italian epigraphy is considered, circumscribed to the 1946-1970 works.

In "Chapter 1" we focus on the consideration of his preliminary book, "Playa Sola"(Lonely Beach) (1946), and from the selection of two poems: "El Amor" (Love) and "Lonely Beach" homonymous of the book, we recognize intertextual, paratextual and metatextual relations oriented to classical tradition, in a style where an evident careful rhetorical elaboration is shown. From his book "Examen de Nuestra Causa" (Review of our cause) (1956) a stylistic shift is shown: a change from lyrical to prosaic, to precision and clarity, which, also, entails a reflection on the literary and political cause, a kind of graft which anticipates other possible metaliterary and intertextual reflection; a shift with ideological weight that leads to ethical prose sayings.

This first part of the first chapter concludes with the treatment of "Las Elegías Italianas" (The Italian Elegies) (1961) in which, from the epigraphy of contemporary origin, it may recognize the decision to honor the tradition of classic Cuneo.

In the "second chapter" versions of poems in Italian are studied, since we consider that from the corpus gathered from his translations, such production plays a role not only important but also foundational in what it will be his work as a poet. This activity results in what will be a unique and specific manner of the translation as an exercise of literary writing. We enunciate, describe and discuss a small selection of Ungaretti and Montale poems. We read, therefore, translated texts as pieces of poetry, as creative sources proposed for their contemporaries, as an object to be considered by the Argentine reader.

The 'Third Chapter' deals with the consideration of Girri doomed to criticism and criticism doomed to Girri, in a continuous forwarding way, difficult to separate at the time of analysis. The highlight of the paratextuality procedure demonstrates judgments and opinions that make it possible to collect large observations, explained by intertextual mechanisms which also facilitate the connection between the literary and social context.

The "Second estancia", although it begins as a continuation of the other, has a rather topic or thematic character, and it is also distinguished by the spring of new traits. The aims achieved in the construction of Girri's poetry impose us a turning retrogressive and progressive form of reading in which, now, the passages are set from the emergence of an epigraphy in English. We depart from a selection of exemplary poems-since a number of unavoidable peculiarities are condensed there, common to other sections of the poetic production- where a stylistic break will be shown which will allow us to recognize constructive procedures characteristic of rewriting. In "Chapter 1", located in what we consider as a sort of prelude, namely, *Diary of a Book* and "En la Letra, ambigua selva", (Within the Letter, ambiguous jungle), we arrived at a turning point, a point of arrival in the work "Homenaje a Williams Carlos Williams (Homage to William Carlos Williams)", which in the form of versions and tributes, become paradigmatic; they achieved, simultaneously, a reflection on the careful reader category.

In "Chapter 2" it is undertaken, firstly, a selection of translations that Girri made of Eliot, Stevens, Donne, Pound, and, secondly, we deal with what comes out of them in the poetry construction sense. There we prove the spread of methapoetic relations departing from what will be a Girrian postulate: A translator does not necessarily have to be a poet but every poet has to be a translator. We show, from his versions, his concept of translation and, from that we glimpse the intensity he puts in his translations, a phenomenon that presents him as an explorer and experimenter in every way.

In "Chapter 3" we engage in a reading of extending possibilities of certain classifications that may be prevalent in the field of criticism. It will be highlighted his particular task as a critic through his epigraphic parafrastic and aphoristic procedures. Once more, we seek a more critical and metacritical orientation that many of his verses assume; verses that function as communicating vessels in a tour between languages, precisely where poetry and criticism interweave. The procedures exemplified in the "Second estancia" at a metatextual level, remove the boundaries between primary texts, poems, and criticism. We appeal again to the careful reader to capture those networks.

The "Third estancia" in a single chapter, deals with the development of the last two volumes of "Corregidor", *Monodias* (Monodies) (1985), "Existenciales" (Existentials) (1986), from Volume to the ones that include the last VI volume, "Tramas y Conflictos" (Plots and Conflicts) (1988), 1989/1990 (1990) and "Juegos Alegóricos, posthumous" (Allegorical Games, posthumous). There appears, in our view, a writing still crossed by the practice of translation, as it confirms the presence of procedures already underlined in previous estancias, but now totally assimilated, almost as something constitutive,

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interlaced in undeniable and intimate communion with the poem, creating an epiphanic space, in a broader intersection between aesthetics and ethics. Departing from the analysis of exemplary poems, we show the decoupling process of certain restraints, of magisterial authorships, a twist in which a new reflection appeared, a different one, a more direct way of dialoguing with the writers, to develop current answers. The major Girrian subjects and the remarkable gradual decrease of authorial epigraphic inscriptions are shown together: the experience of an anonymous epigraphy that detaches the poem from paratextual links.

We found that in this final estancia the interlinguistic edges are blurred; there is a confluence of languages: German with Gottfried Benn, English and French with Paul Valery, the Italian, apparently displaced earlier ... To this range of languages displayed through the epigraphy that is projected on the poems, corresponds another comprise of a variety of reasons, understanding the latter term not only as target but also as a unique repetitive feature that finally turns in a subject: anonymity, impersonality, love, the elderly, care, randomness, appearance, the face, the poem.

Guided by reflection, the verse, in the prose manner, accommodates itself to the idea: a reflection as a calculus and choice, as a laboratory dedicated to language where the big reasons, the major issues are subjected to its procedures experiencing the jolts of consciousness deployed to contingency. Girri without giving up the poetic function turns to the prosaic, not to define, describe or tell; it plays with thoughts, indeed, but thanks to language without falling, in reasoning or abruptly comparison.

Simultaneously, it is imposed as a form accompanying the poems the aphoristic of the "El motivo es el poema" (The reason is the poem), included in the last book published (1991). This is a circular movement of words and ideas that play in a closed sense, this time from the fragmentary. The first ones are in his later books but reconfigured, since a point of climax has been reached. The procedures have already become plots; now they are indistinguishable points on the poem's material: undeniable and intimate communion that proposed to create an epiphanic space, open to considerate the intersection between aesthetics and ethics in a more compromised way.

Thus, going thru an austere and openness to the radical solitude of the poem experience, the texts become *Juegos Alegóricos* (Allegorical Games), (posthumously book), where hope wavers between metaphor and allegory, where epigraphs are entwined in a subtracted form: epigraphic boundaries begin to get lost (own and others voices). So an aphoristic arrives, the close work with the fragment, now the poem only guest.

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