



Agents of Exchange

Women's Roles in Forming the Latin American Literary Canon

International Virtual Symposium

16 February 2024

**Special Guests: Adriana Pacheco of [Hablemos, escritoras](#)
and Luise von Flotow, University of Ottawa**

Even before the 1868 translation of Sarmiento's 'Facundo' by Mary Tyler Mann—wife of Horace Mann and sister to the wife of Nathaniel Hawthorne—women's contributions have been crucial to the development of the Latin American literary canon. Their active involvement in canon formation has by no means been limited to their work as translators—ironically, the most visible of their interventions—but as authors, publishers, literary agents, cultural attachées, arts patronesses, professors, critics, readers for publishing houses, and in their roles in informal spheres as domestic hostesses, event coordinators, secretaries, and aides. Some figures who had a crucial role in shaping the canon of Latin American and Caribbean literature were Gabriela Mistral; Zenobia Camprubí Aymar; Victoria Ocampo; María Rosa Oliver; Concha Romero James; Anita Brenner; Blanch Knopf; Harriet de Onís; Sara Blackburn; Manuelita Mota de Reyes; Mary B. Decker and Mildred Boyer; as well as Boom-era contributors such as Marilyn Gaddis Rose; Edith Grossman; Suzanne Jill Levine; Cola Franzen; Margaret Sayers Peden; and Carmen Balcells. Although several of these names may sound familiar, most are hardly as well-known as their male counterparts. Discussion of the Latin American literary canon in English, even when intended to revindicate the role of the translator, tends to focus on a handful of well-known men.

This virtual symposium seeks to address the significant gap in literary history through round-table discussions and scholarly papers (about 15 minutes in length) on any of the questions listed below, as well as other relevant topics that scholars may wish to propose. Discussions of translations into Latin American & Caribbean languages are also welcome. Presentations may be in English or in Spanish.

- How did women's involvement in government-organized exchange programs, such as FDR's Good Neighbor Policy, influence the selection and translation of Latin American literary texts?
- What impact did university talks or visiting professorships given by Latin American intellectuals such as María Rosa Oliver and Gabriela Mistral have on the creation of the canon?
- What formal and informal roles did women have in the publishing industry that contributed to the international circulation of Latin American and Caribbean

literatures?

- What was the role of personal relationships and friendships in influencing decisions about translation and publication?
- What factors and circumstances are at play in cases where the canonization of a text or an author occurs unevenly between its translated/imported context and its country of origin?
- What strategies of self-translation have authors used to meet or challenge target reader expectations?
- By what means did Latin American literary texts travel to the United States or other Anglophone sites of translation, and vice versa?
- What stories does archival research tell about the roles of women as agents of exchange?

We welcome pre-organized panels of three or four participants, or individual research papers of about fifteen minutes in length, which will later be organized into thematic panels. Round-table proposals of three to five individuals, intended to generate discussion among participants and the audience around a specific topic are also welcome (each round-table participant should limit their contribution to a maximum of five minutes). Both panel and round-table proposals should include an organizer or moderator.

Paper and panel proposals should be a maximum of 350 words per paper and include a professional bio of no more than 100 words per participant. Round-table proposals should include a description of a maximum of 350 words, which includes the themes for discussion or questions that will guide the conversation, the names of the participants and brief bios for each.

Please send proposals as an attachment to leh@uwm.edu by 15 September 2023.

Notice of acceptance: 15 October 2023

Conference website: <https://uwm.edu/clacs/9184-2/>



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