



## Women in Argentina: Early Travel Narratives

*Monica Szurmuk*

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"Tells a compelling story about an almost unknown body of work--Argentine women's travel narratives--and also provokes the reader to think more deeply about the intersection between learning about one's country and learning about oneself."-- Debra A. Castillo, Stephen H. Weiss Presidential Fellow, Cornell University, and author of *Easy Women: Sex and Gender in Modern Mexican Fiction*

In this collection of writings by women both inside and outside of Argentina, Mónica Szurmuk has unearthed a rich and delightful tradition of travel writing. The selections, recorded from the period 1850-1930, include travelogues by European and North American women who visited Argentina alongside pieces by Argentinean women who describe trips to the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and the interior of their own country.

The pieces show that women writers in colonized and colonizing countries share literary and ideological perspectives and discuss race and gender in similar ways, often using the form of travel writing to discuss highly charged political issues.

In addition to short introductions to each text and author, Szurmuk describes how women's texts were co-opted to form an image of white women as models of nationhood that need to be protected and sheltered. She also examines the history of travel writing alongside the participation of women in public life, population policies, and the development of the public school system, and she offers enlightening conclusions about the nature of travel writing as a literary genre.

### Introduction

#### Part I: Frontier Identities, 1837-1880

1. A House, a Home, a Nation: Mariquita Sánchez's *Recuerdos del Buenos Ayres Virreynal*
2. Queen of the Interior: Lina Beck-Bernard's *Le Rio Parana*

#### Part II: Shifting Frontiers, 1880-1900

3. Eduarda Mansilla de García's *Recuerdos de Viaje: "Recordar es Vivir"*
4. Interlude in the Frontier: Lady Florence Dixie's *Across Patagonia*
5. Traveling/Teaching/Writing: Jennie Howard's *In Distant Climes and Other Years*

#### Part III: Shifting Identities, 1900-1930

6. Traveler/Governess/Expatriate: Emma de la Barra's *Stella*
7. Globe-Trotting Single Women
8. The Spiritual Trip: Delfina Bunge de Gálvez's *Tierras del Mar Azul*

**Mónica Szurmuk** is assistant professor of Latin American literature at the University of Oregon. She is the editor of the anthology *Mujeres y Viaje: Escritos y Testimonios*, published in Buenos Aires, and her work has appeared in English and Spanish in journals such as *Nuevo Texto Crítico* and *English Language Journal*.



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