

**Title: Foreignness, Mobility, and Spectatorship in María Luisa Bombal's "Washington, City of Squirrels"**

**Author:** Marisol Fonseca Malavasi

**Abstract:** Published in 1934 in the Argentinean journal *Sur*, the long-overlooked text "Washington, City of Squirrels" draws attention to a frequently ignored aspect of the life of Chilean author María Luisa Bombal (1910-1980): namely, her experience as an immigrant in the United States. Although labeled as a *chronicle*, the text portrays a narrator who lacks the basic sense of security to wander around the city, which is typical of the genre. Thus, the narrator links her own gaze to the gaze of the squirrels (*las ardillas*) of Washington and, by seeing through their eyes, formulates an explicitly female model of unrestricted urban mobility and visual consumption. This project is underscored by the narrator's rereading of the gendered binaries in her literary and cinematic predecessors such as the Latin American chronicle, Baudelaire's poetry, and the melodrama.

**Bio:** Marisol Fonseca Malavasi is a Ph.D. Candidate in Literature and a Gender Studies Minor. She received an MFA in Creative Writing in Spanish from the University of Iowa and an MA in Romance Languages and Literatures from the University of Notre Dame. Her research focuses on the study of 20th century Latin American Literature through the lens of female practices of mobility and visual consumption.