Facundo travels to the US: *Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of Tyrants*
by Mary Peabody Mann and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, 1868

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1. I am forever grateful for the comments and suggestions of Bianca Premo, Darden Pyron, and Mark Szuchman. Also want to thank Gregory Weimer, Amanda Snyder, and the participants of the Río de la Plata workshop for the helpful feedback and encouragement.
Almost a century and a half after its original publication, Mary Mann’s translation of Domingo F. Sarmiento’s *Facundo* continues to be a touchstone of our understanding of nineteenth-century Latin America and is used in a significant percentage of contemporary introductory courses dealing with the history and culture of the region.\(^2\) But why should we continue to use Mary Peabody Mann’s *Facundo, or Civilization and Barbarism* when a complete version, closer to Domingo Sarmiento’s Spanish original, came out a few years ago?\(^3\) Perhaps it is because, while we use *Facundo*, in each of the two English versions, to discuss themes such as liberalism, *caudillismo*, race relations, civilization and barbarism, Mann’s translation seems to offer one more lesson: about US hegemony. Ilan Stavans, in his introduction to the most commonly used edition of *Facundo* in English, acknowledges that Sarmiento orchestrated the project of the translation and was fully aware of what was lost and gained in the process. But he further adds that the final version proved to be invaluable as a “manipulated rendition of Sarmiento’s work as well as a rebirth.” The book “was repackaged, rearranged so as to please an audience with little interest in but much pity for the complications of the Hispanic psyche.”\(^4\)


That audience was a US readership, who was presumed to have “little interest” and see the region as “complicated.”

This article uncovers the history of Mary Mann’s translation of Sarmiento’s monumental work to remind us that no translation or reading of a text is one directional and that no translation or reading is ever complete. After the Argentine kindly asked Mary Mann to take up the project of translating and publishing his book, it took her almost two years to do so. During this period, Sarmiento and Mann exchanged many letters, drafts, notes, and background information discussing the content that would go into the text. Once the book was published, reviewers from several journals wrote their appreciations of *Facundo* showing how it was received by the intellectual elites of the period. The reading of these sources along with Mann’s translation proves to be invaluable to fully appreciate the text, its translation, its reception in the US, as well as the relationship that two liberal thinkers of the Americas built in the nineteenth-century.

The translation and publication of *Facundo* packs into its pages a history of the circulation of ideas that brings Latin America into the mainstream of nineteenth-century intellectual history. Scholars tend to overlook the cultural affinities between Latin America and the United States during the nineteenth century, preferring to trace a trans-Atlantic route of the circulation of ideas on an east-west, rather than north-south, axis. This is in part because, like Stavans, we assume that the US had already become like Europe—part of the West—and established a cultural hegemony that, in fact, was in process rather than in fact. In this case, the history of the Spanish and English versions of *Facundo* reveals the north-south circulation of ideas about nation and region was in process, a process that Latin American thinkers managed to enter on their own terms. If students can grasp that the translations of *Facundo* tell a story about the Americas alongside that of the infamous caudillo, they can see themselves as participants in the *Facundo, or Civilization and Barbarism*.

Within the larger context of the Atlantic exchange of ideas that took place between Europe and the Americas, an active dialogue formed along the north-south axis. While all local elites in the Americas ostensibly were looking to Europe as a model to follow, in fact they were
sharing with one another the ideas and institutions that gave meaning and definition to their individual national experiences. Mary Mann formed part of a select group of American literary and intellectual icons whose studies focused on the Hispanic world. Trying to respond to their own concerns about the character and development of the US national culture after the Civil War, they found inspiration within the Americas. While Europeans viewed the New World as an exotic whole, intellectuals from this side of the Atlantic—in the Americas—continued to search for the unique institutions, language and representations that better fit their distinctive national projects. The 1868 translation of *Facundo* provides a concrete example of this process as it proved to be a collaborative project meant to craft and advance Sarmiento’s and Mann’s own cultural and political ideas.

In her translation of *Facundo*, Mann saw in “South” America a living metaphor for the US South. Mann and Sarmiento constantly established comparisons between Argentina and the US in relation to their geography, economy, race relation, and political immaturity of their leaders, among others issues. The comparison was also established under the theme of Civilization and Barbarism. In neither case was the “nation” a completed process. For the case of Argentina, those in the city-centers needed to deal with the “backwardness” of those in the rural areas (interior). Meanwhile in the US, Northern intellectuals regarded the South as backward. In both countries, intellectuals at the center of “civilization” believed that the spreading of key

5. See Iván Jaksic, *Ven conmigo a la España lejana: los intelectuales norteamericanos ante el mundo hispano, 1820–1880* (Santiago de Chile: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007) Iván Jaksic examines a group of nineteenth-century intellectuals—George Ticknor, William H. Prescott, Henry W. Longfellow, and Mary Mann—who initiated a systematic study of Hispanism and its repercussions. He argues that this group of intellectuals were attracted by the history of Spain (including the New World), not just because they wanted to understand the growth and fall of what once was a powerful nation, but to respond to their own concerns about the character and development of the US national culture.
institutions, like the common school, would contribute to a faster unification of the countries and a more entrenched national identity.

Yet, this article teaches us a lesson that goes beyond the civilization and barbarism dichotomy. Moving away from the local history of Argentina and/or the US, the story behind the translation of *Facundo* shows there were larger forces at work giving meaning to national projects within the Americas. To better understand the relationship between the hemispheres during the nineteenth-century, it is necessary to leave presumptions of the US as an indisputable hegemonic force aside. Not until the turn of the twentieth century would the US emerge as a clear leader. Until then, those who participated in the exchange of ideas that took place in the north-south axis did so in comparable standings. As such, the Mann’s translation of *Facundo* should be read not through but against our twenty-first-century conception of the inevitability of US hegemony.

Sarmiento writes *Facundo o Civilización y Barbarie en las pampas argentinas*

*Facundo* first appeared in 1845 as a periodical series in the Chilean newspaper “El Progreso.” Because of its popularity, it took Domingo F. Sarmiento only a few months to publish it as a first edition under the name: *Civilización y barbarie. Vida de Juan Facundo Quiroga y aspecto físico, costumbres y hábitos de la República Argentina* (Civilization and Barbarism. The Life of Juan Facundo Quiroga and the Physical Aspects, Customs and Habits of the Argentine Republic). The publication of this text in particular, and literature/journalism in general had a clear political role for Sarmiento and his generation.

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6. Domingo F. Sarmiento, *Civilización y barbarie. Vida de Juan Facundo Quiroga y aspecto físico, costumbres y hábitos de la República Argentina* (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta del Progreso, 1845).

Sarmiento wrote *Facundo* in a time when politics determined the place of literature and when Latin American writers blended history and fiction to present their political visions. Literary critic and historian Ricardo Piglia proposes that to understand writing in nineteenth-century Argentina one must visualize “the state of a literature with no autonomy; politics invades everything, there is no space, functions are intermingled, one cannot be only an author.” He further adds that because of the impossibility of being a fictional writer in Argentina, Sarmiento was able to write his greatest texts, *Facundo* being the most important one.

In *Facundo*, Sarmiento links the landscape of the Argentine Pampas to the personalities produced by it. *Facundo* presents the history of post-independence Argentina, a period characterized by civil wars and chaos. To present his political ideas and plans, he places the civilization—represented by the cities, education, progress, and rationality—against a backdrop of barbarism exemplified by the countryside and its uneducated habitants. Overall, Sarmiento’s main goal was to critique the country’s colonial past, present, and expose his prospects for its future. He provides a sociological and cultural analysis of politics in Argentina and tries to offer possible alternatives to what he identifies as the emergent nation’s failures. By adopting the dichotomy of civilization against barbarism, Sarmiento invoked the conflicts of a newly formed society torn between parochialism and the circulation of new liberal ideas set in motion by Romantic impulses determined to modernize the nation.

Sarmiento’s narrative examines the influence of caudillo leaders (rural strongmen), who embody the maximum expression of barbarism in Argentine political and social life. Through his discussion of *caudillismo* as a form of pre-modern political rule, Sarmiento immortalized his

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9. Note that the use of “and” in civilization and barbarism is deliberate. That dialectic opposition is based on mutual need.
ideas about the most characteristic form of leadership of nineteenth-century Latin America. While the story centers on Facundo Quiroga, a popular leader who ruled the province of La Rioja from 1823 to 1835 (he was murdered that year), Sarmiento’s main objective was to denounce the tyranny of Juan Manual de Rosas.10 As Governor of Buenos Aires Province, Rosas ruled Argentina for over three decades and personified, in Sarmiento’s mind, all that was wrong with the country.

While criticized for its erratic prose and oversimplifications, this book has been called the single most important book ever produced in Spanish America. Scholars tend to agree that when Sarmiento wrote Facundo, he actually produced the first literary work of Argentine history.11 Literary critic Roberto González Echevarría insists that Sarmiento’s “Facundo ... is the first Latin American classic and the most important book written by a Latin American in any disciplines or genre.” Jaksic agrees and further adds that Mann’s translation is also a classic to the US audience since it dominated its field for 135 years until a new translation was published.12 Historian Ariel de la Fuente places the book within a larger audience and proposes that “thanks to Sarmiento’s reflections and intellectual legacy Argentina provided the classic example for all Latin American history.”13


12. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism, 1.

When *Facundo* first appeared in Chile, where Sarmiento resided in exile, it soon created controversy among his peers in different parts of Latin America, especially among those who still lived in Argentina. Even though the Argentine government banned the text, *Facundo* found its way among intellectual and political elites. The book soon reached the hands of Sarmiento’s political enemies. Rosas, who by then was clearly his main adversary, read the book and praised Sarmiento’s prose and the intensity of his writing style. The text also circulated among the exile community in the neighboring countries of Uruguay and Brazil. Moreover, journals outside of the southern hemisphere also took notice and reviewed the book. In France, the premiere literary journal *Revue des Deux Mondes* published a review of *Facundo* in 1846, while in the US various journals like the *Atlantic Monthly*, *The Christian Examiner*, and others celebrated Mary Mann’s English translation. *Facundo* was translated into French, English, German and Italian during Sarmiento’s lifetime.

Sarmiento had a particular faith in *Facundo*’s ability to open doors abroad. When the book first came out in Chile, Sarmiento personally sent copies to his fellow exiles and political dissidents in Uruguay and Argentina. He also hired an agent in France to promote the book. For his English-speaking audience, Sarmiento turned to his American friend Mary Peabody Mann, asking her help to publish it in the US. He thought of *Facundo* as a gateway, writing that “I bring the key to two doors in order to penetrate Paris: the official recommendation of the Chilean

14. Sarmiento left for Chile because of his animosities with the government of the time led by Juan Manuel de Rosas.


16. *Facundo* was written before Sarmiento’s trip to Europe and the US. By that time, Sarmiento continued to believe that France was at the center of civilization and the model he wanted his Argentina to follow.
government and *Facundo*; I have faith in this book.”¹⁷ Later, in a letter to his friend Aurelia Velez, he commented, “That book serves me as a means of introduction. If to be a [government] minister is not enough for everyone, to be an educator is already a great title to the friendly consideration of this nation of professors and schoolmasters, but I still keep *Facundo* up my sleeve. It is my “Ace in the hole” (Parrot cannon). Nothing stands up against it.”¹⁸

Much has been written and said about Sarmiento and his ideas. While he continues to generate debate among Argentines, all agree that his ideas influenced the political development of most Latin American countries. During his careers as a journalist and as a politician, he exchanged letters, manuscripts and other of writings with an impressive array of leaders of his time. In the introduction to *Sarmiento, Author of a Nation*, Gwen Kirkpatrick assures readers that “The acceptances and resistance to his plans, and his notable successes as well as failures, marked the course for other Latin American leaders.”¹⁹ As a leader with grand ambitions, he wished to burnish his reputation in the US and Europe. Sarmiento intended his texts and ideas to reach beyond the Southern Cone by actively promoting his writings abroad. Beyond this, he also hoped translations of his texts into French and English would introduce him to the European intelligentsia while enhancing his standing at home.

Sarmiento did much of the necessary work to disseminate his writings, but he received help from many of his acquaintances along the way. Many historians have studied Sarmiento’s

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relationship to other Latin American leaders such as José Pedro Varela in Uruguay and Manuel Montt in Chile, but the connections that Sarmiento built with influential figures in the United States have been less studied. Yet, the relationships he established not only speak to his global connections, but also to how the US became his focal point within the Americas. Sarmiento visited the US twice and traveled widely across the country, living in different cities over the course of three years, visiting and corresponding with many influential people of the time. Among them, Mary Mann was his favorite. He would come to call her a motherly figure and a guardian angel.

“Ambas Americas”

Sarmiento and Mary Mann led an active political and journalistic career at home and abroad. Sarmiento was one of the principal agents of Argentina’s politics and its cultural scene for over the course of four decades between 1840 and 1880. He became governor of his native province of San Juan, the nation’s Minister of Education, Emissary to the United States, and President of the Argentine Republic (1868-1874). His international standing, political ambitions—leavened further by his considerable journalistic and literary abilities—made him as symbol of liberalism and reform within the Americas. Mary Mann was a New England reformer who believed that the abolition of slavery and adoption of universal compulsory education were fundamental in creating a single republic within a democratic United States. For twenty years, she helped Sarmiento spread his ideas and tried to familiarize the US audience with the Argentine Republic. In the process, she introduced him to her dear friends, family, and peers. Sarmiento entered the circle of the US’s most influential reformers of the nineteenth century. Mrs. Mann believed that Sarmiento was not only important to the development of Argentina, but also—and perhaps most critically to her—the US. Before Sarmiento embarked on his way home
in 1868, she wrote: “I should like to have some other people know the sentiments you have inspired in North-Americans.”

Their driven political and social ideas facilitated a friendship in the later years of their lives, particularly advanced by the publication of *Facundo* and the cause for public education. Their interdependence is understood through their give and take on several issues such as religion, politics, education, society, and also personal affairs. Throughout the years Sarmiento and Mary Mann discussed philosophical issues such as the nature of human beings, shared stories about their families, and commented on trivial issues such as what were the best clothes to wear in the winter or the best flowers to cultivate in New England.

Mary Mann and Sarmiento met during his first visit to the United States. In 1844, the Chilean government appointed him as an emissary to Europe to investigate foreign educational systems. He visited France, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, England, and several countries in Africa. While in London, Sarmiento discovered Horace Mann, the architect of the US common school, and his *Seventh Annual Report to the Massachusetts Board of Education*, which contained the Bostonian’s observations of the European educational system. Mann’s ideas fascinated Sarmiento, who felt disappointed with his experiences in Europe. When Sarmiento arrives to France, the nation he most wanted to visit, he feels moved by the great age and beauty of its architecture, art, and literary genius, but disquieted by social inequalities and believed its political system was in shambles. He described the real Europe as "a tragic mix of greatness and abject poverty, of knowledge and brutishness, the receptacle--at once sublime and filthy--of"


21. Most of their correspondence is published in two books: Velleman compiled and annotated Mary Peabody Mann’s letters in “*My Dear Sir*” and the Academia Argentina published most of Sarmiento’s letters to Mary Mann in *Cartas de Sarmiento a la Señora Mann*. 
everything that both elevates and degrades mankind.” Mann’s writings on the US presented a new model of republicanism and universal education, they re-oriented Sarmiento, shifting his attention away from Europe. Sarmiento then decided to visit the US with the main purpose of meeting Mann. In his travel accounts, Sarmiento wrote: “ever since this important work fell into my hands [referring to Mann’s work], I had a fixed point to which to direct myself in the United States.”

Sarmiento traveled to the US for the first time in 1847 and stayed just under two months. There, he stayed at the Manns’ West Newton Massachusetts home for two days and had long conversations with them, mainly about education. Mary Mann served as a translator since her husband did not speak Spanish nor did Sarmiento speak English. The Manns, who belonged to an influential segment of New England society, introduced Sarmiento to important figures of the time, such as Henry Longfellow, Henry Barnard, and others who later played a significant role in shaping his political ideas. Thanks to the Manns, Sarmiento was able to build relationships with vanguard intellectuals.

At first, the cause of public universal education was the idea that brought Horace Mann and his wife together with the Argentine, but later they all realized they shared—or perhaps were in the process of shaping—a common political vision as well. For all three of them, concepts associated with patriotism, nationalism and civilization were weaved into education. They believed that in order to follow an orderly path towards modernization and progress, key institutions such as the common school needed to be universalized. For his part, Horace Mann


24. At this time Sarmiento did not know Mann knew Spanish. Mrs. Mann and her sister Sophia had spent two years in Cuba. They went there to allow Sophia to recover from severe headaches.
started his work in Massachusetts and his ideas later spread across the US. A decade later, Sarmiento started to write about those same ideas and executing them in Argentina.

A stronger relationship between Argentina and the US formed during Sarmiento’s second visit in May 1865, when he traveled on duty as Plenipotentiary Minister to the US and where he lived for over three years. During this time, he participated in various activities, especially those related to educational issues. Sarmiento produced several writings on the importance of educating the masses and participated in conferences and gatherings to discuss these issues. Sarmiento also started an educational journal, *Ambas Américas*, with the intention of bringing together educational ideas from the two hemispheres. Upon hearing of Horace Mann’s death, Sarmiento rushed to express his condolences to the widow and lending any services she may need. She extended an invitation to receive him at her house.

Mary Peabody Mann, who is now commonly known in relation to her husband and others of her age, proved to be a liberal reformer in her own right. She participated avidly in the nineteenth-century American political, educational, and cultural scene. Laboring at the heart of Boston’s feminist movement, the anti-slavery moment, and for the cause of public education, she embraced the mission of reformist nineteenth-century middle-class women by assuming civic leadership roles, well beyond the private sphere of the household. As a public figure, Mann was constantly writing for newspapers, journals, and for herself. Her correspondence and publications show her to have been an exceptionally talented woman. Like her sisters and the men who

25. Widow of the educator Horace Mann, the sister of kindergarten pioneer Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, and the sister-in-law of literary figure Nathaniel Hawthorne

surrounded her, she formed part of the New England intelligentsia that revolutionized concepts of governance and its people’s role in the relationship with government.\textsuperscript{27}

Sarmiento and Mary Mann’s epistolary, which consists of about four hundred letters sent over the span of over two decades, allow us to understand what was essentially a symbiotic relationship between the liberal-minded correspondents.\textsuperscript{28} Sarmiento found in Mary Mann an active and intelligent reformer who offered him helpful connections with the press and educational figures. She advised him as to how libraries, the press, and politics worked in her country. Sarmiento served as a willing disciple to Mann’s educational ideas. She saw in Sarmiento “an opportunity to pass on the knowledge of education which she had accumulated during her years with Horace Mann.”\textsuperscript{29} Sarmiento agreed, “It will be a historical fact of great importance that the woman who aided Horace Mann in his great work in the Northern Continent should lend her sympathetic cooperation to those who endeavor to carry on his work in South America.”\textsuperscript{30}


\textsuperscript{28} Velleman, “\textit{My Dear Sir}”. On average they exchanged 3 to 4 letter per month while Sarmiento was in the US. On occasion, Mary would write him two letters in a week or even on the same day. The correspondence continued when Sarmiento returned to Argentina, but they were less regular.

\textsuperscript{29} Louise Hall Tharp, \textit{Until Victory: Horace Mann and Mary Peabody} (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953).

\textsuperscript{30} Velleman, “\textit{My Dear Sir}”, 26.
Only a month into initially corresponding with Mrs. Mann, Sarmiento sent her two copies of a “little book” *Facundo o Civilización y barbarie*, presumably in its 1853 French translation. He asked Mrs. Mann if she was “blessed with an abundance of spare time and good will to undertake the translation” and added “...I would feel particularly proud to see on the title page of a book written by Mr. Sarmiento the name of Mrs. Mary Mann.”

Sarmiento, well aware of Mann’s connections with Boston’s intellectuals and publishing houses asked her for help in translating and publishing his most important creation, *Facundo*. In a letter dated July 28, 1865, Sarmiento wrote, “I send you a little book entitled: Civilization and Barbarie, that I wrote some twenty years ago, in order to explain the causes of the civil wars we have been subjected to during nearly half century.” He further adds that the book would need an appendix to explain the current situation of the country to US readers. Ten days later she replied: “I am so much interested in your little book.”

**Barbarism, or the Two Souths**

The translation of *Facundo* under the title of *Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of Tyrants* ended up being what Lawrence Venuti calls a project of “intellectual collaboration.”

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31. *Facundo*’s third edition was the one translated into French. Scholars such as Velleman and Sorensen assume that Mann translated *Facundo* from the French since her translation does not include the last chapters Sarmiento added afterwards.


35. Mr. Howells suggested the English title to Mary Mann. Sarmiento accepted it.
This cooperation lasted for almost three years with all the attendant frequency of letter exchanges on the subjects of editing, translation, and publication strategies. Sarmiento and Mary Mann worked side-by-side to achieve a set of common goals: advancing their ideas on the forces of civilization and the importance of a united nation, revealing to North Americans the existence of the Argentine Republic and its ideals, and promoting Sarmiento’s candidacy to the Argentine presidency. Mary Mann knew that Sarmiento was trying to implement the same liberal reforms in Argentina that she advocated for in New England. In particular, as her biographer Megan Marshall points out, she felt he was keeping her husband’s memory and interest alive beyond Massachusetts by promoting public education in Sarmiento’s Argentina. But this was not all for her. Sarmiento’s book provided an applicable comparison between Argentina and the US: the choice between civilization or barbarism pertained to the US as much as it did to Argentina.

Sarmiento and Mann established similarities between Argentina and the US on the theme of civilization and barbarism. Sarmiento, who visited the United States twice in 1847 and 1865, frequently drew parallels between the South of the US and South American Republics. In more than one occasion he lamented, “When eminent statesmen in the United States asked me about my country, I would sadly tell them that our situation was the same as that of the Southern states. There, as with us, society is divided between the aristocrats...and the poor whites”. Mrs. Mann agreed, “…we can sympathize with your difficulties...In the southern people with their millions of uneducated freemen we have almost as great a difficulties as you have with your gauchos.”

When Sarmiento asked Mrs. Mann to translate *Facundo*, both nations found themselves in the process of constructing and re-constructing themselves. Argentina and the US were just emerging from the civil wars that had divided the countries. The union of all its parts under a federal and republican government was fundamental to both. Referring to Sarmiento Mann explained, “…all his efforts and writings had for the object the Union”, and further added that

Sarmiento had adopted the US as the model to follow. He “advocated a federal government, like that of the United States, as the only means of continuing the Republic”, she explained.\textsuperscript{37}

Mann and Sarmiento believed that the spreading of key institutions, emanating from the civilized centers of power, the North for the case of the US and Buenos Aires for the case of Argentina, would contribute to a faster and successful unification of their nations. Among the several institutions that, according to them, needed to reach all parts of the nation, it was the public school and universal education that embodied the ideas of civilization and progress they embraced. To show how Sarmiento and herself agreed on this point she highlighted that Sarmiento’s political views “has had but one watchword: The Education of the People. To his countrymen he is the very ideal type of the SCHOOLMASTER [caps are hers], which he has ever considered his proudest title.”\textsuperscript{38}

Same as Sarmiento, Mann had dedicated much of her life to the cause of public education. She had been a teacher, a tutor, had written books on the subject and had accompanied her husband Horace Mann and her sister Elizabeth Peabody on their crusade as progenitors of the common school and the kindergarten movements. Few years before publishing Sarmiento’s \textit{Facundo}, Mann had put together a biography of her husband containing all his educational writings and speeches and had co-authored an education book with her sister, \textit{Moral Culture of Infancy, and Kindergarten Guide: With Music for the Plays}.\textsuperscript{39} Sarmiento and Mann agreed that all citizens should be able to participate in democratic institutions, but to do so

\textsuperscript{37} Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, \textit{Life in the Argentine Republic}, xxvi.

\textsuperscript{38} Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, \textit{Life in the Argentine Republic}, 7.

\textsuperscript{39} Mann and Peabody, \textit{Moral Culture of Infancy, and Kindergarten Guide: With Music for the Plays}.
responsibly they needed to be educated first. For them, the best way to eradicate the barbarism which was holding their countries back was through educating the interior/the South.

Education was fundamental to construct the republican and democratic nation they envisioned. Mann felt proud that Sarmiento desired to continue her husband’s project in other parts of the Americas. After reading one of the few books published in the English language on South America, a book she describes as lacking all sorts of hope for the region, she assumed the author painted a pessimistic picture because he did not refer to education. When she shared her thoughts with Sarmiento she further added, “That [referring to the crusade on education Sarmiento led] is reserved for your genius to be done -and the view we have taken of your Republic could be in fine contrast.”

In order to consolidate Argentina as a Republic, Sarmiento intended to copy the US federal government with Buenos Aires as the commercial and political center of the country. He believed that the construction of a federation, led by the civilized forces of the city, would be the only way to beat Rosas and end the civil war. The Unitarios, a term which referred to those advocating for a centralized power residing in Buenos Aires were in opposition to the Federalists led by Rosas and his caudillos promoting descentralization. The struggle between Unitarios and

40. Mann, who in 1837 abandoned his political career to become the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, understood that “a nation cannot long remain ignorant and free”. Lawrence Cremin, The Republic and the School: Horace Mann on the Education of Free Men (New York: Bureau of Publications, 1965), 7. He further proposed that education should be paid for, controlled, and sustained by an interested public and it must be non-sectarian. A decade later, Sarmiento started to write about those same ideas and executing them in Argentina.

41. Velleman, “My Dear Sir”, 184 The book she was referring to was written by a journalist appointed as a US ambassador to Ecuador. See: Friedrich Hassaurek, Four Years Among Spanish Americans (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1967).
Federalists defined Argentine politics for most of the nineteenth-century. Mann had a hard time understanding what the term Unitarios meant in the context of nation-building in Argentina. “It has been very difficult for me to picture to my imagination exactly what the word Unitario meant” she wrote days before sending the manuscript to the publisher. It was through a comparison with the US’ Federal System that she managed to make sense of it. Yet, to make sure she understood it right, she asked Sarmiento:

“perhaps after seeing that each province had a certain individual life as our states have, & because you came to see the disadvantages so many independent states labored under & the advantages that might accrue from a Union under one, to which every state must sacrifice something of its individuality as we do and did all your other provinces band together under one government except B.A.? which as I understand it, has now come into the confederation on equal terms?”

Two days later Sarmiento responded to her query explaining the history of the term and concluding that it was because of him and his experiences in the US, that the Unitarian Party (unitarios), who initially promoted a centralized government in the hands of Buenos Aires, finally decided to give the country a federal constitution. In his letter to Mann he explained, “... this was because of my trip to the US, and the desire to end the war and create a civilized government”.


43. Academia Argentina de Letras, Cartas de Sarmiento a la Senora Mann, 187; Academia Argentina de Letras, Cartas de Sarmiento a la Senora Mann, 187 “De este modo se encoentro eque el partido unitario mismo convino en dar al pais una Constitucion Federal. el movimiento fue iniciado por mi sin cooperacion al principio y fue el resultado de mi viaje a E. Unidos, i del deseo de poner termino a la guerra, i establecer un gobierno civilizado"
In the introduction to *Facundo*, Mann used the term *unitarios* to explain Sarmiento’s quest for a unified Argentina and by comparison promoted how important the unification of the US was to her. Trying to explain the history of the concept, her narrative goes back to Bernardino Rivadavia, the first president of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata—later Argentina. Mann wrote, “Rivadavia, who was the chief of the *Unitarios*, began by introducing into Buenos Ayres the complete system of a Republic for this province alone, with legislature, government, revenues, etc., like the North American States, and advised the other provinces to do the same, each for itself.” These, she added, were the foundations of the federation Sarmiento later fought for. In the National Convention to amend the Constitution (1853) which was held in Argentina decades after Rivadavia’s government, Sarmiento promoted a federation that resembled that of the US and further appealed to the national sentiment for the Union, Mann explained in her introduction. Mann believed that all states needed to “sacrifice” some of their individuality for the greater good of the nation, she had told this to Sarmiento when discussing the nature of the federation in their correspondence.

Mann also established comparisons between Argentina and the US when she referred to the black population in both places. Yet, this time she saw a difference between the two nations: their religious background and impulse for education. She explained to him, “There is one difference between our Negro & those of your country. The Negroes here have grown up among Protestants, and such is their natural religious sensibility...” According to her, the beliefs and religious background of freed blacks in the US made them more prone to be educated that the

44. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Life in the Argentine Republic*, xxii.


47. Velleman, “My Dear Sir”, 140.
freed slaves in Argentina. “Since freedom for the whites has been not only the rule but the practice in this country, a great deal of the spirit of liberty & the knowledge of it has penetrated to the slaves, & they are therefore in a better condition probably than your slaves were for freedom”, she wrote.48

Reviewers of the time, who promoted the book as fundamental reading to the US audience, explained how books discussing life in other parts of the Americas, invited for a reflection on their own country. A reviewer for the Putnam’s Review pointed out, “It is not in this country alone that we are passing through a fierce transitional epoch that is leading us to a higher stage of development … But it is South America, that un-redeemed Eden of the world … which is beginning to attract the attention of the whole civilized world.”49 An anonymous reviewer for the New Englander reached a similar conclusion as he or she explained, “An intelligent American can hardly read the life of this Republic and of its prominent representative, without seeing in it again and again the broken image of his own country, and a new illustration of the vital energy existing in Republicanism...Far away, at the southern extremity of the continent, a society accepting the same instrument of government which we have had, has likewise had to pass through a conflict, more open, and lasting for a longer period than our own, but, alike with ours, the conflict of civilization and barbarism”.50

Diana Goodrich Sorensen, an expert on Sarmiento’s Facundo, shows a similar dynamic at work in the US reading the book arguing that its reception in the US resonated with the political circumstances in which it was released. Ideally, Northerners would read Facundo and


see in it the need to reform, not just reconstruct, the US South. Yet, at a larger scale, the book also opened the possibility that US readers would see Argentina itself as the backward place, and would derive a sense of cultural and national superiority from their reading.

Seeking to provide historical context, Mary Mann wrote a long preface to *Facundo* and a biographical sketch to introduce Sarmiento to the US audience. The preface is arguably the place where Mary Mann’s made her strongest efforts to lure the public into reading the book. She put much emphasis on reassuring the North American reader of Sarmiento’s fondness for their institutions when discussing his intentions of “modeling their government upon that of the United States, which is their prototype, and to which they now look, rather than to Europe, for light and knowledge.” In other words, Mary Mann was arguing for a hegemony of the US within the emergent republican Americas.

Still, this did not come at the cost of praise for the book’s author. The biographical sketch, which stood at the end of the *Facundo* itself, heaped accolades on Sarmiento and his accomplishments. Ever cognizant of his status and consummately vain, he asked her to add the title of “Doctor” to his name on the cover page even though it was only an honorary title he had received from the University of Michigan that same year.

And, however much Mary Mann tried to persuade her readers to see Argentina through their own national lens, she was reliant on the author for both information about his status and details about the history and culture of Argentina. Sarmiento provided substantial notes to Mary Mann’s preface and biography. He also preferred to qualify a few of the facts she chose to write about to make it less obvious that he was the source of the information. On January 6 1867, he asked her to “correct some truths, that he deems important not to mention since they would cast a shadow on others who don’t like to be reminded of the facts.” On January 13, 1867, Mann sent Sarmiento “an improved” copy of the preface asking him to please make sure he agreed with everything she had wrote. Sarmiento sent a letter with comments and suggestions two days after

she wrote him. On January 17, 1867 Mann wrote him back, “I have just received your letter enclosing the Preface. I will attend carefully to all your suggestions.”

The preface also served Mann to highlight that Sarmiento was acquainted with some of the political leaders of Europe and in the US. In the preface to *Facundo* Mary Mann names different Europeans and North Americans Sarmiento had met during his trips, “This work and other productions of his pen, secured to Señor Sarmiento in Europe, which he subsequently visited, the acquaintance of many prominent men: M. Guizot, M. Thiers, Cobden, then ambassador of Spain...” and the list continued. In the US, “When R. W. Emerson read the book, he told colonel Sarmiento that if he would write thus for our public, he would be read; and Mr. Longfellow suggested him writing a romantic poem.”

All this being the case, there are also hints that Mary Mann needed to present herself as independent source of knowledge about Argentina. She wrote him: “Whenever I sit down to write anything about your country & yourself, I am arrested by want of knowledge.” Yet, she constantly expressed she did not want the audience to known she was writing it based on his suggestions. She explained to him, “The book will be yours, but I do not wish you to appear in it, as the bibliography will form a part of it.”

The rush to publish *Facundo* in the United States really hit its stride when Sarmiento learned that he was one of the candidates for the presidency of Argentina. Sarmiento intended the publication of *Facundo* in the English language to help him with his cause. Because of

52. Velleman, “My Dear Sir”, 89.


54. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Life in the Argentine Republic*, xii.


Sarmiento’s desires to demonstrate he was popular outside his country of origin, he urgently sought to publish *Facundo* in the US. Sarmiento wanted to show to his fellow Argentines that he was an acclaimed politician and journalist in the US. Mary Mann and her sister Elizabeth Peabody helped him greatly on his quest for self-promotion, mostly by publishing articles and notes about him and his country in several journals. And he asked Mary Mann to send him copies of the *Atlantic Monthly* and any other journal announcing the publication of his book. Right before embarking to Argentina he wrote her, “If you could get a hold of a sample of *The Atlantic* or any other journal announcing the publication of the book before I leave this country, it would be good if I could take it to Buenos Aires to get it published.”^57^ He also intended to translate the biographical introduction she had written and attach it to the Spanish version published in Buenos Aires.

While Mary Mann understood the publication of *Facundo* in the US as a political propaganda tool for Sarmiento, she was careful to ensure that so much was not obvious to the general audience. Goodrich proposes that the timely appearance of the book purposely “coincided with Sarmiento’s candidacy to the presidency of Argentina, and it was clearly meant to contribute to its author’s prestige by making him known to North American readers, thus proving to his countrymen that he commanded the respect of foreign audiences.”^58^ Yes, she wanted Sarmiento to win the elections and thought he was the best option Argentina had, but she cautiously timed the book’s publication. In a letter to Sarmiento, she claimed that it will be an advantage that the book is “…coming out after [underlined twice] the election, that it will not

^57. Academia Argentina de Letras, *Cartas de Sarmiento a la Senora Mann*, 8. “Si puede obtener algun ejemplar del Atlantic u otro papel, que anuncie el libro antes de mi salida seria bueno llevarlo a Buenos Aires para hacerlo publicar alla”. NY, July 14 de 1865.

look like a campaign bibliography.” He agreed that is how it should be done. Both concurred to maneuver the situation to their best advantage.

Mary Mann’s letters to Sarmiento demonstrate that she not only had a personal interest in *Facundo*, but was committed to make it public. By sharing the narrative with the New England’s intellectual elite, she promoted Sarmiento’s project. She sent the manuscript of the English translation to various influential public intellectuals such as Henry Longfellow and Ralph Waldo Emerson. About this, she told Sarmiento, “Gentlemen to whom I have spoken of ‘civilisation et Barbarie’ tell me there is no doubt it will be read with interest when translated.” Once published, Mrs. Mann personally sent the book to newspaper editors in the expectation they would review them. And indeed, reviews appeared in prominent outlets for politics and the arts, such as the *New York Times*, *The New Englander*, *The Christian Reader* and *The Nation*. The reviews not only took note of Sarmiento’s achievements but also the importance of *Facundo* to US readers.

The *New York Times* review gave its readers a short narrative of Sarmiento’s accomplishments and a brief summary of the book. It praised it by noting that “The type of this elegant book is the most beautiful and satisfactory we have seen, and it is ornamented by a well-executed portrait of Domingo Sarmiento himself.” It also mentions Mrs. Mann’s work since she is considered responsible for the book’s appearance in the US. The reviewer explained, “Mrs. Mann has done her part well and faithfully, if we may judge by the closeness with which she evidently follows the original, and which sometimes give her lexis a Spanish cast or countenance.”


that many Americans are aware “of the cordial and intelligent interest he [Sarmiento] takes in our free-school system, and of the efforts he has made for its introduction and adoption in his own country”; however only few of their readers, “can justly appreciate the greatness of his character and career.”

While most nineteenth-century reviewers of the book praised Mann’s translation for following the original text, scholars of the twenty-first-century argued that she made important changes to it. It is certainly true that she modified things in the book, and added and subtracted others. Yet, it is critical to note that Sarmiento approved all changes she introduced and worked side by side with Mann before the final version was submitted for publication. Sarmiento carefully reviewed various drafts before the book was sent to the publishers. All the while he sent her encouraging comments: “I feel the special flavor of my style in the English version,” and detailed feedback showing that he carefully read the text: “There are minor misspellings, as on pg. 30 where you write ‘Christian’ when it should read ‘Chilean,’ idem – ‘Ariste’ for ‘Triste’.”

Critics of Mann’s translation of Facundo believe there was a need for her interpretation and adaptation of the text since without such editorial interventions the work would have been impenetrable to U.S. readers. The truth is that despite the encouraging words of Mann and her circle, not many people in the U.S. knew who Sarmiento was or even where the Argentine Republic was located. Thus, some changes needed to be undertaken in order to increase the book’s accessibility to a wider audience and Sarmiento was well aware of this. On October, 1867, she sent a letter to Sarmiento stating, “I presume you will agree with me that I must make the style my own as far as possible - ... of course any intelligent person will see immediately that I have derived all my knowledge from you & from the perusal of your work & speeches, but I

63. Review of Civilization and Barbarism, 374.

wish it to read as if I wrote the sentences, and for that purpose I must make some of them a little less stately, and occasionally put into a note references to authorities.” Sarmiento agreed. In reference to other writings he had sent her he understand his writings might need to be modified, “…you are fully authorized to change or alter my letters and article to make suitable for publication.”

Mann’s translation bears what translation critics call “traces of the cultural migration” between two languages. Mann started by changing the title of the book. On September 29, 1867 Mann sent a letter to Sarmiento with an idea for a new title that her friend, William Dean Howells, editor of the Atlantic Monthly, had suggested. She said, “Mr. Howell suggests a new name for your story - one that will tell its aim better, perhaps The Argentine Republic in the days of tyrants, or Civilization & Barbarism.” The final title of the book ended up being Life in the Argentine republic in the Days of Tyrants; or, Civilization and Barbarism instead of Facundo o Civilization and Barbarism. The title directly evoked the US’s condition after the American Civil War.

Both Mrs. Mann and Sarmiento read the final proofs coming from the publishers before they went to print. They wanted the book to contain no errors. She was very insistent that he carefully revise it. She request the publisher to send him a rough proof of the whole and explains to Sarmiento, “The typographical errors you will not be troubled by, but it may not be too late to put notices in the errata of any blunders.” She further adds, “Please to note all the errors in the


67. Sorensen Goodrich, Facundo and the Construction, 89.

book carefully upon a sheet of paper, & I will have an *errata* put in upon a slip of paper when the book is bound.\textsuperscript{69}

Mary Mann made the translation of *Facundo* her project and fully committed herself to it. While she relied on the collaboration of others — including a young astronomy student from England Arthur Searle and from her friend Miss Hall\textsuperscript{70} — she consistently expressed her commitment to publish the book in the US as if it were hers. She explained to Sarmiento, “I am now very busy translating the introduction, and have found myself obliged to review the whole of the translation of Civ. and Barb. because it was done so badly”\textsuperscript{71} When she finished the translation of the book she exclaimed “I have just written the last sentence in my book - but I must get your sanction for it, and then - I will go & take a good nap!”\textsuperscript{72} Sarmiento praised the final edition in English of *Facundo*. In a letter to Mann he expressed how impressed he is with the quality of the publication itself and added, “I can fell the flavor of my own special style in the English version.”\textsuperscript{73}

Not only did Mary Mann devote much of her time and money on the translation itself, she also invested effort in finding a publisher. For months, she would send letters and ask publishing houses to accept the book with no success. She negotiated a special deal with

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{69} Velleman, “*My Dear Sir*”, 201.
\item \textsuperscript{70} Mrs. Hall’s first name or relationship with Mary Mann is not known.
\item \textsuperscript{71} Velleman, “*My Dear Sir*”, 161.
\item \textsuperscript{72} Velleman, “*My Dear Sir*”, 237.
\item \textsuperscript{73} “Recibi ayer ochenta pajinas de Civilizacion en magnifico papel I de esmerada impression. La traduccion no deja que desear, Siento el sabor especial de mi estilo, en la version inglesa. Hai pequenos errors de letras. Paj.30 Christian family –por Chilean family-, id – Ariste por Triste. Pero no importa nada. Es una esplendida edicion.”
\end{itemize}
Houghton and Hurd and the Riverside Press. While the letters do not clearly portray the details of the agreement, it seems that the Company would print the book, provided Mary Mann shorten her introduction, and that it would guarantee the purchase of 300 copies at retail price. Mann left the decision on the publishing contract up to Sarmiento, “I leave you to decide the point, because the alternative depends upon your pocket. (…)”  

Reluctantly, Mann agrees to cut down the bibliographical sketch and Sarmiento pays for the 300 copies himself.  

_Facundo_ in its English version was finally published in July 1868. By October, the publisher sent a letter to Mann telling her it was selling well and by March 1869 the book sold out. Riverside Press, the publishing house, sent her a check for half of the profits made. She reported to Sarmiento, who had already become the president of Argentina, that the money covered her expenses. She proudly added that the publication of _Facundo_ in the US “… has made you known favorably, and it is very plain that it has given the public the power to appreciate your administration. I see it alluded to very frequently.”  

By then, Mary Mann had already secured the copyright of the book under her name making it her own to the eyes of the US audience and her friends.

**Conclusion**

Sarmiento and Mary Mann continue to be symbols of nineteenth-century liberalism and Reform. They promoted democracy and republicanism as core concepts to build the modern nation that they envisioned for their countries. For them, spreading education to the entire population, with no distinction of class, race, or sex, was the key to forming productive citizens.


75. We later find out that Sarmiento brought those copies with him when he left the US and sold them all in Argentina.

Their shared political and social ideas strengthened their friendship over the course of twenty years in which they exchanged all sorts of ideas and experiences. Both had an active political and journalistic career at home and abroad which allowed them to promote their ideas and influence writers from different parts of the world. The translation and publication of *Facundo* in English is just one of the many examples of this.

The translation of *Facundo* was one of the many projects they collaborated on. Mary Mann helped him not only out of friendship, but also because the rhetoric of Manichean belief-systems, encoded in civilization and barbarism, allowed her to advance her own principles during a time of national reconstruction. For three years they exchanged many letters discussing all the details of the book’s translation and publication. They both believed the English version of the book would provide Sarmiento the key to enter the US and European intelligentsia and promote him at home and abroad. She constantly told Sarmiento how committed she was to help him succeed. She wrote him, “I never shall be satisfied till that whole book is in English … Nor can I conceive that your own countrymen can read it without seeing that the best thing they can do for themselves - the only sensible thing is to install you at the head of it.” By 1868, the year that Mann finally got *Facundo* published, the Argentine people elected Sarmiento as their new president.

In *Facundo*, Mary Mann saw a possibility of addressing issues that concerned her and her country: the Civil War and Reconstruction. Mann put forward her own ideas in the preface, the bibliography and, of course, in the translation of the narrative itself. Under the theme of civilization and barbarism she expressed her thoughts on the current state of affairs of her country, especially on the division between the US North and South. She regarded *Facundo* as a must-read book for the US audience saying that “the work before us, is in all respects attractive and instructive.” She would later agree with a review published in the *New Englander* whose author proposed, “No difference of race or faith can separate our fate wholly from that of the

other American republics. Self-government if good in itself is good for every people. Its failure anywhere is a blow at out prosperity; its endeavors have a perpetual hold upon our sympathies.”  

Mann and Sarmiento believed that the similarities they found among their nations brought them closer together. Mann drew parallels when comparing the situation of the US to that of Argentina in terms of slavery, geography, economy, and the repercussions of the civil war among others. Sarmiento felt at one point, or so he wrote, that Mann was writing about herself when discussing the translation of *Facundo*. He mentioned in one of his letters, "you humble me with your flattery, yet you could almost be talking of yourself as well. I am afraid that you are picturing yourself. It does not matter.”

Mann’s translation of *Facundo* does not only teach a history of the ideological connections established between Argentina and the US. Rather, it also reveals fragments of an untold story of nineteenth-century America. In some ways, Sarmiento’s life and accomplishments were exceptional, but the time he spent and the writings he published in the U.S. show that Argentines entered and formed part of the New England vanguard on their own terms. At the same time, the process of creating US cultural hegemony in the Americas did begin during this period, and its origins are evident—if not dominant—in the history of the translation of *Facundo*.

Beginning a reading of *Facundo* by assuming that the US was the “center” and Latin America was the “periphery”—by reading our own version of “civilization” and “barbarism” into the history of the book—can inhibits a full understanding of how transnational exchanges

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79. Academia Argentina de Letras, *Cartas de Sarmiento a la Senora Mann*, 156 “…que ya me estoy envaneciendo de verme retratado por V. Temo que se retrate a V. misma. No importa”.
take place and national experiences develop in a global context. As we continue to use *Facundo* in our history courses to discuss liberalism, regionalism and race relations, we should consider how the book was translated, how it got to us, and why it continues to be relevant. Doing so allows us to start thinking differently about Latin American intellectuals of the nineteenth-century, the Americas, and ideas, recognizing Mary Mann’s translation as a classic in its own right.
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