

**CALL FOR PAPERS**  
**ASOCIACIÓN CANADIENSE DE HISPANISTAS**  
**OTTAWA, JUNE 3-5, 2023**

**Organizer: Rosalía Cornejo-Parriego, Professor, University of Ottawa**

**Widowhood in Literature**

While Gender and Cultural Studies have extensively examined the role of mothers, wives, female friends, and single women, they have neglected the figure of the widow. Indeed, scholarship on cultural and literary representations of widowhood is scarce and has generally focused on Medieval and Early Modern literature. The widow is, however, a multifaceted character linked, among others, to the writing of grief and mourning, to concepts of womanhood and nation, and to cultural, social and sexual practices and expectations.

In Spanish literature, the widow becomes the object of ridicule in *El sí de las niñas* (Moratín, 1805); a symbol of repression and obscurantism in *Doña Perfecta* (Pérez Galdós, 1876) and *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (García Lorca, 1936); the embodiment of classism and anti-intellectualism in *Cinco horas con Mario* (Delibes 1966); and a very distinctive victim in the context of Spain's Civil War in *Mujeres de negro* (Aldecoa, 1994), *La voz dormida* (Chacón, 2002), and *Malena es un nombre de tango* (Grandes, 1994). The widow also plays a crucial role in narratives about the Basque conflict, such as *Patria* (Aramburu, 2016). The suspicious and dangerous sexuality of the "merry widow" is explored in *La Regenta* (Clarín, 1884), *Insolación* (Pardo Bazán, 1889), and *Pepita Jiménez* (Valera, 1874). A widow's mourning process constitutes the focus of Rosa Montero's *La ridícula idea de no volver a verte* (2013) and Marta Oriols's *Aprender a hablar con las plantas* (2018). These few examples demonstrate that the literary widow is an intriguing and complex character that deserves more scholarly attention.

The panel welcomes abstracts that propose to examine widows' representations in the literatures of the Spanish-speaking world. Some of the suggested themes are:

1. Widows as symbols of collective and national identities
  2. Widows in armed conflicts
  3. Widows and sexuality
  4. Widows and the literature of mourning
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- Abstracts of 200-250 words should be sent to [rosalia.cornejo-parriego@uottawa.ca](mailto:rosalia.cornejo-parriego@uottawa.ca)
- Abstracts may be submitted in English, French or Spanish
- All submissions must include an abstract title, the full name of the author, institutional affiliation, and email address
- Submission deadline: **February 12, 2023**
- Selected contributors must be members of ACH in order to present their paper