



STOCKCERO TEACHING KIT (054)

TITLE: *El pozo del Yocci*

AUTHOR: Juana Manuela Gorriti

EDITOR:

ISBN: 978-987-1136-41-4

I. OVERVIEW & SIGNIFICANCE

El pozo del Yocci stands as a masterclass in the Latin American historical romance, intricately weaving the violent political realities of the Argentine Confederation with the intimate tragedies of the domestic sphere. Written by Juana Manuela Gorriti, one of the most prominent female intellectuals of the 19th century, the novel is set against the backdrop of the brutal, undeclared civil wars between Federalists (aligned with Juan Manuel de Rosas) and Unitarians in Argentina's northern provinces, further complicated by the expansionist incursions of the Bolivian Marshal Santa Cruz.

Gorriti—whose own family suffered exile and the confiscation of their estates in 1831 due to their fierce enmity with Federalist caudillo Facundo Quiroga—brings profound personal authenticity to the narrative. Rather than merely documenting military campaigns, the novel illustrates how grand historical conflicts infect and destroy the foundational units of society. Through an aesthetic that bridges late romanticism and proto-realism, Gorriti shows how the ideological divisions of the nation act as a Greek tragedy, inevitably dictating the doomed fates of her characters. This text is an essential pedagogical resource for exploring women's writing in 19th-century Latin America, the literature of exile, and the intimate reverberations of state violence.

II. CONTEXT & CRITICAL APPROACHES

This volume provides a rich framework for exploring the intersection of national history and family tragedy, the role of the female author in the 19th century, and the legacy of the Rosas dictatorship.

The Domestic Allegory of the Civil War:

- Analyze how Gorriti uses the fragmentation of families to mirror the fragmentation of the Argentine nation. How do the personal vendettas, divided loyalties, and tragic romances in the novel serve as an allegory for the ideological chasm between Unitarians and Federalists?
- Examine the concept of the "sins of the fathers." How do the conflicts inherited from the era of Independence (royalists vs. patriots) evolve and metastasize into the civil wars of the Rosas era, sealing the determinist fate of the younger generation?

The Literature of Exile and Trauma:

- Discuss how Gorriti's own biographical experience of exile and political persecution informs the narrative voice. How does the novel function both as a historical testimony of state violence and as an act of political resistance from the margins?
- Evaluate the portrayal of the northern Argentine landscape. How does the setting—particularly the geographical proximity to the Bolivian border—reflect the



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instability and vulnerability of political borders and national identity during this period?

Gender and the Historical Romance:

- Analyze the role of female characters within the context of war. How does Gorriti navigate the limitations imposed on female authorship by centering the narrative on the domestic and emotional fallout of male-driven political violence?

III. ADVANCED DISCUSSION & RESEARCH PROMPTS

These prompts encourage deep engagement with the text, critical thinking, and research into historical, biographical, and literary contexts.

The Aesthetics of Tragedy:

- Analyze the narrative structure of the novel. Gorriti relies heavily on elements of Greek tragedy—inevitability, fatal flaws, and inherited curses. How does this fatalistic structure complicate the liberal, progressive political ideals typically associated with the anti-Rosas generation?

The Figure of the Caudillo:

- Research the historical figures of Facundo Quiroga and Juan Manuel de Rosas. How does the shadow of caudillismo loom over the narrative of *El pozo del Yocci*, even when these historical figures are not directly on the page?

Comparative Foundational Fictions:

- Compare *El pozo del Yocci* with José Mármol's *Amalia*. How do both novels use the romance plot to critique the Rosas regime, and how does Gorriti's perspective as an exiled woman from the northern provinces differ from Mármol's urban, Buenos Aires-centric vision?

IV. SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS & BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Text:

- **Gorriti, Juana Manuela.** *El pozo del Yocci*. SpanishBookPress. (TK ORDER: 054)

Key Secondary Scholarship & Context:

- **Batticuore, Graciela.** *El taller de la escritora: Veladas literarias de Juana Manuela Gorriti*.
- **Iglesia, Cristina.** *El ajuar de la patria: Ensayos críticos sobre Juana Manuela Gorriti*.
- **Sarmiento, Domingo Faustino.** *Facundo: [Civilización y barbarie](#)*. (Stockcero, ISBN 978-987-1136-00-1) Essential for historical context on caudillismo and the Unitarian/Federalist divide).
- **Mármol, José.** *Amalia*. (For comparative analysis of anti-Rosas literature).
- **Sommer, Doris.** *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America*.



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Additional Resources:

- Historical texts covering the Argentine Civil Wars (1814-1880) and the Bolivian-Argentine War (1837-1839).
- Biographical studies on the Gorriti family and their exile in Bolivia and Peru.

V. RELATED STOCKCERO RESOURCES

From Costumbrismo to Naturalism: 6-Book Bundle. Other titles in the bundle: *La Charca*, *Sin rumbo*, *A fuego lento*, *Música sentimental*, *Eugenio Díaz Castro: Realismo y Socialismo en Manuela*.

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