



STOCKCERO TEACHING KIT (058)

TEXT: *Novelas y cuadros de la vida sur-americana* (1869)

AUTHOR: Soledad Acosta de Samper

EDITOR: Flor María Rodríguez-Arenas

PART 1: CONTEXT & CRITICAL ANALYSIS

(Based on critical studies of Soledad Acosta de Samper's work)

1. SOLEDAD ACOSTA DE SAMPER: PIONEERING INTELLECTUAL AND AUTHOR:

Colombian Foundational Voice:

Soledad Acosta de Samper (1833-1913) was a prolific Colombian writer, journalist, historian, playwright, and feminist. Her extensive output and diverse literary forms established her as a central figure in 19th-century Latin American letters.

Privilege and Perspective:

Born into an elite family and daughter of General Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera (a four-time president of Colombia), Acosta de Samper's social standing and travels across Europe and the United States afforded her unique insights into the political and social landscapes of her time.

2. "NOVELAS Y CUADROS": A SOCIAL PANORAMA OF 19TH-CENTURY SOUTH AMERICA:

Observational Realism:

This collection, *Novelas y cuadros de la vida sur-americana* (Novels and Scenes of South American Life), showcases Acosta de Samper's acute observational skills, characteristic of a burgeoning realism infused with romantic sensibility.

Dissecting Society:

Through these narratives, she meticulously portrays the customs, class structures, political intrigues, and evolving identities of various South American societies. Her focus often includes the challenges of nation-building, the legacies of the colonial past, and the tensions between tradition and modernity.

Moral and Didactic Intent:

Acosta de Samper's writing often carries a moral and didactic undertone, implicitly or explicitly critiquing societal vices and advocating for social progress and justice.

3. GENDER ROLES AND WOMEN'S AGENCY:

Advocacy for Women:

A staunch advocate for women's education and their participation in intellectual and public life, Acosta de Samper's works frequently feature strong, intelligent female characters who navigate and often challenge restrictive patriarchal norms.

Exploring Female Agency:

Her narratives explore women's agency within limited social frameworks, examining their roles in love, marriage, family, and public life, often highlighting their struggles for autonomy and self-realization.

Historical and Biographical Insights:

Beyond fictional narratives, Acosta de Samper also authored numerous historical biographies, many focused on women, further solidifying her commitment to documenting and promoting women's contributions to society.



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PART 2: TOPICS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

Soledad Acosta de Samper as a Pioneering Woman Writer:

Discuss Acosta de Samper's significance in 19th-century Latin American literature. How did her diverse output (journalism, history, fiction) contribute to her influence?

Social Realism and Romanticism:

Analyze how *Novelas y cuadros de la vida sur-americana* blends elements of Romanticism with a nascent Realism. How does this stylistic combination serve her critique of contemporary society?

Gender Roles and Societal Critique:

How does Acosta de Samper portray women in her narratives? Discuss how her female characters challenge or conform to prevailing gender expectations of the 19th century.

Nation-Building and Identity:

How do these "novelas y cuadros" contribute to understanding the social and political fabric of nascent South American nations? What are the key challenges and tensions she identifies in the process of national formation?

The Role of the Elite:

As a writer from a privileged background, how does Acosta de Samper's perspective shape her portrayal of different social classes and the elite itself?

Didacticism in Literature:

Discuss the didactic (moralizing or instructional) function often attributed to 19th-century literature. How does Acosta de Samper integrate this into her narratives?

PART 3: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acosta de Samper, Soledad. *Novelas y cuadros de la vida sur-americana.*

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Díaz Granados, José Luis. *Soledad Acosta de Samper: Obra escogida.* Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2011.

Martin, Claire Emilie. *Soledad Acosta de Samper: La obra en el contexto de su vida y de su época.* Tamesis, 1995.

Ordóñez, Luis Carlos. *Soledad Acosta de Samper: Una vida en la escritura.* Fondo Editorial Universidad del Rosario, 2013.

Rodríguez-Arenas, Flor María. (Editor of this edition, her critical work provides context).



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PART 4: QUIZ BANK (Multiple Choice)

1. Who is the author of *Novelas y cuadros de la vida sur-americana*?

- A) Juana Manuela Gorriti
- B) Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera
- C) Soledad Acosta de Samper
- D) Juana Manso **Correct**

Answer: C

2. What was Soledad Acosta de Samper's primary nationality?

- A) Argentine
- B) Peruvian
- C) Colombian
- D) Mexican

Correct Answer: C

3. In addition to novels and short stories, Acosta de Samper also wrote extensively in which other genres?

- A) Epic poetry and science fiction
- B) Historical biographies and journalism
- C) Detective stories and horror fiction
- D) Avant-garde drama and essays

Correct Answer: B

4. What does the title *Novelas y cuadros de la vida sur-americana* suggest about the content of the collection?

- A) It is solely a historical chronicle.
- B) It presents fictional narratives and vivid social depictions.
- C) It is a collection of landscape paintings.
- D) It focuses exclusively on scientific discoveries.

Correct Answer: B

5. Which of these themes is frequently explored in Acosta de Samper's works?

- A) The glorification of military heroes.
- B) Critiques of gender roles and class structures.
- C) Fantastical elements and magical realism.
- D) The beauty of nature in isolation.

Correct Answer: B

Explore the “Pioneering Women Writers” Collection: This book is part of our comprehensive collection celebrating the groundbreaking contributions of influential women authors who shaped 19th-century Latin American literature: *Novelas y cuadros de la vida sur-americana* (Acosta de Samper); *Peregrinaciones de una alma triste* (Gorriti); *Los amores de Hortensia* (Cabello de Carbonera); *Los Misterios del Plata* (Manso); *La hija del bandido o los subterráneos del Nevado* (Barragán de Toscano); and *Herencia* (Matto de Turner).

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