



**STOCKCERO TEACHING KIT (206)**

**TEXT:** Memorias de un solterón

**AUTHOR:** Emilia Pardo Bazán

**LITERARY EDITOR:** Susan Walter

**ISBN:** 978-1-949938-23-4

---

## I. OVERVIEW & SIGNIFICANCE

*Memorias de un solterón* (1896) by Emilia Pardo Bazán is a incisive novel that critically examines and challenges the traditional roles assigned to men and women in late 19th-century Spanish society. Through the introspective voice of its male narrator, Mauro Pareja, Pardo Bazán scrutinizes the idealized model of womanhood as the "ángel del hogar" (angel in the home), exposing its detrimental effects on both genders.

This novel is a crucial text for understanding Pardo Bazán's sustained critique of rigid traditional gender roles, suggesting how these constraints impede the formation of equitable, free, and fulfilling marital relationships. It belongs to her "Adán y Eva Cycle," further exploring the complexities of human relationships within a transforming society. Edited by Susan Walter, this edition provides essential insights into key themes such as the double moral standard, the dynamics of bourgeois marriage, and the pervasive influence of "el qué dirán" (what people will say). It is an indispensable resource for courses in Peninsular Literature, Gender Studies, and the social history of 19th-century Spain.

---

## II. CONTEXT & CRITICAL APPROACHES

*Memorias de un solterón* offers a rich ground for exploring critical themes within the context of Pardo Bazán's broader literary project and the socio-historical landscape of Restoration Spain.

### Critique of Gender Roles and Bourgeois Marriage:

Analyze how the novel, despite being narrated by a male character (Mauro Pareja), subverts and critiques traditional gender roles and the institution of bourgeois marriage.

Discuss the concept of the "ángel del hogar" and how Pardo Bazán deconstructs this prescriptive model through characters like Feíta Neira and the experiences of other women in Marineda.

Examine the impact of the "double moral standard" on both men and women, and how the novel exposes the hypocrisy inherent in societal expectations.

### The "New Woman" and Female Agency:

Explore Feíta Neira as a prototype of the "new woman" in Spanish literature. How do her intellectual aspirations and desire for independence challenge the domestic confines expected of women of her class?

Discuss the significance of her self-education and her movement through public spaces as acts of rebellion against societal norms.

How does Pardo Bazán, through Feíta, link the rejection of bourgeois marriage with the broader fight for women's agency and economic independence?



The Stockcero Guarantee

SpanishBookPress Editions.

Printed in the USA. Never backlisted. Always available.

Copyright © 2025 Stockcero, Inc

3785 N.W. 82nd Avenue, Suite 302, Miami, FL 33166, USA

### Socio-Historical Context of Restoration Spain:

Analyze the novel's setting during the Restoration period (1874-1931), a time of political stability but also persistent social inequalities and electoral corruption.

Discuss the influence of Krausismo and the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza* on progressive educational ideas, particularly for women, and how these broader intellectual currents resonate within the novel's themes of female education and autonomy.

Examine the representation of social classes (aristocracy, bourgeoisie, proletariat) and the possibility (or lack thereof) of social mobility in 19th-century Spain, as seen through characters like Feíta Neira and Ramón Sobrado.

### Narrative Perspective and Authorial Intent:

Discuss the significance of using a male narrator, Mauro Pareja, to articulate the critique of bourgeois society and gender norms. How does this narrative strategy influence the reception of Pardo Bazán's progressive ideas?

Analyze the intertextual connections to other Pardo Bazán novels (*Doña Milagros*, *La Tribuna*) through recurring characters. How does this practice enrich the reader's understanding of her narrative universe and evolving thematic concerns?

Consider the novel's reception, particularly its lukewarm initial response in Spain versus its greater international circulation. What does this reveal about the cultural climate and the state of feminist movements in different countries at the time?

### Language and Realism:

Examine the novel's use of precise, direct, and colloquial language to reflect the social realities of Marineda.

Discuss how Pardo Bazán's "Traditional Spanish Realism" (rooted in Cervantes) is applied to contemporary issues, balancing detailed social observation with psychological depth.

---

## III. ADVANCED DISCUSSION & RESEARCH PROMPTS

These prompts encourage deep engagement with the text, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary connections suitable for graduate-level seminars or research projects.

**Mauro Pareja as a Narrator:** Analyze the complexities of Mauro Pareja's character as the narrator. How does his perspective—a bachelor initially resistant to marriage but gradually transformed—shape the reader's understanding of the novel's critique of gender roles and marriage? Is he a reliable narrator, and how does his "solterón" status enable or limit his observations?

**Feíta Neira: The "New Woman" in Practice:** Discuss Feíta Neira as an embodiment of the "new woman." What specific actions or attitudes does she exhibit that challenge the "ángel del hogar" ideal? How does Pardo Bazán present her intellectual curiosity and desire for independence, and what are the ultimate successes and compromises of her journey?

**Intertextual Connections and Character Evolution:** Select a character like Baltasar Sobrado or Feíta Neira and trace their appearances and development across *Doña Milagros*, *La Tribuna*, and *Memorias de un solterón*. How do these intertextual links deepen the social critique and character analyses across Pardo Bazán's oeuvre?

**"El Qué Dirán" and Social Pressure:** Examine the pervasive influence of "el qué dirán" (what people will say) on the characters' lives, particularly women. How does this social pressure limit individual freedom and contribute to the maintenance of the double moral standard? Use examples from the novel to illustrate its impact.



The Stockcero Guarantee  
SpanishBookPress Editions.  
Printed in the USA. Never backlisted. Always available.

Copyright © 2025 Stockcero, Inc  
3785 N.W. 82nd Avenue, Suite 302, Miami, FL 33166, USA

**The Problematic Nature of "Heritage" (Herencia):** Given the title, explore the various forms of "heritage" (social, moral, financial, genetic) that influence the characters. How does the novel critique inherited class structures and traditional values, and what role does individual agency play in overcoming or succumbing to these inheritances?

**Pardo Bazán's Feminist Discourse in Context:** Pardo Bazán was a prominent feminist, yet her fiction often reflects the complexities and compromises of her time. Discuss how *Memorias de un solterón* engages with feminist ideals, considering both its explicit critiques and any subtle contradictions or limitations in its portrayal of gender emancipation.

**Comparative Analysis with La Tribuna:** Compare and contrast *Memorias de un solterón* with *La Tribuna*. While both novels explore social issues, they differ in setting (urban bourgeoisie vs. working class) and narrative focus. How do these differences highlight Pardo Bazán's versatility as a Naturalist and Realist author?

---

## IV. SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS & BIBLIOGRAPHY

This section complements the study of *Memorias de un solterón*, providing avenues for deeper research.

### Primary Text:

- Pardo Bazán, Emilia. *Memorias de un solterón*. Edited by Susan Walter. Stockcero.

### Key Secondary Scholarship (as referenced in the Introduction):

- Aldaraca, Bridget. *El ángel del hogar. Galdós and the Ideology of Domesticity in Spain*. 1991.
- Ayala, María Ángeles. Introduction to *Memorias de un solterón*. Cátedra, 2004. (For detailed critical analysis and reception).
- Gómez Ferrer, Guadalupe, ed. *La mujer española y otros escritos de Emilia Pardo Bazán*. 1999. (Includes "La educación del hombre y la mujer").
- Jagoe, Catherine. *Ambiguous Angels: Gender in the Novels of Galdós*. 1994. (For further context on "ángel del hogar").
- Pardo Bazán, Emilia. "La mujer española." *Fortnightly Review*, 1889 (and later in *La España Moderna*).
- Vázquez Ramil, Raquel. *Mujeres y educación en la España del siglo XIX*. (For context on female education and Krausismo).
- Walter, Susan. Introduction to *Memorias de un solterón*. Stockcero. (For current edition's critical insights).

### Additional Resources:

- Studies on 19th-century Spanish Realism and Naturalism.
- Historical accounts of the Bourbon Restoration in Spain.
- Research on early feminist movements and women's roles in 19th-century Spanish society.

---

## V. RELATED STOCKCERO RESOURCES



The Stockcero Guarantee  
SpanishBookPress Editions.  
Printed in the USA. Never backlisted. Always available.

Copyright © 2025 Stockcero, Inc  
3785 N.W. 82nd Avenue, Suite 302, Miami, FL 33166, USA

[Browse Collection](#)

Interested in adopting this text for your course?

[Request an Evaluation Copy](#)

or [Browse our Full Catalog](#)



**The Stockcero Guarantee**

*SpanishBookPress* Editions.

Printed in the USA. Never backlisted. Always available.

Copyright © 2025 Stockcero, Inc  
3785 N.W. 82nd Avenue, Suite 302, Miami, FL 33166, USA