



## STOCKCERO TEACHING KIT (070)

TEXT: *Recuerdos de Viaje* (1882)

AUTHOR: Eduarda Mansilla

EDITOR: J. P. Spicer-Escalante

### PART 1: CONTEXT & CRITICAL ANALYSIS

(Based on the Introduction by J. P. Spicer-Escalante and historical studies of travel literature)

#### 1. EDUARDA MANSILLA: WRITER, TRAVELER, AND "NOMAD":

##### *A Literary Pioneer:*

Eduarda Mansilla (1834-1892), sister of Lucio V. Mansilla and niece of Juan Manuel de Rosas, was a multilingual and prolific writer who excelled in journalism, novels, and children's literature.

##### *"Nomadic" Travel:*

Unlike male travelers of her time who left home for adventure or business, Mansilla traveled as a diplomat's wife, carrying her "home" with her. This "nomadic" condition allowed her unique access to domestic spaces and social circles often closed to men, shaping her distinctive travel narrative.

##### *The Causerie Style:*

Mansilla adopts the *causerie*—a conversational, witty, and erudite style popular among male intellectuals of her generation (like her brother)—to establish an authoritative voice. She engages her readers as equals in a literary "chat," discussing everything from fashion to politics with sharp insight.

#### 2. AN ARGENTINE GAZE ON THE UNITED STATES:

##### *Witness to History:*

The travelogue chronicles her stay in the United States during the pivotal years of the Civil War (1861-1865). She offers a rare Latin American female perspective on this tumultuous period.

##### *Domestic and Public Spheres:*

Mansilla seamlessly weaves observations of the "domestic" sphere (women's fashion, home interiors, courtship rituals) with commentary on the "public" sphere (politics, war, slavery, progress). This dual focus allows her to critique gender roles in both the US and Argentina.

##### *Critique of Modernity:*

While admiring American progress ("Time is money"), she also casts a critical eye on its shortcomings, such as the treatment of Native Americans, implicitly connecting these issues to Argentine national debates (e.g., the "Conquest of the Desert").

#### 3. GENDER, CLASS, AND AUTHORSHIP:

##### *A "Distinguished Traveler":*



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Mansilla constructs her identity as a "distinguished traveler" through her cultural capital and diplomatic status. This authority allows her to transcend traditional gender limitations and assert her voice in the male-dominated genre of travel writing.

***Comparative Perspectives:***

She constantly compares American society with European and Argentine norms, using these comparisons to reflect on the state of civilization, education, and women's roles in her own country.

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## PART 2: TOPICS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

### *The "Nomadic" vs. the "Traveler":*

Discuss the distinction made in the introduction between Lucio V. Mansilla as a "traveler" and Eduarda as a "nomad." How does her position as a diplomat's wife shape her experience and her writing?

### *The Causerie Genre:*

Analyze the conversational style of the text. How does Mansilla use wit, digression, and direct address to the reader to build authority and engage her audience?

### *Gendered Spaces:*

How does Mansilla navigate and describe both domestic (private) and public spaces? What does her access to the intimate lives of American women reveal about gender roles in the 19th century?

### *Views on the United States:*

What is Mansilla's overall impression of the United States? Discuss her observations on American democracy, the Civil War, and social customs. How do they compare to the views of other travelers like Sarmiento?

### *Critique of Argentina:*

In what ways does Mansilla use her observations of the US to implicitly or explicitly critique Argentine society, particularly regarding the status of women and cultural development?

### *Race and Civilization:*

Discuss Mansilla's comments on slavery and the treatment of Native Americans. How do her views reflect the racial and civilizational discourses of her time?

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## PART 3: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## PART 4: QUIZ BANK (Multiple Choice)

### 1. Who is the author of *Recuerdos de Viaje*?

- A) Clorinda Matto de Turner
- B) Juana Manuela Gorriti
- C) Eduarda Mansilla
- D) Victoria Ocampo

Correct Answer: C

### 2. What historical event was taking place in the United States during Mansilla's stay?

- A) The American Revolution
- B) The Civil War
- C) The Great Depression
- D) The Gold Rush

Correct Answer: B

### 3. What literary style, characterized by witty and informal conversation, does Mansilla adopt in her travelogue?

- A) The *Causerie*
- B) The Picaresque
- C) The Epic
- D) The Sermon

Correct Answer: A

### 4. How does the introduction describe Mansilla's travel experience compared to her brother Lucio's?

- A) As a solitary adventure.
- B) As a scientific expedition.
- C) As a "nomadic" experience, carrying her home with her.
- D) As a religious pilgrimage.

Correct Answer: C

### 5. Besides social customs and politics, what specific aspect of American life does Mansilla frequently comment on, often contrasting it with Argentina?

- A) The culinary traditions.
- B) The role and freedom of women.
- C) The landscape of the Wild West.
- D) The educational system for men.

Correct Answer: B

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