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Educating a City's Children: *British Immigrants and Primary Education in Buenos Aires (1820–1880)*

Argentina, and Buenos Aires in particular, was a preferred South American destination for great numbers of European immigrants who crossed the Atlantic beginning in the late nineteenth century in search of new opportunities. Most Latin American governments, from the early days of their nations' independence, sought to attract European workers. These newly founded countries considered immigration an essential element for creating a society that would become economically, politically, and socially modern. They hoped to attract mainly foreigners from Northern Europe, among them the British, whom they considered to have superior labor skills and to be accustomed to the habits of order and work the new nation required.[1]

Despite the importance politicians and intellectuals of the period granted northern Europeans overall, this group has been ignored by the great majority of Latin American historians. The main studies have focused on the larger-scale influx of Spanish and Italians during the period of massive European immigration (1880–1914). Meanwhile, the immigration of British citizens—English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish—to Latin America has scarcely been researched and very little is known about the educational institutions they established, the role those schools played in immigrant communities, and the place of the schools in native society.[2]

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1. Tulio Halperin Donghi, "¿Para qué la inmigración? Ideología y política inmigratoria en la Argentina (1810–1914)," *El espejo de la historia. Problemas argentinos y perspectivas hispanoamericanas,* Halperin Donghi, ed. (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1987). The Welsh were not included in this study because their presence in Buenos Aires was insignificant.

2. On the British in Latin America, see Oliver Marshall, *English-Speaking Communities in Latin America*, (Basingstoke, U.K.: Macmillan, 2000); Alan Knight, "Britain and Latin America" in *The Oxford History of the British Empire. The Nineteenth Century*, Edward Porter, ed. (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Matthew Brown, *Informal Empire in Latin America. Culture, Commerce, and Capital* (Oxford:

The main impetus for study of these schools among historians has been the attempt to understand the construction of a national identity in nascent Latin American countries between the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth.[3] However, this issue was not at the forefront during the first decades of the nineteenth century when the new Latin American states were struggling for their independence and structure. This is not to say that the education of the new nations' children was not a concern during the first half of the nineteenth century. Since the advent of the Enlightenment in Hispanic America in the second half of the eighteenth century, education had come to be considered as a means through which the people—"barbarous, degenerate and ignorant"—could be "illuminated and saved from savagery."[4] In this manner, the children would become hard-working, responsible adults and good republicans or monarchists (according to the case).[5] However, the lack of resources and qualified teachers, the wars of independence, and the struggles for civil rights led to the failure of state-run educational projects during the first half of the nineteenth century. A comprehensive educational system would be realized only after these nations had achieved a higher degree of centralization and structure, which allowed them to establish a homogenous educational system that could permeate society and create a national identity. Up to that time, the field of education, decentralized and heterogeneous, remained open to a range of educational

Blackwell Publishing and Society of Latin American Studies, 2008). See in addition the following works about the British in Latin American countries: Hans P. Rheinheimer, *Top: The Story of a Scottish Colony near Caracas, 1825–1827* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1988); Gilberto Freyre, *Ingleses no Brasil: aspectos da influência britânica sobre a vida, a paisagem e a cultura do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1948); Oliver Marshall, *English, Irish and Irish-American Pioneer Settlers in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Oxford: Centre of Brazilian Studies, 2005); Deborah Lynn Jakubs, *A Community of Interests: A Social History of the British in Buenos Aires, 1860–1914* (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1986); Glyn Williams, *The Desert and the Dream: A Study of Welsh Colonization in Chubut, 1865–1915* (Wales: University of Wales Press, 1975); and Juan Carlo Korol and Hilda Sábato, *Cómo fue la inmigración irlandesa en Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Plus Ultra, 1981).

3. See for example Thomas J. Le Belle, *Educational Alternatives in Latin America: Social Change and Social Stratification* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin America Center Publications, 1975); Lilia Ana Bertoni, *Patriotas, cosmopolitas y nacionalistas. La construcción de la nacionalidad argentina a fines del siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001); Lucía Lionetti, *La misión política de la escuela pública. Formar a los ciudadanos de la república (1870–1916),* (Buenos Aires: Miño y Dávila, 2007); Belin Vázquez de Ferrer, "Ciudadanía e instrucción pública para el estado-nación en Venezuela, 1811–1920," *Revista Historia de la Educación Latinoamericana* [hereafter RHEL] 12 (2009), pp. 220–273; Françoise Martínez, "Los primeros pasos liberales hacia la unificación escolar en Bolivia," RHEL 1 (1998), pp. 1–23; Loreto Egaña, *La educación primaria popular en el siglo XIX en Chile: una práctica de política estatal* (Santiago: LOM, 2000); Josefina Vázquez, *Ensayos sobre historia de la educación en México* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1981); and Antonio Espinoza, "Educando al ciudadano: alcances y límites del proyecto educativo disciplinador en el departamento de Lima (1850–1879)," in *La experiencia burguesa en el Perú (1840–1940),* Carmen McEvoy, ed. (Madrid: Iberoamericana Vervuert, 2004).

4. Carlos Newland, *Buenos Aires no es pampa. La educación elemental porteña. 1820–1860* (Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1992), p. 38.

5. Ibid.; Moyra Castro Paredes, "Gobiernos locales y educación en Chile en el siglo XIX: una aproximación histórica," RHEL 15 (2010), pp. 93–124; Daniel Morán and María Aguirre, *La educación popular en los tiempos de la independencia* (Lima: Morán y Aguirre [author's edition], 2011).

proposals that came from many sides, from the Catholic Church to the Protestant churches, from private initiatives to public efforts, and from native schools to foreign schools. Through studying British schools in Buenos Aires, in their various forms, this paper aims to analyze the overall educational system immediately following independence and before the consolidation of national identities.

In early studies of the region, scholars looked at the schools of various ethnic immigrant groups to observe how the schools guided the new arrivals and their children in integrating themselves into their new society. The most researched period was that of the massive migrations, and the focus was on the groups with the greatest numbers of migrants.[6] Scholars in the fields of history of religion and sociology of religion have studied foreign schools, in particular Protestant schools. Many Protestant churches in Latin America developed their own schools, and what distinguished them was their effort to guarantee a level of instruction that would afford the faithful direct access to the Bible—unlike Catholics, Protestants required a congregation that could read.[7] Although these studies have brought to light important factors in the development of education during the final years of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, they say nothing about schools founded by Protestant teachers that were not church-dependent. Further, although many studies in Latin American historiography have extensively researched educational systems designed to create a national identity, as well as ethnic schools (those seeking to reproduce an ethnic identity) and Protestant academies, few have gone back to the decades before independence to consider the earlier devel-

6. See Luigi Favero, "Las escuelas de las sociedades italianas en la Argentina (1866–1914)" in *La inmigración italiana en la Argentina*, Fernando Devoto and Gianfausto Rosoli, eds. (Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2000); Carina Frid de Silberstein, "Mutualismo y educación en Rosario: las escuelas de la Unione e Benevolenza y de la Sociedad Garibaldi (1874–1911)," *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos* 1:1 (December 1985), pp. 77–97; Maria M. Bjerg, "Dinamarca bajo la Cruz del Sur. La preservación de la herencia cultural danesa en la Pampa Argentina (1848–1930)," *Studi Emigrazioni* 28:102 (June 1991), pp. 218–232; and Hernán Otero, "Las escuelas étnicas de la comunidad francesa de la Argentina, 1880–1950," paper delivered at the XXII Jornadas de Historia Económica (Río Cuarto [Córdoba], Argentina: Universidad de Río Cuarto, 2010).

7. Paula Seiguer, *La iglesia anglicana en la Argentina y la colectividad inglesa. Identidad y estrategias misionales, 1869–1930* (Doctoral thesis, University of Buenos Aires, 2009); Alessandro Carvalho Bica and Elomar Tambara, "O Colégio Diocesano Santa Margarida, aspectos da educação feminina de uma escola anglicana na cidade de Pelotas," *Anais do II Encontro História da Educação em Debate* (Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul: Centro de Estudos e Investigações em História da Educação, 2004); Antonio Gouvêa Mendonça, "Ideologia e educação religiosa protestante no Brasil" en *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 29:107 (1991); Jether Pereira Ramalho, "As características pedagógicas dos colégios protestantes e as categorias ideológicas do liberalismo" in *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 29:107 (1991); Roger Geymonant, *El templo y la escuela, los valdenses en el Uruguay* (Montevideo: OBSUR/Cal y Canto, 1994); Pablo Moreno, "La educación protestante durante la modernización educativa en Colombia (1869–1928)," *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 29:107 (1991); Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Los disidentes. Sociedades protestantes y revolución en México, 1872–1911* (Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989); and Silvia B. Venezian, *Misioneros y maestros: la educación inglesa y norteamericana en Chile en el siglo XIX* (Bachelor's degree thesis: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 1993).

opment of British primary schools in Latin America in general and in Argentina in particular. The present study focuses on those early years—on schools founded by migrants from the British Isles and their descendants, and those built by Protestant churches (the English Anglican Church and the Scottish Presbyterian Church) between 1820 and 1880 in Buenos Aires.

One hypothesis of the present study is that the situation in Buenos Aires differed substantially from that in other parts of Latin America as a result of the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation with Great Britain in 1825 and the British migrations to this region in the 1820s. There were more British citizens in Buenos Aires than in other regions of Latin America during the first half of the nineteenth century, and these citizens enjoyed a more privileged status than they did elsewhere. They were able to profess their faith freely and develop their own institutions. At the same time and unlike what occurred in the period of massive Spanish and Italian immigration, the small number of foreigners in relation to the native population did not drastically alter the composition of local society. This led to a certain degree of interaction between foreigners and locals, of which British-run schools are a good example.

This study aims to generate questions that will facilitate understanding of how education in Latin America developed in the years before the advent and implementation of national projects aimed at creating a sense of Argentine identity. There was considerable fluctuation in British migration over the nearly 60 years addressed in this study, starting in the 1820s when British emigrants began to arrive in significant numbers at the port of Río de la Plata, attracted by the opportunities of settling abroad under a beneficent agreement. The signing of the 1825 treaty with Great Britain occurred during a period of relative peace and stability under the administration of Bernardino Gónzalez Rivadavia, and this study follow changes in the succeeding years, to 1880. During the 1870s immigrants from Great Britain entered in larger numbers, and their social and economic profiles were different from those who had entered before (at the beginning of the century they were merchants and craftsman; by the 1880s they were farmers, workers in the new fields of media and transport, and merchants). This paper aims to contribute to understanding the diverse nature of the educational programs that prevailed from about 1820 up to that time in Buenos Aires and of how the British used them to integrate into local society.

In 1820, after the political and military confrontations following Argentina's split from Spain in 1810, the central authority of the former viceroyalty of Río de la Plata was dissolved into several centers of power, each rather weak but

nonetheless retaining its independence. In Buenos Aires, this situation led to a political crisis and later to the construction of the State of Buenos Aires. Under the government of Martín Rodríguez and his chief minister Rivadavia, the new regime emerged with a plan for reforms aimed at modernizing the political structure, the state apparatus, the militia, and the economy.[8]

Economic expansion, the end of the war with Spain, the creation of the Immigration Commission (1824), the signing of the 1825 treaty,[9] the expansion of British interests, and the desire for new lands favored British migration.[10] Toward the mid-1820s, there was a spike in the number of British migrants arriving in the River Plate region, and for a time at the beginning of the 1830s these foreigners were actually the largest group of Europeans in the city of Buenos Aires.[11]

Despite its initial successes, the Rivadivia government soon fell as a result of internal disputes, war in the interior, and a war against Brazil for the control of what is now the Republic of Uruguay. From these conflicts, a new political figure emerged: Juan Manuel de Rosas. In 1829, Rosas proclaimed himself governor of the Province of Buenos Aires, a position he held until 1852. Under his mandate, the hegemony of Buenos Aires expanded, a republican political order came into being, cattle production and commercial activity increased, and, starting in the decade of the 1830s, a new cycle of migration began in Río de la Plata.[12] During this period, however, the number of British nationals entering decreased. The abandonment of settlement plans drawn up in the 1820s and the failure of many early British investments slowed the immigration of the English and Scottish, who soon lost their place as the largest European group in Buenos Aires.[13]

8. Tulio Halperin Donghi, *Revolución y Guerra* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 1994); Noemí Golman, *Revolución, república, confederación (1806–1852)* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1998); and H. S. Ferns, *Gran Bretaña y Argentina en el siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette, 1966).

9. The treaty guaranteed a preferential situation for commerce and for British merchants, recognized the sovereignty of the political authorities in Buenos Aires, and assured British subjects commercial and civil rights including the right to freedom of religion. It also exempted them from military service. H. S. Ferns, *Gran Bretaña y la Argentina*.

10. Fernando Devoto, *Historia de la inmigración en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2004); José C. Moya, *Primos y extranjeros. La inmigración española en Buenos Aires, 1850–1930* (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 2004).

11. Alina Silveira, *Los británicos en Buenos Aires: movimientos poblacionales, pautas matrimoniales e inserción económica (1800–1850),* (Master's thesis, Universidad de San Andrés [Argentina], (2008).

12. For a more detailed analysis of the social and economic life of Buenos Aires during the first half of the nineteenth century, see Tulio Halperin Donghi, *Revolución*; María Alejandra Irigoin and Roberto Schmit, eds., *La desintegración de la economía colonial. Comercio y moneda en el interior del espacio colonial (1800–1860*), (Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2003); Jonathan Brown, *Historia socioeconómica de la Argentina, 1776–1860* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2002); and Jorge Myers, *Orden y virtud. El discurso republicano en el régimen rosista* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 1995).

13. Alina Silveira, *Los Británicos en Buenos Aires.*

The hegemony of Rosas ended in 1852, although the creation of the Argentinean state would have to wait another decade. Early in the year 1862, the process of building a national state based on an agro-export economy began, continuing to 1880 but not without conflict.[14] Despite the fall of Rosas, the process of immigration was not substantially affected, but during the 1860s the state began to play a greater role in fomenting immigration.[15] Toward the end of the 1860s, a little more than half of the foreigners residing in the city of Buenos Aires were Italian, followed in numbers by the Spanish and French. By that time, the British represented a mere four percent of the total.[16]

PRIMARY EDUCATION IN BUENOS AIRES FROM THE 1820S TO 1860: CHANGING FORTUNES

During the early nineteenth century, a majority of Latin American countries suffered the effects of the wars of independence, followed by wars over the structure of civil society, political uncertainty, and economic setbacks. Political instability, administrative disorganization, and a lack of resources, human and economic, made it impossible for the state to create a homogeneous, centralized educational system during a good part of the first half of the nineteenth century, even though many politicians of the period strongly agreed on the importance of education for the emerging republics. In this context, the space left open by the state was occupied by private initiatives.[17] The result was that the educational system in Buenos Aires during a good part of the nineteenth century was heterogeneous and decentralized. For boys, there were public schools financed by the state; girls' education was left to the Society of Beneficence, an institution managed by women prominent in *criollo* society and maintained economically by the state and by donations. There were also private schools run by laypeople (both native and foreign) that received no state aid but were financed with monthly fees paid by students. These schools did not always have a religious orientation, although many included the study of religion in their curricula. The best establishments, called *colegios* or *liceos*, were institutions exclusively for boys where primary and mid-level education were provided. These coexisted with smaller schools

14. Marta Bonaudo, *Liberalismo, estado y orden burgués (1852–1880)*, (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1999), Vol. 4; Tulio Halperin Donghi, *Una nación para el desierto argentino* (Buenos Aires: CEAL, 1995); Hilda Sábato, *Capitalismo y ganadería. La fiebre del lanar, 1850–1890* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1989); Oscar Oszlak, *La formación del estado argentino* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1997); and Roy Hora, *Historia económica de la Argentina en el siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2010).

15. Fernando Devoto, *Historia de la inmigración*; José C. Moya, *Primos y extranjeros;* and María Bjerg, *Historias de la inmigración en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2009).

16. Argentine National Census, 1869.

17. Gregorio Weinberg, "Modelos educativos en el desarrollo histórico de América Latina," *Educación Hoy* 11:62-63 (January–June 1981), pp. 7–129.

made up of one teacher and an assistant who gave lessons in a room of a private home.

There were also primary schools maintained by churches or founded and operated by voluntary associations. The convents offered free Catholic education and focused their efforts on children from humble backgrounds, mainly mulattos and mestizos.[18] Starting in the 1820s, Protestant churches also founded schools, aimed mainly at the children of foreign Protestants, where the religion and language of national origin were taught. The education these immigrant communities offered to members of their group often aimed to preserve and reconstruct an ethnic identity among immigrant children. In addition, some children were educated outside school institutions, either by a tutor (often of foreign origin) or by a family member. However, hiring a private teacher was expensive, and only the richest could offer this type of non-formal education.

During the Rivadivia period, there were efforts to consolidate these various systems. First, Rivadavian reforms in the 1820s sought to set up a uniform public education system, free and open to all, with the aim of extending education to the largest number of children possible. New schools were built and the number of public establishments and students doubled in comparison to the colonial period.[19] However, starting in the 1830s, the Rosas government restricted and then eliminated state school financing to balance the public budget. Free public schools disappeared and the number of state schools and students in attendance decreased. In their place, private educational systems flourished.[20] When Rosas fell, successor governments annulled his restrictive laws and attempted to restore the educational system of the Rivadivia period. New schools were again built, many more students came to school, state financing increased, and free education was once again established.[21]

Private schools, whether independent or church-affiliated were affected in other ways. The independent institutions were managed by natives or foreigners and financed mainly by monthly tuition paid by the children's parents. In contrast, church schools were free or charged small monthly fees. Their main

18. Convent schools disappeared in 1820 after the closure of the convents and were reestablished in the 1850s.

19. Ibid.

20. Carlos Newland, *Buenos Aires no es pampa;* Antonio Salvadores, "La enseñanza primaria y la universidad en la época de Rosas, in *Historia de la nación Argentina (desde los orígenes hasta la organización definitiva en 1862)*, Ricardo Levene, dir. (Buenos Aires: El Ateneo, 1962), Vol. VIII, pp. 253–269.

21. Ibid.; Antonio Salvadores, *La instrucción primaria desde 1810 hasta la sanción de la ley 1420* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos/Consejo Nacional de Educación, 1941); Juan P. Ramos, *Historia de la instrucción primaria en la República Argentina, 1810–1910* (Buenos Aires: Peuser, 1910); and Registro Estadístico de Buenos Aires [hereafter REBA], 1872.

source of income was voluntary contributions collected among city inhabitants, both foreign and native. During the Rivadavian period, educational freedom in Buenos Aires increased, allowing all schools substantial autonomy in their internal organization, teaching methods, and curriculum selection. This freedom, together with the growing British, American, and French populations, led to the rise of foreign schools and of church schools where language and religion (especially among the Protestants) were taught along with the basic skills of primary education (reading, writing and arithmetic).

Private schools flourished under the successive Rosas administrations as a consequence of diminished funding for state schools. Many educators who had worked at public schools switched to private schools. These were economically viable, as they offered services to the middle and upper-middle echelons of society that could afford monthly tuition. Additionally, the ever-increasing influx of foreigners in Buenos Aires led to the founding of schools for immigrants. As a consequence, the total number of private schools grew substantially. Furthermore, students who previously had been distributed between private and state schools now crowded to the private sector, where the educational system was concentrated. This shift occurred mainly after 1838, the year in which state financing for public schools was completely abolished, and continued until the end of the Rosas regime. [22]

Under Rosas, however, the government attempted to limit the freedom private schools and Protestant churches had enjoyed during the Rivadavian period. Two decrees were enacted in the attempt to increase state control over private schools. The first, dating from 1831, demanded that these establishments request permission from the school inspector to open their doors and obliged school directors to present formal justifications regarding their morality, religion, and economic sufficiency. Schools whose teachers were not considered to be moral enough, or who were not Catholic, would be closed, as would any where Catholic dogma was not taught. Rosas frowned on the growth of private schools in the hands of foreign Protestants, as they were suspected of taking advantage of their success to disseminate their language and faith. In 1844, a new decree reinforced previous directives, and the Ministry of Government took charge of enforcing laws that up to that time public functionaries had largely ignored. The decree required that each school request permission to operate and that it renew the permission annually. It was also

22. Carlos Newland, *Buenos Aires no es pampa*; Newland, "Enseñanza elemental"; Antonio Salvadores, *La instrucción primaria*; Antonio Portnoy, *La instrucción primaria desde 1810 hasta la sanción de la ley 1420* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos/Consejo Nacional de Educación, 1937); and Ramos, *Historia de la instrucción*.

established that foreigners could not teach native children. Thus, if teachers wanted to continue working, they had to become Argentines. Many Spanish citizens did just this, but few British followed suit because they had no need to—protected as they were by the British Consulate under the 1825 treaty. At the same time, the prohibition that Protestant educators not teach Catholic children was reiterated.[23]

Although these decrees may seem quite restrictive, several exceptions were made to allow Protestant schools and others to continue operating. It is likely that the country would have found it difficult to get along without them, given the scarcity of local teachers and the superior qualifications of the foreigners. Either way, with the suspension of state school financing, the growth of private establishments was inevitable. Foreign Protestant schools were allowed to continue operating even if their teachers did not naturalize or teach Catholic dogma, under the condition that they limit attendance to children of their own religious faith. In general, political authorities were rather tolerant with the Protestants, particularly those from the British Isles, who operated under the 1825 treaty that guaranteed them freedom of religion.[24]

Unlike the rest of Latin America, the Río de la Plata region gave early recognition to foreigners' freedom of religion. Foreigners there had greater flexibility to establish their own churches and schools starting in the 1820s, whereas other Latin American countries did not recognize and facilitate construction of the first Protestant churches until nearly the mid nineteenth century. Overall, Protestants in the rest of Latin America suffered greater limitations and pressure during the first half of the nineteenth century.[25] As long as the Protestants in Argentina limited their field of action to foreigners, Rosas did not show any resistance toward differences of faith.[26] With the fall of Rosas, the restrictive decrees on morals and religion were annulled, and there was a return to a greater freedom for both native and foreign private schools and Protestant churches. New schools began to appear as immigration increased, due to economic growth and the ample freedoms immigrants were granted. In addition,

23. For a more detailed analysis of the Rosas decrees, see Antonio Salvadores, *Instrucción primaria*; Salvadores, "El decreto del 26 de mayo de 1844, sobre las escuelas de la provincia de Buenos Aires," *Boletín del Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* 7:39 (January-March 1929), pp. 41–63; and Carlos Newland, *Buenos Aires no es pampa*.

24. Nancy Calvo, "Los unos y los otros. Católicos, herejes, protestantes, extranjeros. Alcances de la tolerancia religiosa en las primeras décadas del siglo XIX," *Anuario del Instituto de Estudios Histórico-Sociales* 21 (2006), pp. 13–35.

25. Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo en América Latina* (Mexico: Cupsa Editorial, 1990).

26. Daniel P. Monti, *Presencia del protestantismo en el Río de la Plata durante el siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1969); Arnaldo Canclini, *La libertad de cultos. Historia, contenido y situación constitucional argentina* (Buenos Aires: Asociación Bautista Argentina de Publicaciones, 1987).

the National Constitution of 1853 guaranteed widespread freedom of religion: although the official religion of the country was Catholicism, all Protestants—not only the British—could freely profess their faith. Religious tolerance became a universal and inalienable right.[27]

BRITISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BUENOS AIRES

Throughout the nineteenth century, a great number of private British schools operated in the city of Buenos Aires. It is possible to construct a list of schools that functioned in Buenos Aires between 1820 and 1860, based on advertisements published in the *British Packet*, information gleaned from police reports, and the permissions granted pursuant to the 1844 Rosas decree. During these 40 years, there were 35 schools directed by English, Scottish, Irish people and their descendants, although not all of them were open at the same time. These establishments provided children with a balanced education very similar to that offered by other non-British private schools. Among their subjects were mercantile arithmetic, bookkeeping, dance, drawing, geography, French, English, Latin, and Spanish.[28] Nevertheless, religious instruction had a greater weight in the non-British schools than in the British ones; nearly 80 percent of the former included religion (Catholicism) in their curricula but only a third of the latter did. Despite the fact that the majority of the teachers at schools run by the English and Scottish were Protestants (Anglicans, Methodists, or Presbyterians), as in Chile they did not use their establishments as a means to disseminate their faith.[29] Moreover, the limitations and suspicions of which Protestant schools were the object made it necessary for these teachers to eliminate religion from their classrooms to avoid confrontations with the state. On the other hand, some teachers introduced religious studies of the Catholic faith and hired natives to handle these classes. In this way they sought to diversify their student body without running the risk of state intervention. Unlike private schools not run by British, these institutions had a marked commercial orientation and typically taught both mercantile arithmetic and bookkeeping.

The British schools' curricula included the teaching of Spanish. This was necessary because a significant number of native children attended these establishments—the British schools did not limit their offerings to foreigners. To the contrary, the teaching of Spanish allowed for and perhaps encouraged the

27. Arnaldo Canclini, *La libertad de cultos;* Monti, *Presencia del protestantismo.*

28. The list of subjects offered by the private schools can be seen in Newland's *Buenos Aires no es pampa*. For the English schools, the variety of schools offered was reconstructed from advertisements published by some schools in the *British Packet.*

29. Silvia B. Venezian, *Misioneros y maestros.*

attendance of both British and native children. The foreigners stressed the importance of their children learning Spanish correctly to assimilate economically and socially into local society, especially important because during this period few foreigners returned to their countries of origin.[30] An English-speaking father wrote in the newspaper the *British Packet* to promote the importance of children learning both the language of their forefathers and that of the country where they resided. Although it would have been possible to acquire the local language through daily contact with the natives, he maintained that it was important Spanish be taught in school so that the children could learn to speak it correctly. He also considered that the learning of Spanish would facilitate the children's assimilation in the country:

> The children of foreigners born and brought up here, must naturally, along with the language of their parents, speak that of the country; but without care and instruction they will not do it correctly. Their views and prospects are all connected with this country, their chief intercourse in the prosecution of their future plan and avocation, must inevitably be with its native inhabitants; and the better they can speak their language, they are so far better qualified to act their part with respectability and advantage.[31]

Most British schools were in the hands of the English or their descendants and set up operations around Plaza Victoria (see Figure 1). This location reflected the fact that the majority of the population was concentrated there. According to the 1855 municipal census, 30 percent of the city population resided in the centrally located parishes of South Cathedral, North Cathedral, and San Miguel. Consequently, 30 percent of the student population also lived in this zone, which was home to 40 percent of the schools and nearly 60 percent of the teachers.[32]

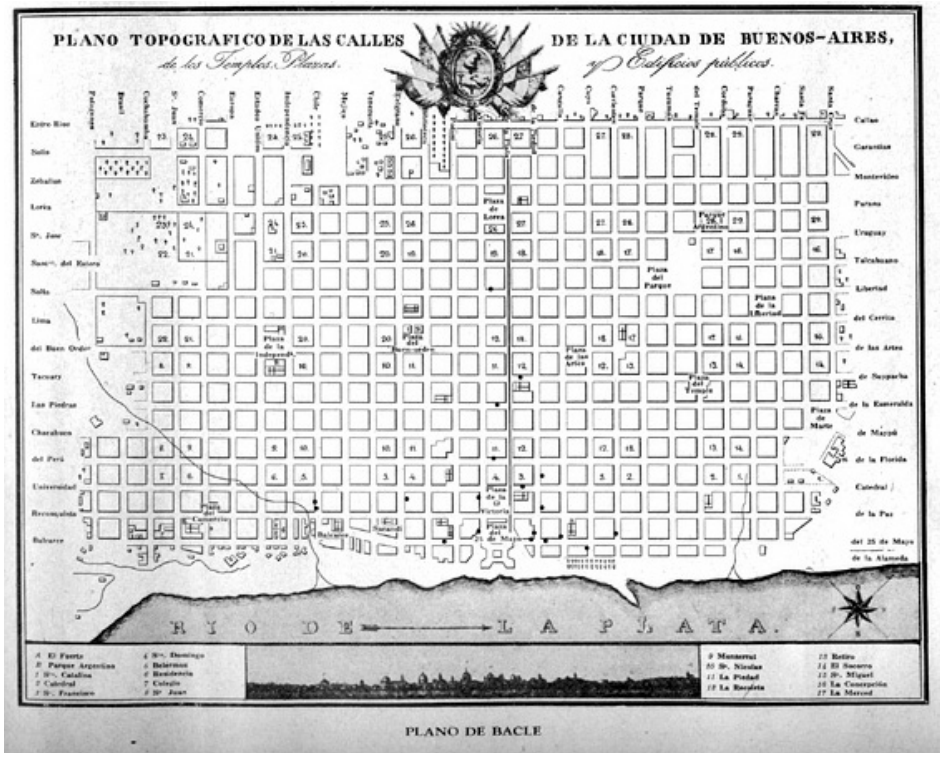
Some of these schools stood out on the local educational scene, for example, the school belonging to the Englishman Henry Bradish. Bradish had studied in Liverpool and there he began his ecclesiastic career. His school (called Academia Literaria Comercial, then Academia Clásica Comercial, and later Academia Comercial Inglesa, or the Foreign Mercantile Academy) was renowned during the period. Among the students were children of prominent local figures: Admiral Brown, the nationalized Irishman who had fought for local independence; Carlos Ezcurra, a criollo born into an elite family; and the writer and

30. The chances of returning to the motherland during the first half of the nineteenth century were slight. Until well into the nineteenth century, the voyage across the Atlantic was long and traumatic, comforts on the ship were minimal, and costs were high.

31. *British Packet,* September 26, 1835, pp. 2–3.

32. REBA, 1856.

FIGURE 1
Location of English-Speaking Schools, 1820–1860



Source: A. Taullard, *Los planos más antiguos de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Peuser, 1940). Each dot represents a school.

doctor José Antonio Wilde.[33] The establishment owned by Englishman Percy Lewis, the Colegio de la Independencia, was founded in 1833 with the support of criollo families and also played an important role in providing education to natives. Figures such as the artist Prilidiano Pueyrredón, the *estanciero* Carlos Gorostiaga, the merchant Carlos Zimmerman, and the son of the merchant Julián Arriola studied there.[34]

The school operated by Englishwoman Elizabeth Hyne was open from 1822 to 1834. Mrs. Hyne, who had completed her studies in England, was well

33. Antonio Salvadores, *Instrucción primaria*; José Antonio Wilde, *Buenos Aires desde setenta años atrás* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1960 [1881]); Maxine Hanon, *Diccionario de británicos en Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Gutten Press, 2005); and *British Packet*, August 9, 1834, p. 1.

34. Maxine Hanon, *Diccionario*; Carlos Newland, *Buenos Aires no es pampa*.

known and respected by the parents who sent their children there, about 80 students in all.[35] In 1825 an Englishman observed: "Of the many schools there is one directed by an Englishwoman, Mrs. Hyne, that enjoys great popularity; she has got seventy students to whom she teaches, among other indispensable things, the English language."[36] When Mrs. Hyne returned to England the *British Packet* commented with great sadness on her departure and lauded her educational efforts in teaching English to local families.[37]

Gilbert Ramsay, who studied at the University of Glasgow, was another English-speaking educator who gained local attention. Initially, his Academia Argentina (then called the Commercial Academy) sought to provide primary education to the children of English-speaking foreigners. Yet, as the level of instruction provided there gained in prestige, criollo children also enrolled, many because Spanish was taught as well as English and there were no religious studies. This was of great importance to Catholic criollo families who wanted their children to obtain the educational advantages of the Protestant-run schools but did not want their children to be taught religion there. In 1835 some 60 children attended Ramsay's school. Parents noted the children's progress, praising the school and Ramsay himself as an educator, and talked of the importance of such a school for the English-speaking community residing in Buenos Aires and for their younger generations. One enthusiastic observer wrote:

> I beg, in justice to him, and with your permission, to express my high admiration of the rich treat which he provided for his visitors on the occasion. No one, I am sure, could witness such a number of fine boys enjoying the benefit of Mr. Ramsay's superior tuition without gratification. It required only being present to be convinced of the high importance of his Institution to the foreign population of this city. Let him but persevere in his present career, and he will assuredly prove one of the greatest benefactors to his countrymen here. His skilful and successful method of instruction must eventually manifest itself in the improved character and fortunes of many of the rising generation.[38]

Clearly, the British schools were attended by a great diversity of children, among them a number of enthusiastic natives. In 1825, "an Englishman" stated:

35. José Antonio Wilde, *Buenos Aires desde setenta años atrás.*

36. Un inglés, *Cinco años en Buenos Aires, 1820–1825* (Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette, 1962 [1825]), p. 117. According to members of the British community in Buenos Aires and investigators José Antonio Wilde, Michael Mulhall, Paul Groussac, and Maxine Hanon (among others), the author was Thomas George Love. It is thought that due to his prominent presence in local society, he chose to remain anonymous so as to be able to express his opinions freely, without fear of offending anyone.

37. *British Packet*, April 30, 1842.

38. *British Packet*, September 26, 1835, p. 2.

Table 1
Ethnicity of Students at English-Speaking Schools, 1830–1850

	Number	%
Family names of Anglo-Saxon origin	87	38
Non-Anglo Saxon family names	117	51
No data	24	11
Total	228	100
Family names of Anglo-Saxon origin		
Scotland	26	31
England	21	25
Ireland	12	14
No data	26	31
Total	85	100

Source: AGN, Room X: 33-6-2 Book 170, and 33-5-10 Book 164; *British Packet*, November 8, 1834, January 2, 1836, and March 25, 1837. These figures are composites for the schools run by Gilbert Ramsay, Percy Lewis, Ana Bevans, Elizabeth Heathfield, Rosa Wilde de Barton, and Catalina Wilson. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding factor.

> If one judges by the zeal the parents have to teach their children our language, the next generation will end up totally Anglicised. By putting the little ones under the tutelage of a Protestant lady they have proved their objectives are not so limited as I had thought, as it seems they don't believe their religion will suffer from it. One of the young students spoke the other day to me in good English, learnt rather quickly.[39]

Using a variety of sources, it is possible to create a list (albeit fragmentary) of alumni from six schools, and from this to derive a sociological profile of the students who attended and the education they experienced. The six schools are Percy Lewis's Colegio de la Independencia, Ramsay's Commercial Academy, and the schools belonging to Ana Bevans, Elizabeth Heathfield, Rosa Wilde de Barton, and Catalina Wilson. For Ramsay's academy, there are lists of outstanding students—those who won some kind of award—from the years 1836 and 1837, and for Lewis's school there is a similar list for 1834; both were published in the *British Packet*. There is also information from a police registry of children who attended Protestant and other foreign-operated schools in 1848 and 1849. The registry exists because it was prohibited for Protestants and other foreigners to educate native or Catholic children, and the government, especially after the 1844 decree, began to exercise greater control over their schools. The police records include the names of the students who

39. Un inglés, *Cinco años en Buenos Aires*, p. 117.

TABLE 2
Ethnicity of Students Attending Colegio de la Independencia (Lewis) and the Commercial Academy (Ramsay), 1834, 1836, and 1837

	Number	%
Family names of Anglo-Saxon origin	46	53
Non-Anglo Saxon family names	23	26
No data	18	21
Total	87	100
Family names of Anglo-Saxon origin		
Scotland	18	39
England	19	41
Ireland	3	7
No data	6	13
Total	46	100

Source: *British Packet,* November 8, 1834, January 2, 1836, and March 25, 1837. Percentage totals may not equal 100 due to rounding factor.

attended and their professed religions. From this data it can be surmised that nearly 40 percent of the children who attended the six schools came from English-speaking families, in their majority Scottish and English; the rest were natives or of other national origins (see Table 1).

It is probable, however, that the number of English and Scottish is underrepresented because of the fragmentary nature of the historical sources. In fact, the police records focus on schools that were seen as problematic by the government—the Protestant schools that native or Catholic students attended.

If the data from only the Ramsay and Lewis schools is considered, the percentage of students of British origin increases. The difference however is not very substantial, 40 percent to 53 percent. Yet if one considers just those two schools, the composite presence of non-British children diminishes significantly, from 50 percent to 26 percent (see Table 2). In summary, if it cannot be concluded from the limited sources that all the British schools had a majority of local children (as occurred in Chile),[40] it can be supposed that many of these schools had among their students varying numbers of children from English and Scottish families as well as those of other nationalities and natives.

40. Silvia B. Venezian, *Misioneros y maestros.*

BRITISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE PERIOD OF NATION-BUILDING (1860–1880)

With the fall of Rosas and with him the restrictions on Protestant and foreign schools, the British educational scene grew and increased in complexity. According to the 1872 national education census, Buenos Aires was home to some 131 private schools, of which only about 20 were British.[41] The census was carried out by the police on December 20, 1872, in the province of Buenos Aires. All schools in the city and on the outskirts of town, public and private, received questionnaires to be filled out by their directors.[42] Overall, the census provides a detailed picture of the Buenos Aires educational system in 1872, but in some cases the data are incomplete. Many directors were reticent about providing information, and some even refused to participate. Other schools were able to avoid the census altogether. Thus, census questionnaires exist showing schools whose directors did not wish to provide information. Some schools are simply not listed. Probably the persecution that some of these schools had experienced in earlier periods made their directors reluctant to respond to inquiries from the state.

According to the 1872 census, the education provided at the majority of private British schools included lessons in reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, geography, history, Spanish, French, and handcrafts (for girls only), as shown in Table 3.

In comparison to the curricula of the earlier period, and of the non-British private and public schools of the same period, the education offered by the British schools was more ambitious and more varied. Furthermore, the level of instruction was higher than the average of private and public schools in 1872 (see Table 4). The British schools were also better equipped than the rest; the majority had maps, blackboards, and libraries (see Table 5).

Typically, the British schools were also more spacious and could accommodate a greater number of students. They also had better facilities in general—ventilation, gardens, patios, trees, benches, and other amenities—as shown in Table 6.

41. The census summaries can be found in the Registro Estadístico de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, 1872, Archivo General de la Nación [hereafter AGN] Sala VII 1405–1414.

42. The questionnaires requested information on the name and location of the school; the days it was open and the class schedule; religion; records and notes; the name of the director and the nationality, age, and marital status of the director and teachers; the number of children registered by age and gender; student body attendance; subjects taught, with the numbers of boys and girls enrolled in the various classes; textbooks used; the level of instruction achieved by the students broken down by gender; the characteristics of the school building and furniture; and school income and expenses.

TABLE 3
Subjects Taught by Type of School (Percentages), City of Buenos Aires, 1872

	Public Schools	Private Schools	British Schools
Reading	100	92	100
Writing	99	94	100
Arithmetic	98	92	100
Algebra	0	19	30
Geometry	19	26	20
Drawing	21	38	65
Geography	79	81	95
History	50	62	85
Handcrafts	61	55	50
Spanish	87	85	100
French	32	59	85
English	5	39	90
Italian	6	18	10
German	1	8	15
Latin	4	21	40
Other languages	1	3	10
Other subjects	19	23	30
Total Schools	107	120	20

Source: Education Census of the Republic of Argentina, 1872, AGN, Room VII, 1405–1414.

TABLE 4
Instructional Goals by Type of School, 1872

	Public Schools	Private Schools	British Schools
Read well with punctuation and other orthographic symbols of all kinds	20	33	48
Know how to use full stops in dictations with all the necessary punctuation marks	16	29	35
Know numbering and the four operations with all types of numbers	14	20	25
Know the theory of proportions and its applications	5	14	23
Have knowledge of the pronunciation of Spanish	22	16	17
Know syntax, logical analysis, and composition	4	16	26
Know Argentinean geography	14	16	37
Have general notions of geography, physics, and politics	4	16	33
Total number of students	9,090	9,086	1,521

Source: Education Census of the Republic of Argentina, 1872, AGN, Room VII, 1405–1414.

TABLE 5
School Equipment by School Type, 1872

	Public Schools	Private Schools	British Schools
Maps	81	62	85
Globes	20	34	40
Abacus	28	35	50
Blackboard	95	70	80
Library	75	51	60
Generally well-equipped facilities	40	41	55
Total number of schools	120	107	20

Source: Education Census of the Republic of Argentina, 1872, AGN, Room VII, 1405–1414.

TABLE 6
Buildings and Furnishings in Private Schools and British Schools, 1872

Building conditions	Private Schools Number		British Schools Number	
Square meters	11,948		2,252	
Maximum capacity of children	6,084		1,501	
Hygienic conditions	Number	%	Number	%
Sufficient ventilation	95	73	20	100
Gardens	34	26	6	30
Sufficient outdoor spaces	64	49	16	80
In good overall condition	54	41	12	60
Children	Number		Number	
Total school attendance	9,135		1,470	
Children with no seat/desk	681		6	
Objects	Number		Number	
Good quality benches	746		236	

Source: Education Census of the Republic of Argentina, 1872, AGN Room VII, 1405– 1414.

However, there were small British schools as well. The value of the properties on which the establishments were located varied from 100,000 monetary units of the period for the smallest (for example, Byrne's English school for girls, the Anglo-Porteño Froggatto school, MacKen's English school for girls, and Scott's school) to more than a million monetary units for the largest and most important schools, such as those belonging to George Ryan, W. D. Junor, and Robert Bird. Approximately 1,521 children studied at these schools, with an

TABLE 7
Nationality of Teachers and Assistants at British Primary Schools, 1872

Directors	%	Assistants	%
English	55	English	34
Argentinean	30	Argentinean	26
French	10	French	14
Spanish	0	Spanish	11
Italian	0	Italian	5
German	0	German	4
Other nations	5	Other nations	6
Total number of directors	20	Total number of assistants	91

Source: Education Census of the Republic of Argentina, 1872, AGN Room VII, 1405–1414. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

average annual attendance of 859; the majority of students were from five to 15 years old.[43]

These schools were mainly in the hands of English, Scottish, and Irish men and women and their descendants. Even many of those who registered as Argentinean were second- or third-generation British immigrants. The corps of assistant teachers was more heterogeneous (see Table 7).

Given that the 1872 school census data are incomplete, this study also used the advertisements of British schools published in the English newspaper *The Standard*[44] and the 1869 *Handbook of the River Plate* by the Mulhall brothers as complements.[45] Although the census identified only some 20 British schools, 65 schools appear in the advertisements. It is possible that some of these schools were not included because they had closed before the 1872 census, or opened after that. It is also possible that some of the schools were located outside the city of Buenos Aires, yet were interested in attracting the attention of city dwellers. By counting the schools with advertisements in *The Standard*, those mentioned in the Mulhall *Handbook,* and those included in the 1872

43. Educational Census, Republic of Argentina, 1872, AGN Sala VII 1405–1414.

44. Issues of *The Standard* were randomly chosen, mainly from the first quarters of the years 1865–1868 and 1876–1880. The first quarter marked the beginning of the school year, and it was then that the number of advertisements was highest.

45. M. G and E. T. Mulhall, *Handbook of the River Plate*, Buenos Aires, Standard Printing-Office, 1869. The Handbooks of the River Plate were a series of books published for several years by the Irish brothers Mulhall, editors of the newspaper *The Standard*. They were directed to the British in Latin America and those who intended to immigrate there. The books are a synthesis of the natural, political and historical descriptions of Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay. At the end of these books there was a special section designated for advertisements of goods and services, in which some educators promoted their institutions.

census, it can be shown that some 75 British schools existed in Buenos Aires between 1860 and 1880. Although approximately 10 of these were located on the outskirts of the city, the number of British establishments was nearly double that of the earlier period.

In the 1860s and 1870s, as in earlier decades, the Buenos Aires schools were located mainly in the region near Plaza Victoria (see Figure 2), where the majority of the population of Buenos Aires resided.[46] In 1860, 40 percent of the private boys' schools were headquartered downtown where 50 percent of the students lived; for girls' schools these percentages were lower, 23 percent and 28 percent respectively.[47] Toward the end of the 1870s, however, the downtown area began to lose primacy. Only 26 percent of the schools were located there, and just 26 percent of the private school students in the city attended them.[48] Who were the children in these schools?

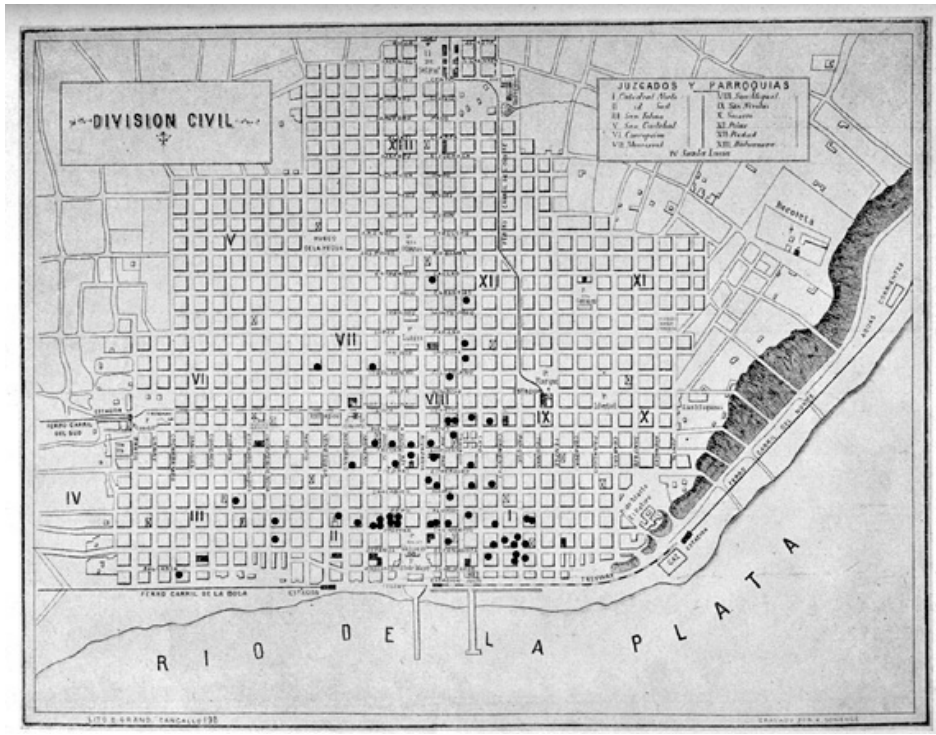
Unfortunately, the kind of information available for the students of the earlier period does not exist. The only source identified was a list of names with the results from the 1880 Christmas exams from Reynolds's Anglo-Argentine Seminary, which was published in *The Standard*.[49] According to the list, of the 40 students who took the exams only one had a last name of Anglo-Saxon origin. Although it is possible that some of the children came from mixed marriages (native father and foreign mother), this profile, regardless, shows a British school open to all types of students.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF THE BRITISH PROTESTANT CHURCHES

In addition to the private British schools, there were schools established by the Anglican and Presbyterian churches: the Buenos Ayrean British School Society, the British Episcopal Schools, and the National Scottish Schools (later St. Andrew's Scotch Schools). During the nineteenth century the school networks of missionary and Protestant societies expanded throughout Latin America, with church and school operating as a single unit. Often these schools fulfilled a double mission: to educate the children of Protestants living in Latin America and to disseminate Protestant moral and religious values. Their main focus was to prevent these children from losing the national identity of their parents by integrating into the local educational system. James Thomson, a Scot and

46. Argentine National Census, 1869.
47. REBA, 1860.
48. REBA, 1879. See James Scobie, *Buenos Aires del centro a los barrios* (Buenos Aires: Solar/Hachette, 1977).
49. *The Standard*, January 29, 1880.

FIGURE 2
Location of English-Speaking Schools in Buenos Aires, 1860–1880



Source: A. Taullard, *Los planos más antiguos de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Peuser, 1940). Each dot represents a school.

representative of the British and Foreign School Society who arrived in October 1818, was the first Protestant missionary come to the region with the aim of disseminating modern education (the Lancasterian system) as well as the teachings of the Bible, although his success in the latter goal was limited.[50] Beyond this initial effort, the penetration of Protestant schools in Latin America (with the exception of Buenos Aires) began toward the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Protestant educational networks began operations in areas where state primary schools had not arrived (rural zones, marginal neighborhoods, and other non-central locations) and offered modern teaching systems and a pragmatic

50. Arnaldo Canclini, *Diego Thomson. Apóstol de la enseñanza y distribución de la biblia en América Latina y España* (Buenos Aires: Asociación Sociedad Bíblica Argentina, 1987).

education. They focused on the individual, seeking to forge moral and religious awareness, although a civic and democratic education was often included as well. To support the latter aim, they sought to give the children tools that would allow them future entry into the labor market and make them citizens useful to society. Lower-income students often attended these schools, especially in the areas where free state education had yet to arrive. Middle-class families and the petite bourgeoisie also sent their children to the Protestant schools, attracted by the bilingual education they offered. However, these schools were at the same time dedicated to preserving their foreign culture and identity. To this end, the immigrant community supported many of the schools and other educational projects through voluntary contributions to assure that foreign children from lower-income sectors would retain the cultural identity of their parents and not be absorbed by local society.[51]

The first school of this type in Buenos Aires was founded in 1826. With the initiative of the Anglican pastor John Armstrong and the support of Scottish Presbyterian pastor William Brown and the American Methodist pastor William Torrey, the Buenos Ayrean British School Society (hereafter British School Society) began taking students. As in Chile the Protestants were a minority living in a country that was almost completely Catholic,[52] and Protestant congregations put aside their differences to achieve common goals: to educate young people and to maintain through them the cultural identity of their parents. To achieve these ends, the schools initially renounced religious instruction, which was to be handled by the Sunday schools of the respective churches. The British School Society promoted the need to organize the education of English-speaking foreign children living in the region. Its objective was to provide education to the children of the more modest families of the English-speaking population who could not attend the private British schools or hire a tutor. The schools were financed through a modest monthly fee[53] and funds collected by voluntary contributions from British residents in Buenos Aires. Although the society's schools had been founded to meet the educational needs of all the British residing in Buenos Aires, the majority of the students who attended them were Scottish or Scottish descendants and children

51. Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Historia del protestantismo;* Alessandro Carvalho Bica y Elomar Tambara, "O Colégio Diocesano Santa Margarida"; Paula Seiguer, *La Iglesia Anglicana;* Antonio Gouvêa Mendonça, "Ideologia y educação religiosa; Jether Pereira Ramalho, "As características pedagógicas"; Pablo Moreno, "La educación protestante"; Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Los disidentes;* and Silvia B. Venezian, *Misioneros y maestros.*

52. Sylvia B. Venezian, *Misioneros y Maestros.*

53. In 1826 the monthly fee was one currency unit plus 4 *reales* per child, although scholarships were offered if the parents could not afford the tuition. However, in 1822 Mrs. Hyne's private school charged between 4 and 6 currency units for a very similar education. In the 1830s the fee was between 5 and 7 currency units at the Buenos Ayrean British School Society, while at some other private schools, such as Mr. Clarke's, the fee was 30 currency units.

of craftsmen.[54] Their families were neither the economically and socially prosperous merchants, landowners, and leaders in the ethnic communities, nor the humble unskilled or rural workers, although it is probable that the latter were not strongly represented at any rate, given that the school was urban.

The first decade of the British School Society was fairly successful. The society school reached an enrollment of 90 students in 1831, and several people prominent in the local British community[55] contributed economically to its maintenance and collaborated in its management.[56] However, by the end of the 1830s the institution had declined. When it was established in 1826, there were few schools, but by the 1840s schools in the city had grown and diversified, and there were a large number of newer private schools run by Argentines and the British and other foreigners. Additionally, other schools founded within the Scottish and English community competed directly with the British School Society's objectives. The society also had to deal with ongoing difficulties in raising voluntary contributions among the British. The failure of the British School Society also reflected a breakdown in the once-harmonious relationship among the Protestants. Toward the end of the 1830s, a conflict had erupted among the pastors and between the pastors and the laypeople who managed the society.[57] As a result the Anglican and Presbyterian churches, each of their own accord, founded schools that were directly dependent upon them and thus competed with those of the British School Society.

In 1838 Rev. John Armstrong founded a school associated with the Anglican Church, the British Episcopal School of Buenos Ayres (British Episcopal School). The school professed the same objective as the British School Society: to provide low-cost primary education for the children of English-speaking families of humble origin. Education, under the direction of Rev. Armstrong, was linked to religious instruction, although children from other sects or denominations were not excluded. Unlike the other British schools studied, the British Episcopal School had a clear religious orientation of its own, which it offered to all children who attended, regardless of their own religious denominations. The children were instructed according to the moral and doctrinal guidelines of the Anglican Church, and teachers had to be Anglicans. As

54. A list of the students who attended the schools financed by the Buenos Ayrean British School Society could not be found, but the names of those who won awards in the annual public exams were published in the newspaper. The names used were those published in the *British Packet* on July 30, 1831, and November 19, 1831.

55. Among those who attended were Patrick McLean, William Parish Robertson, John Zimmerman, Daniel Gowland, John Harrat, and George Dowdall.

56. Prominent individuals such as John Zimmerman and John Harrat were also members of the school committee.

57. 58 *British Packet,* February and March 1838.

reported in the *Minute Book,* which contained the rules and regulations used to govern the school, the children received religious moral instruction, and a prayer written by the Anglican minister was recited at the beginning and end of each school day.[58]

Like the British School Society, the British Episcopal School was financed by a small monthly fee[59] and by donations. Unlike the British School Society, which hired local teachers, the British Episcopal School sought teachers in England. In 1839, Henry Benjamin Schroeder and his wife Mary Schroeder arrived to take charge of the boys' and girls' schools. However, they did not last long. Mrs. Schroeder relinquished her post two years after her arrival and was replaced by a Mrs. Holder who quit shortly thereafter, and the girls' school closed its doors. Furthermore, the performance of her husband as educational director was a disappointment to the British Episcopal School committee members. Schroeder did not follow class schedules, interrupted classes without authorization, and was even found to be drinking. When the committee decided, after a very short time, that they no longer required his services, he was replaced by a local man, William Losh, who had been a teacher in England.[60]

It would seem, however, that the British Episcopal school initially enjoyed some degree of success. In 1840 there were some 53 boys and 39 girls registered, although the average attendance was 35 and 20, respectively. In 1842 some 50 boys regularly attended class (the girls' school had closed). Unfortunately, there is no information about the school beyond 1845, when the *Minute Book* ceased publication and articles about the school no longer appeared in the *British Packet*. The 1844 decree introduced by the Rosas administration must have been a tough blow to this openly Protestant and foreign institution. It is likely that the political situation made it quite difficult for the school to maintain its student enrollment and solicit contributions, given that it would have automatically drawn attention and provoked suspicion on the grounds of being both English and Anglican. Additionally, it is likely that difficulties in finding qualified teachers, as well as the ever-increasing competition from other British schools, affected it. The British Episcopal School group had tried to differentiate itself from the British School Society by hiring its

58. *British Packet,* May 26, 1838; *Rules and Regulations for the Management of the British Episcopal Schools, Minute Book, British Episcopal School (1838–1845)*. Universidad de San Andrés Archive.

59. In 1839 it was customary to charge 5 currency units per month for reading lessons alone, 7 for reading and writing together, and 10 for reading, writing, and arithmetic, (those who could not afford to pay would be admitted free of charge). According to Carlos Newland, the minimum tuition charged by private schools in 1834 was between 10 and 15 currency units.

60. *Minute Book, British Episcopal School (1838–1845)*, Universidad de San Andrés Archive.

teachers in England, but this attempt had foundered on the unsatisfactory performances of Mr. and Mrs. Schroeder, who had to be replaced locally.

The National Scottish Schools organization, associated with the Scottish Presbyterian Church, was founded by Rev. William Brown in 1838. As was true of the Anglican school, education and religious instruction went hand in hand.[61] It too was funded through modest monthly fees and donations.[62] The school's initial aim was to provide the children of Scottish Presbyterians, then all British children, and eventually any child with a primary education consisting of reading, writing, arithmetic, and teachings that would allow them to become good believers. According to the school's own declaration, education would be provided in accordance with the Scriptures while respecting the most modern teaching methods.[63] Together with its religious orientation and studies, the institution, like the private British schools, had a clear mercantile orientation. Subjects included arithmetic, accounting, letter-writing, English, and Spanish.

Even though the school was founded to guarantee lower-income children affordable education, children of individuals prominent in the community also attended, as did children of church collaborators and school staff. In this the National Scottish School was unlike the British School Society. J. Monteith Drysdale, who wrote a history of the school, affirms that during the 1840s there were in attendance children of prominent English and Scottish citizens such as James Barton, George Dowdall, Daniel Gowland, Thomas Galbraith, Robert McClymont, Patrick McLean, and Edward Lawson. It is probable that the wealthier families sent their children to the school for both the instruction provided and for assurance that they would be educated according to the cultural values and standards of their mother country, through language and religion. Furthermore, the school offered an environment in which second-generation Scottish Presbyterians in Buenos Aires could socialize and re-create community bonds. It is probable therefore that these parents considered it important for their children to establish bonds with other Scottish children, regardless of social status, and were thus willing to have them mix with children of different socioeconomic levels.

Not only members of the Scottish Presbyterian congregation sent their children to this school. Scottish, English, and Irish Catholics, and even families from local society did so as well. It is probable that those who sent their children to the school or wished to do so were not looking first for an ethnic reli-

61. *British Packet,* April 20, 1838.

62. The fee in 1838 was between 5 and 8 currency units, depending on the courses taken.

63. School regulations (1838). The regulations are transcribed in J. Monteith Drysdale, *One Hundred Years Old, 1838–1938* (Buenos Aires: The English Printery, 1938).

gious education, but rather for an education in a country where low-cost, quality schools did not yet exist. Furthermore, education was provided in English, which, as previously stated, was very useful given the growth of British business dealings in the region.

However, at a Scottish School committee meeting in 1844 it was announced that the admission of British Catholic and native children would come to an end, due to the 1844 decree: "Many applications for admission have been made by British Roman Catholics and natives; but in consequence of the restriction placed upon the school by Government, they have been invariably refused."[64] Since the Scottish school had always accepted children of different national origins and religions, the 1844 decree must have had a severe negative impact, just as it did on the British Episcopal School. In 1843 some 140 children attended the Anglican school, but the following year enrollment dropped to 30; in the following years the student body never surpassed 50 children. Even after the Rosas edicts that restricted private education were rescinded in the 1850s, the Scottish school was unable to regain the number of students it had previously attracted, even though it seems to have begun to accept children of any faith and a variety of nationalities, probably in an effort to keep operating. During the 1850s, an average of 60 children per year attended, of whom only 40 percent, according to an 1861 report, belonged to the Presbyterian congregation.[65]

Overall, the education offered in the mid nineteenth century was poor compared to the period leading up to 1838, but the situation changed between 1860 and 1880. A large number of private British schools were created, providing a more complex education than that offered by the Presbyterian Scottish school, although at a higher cost.[66] For those who could not afford it, free public education was also available, as it had been restored after the fall of Rosas. The public schools offered primary education, including reading, writing, geography, and Spanish, as had the Scottish school, but the classes were not given in English. It was left to the family that could not afford a private school, but wished to maintain the language of its country of origin, to teach their children English at home.[67]

64. School Committee records cited in Drysdale, *One Hundred Years Old*, p. 77.

65. Ibid.

66. For example, in 1866 the Scottish school charged between 50 and 70 currency units per month, whether the child was a member of the Scottish congregation or not. In the same year, monthly tuition at Colegio San Jorge was between 100 and 300 currency units and in the Anglo-French Seminar between 300 and 500 currency units according to the courses taken and the type of studies (pupil, partial-pupil, or external). Drysdale, *One Hundred Years Old; The Standard*.

67. Education Census of the Republic of Argentina, 1872. For information on public schools in the 1850s, see Carlos Newland, *Buenos Aires no es pampa*.

Toward the mid-nineteenth century, teaching at the Scottish Presbyterian school had fallen behind. Whereas the privately owned British schools flourished and their level of education improved in the decades after the fall of Rosas, the Scottish School seems to have been unable to withstand the competition. The mathematics and accounting classes were reduced, the school lost its mercantile orientation, and instruction was limited to reading, English grammar, writing, elementary geography, and arithmetic.[68] In comparison with the subjects taught in the 1840s, and considering the flourishing and increasingly complex British educational scene, the education the Scottish school provided in 1860 was not keeping pace. According to an 1861 report, the students who attended the Scottish school could read English with great ease and their pronunciation, in many cases, was clear. However, it was noted that this was probably due to the fact that many of the children who attended were Scottish or children of Scottish parents, for which reason it was believed they had learned their English at home. The grammar lessons taught in the school, on the other hand, were quite rudimentary. Analysis was not a common practice, nor were syntax, pronunciation, and accentuation taught. The geography curriculum was found to be was less than satisfactory,[69] as was the instruction in accounting, geometry, and algebra.[70]

From this report, it can be supposed that the school's efforts toward the mid-nineteenth century were focused on teaching the English language, which its students were expected to speak correctly, and also on imparting a basic knowledge of accounting, algebra, and geometry. However, by the beginning of the 1860s, the school no longer provided children with much in the way of tools for competing in the labor market, and its emphasis seems to have been on guaranteeing the survival of the language.

CONCLUSION

We have looked at the changing character of British schools over some 60-odd years, starting in 1820. The right of English, Scottish, and Irish immigrants to profess their faith freely made it possible for them to carry out educational programs. Furthermore, British immigration to Buenos Aires was greater than that registered in other Latin American countries, and even reached such rela-

68. Report of the Subcommittee appointed at the School Committee meeting held May 3, 1861, as cited in Drysdale, *One Hundred Years Old*.

69. According to the report, the children had basic knowledge and could repeat from memory some words from the book. They were "familiarized" with the political divisions of the Earth's surface and could recognize several continents on the map.

70. Report of the Subcommittee appointed at the School Committee meeting held May 3, 1861.

tively high numbers that the British in 1830 were the largest group of European residents in the city.

In the nation's early years, two types of British educational institutions emerged in Buenos Aires: privately owned schools and institutions associated with Protestant churches. The development of these schools occurred early in the nation's history, in comparison to other Latin American countries. The first schools were established in the 1820s, and in the following decades they grew in number and complexity, mainly as a result of the preferential treatment the British received under the 1825 treaty. The religious freedom that English, Scottish, and Irish immigrants enjoyed, and their significant number made it possible for them to carry out educational programs.

The British schools established under private initiatives during the nineteenth century targeted a heterogeneous public. The foreign origin of the teachers (English, Scottish, Irish, and their descendants) gave them a certain prestige and standing in a society where qualified teachers were scarce. Many parents who wanted to give their children a good education but could not afford a foreign tutor sent them to local British schools, which offered a qualified teaching staff and a useful education that reflected the economic realities of the period. Argentina's relations with Great Britain had become very close, starting with the colonial crisis, gaining strength with the signing of the 1825 treaty and growing through ongoing business dealings between the two countries over the eight succeeding years. The possibility of learning English, accounting, and Spanish, with the promise of excluding any type of religious instruction, attracted natives to the English-speaking schools.

For their part, the privately owned schools did not seek to convert native children, beyond the simple fact that their teachers were Protestant. To the contrary, these schools, especially during the Rosas period, had to guarantee the teaching of Catholic doctrine to avoid police persecution and forced closings. The Buenos Aires area schools belonging to British Protestants did not attempt to inculcate typical English cultural values and standards—in contrast to the Protestant schools in Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, and Chile. On the contrary, the schools chose subjects that would provide the children with skills useful in the economy.

Given that these schools, unlike the church-dependent institutions, were financed exclusively through monthly tuition, they needed students who could pay the fees to keep their doors open. Thus, they could not provide education for English speakers only, as their numbers were not great; the 1885 munici-

pal census registered a British population of some 1,900 people.[71] In addition, they faced increasing competition from other schools. Therefore, they had to offer instruction that was attractive to both the British residents in Buenos Aires and the native population. In effect, English-speaking schools played a relevant role in local education, beyond what mere numbers might indicate. They offered an education in a variety of subjects and at greater levels of complexity than did public schools and other private schools. They were sought out by outstanding families in local society as an alternative to the precarious or inexistent state educational system. Furthermore, given that these schools were attended by English and Scottish, they acted in many cases as vehicles to facilitate British integration into native society. Children of British families learned the local language and were taught elements that would allow them to enter the local labor market. In refraining from teaching the Protestant faith, the schools also created a space for the primary socialization of local youth and English and Scottish children.

The church-dependent schools, in contrast, focused on preserving and fostering the identity of the migratory group, based on moral and religious guidelines. These schools oriented their efforts toward lower-income children, who (as in Protestant schools in Brazil, Chile, and Colombia) were considered the most susceptible to losing the cultural standards and values of their parents and integrating more quickly into local society. The British Episcopal Schools and St. Andrew's Scotch School offered both primary teaching and doctrinal instruction in an effort to educate children according to the moral principles of the motherland, with a strong base in language and religion. Additionally, these institutions offered space for the socialization of the second generation of immigrants. Nevertheless, regardless of their founding objective, it was not only lower-income children of the English and the Scottish who attended. The middle class and the more prosperous echelons of the English-speaking population, as well as natives, took advantage of their services.

These schools, given their clear religious orientation, were subject to political restrictions that limited their operations. The foreign-owned Protestant schools, much more than the private schools in the hands of natives or Catholics, were the target of restrictions under Rosas that limited their growth and future undertakings. First, they were obliged to reject potential students—accepting Catholics or natives brought the risk of being shut down—and second, the schools as enterprises were under suspicion. The risk of persecution made many parents think twice about enrolling their children. However,

71. Buenos Aires municipal census, 1855, AGN VII, 1391–1404.

unlike William Morris's school at the beginning of the twentieth century in Argentina or Presbyterian schools in Brazil and Mexico, these schools made no attempt to convert the native children. Their efforts were limited to British children, and their goal was to inculcate a religious and moral identity that would keep those children from integrating into native society. The social moment was not favorable to attempts to convert criollo or Catholic children, especially during the Rosas administrations. Regardless, it was never the school's objective to indoctrinate the native population, neither before the ascension of Rosas nor in the decades following his fall. The focus was on educating the children of the English and Scottish residing in the region.

In sum, before the implementation of educational guidelines aimed at creating a national identity in the later nineteenth century, education in Buenos Aires was heterogeneous. It allowed for the functioning of private British schools as well as those associated with Protestant churches, with greater or lesser restrictions corresponding to the ups and downs of the political situation. The private schools became part of local society, providing a varied bilingual education more complex than that of the state system, and in some cases facilitating the integration of British children into native society. In contrast, the Protestant church schools sought to become ethnic sanctuaries, environments in which foreigners could reproduce their cultural and religious standards and values.

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