

*The following text is taken from Prospects (UNESCO, International Bureau of Education)
vol. XXXV, no. 1, March 2005, p. 117-132.*

©UNESCO:International Bureau of Education, 2005

This document may be reproduced free of charge as long as acknowledgement is made of the source.

JUANA P. MANSO

(1819–75)

Myriam Southwell

*I know that in the period I live in, in my country I am an orphan soul or an exotic plant
unable to acclimatize.*

(Juana Manso, letter to Mary Mann, 1869.)

*We have a sad experience of how important it is to spread learning to the masses, if this had
been the first step after May 1810, and if there had been a clean break with the traditions of
the past to emancipate reason as all men had been emancipated, perhaps neither so much
blood would have soaked these lands; nor so many tears been shed.*

(Manso, 1854.)

Juana Paula Manso, who was born in Buenos Aires on 26 June 1819 and died on 24 April 1875 in the same city, was a writer, translator, journalist, teacher and precursor of feminism in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. In 1840 she moved with her family to Montevideo (Uruguay), exiled under the regime of Juan Manuel de Rosas, who was governing the territory of the United Provinces of the River Plate. During Rosas' conservative government in Argentina, liberals were persecuted and many had to flee into exile. Subsequently, due to political pressure from Rosas, the Manso family moved to Rio de Janeiro, returning some time later to Montevideo. In Rio de Janeiro, Juana married and travelled with her husband around the United States and Cuba. Later, in 1853, she returned from exile to Buenos Aires, but without her husband; this was followed by another attempt to live in Brazil (in 1854) and she finally settled in Buenos Aires in 1859.

From May 1810 to 1820 the territory of the United Provinces of the River Plate—which included present-day Uruguay—endured the wars of independence from Spain. From that time until well into the 1850s and 1860s, this territory was marked by wars of independence, disputes with neighbouring countries, and then civil wars over the way the State, the nation and the government of the new, incipiently independent country should be constituted. Within this scenario, the broad territory was divided into regions run by Creole

political leaders—in some cases *caudillos*—who were fighting for political hegemony and developing embryonic provincial states with unequal degrees of development. This complex socio-political situation lasted until the final decades of the nineteenth century, when a State model focused on the port and city of Buenos Aires was consolidated, with a representative republican form of government. Throughout the nineteenth century there were experiments with education and schools of various kinds, some with a colonial format inherited from earlier centuries and others that were newly developed. But we had to wait until the final decades of the nineteenth century to find a public education system. This moment—which we could place approximately in the 1880s—is not precisely the birth of the education system, but the crystallization of the debates held throughout the century that was drawing to a close. Juana Manso's activities played an important role in these debates.

Juana Manso shared ideas that were identified with the May Movement. In the River Plate territory, the May Movement refers to the first step towards independence from the Spanish Crown and the shaping of the first autonomous government. Many intellectuals shared in the 'Spirit of May', which brought together ideas of emancipation, republicanism, enlightenment, sovereignty of the people, opposition to slavery, progress, etc. Together with other intellectuals of the time—one of the leading figures being Domingo F. Sarmiento—Manso was committed to the enlightened project of popular education; that is, to the building of a republic through the education of all citizens. Her written work and her public activity did not take individual personality as the cornerstone of public education, but linked the latter to the building of a literate collective body incorporated into republican institutions and leading to the country's progress. Through correspondence about and from the United States, Sarmiento exchanged ideas with Manso on the characteristics that modern nations should have.

As part of the Romantic Movement and the rationalist thinking of the period, Manso understood that mankind never went backwards; progress was its inevitable destiny. In line with the ideas of the Enlightenment and with Rousseau's reflections on the importance of education, she wanted to abolish slavery and racism. Thus, she opposed prejudice and intolerance, which included tensions with regard to the eradication of the Indians—a current practice at that time.

She also examined the need to overcome social conventions in order to achieve happiness. Manso challenged various aspects of cultural traditions and family or religious conventions. Thus, she expressed her disagreement with Catholic domination: 'with regard to the Roman Catholic clergy, they have had mankind in their hands for eighteen centuries, only

to try to annihilate it' (Manso, 1868, p. 398). 'This city [Buenos Aires] has fallen into the hands of the Jesuits, and for the last seven years all the women have been dragooned into secret religious associations so that for a heretic like myself there is only unremitting hatred and war'.¹

In an article with the title 'Freedom of conscience', Juana Manso maintains that she wants to see no more disputes among the different religions in Buenos Aires: 'Jew and Catholic, Christian and Muslim, are all children of God and those who forgive here on earth will be forgiven in Heaven' (Manso, 1854c, p. 55).

Her divergences with and criticisms of the dominant Roman Catholicism meant that the society of her time never forgave her for being a free-thinking woman. For these two reasons, when she died her body was left unburied for two days because she was denied a place in the cemeteries of Chacarita and Recoleta—both Catholic—since she did not allow a Catholic priest to give her 'the last rites'.²

In a River Plate area still strongly influenced by the Hispanic tradition, until the end of the nineteenth century women were confined to the domestic sphere, the domain of biological reproduction and raising children. It was expected that women would devote themselves to domestic and family duties. For their part, men would be providers of economic sustenance and honour. For this reason, women's equality of capacity and opportunity, their right to self-fulfilment and personal development were excluded from public discourse. In this context, Juana Manso burst into—and sought to interrupt—tasks and areas of society that until then had been the almost exclusive domain of male culture (letters, journalism, musical criticism, managing newspapers).

The presence of Juana Manso in River Plate culture can be analysed through her writing and the dissemination of ideas, her concerns with the emancipation of women, her search for an education that from an early age would employ teaching practices free of dogmatic or moral constraints, and that would emancipate thinking rather than mould it according to social conventions. We will analyse these aspects and the teaching practices that each one fostered.

The word as public spectacle

Manso was a journalist who used her articles as a battleground to discuss the prejudices of her time and gender. In Montevideo, she took part in the literary salon that brought together

several of her exiled compatriots. Her first poems were published in the Montevideo newspaper *El Nacional* in 1841.

During her stay in Brazil, Manso founded *O Journal das Senhoras: modas, litteratura, bellas artes, theatros e critica* [The Ladies' journal: fashion, literature, fine arts, theatre and criticism]. Published between 1852 and 1854, this was the first Latin American feminist newspaper.³ Manso also wrote for *La ondina del plata* [The water nymph of the Plate], a publication that exercised a strong influence on nineteenth century women (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 38–39). According to Santomauro, Manso strove to disseminate her criterion regarding feminism because she felt that it would inspire an unprecedented peaceful revolution (Santomauro, 1994, p. 74). As a political exile she assumed the function of a critical philosopher in the pages of *O Journal das Senhoras*. Consequently, she became an interpreter, appropriator, reconstructor and standard setter on principles and values for those who make up half of the world's human species—women (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 85).

In Buenos Aires she publishes articles in the newspaper *La ilustración argentina* [Argentine Enlightenment]. Juana Manso knew she would find her best ally in the press, so she founded in that city the *Album de señoritas. periódico de literatura, modas, bellas artes y teatros* [Young ladies' album. journal of literature, fashion, fine arts and theatres] (first published on 1 January 1854). This newspaper—which contained musical criticism and analysis of the main musical events in Buenos Aires⁴—had the peculiarity of bearing its director's name (uncommon at the time since women writers often published under a male pseudonym), since Manso signed as director and proprietor. Buenos Aires society, which was emerging from years of authoritarianism and the aftermath of the colonial period, did not welcome the newspaper and it was only published for eight weeks. According to Vitale, as a publication it was too lucid for a period full of conflict and turmoil (Vitale, 1987).

As a polemicist and assigning herself the role of disseminator, Manso chose public reading and lectures as a way of participating in the ideas of her time. This method was intended to develop awareness and was an activity not well regarded for a woman. Manso was personally harassed on many occasions. According to Zucotti, Manso was perhaps the first woman to give lectures in Argentina (Zucotti, 1994, p. 97).

As stated by Zucotti, 'If literary gatherings and evenings were intermediate areas between the domestic and the public domain, with great difficulty Juana Manso inaugurated an area decidedly alien to the home: the lecture' (Zucotti, 1994, p. 102). Zucotti tells us that Manso's public lectures on political and religious issues attracted unusual violence and irritation: the throwing of stones, requests to keep silent on religious issues, accusations of

heresy, etc. ‘Ill-mannered plebs’ (she recounts in the *Anales de la educación común*, 1867)⁵ used to crowd against the windows of the room where she was speaking to shout obscenities at the ladies attending the lectures. The ‘lectures for teachers’—for the professionalization of teaching—suffered the same fate. They consisted of classes, readings and exercises on the teaching of various subjects; the reaction to them culminated with a petition to the educational authorities requesting their suspension, even accusing the gymnastics classes Manso was trying to introduce of being immoral (Zucotti, 1994, p. 103).

Zucotti stresses that it is the very genre of the lecture that excludes women. Sarmiento describes the situation in a letter when he says:

It is the lectures themselves that irritate. It is the first time that the practice of speaking in public on any subject at all has been introduced. Only the pulpit possessed this prerogative. Today it is thinking that does. Here [he is referring to the United States] it is freedom itself, total freedom; but here freedom carries (do not say so over there) a stick in its hand and a revolver in its pocket to subdue those who attempt to hinder others in the exercise of their own freedom. Freedom, thus armed, is called a policeman, and there is no public meeting where this guardian of the people’s freedoms is not present.⁶

In this way, the lecture is the lay genre that succeeds the religious sermon, which had been forbidden to women for centuries, and that same constraint was now applied to lay lectures. In Zucotti’s words, ‘the virulence provoked by a teacher who simultaneously attempted to transmit knowledge, attract attention, overcome the silence of men and women, sustain an economic purpose (raise funds) and exercise a political motive (doing it in on behalf of Sarmiento) was hardly surprising’ (Zucotti, 1994, p. 104).

Another frequent activity of Manso’s was translation. She maintained: ‘I prefer translating because maybe my ideas lack authority’. She translated *La libertad civil* [Civil liberty], by Lieber, *Naturaleza y valor de la educación* [Nature and value of education] by John Lalor, *Lecturas e informes* [Readings and reports] by Horace Mann, among other works. In letters too, Juana Manso found the opportunity to review aspects of culture and education and to disseminate information (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 274). She does this through correspondence with Sarmiento and with Mary Mann, which she subsequently published.

In Brazil, she wrote two novels, *La familia del Comendador* [The Commander’s family] (1854), whose theme was the injustice of racism, inspired by the suppression of the slave traffic,⁷ and *Misterios del Plata* [Mysteries of the Plate], a socio-political analysis which maintains that all social evils are the result of a lack of culture.⁸

The use of the written word was also her main weapon for presenting her ideas on education and discussing them with her contemporaries. Probably one of her most important contributions to education was through the journal *Anales de la educación común* [Annals of

common education]. This was a semi-official publication, sponsored by the Argentine Government and the Province of Buenos Aires, but independently of the school authorities (Kaufmann, 2000, p. 133). It appeared on 1 November 1858, founded and directed by Sarmiento until 1865, after which it was directed by Manso until 1875.⁹

Manso also published the *Compendio de la Historia de las Provincias Unidas del Río de La Plata* [Compendium of the History of the United Provinces of the River Plate] (1862), which was used for teaching Argentine history in schools. Through it, Manso proposed that the study of history should extend to the family and stimulate parents to participate in their children's education (Santomauro, 1994, p. 81). She also published *Historia general del Descubrimiento y la Conquista de Nuevo Mundo al alcance de los niños* [General history of the discovery and conquest of the New World for children].

Defying rules: male shouts or women's whispers

A woman thinker is a scandal [...] And you have scandalized the whole race.¹⁰

All my efforts will be dedicated to enlightening my compatriots and will tend to a single purpose: to emancipate them from the stupid, old-fashioned concerns that have up to now forbidden them to make use of their intelligence, have transferred their freedom and even their conscience to arbitrary authorities against the very nature of things. I want and will prove women's intelligence, far from being an absurdity or a defect, a crime or an error, to be their best adornment, the true source of their virtue and domestic happiness because God is not contradictory in his works and when he made the human soul, he did not define its gender (Manso, 1854a).

Juana Manso was aware that democracies had committed a serious error from their very beginnings: they had neglected the condition of women, thus denying them political existence and the right of citizenship (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 295). On the cultural map imposed by the *caudillos* and patriarchs, still influenced by the Hispanic tradition, women were subject to a family model of male domination¹¹. As is stressed by Zucotti, in the period we are investigating through the personality of Juana Manso, women's word was subject to surveillance; men were responsible for their knowledge and their words (Kaufmann, 2000, p. 131).

The isolation in which women found themselves and the stifling of their aspirations was not easily overcome. We can consider Manso to be a confessed feminist. The imposition of her aspirations had a repercussion on women's position outside the family that was intended to be radical. She wanted to integrate them into the world of education. She aimed at strengthening female individuality, an attitude that was to generate new kinds of co-existence. Her struggle focused on extending women's rights of participation in the field of education

and in rejecting distinctions imposed on them by virtue of their gender. Manso showed her skill in interpreting the social differences in gender through political conflict; women were not full members of revolutionary organizations. Excluded from the public arena by tradition, they nevertheless were aware of their own intellectual ability.¹²

For these reasons, Manso started a series of articles entitled 'Women's moral emancipation' in the newspaper *O Jornal das Senhoras*. In this way she gave priority to their actions and their place in society, and not as victims of circumstance. She invited her readers to reflect upon the rejection of structural factors, such as the lack of access to certain educational levels. She encouraged them not to raise the banner of rebellion, but assumed that women were perfectly aware that they were being treated unjustly and they would have to convince themselves of the need to gain access to their rightful spheres of activity.

From the first issue of the *Album de Señoritas* she stated her objectives: to prove that women's intelligence is important because when God made the human soul he did not give it a gender.¹³ The meaning proposed by Juana Manso enables women, on an equal footing with men, to assume the ability to represent their own perception of the world. Through this publication, Manso asserted:

You take everything from women! Everything that falls within the great mission of intelligence, embracing sensitivity and free will, but you flatter their vanity, you excite their love of luxury, of adornments, of hairstyles; blind idolaters of their beauty, you are the dreadful incitement to corruption, because if they do not know what their souls are, what do they care if they sell them for a handful of golden pins? (Manso, 1854d, p. 59).

In this context, Manso's *modus operandi* was understood in terms of masculinity; so paradoxically her struggle for women's emancipation was read in terms of male attitudes. For example, some of the subsequent characterizations of her were made in the following terms. 'Being appreciated for her intelligence by Sarmiento, as Manso was, is of great significance. The influence was mutual but Manso was also the first feminist leader in Argentina. And she was a poet, novelist, journalist and lecturer with manly energy and courage' (Morales, 1941). Manso addressed women with two aims: intellectual and moral emancipation, linked to popular education, art, freedom from Catholic dogma, etc.; and the integration of those emancipated women to reform the country and change the pattern by which families and the State functioned (Fletcher, 1994, p. 109).

Education as emancipation

[...] the peoples and governments of Latin America do not devote to education either their first concern nor all the resources that expand it and give it stature in other countries.¹⁴

These ideas of Manso's crystallize in her thinking on education. She demanded that the emancipation of the nation should also be the emancipation of its intellect and that the State's efforts should be focused on people's enlightenment:

It is useless to tell men 'you are free' if they are not taught to be so. It is from the early days of childhood that a love of justice, self-respect and a sense of conscience that does not waver should be inspired. A precise, practical knowledge of these duties, such that a day will come when it is not necessary to enforce the law with a bayonet, when soldiers will have one mission only, to guard our borders against the Indians, when the citizen will be the best defender of order, respecting institutions by virtue of their sheer moral force; this result is attained only through the people (Manso, 1854a, p. 10).

In the context in which Argentina found itself, education became one of the basic priorities, being considered an essential socio-political instrument for modernizing the territory's structure. In Manso's words:

The opening of a public library appeared to me the most logical and immediate result that the inauguration of the railway could bring to us, putting this town at a distance of five hours from the provincial capital. The logical result is the telegraph that has cancelled distances and has enabled you to talk to Buenos Aires. [...] It is not enough to learn to read, one should also cultivate a liking for reading so that this pastime will help us in the task of our own education. [...] There are children who without the opportunity to cultivate what they have learnt at school forget before they become men—this is the seed that fell on rock.¹⁵

Manso encouraged schooling in general—and for women in particular—in various ways. In the two periods when she lived in Montevideo she founded a school, the *Ateneo de Señoritas* (in the first period on her own initiative and in the second at the request of the Uruguayan authorities). From this school, she opposed sectarian, restricted, discriminatory education.¹⁶ She advocated popular, free, methodical, scientific education, open to all social classes. She promoted strong elements of the liberalism then prevailing in the world: republicanism, constitutionalism, public education, freedom of the press and public libraries (Santomauro, 1994, p. 86). She had two main concerns: that education in all its dimensions should reach women (and vice versa) and that it should not be dogmatic Catholic education.

With regard to the first aspect, Manso was the initiator of a movement for co-education as a method based on the recognition of equality between men and women.¹⁷ Sarmiento—with his strong political influence—shared these concerns and saw Juana Manso

as an important collaborator. They were convinced of the efficiency of mixed schools because they understood that the cohesion that occurs in the family and in the home should also occur in the school. But they encountered two problems: the schools for girls were maintained and kept under surveillance by the Benefit Society (so they were not within the competence of the official bodies), which had little liking for them, and only boys studied in the municipal corporation schools (Mira López & Homar de Aller, 1970). Encouraged by Sarmiento, in 1858 Manso took up the headship of a school for pupils of both sexes, whose establishment was strongly resisted by the women of the Benefit Society responsible for girls' education, who considered co-education unacceptable.¹⁸ The experimental nature of this type of school, with modern materials and special plans and curricula, did not prevent the buildings from being stoned, although this did not frighten the writer (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 128). However, Buenos Aires high society, the most conservative journalists and the clergy writhed in agony at such an offence; so attendance of both boys and girls declined.

As a result of a project for civil marriage, Manso maintained that in a strictly religious marriage a woman has no civil status; so she is subject to the man—she has to obey. As always, she offered the United States of America as an example, where society is based on sovereignty of the people, and told those who opposed this measure that they appeared to have misinterpreted the ideal of the men of May 1810.¹⁹

Manso was one of the first women concerned about children's rights. According to Alejandro Krause (Krause, 1875, p. 282), at the time she died she was telling the Primary Teacher-Training School students about the order not to punish children any more, of which she was the author.

She was buried in the English cemetery. Friar Junior proposed the following epitaph: 'Here lies an Argentine woman who, in the midst of the night of indifference that enveloped the country, preferred to be buried among foreigners rather than defile the sanctuary of her conscience' (Krause, 1875, p. 283).

Schools with progressive methodologies

Juana Manso pointed out that in the United States women were entrusted with greater teaching responsibilities. Manso complained that in her country the teaching profession was exercised in a humiliating fashion (Krause, 1870). She founded the Schoolmistresses' Association with the purpose of interchanging knowledge, teaching materials and establishing a permanent dialogue between teachers, but it failed through lack of participants (Santomauro,

1994, p. 97). With regard to teaching as a career, on 13 July 1874 Manso sent to the Legislature of the Province of Buenos Aires a bill for an Organic Law for Common Education in which she asked for professionalism, appropriate salaries with periodic increases, announcements for appointments, etc. She also proposed long holidays to avoid the fatigue and loss of energy involved in education for both teachers and pupils. She was also in favour of suppressing examinations, making the acquisition of knowledge a question of awareness of duty.²⁰ Many concerns about teacher training that would materialize in subsequent years during the spread of primary teacher-training schools can be found in the correspondence between Mary Mann and Juana Manso.

In 1869 Juana Manso was appointed a member of the Schools Department. From that position, she proposed setting up parish committees to deal with child poverty by providing food, clothing and books (Santomauro, 1994, p. 75); she thus became the precursor of the school co-operatives that have continued to exist—even though their purposes have evolved—up to the present time.²¹ At that time she also fostered lectures for schoolmistresses. In 1871, she was appointed to be a member of the National School Commission, being the first woman to occupy this position (Santomauro, 1994, p. 97).

Manso also dealt with methodological issues in education connected with everyday school strategies. She says:

And although I could not go against the timetable and the rules, I knew how to exploit opportunities to break the monotony of routine; every half-hour a song or exercise to the music of the piano expanded the soul; I was criticized for this, but [...] I was right. The body, the steps, the arm movements were fitted to the rhythm of the music (Mira López & Homar de Aller, 1970, p. 241).

She proposed educating children in keeping with their nature. To do so, she proposed dividing childhood into four periods: the first, attention and observation; the second, attention and comparison; the third period for exercising memory; and the last one for applying the imagination (Lewkovicz, 2000, p. 121). She thus introduced the practice of gradualism in teaching, which was later to become widespread. She proposed:

Let us grade school into primary and elementary, let us broaden the circle of notions and teaching subjects and let us be convinced that these same subjects should be divided according to the faculties required for their understanding (Mira López & Homar de Aller, 1970, p. 243).

Manso remarked that coercion and rote learning were frequently employed as teaching methods in the River Plate area during the nineteenth century.²² She took up the defence of children and aimed at eliminating corporal punishment from education; she considered such punishment to be the result of ignorance. Consequently, she foresaw that the behaviour of

teachers and tutors should avoid fear and corporal punishment, disciplinary measures that arouse resentment and defiance. She used terms such as respect, stimulation, the will to learn, friendship, modern methods, and the same education system in State and private schools (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 118).

Manso prescribed the use of the attendance register for teachers and pupils (Santomauro, 1994, p. 99). Considering the 'reading cards' method to be obsolete, she regarded large-sized 'reading charts' with large pointers as innovative. According to this method, the girls sat in a semi-circle around her, directed by a monitor barely older than themselves. She stated that this procedure gave interesting results in the small circle in which she acted. She also encouraged teaching through play. For pupils beginning to learn the alphabet she recognized the importance of the system of a table covered with white sand, since the pupils would easily draw the letters of the alphabet there; then they would move on to syllables and from slate to paper (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 117).

Manso supported Sarmiento when he stood for president of the nation and with him designed the education system that was later to be established throughout the country. She also joined the Autonomist Party in which Presidents Mitre and Sarmiento were active, among other public figures. She maintained that education should be a fourth power of the State, with its own constitution, executive and legislative. She gave the example of the State of Massachusetts where education was run by an Assembly, whose members belonged to councils that revised and wrote texts (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 124). She expressed her desire for equality of opportunities as follows: 'Education should be paid for by everyone for everyone'.²³ She also stated: 'We [educators] are not utopian. We know that social levelling is impossible, since money will always divide men into classes' (Manso, 1854b). Consequently, the educator assumes that the daughter of a poor man, destined to be the wife of a poor man too, cannot waste time intended for work in learning to embroider, sing or play the piano. Infact, that little girl of scant resources should enjoy a broader education, better suited to the needs of her time (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 117). In a dissertation entitled *School is the secret of the prosperity of young people*, she makes an exegesis of the poor education received by the poor, whose children waste the early years of their lives on frivolous teaching, while wealthy families send their children to fee-paying schools. And she adds that if the sovereign is educated in intellectual inequality, there is a risk of losing the republic's perpetuity (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 171). Manso was aware that people are educated not only by the school but by the society as a whole, even through the printed word. For this reason she called on

neighbours to join together, since she considered they were capable of creating popular education if they encouraged it.²⁴

Educating early in enlightened freedom: kindergartens

One of Manso's contributions to Argentine education was to propose the creation of kindergartens, based on prior experience. Some kindergarten-type schools had been set up during Bernardino Rivadavia's government in the 1820s. From the exchange of letters between Manso and Mann, it can be seen that Mann comments on the advantages of the kindergarten and Manso talks of moves in favour of the introduction of pre-school education occurring simultaneously in the United States and Argentina (Mira López & Homar de Aller, 1970, p. 242). Through the *Anales*, Manso disseminates the benefits of the kindergarten, informs teachers about them, recommends appropriate songs and exercises, translates round songs, introduces gymnastics and games (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 138).

Manso promoted the ideas of Pestalozzi and Froebel, whose works she translated (Kaufmann, 2000, p. 134). She adopted Pestalozzi's thinking with the idea of turning these schools for small children into kindergartens and introducing continuity with primary education. She expressed the hope that a Women's Primary Teacher-Training School, with attached practice schools from the kindergarten level, would be opened, but she came up against a Charity Teacher-Training School that refused to accept foreign, Protestant teachers or their ideas, even though the national constitution guaranteed freedom of conscience (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 276).

Commenting on the teachers' guides for kindergarten, she says:

contrary to our schools that begin with reading, as if this were education's sole purpose, and as if the only means of achieving it were the early knowledge of the reader, the kindergarten schools recommend music;²⁵ the sound of the melody, they say, penetrates the child's soul, sweetening its nature, it disarms capricious disorder, and provides a natural expression for the joy brimming within the child by educating its voice, which, as this organ develops, acquires a certain melodious sweetness instead of the discordant screech to which children are so prone (Mira López & Homar de Aller, 1970, p. 242).

Conclusions

Juana Manso was a part of the struggle conducted by intellectuals in the late nineteenth century—those building the State's institutional structure—in the aftermath of the colonial culture and the hegemony of the Catholic Church.

Authors such as Kaufmann and Zucotti have stressed how nineteenth century River Plate society did not forgive Manso for her refusal to submit to the appearances and style that women 'ought' to follow. Kaufmann analyses how Juana Manso suffered from strong discriminatory pressures, since there was surprise that a woman should exhibit such supposedly manly characteristics as decisiveness and vigour. The author stresses, for example, the expressions used by Chavarría to praise Manso: 'with manly vigour and 'a brave manly decision and the apostolic meekness of a martyr' (Chavarría, 1947, p. 141). This prejudiced view was also emphasized by Sarmiento when he stated: 'Manso, whom I barely knew, was the only man out of three or four million inhabitants of Chile and Argentina who understood my educational work and who, inspired by my thinking, set her shoulder against the edifice she saw was crumbling. Was she a woman?' (Sarmiento, 1944, p. 31).

In some works that have been published on the history of Argentine education, Manso is recorded as a heroic woman (Kaufmann, 2000, p. 140), as does Chavarría by calling her a 'woman made for adversity' or stating that 'her fortitude and strength of spirit were capable of withstanding the greatest reverses and taking advantage and gathering strength from the most difficult moments' (Chavarría, 1947). This trend has been repeated with regard to women who have played an important role in Argentine culture; history often remembers them and records them not as political beings with disruptive positions in relation to the social roles assigned to them, but as self-denying, self-sacrificing and above all strong-willed. In this twist of the discourse, the subject's political position is exchanged for wilful obstinacy.

For her part, Zucotti maintains—stressing the use Manso makes of her voice, not the 'correct feminine whisper' but the passionate shout—that if her voice 'becomes masculine, history pays her back by stealing her body, making her figure circulate as a doubtfully female Sarmiento in the only photograph passed round among her biographers; she fails to protect her own public image'. Sarmiento expressed it as follows: 'In Buenos Aires there is an institution for honouring women. Why is Manso not within it? Because she is grey' (Sarmiento, 1944, p. 109). Continuing with this idea, we can add that this theft of the body is so great that 'the moral forces' make Manso herself—on occasions—echo her doubtful femininity or have to clarify those aspects of femininity with which she identifies.

Zucotti states that Manso seems fascinated with the brusqueness and strength of the proselytizing word; that hard, strong, unadorned word was—in a woman's mouth—condemned to failure (Zucotti, 1994, p. 106). Manso combined the presentation of certain ways of thinking through her use of words with strategies associated with denying herself, diluting her presence, her very voice. This is shown—for example—in Manso's statement: 'I

prefer translating because maybe my own ideas lack authority'.²⁶ 'Maybe I am only the reverberation of an echo'.²⁷

If we examine the characteristics adopted by education systems as they develop, we find numerous features which—although anonymously—reflect problems and proposals formulated by Juana Manso: the early development of nursery education; the professionalization of teachers; the need to avoid dogmatism in teaching; the spread of republicanism; tolerance and respect for those being taught. Probably her most formative principle in the period when she lived was her conviction that emancipation of the nation involved the emancipation of its intellect, and this unleashed consequences that have often made her an object of condemnation.

Notes

- * *Myriam Southwell (Argentina)*. Ph.D., Department of Government, University of Essex, UK; Master in Social Sciences, FLACSO. Associate Professor of History of Argentine and Latin American Education, National University of La Plata. Author of various works on issues in educational history, theory and policy, the most important of which is *Psicología experimental y ciencias de la educación: notas de historias y fundaciones* (2003). She has held various executive posts in both in university management and in government. She is currently Researcher in Education and Co-ordinator of the Comparative Educational Policies Project connected with the agreement between FLACSO and the Union of Educators of the Province of Cordoba. E-mail: msouthwell@flacso.org.ar
1. Juana Manso, letter in the Library of Congress, Washington, 1872 (in Carilla, 1961). The original is in old Spanish.
 2. Zucotti records in her work that it was forty years later 'in 1915 that the public school was imposed as an appropriate instrument for nationalizing the immigrant masses and Juana Manso's remains were transferred to the teachers' mausoleum in the Chacarita cemetery' (Zucotti, 1994, p. 96).
 3. On Manso's role as a precursor in the Brazilian feminist movement, see Vitale, 1987, quoted in Kaufmann, 2000.
 4. This publication reflects the concerns over access to knowledge by River Plate women. They were addressed, for example, in articles such as *Emancipación moral de la mujer* [Women's moral emancipation] (first issue, 1 January 1854); *Organización de las escuelas* [School organization] and *Ilustración de la mujer* [Women's enlightenment] (second issue, 8 January 1854), etc.
 5. For example, in San José de Flores (Buenos Aires) she tried to read a homily, but the inhabitants of the region, opposed to women's emancipation, assembled some organ grinders to drown the reading (*Anales de la educación común*, 3 May 1867).
 6. Sarmiento in *Anales de la educación común*, October 1867, quoted by Zucotti, 1994.
 7. According to Lea Fletcher, this work can be considered as the first novel written by an Argentine woman, and adds that it is also the first novel published in Argentina (see Fletcher, 1994, p. 109).
 8. Several editions of this novel have been identified. The first, in Portuguese, began to appear in episodes, in the newspaper *O Journal das senhoras* from 4 January 1852 (until June of the same year), with the title 'Misterios del Plata' [Mysteries of the Plate]. In Argentina it appears as a serial in *El inválido argentino* [The Argentine invalid] from 29 December 1867 to 16 March 1868, the last issue of this weekly, with the title 'Guerras civiles del Río de La Plata. Primera parte. Una mujer heroica por Violeta. 1838' [River Plate Civil Wars: a heroic woman by Violet. 1838], Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 216–18.
 9. The circulation of *Anales* declined enormously in 1870, probably due in part to the resistance provoked by Juana Manso.
 10. Sarmiento in a letter to Juana Manso dated 15 October 1867, appearing in *Domingo Faustino Sarmiento: epistolario íntimo* [Domingo Faustino Sarmiento: collected private letters], vol. 2, p. 73, Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1963.
 11. On Argentine women's social inclusion up to 1870, see Malgesini, 1993.
 12. Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 49 & 261.
 13. For an analysis of the publication *Album de señoritas*, see Area, 1997.

14. This statement was made by Juana Manso in an article titled 'The school of flowers'. Manso's use of letters to join in controversies even surprised a polemicist like Sarmiento; in relation to this article Sarmiento replied 'how have you dared so much?' (Santomauro, 1994, p. 82).
15. Lecture by Juana Manso given on 11 November 1866 in the city of Chivilcoy (see De la Vega, 1937, p. 121ff).
16. She wrote about education for the Indians in an article called 'Las misiones' [The missions] (*Album de Señoritas*, no. 5, 29 January 1854, p. 38).
17. In an article entitled 'La educación profesional de la muger' [Women's professional education], the following can be read: 'There are grave problems and serious objections to the admission of women to some of the professional careers' (Kaufmann, 200, p. 130–32).
18. Manso says: 'If there is any danger in the sexes being together at such an early age, it arises only from the disproportionate difference in ages. [...] To avoid such ills the ages should be regularized and teaching grades established' (*Anales de la educación común*, vol. 3, no. 30, 31 December 1865).
19. Manso in the periodical *El inválido argentino*, recorded in Cecarelli, 1991.
20. She considers it necessary to implement language teaching and she imposes the teaching of English in the Escuela de Ambos Sexos Nro. 1, as well as oral French (*Anales de la educación común*, vol. 7, March 1868).
21. Manso extends an invitation to set up a committee in Chivilcoy using the Franklin badge, like the one that had been set up in San Juan and another planned in Gualeguay, Province of Entre Ríos (see Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 184).
22. The Society of Friends of Popular Education of Montevideo (at the suggestion of Pedro Varela, among others) appointed her as correspondent in 1869; she accepted (Lewkowicz, 2000, p. 174).
23. *Anales de la educación común*, vol. 4, July 1867.
24. She did so in an article in the periodical *La tribuna*, Buenos Aires, 27 April 1867.
25. Elizabeth Peabody, Mary Mann's sister, tells Manso in a letter: 'Dancing is another kindergarten exercise. In my school I was not very strict with regard to the positions and steps, but simply taught some group figures'. Manso replies: 'what a scandal to teach children to dance!! If I had been so bold, they would accuse me of God knows what ...' (Mira López & Homar de Aller, 1970, p. 243).
26. *Anales de la educación común*, 1869.
27. *Anales de la educación común*, vols. 7 & 8.

References

- Area, L. 1997. Juana Manso y el periodismo femenino en la Argentina del siglo XIX [Juana Manso and female journalism in nineteenth century Argentina]. In: Area, L.; Vázquez, H., eds. *A Alfa a Europa—Latinoamérica Cooperación en Estudios Sociales Aplicados*. Zaragoza, Spain: Rosario.
- Carilla, E. 1961. *El embajador Sarmiento (Sarmiento y los Estados Unidos)* [Ambassador Sarmiento (Sarmiento and the United States)]. Santa Fe, Argentina: National University of the Litoral, Faculty of Arts.
- Cecarelli, S.V. 1991. El primer matrimonio civil en la Argentina [The first civil marriage in Argentina]. *Revista histórica* (Buenos Aires), vol. 6, no. 17.
- Chavarría, J.M. 1947. *La escuela normal y la cultura argentina* [Teacher-training school and Argentine culture]. Buenos Aires: El Ateneo.
- De la Vega, M.M. 1937. *La maestra histórica* [The historical teacher]. Buenos Aires.
- Fletcher, L. 1994. Juana Manso: una voz en el desierto [Juana Manso: a voice in the desert] In: Fletcher, L., ed. *Mujeres y cultura en la Argentina del siglo XIX*, p. 109. Buenos Aires: Feminara Editora.
- Kaufmann, C. 2000. Juana P. Manso, protagonismo y marginación [Juana P. Manso, protagonism and marginalization]. *Alternativas* (San Luis, Argentina), vol. 3, no. 3.
- Krause, A. 1870. *Anales de la educación común* [Annals of common education], vol 9, January.
- Krause, A. 1875. *Anales de la educación común* [Annals of common education], vol. 14, no. 9, April.
- Lewkowicz, L. 2000. *Juana Paula Manso (1819-1875): una mujer del siglo XXI* [Juana Paula Manso (1819–1875): a woman of the twenty-first century]. Buenos Aires: Corregidor.
- Malgesini, G. 1993. Las mujeres en la construcción de la Argentina en el siglo XIX [Women in the construction of Argentina in the nineteenth century]. In: Duby, G.; Perrot, M., eds. *Historia de las mujeres, Tomo VIII. Cuerpo, trabajo y modernidad*. Madrid: Taurus.
- Manso, J. 1854a. Editorial. *Album de señoritas* [Young ladies' album], no. 1, 1 January 1854.
- Manso, J. 1854b. *Album de señoritas* [Young ladies' album], no. 2, 8 January 1854.
- Manso, J. 1854c. *Album de señoritas* [Young ladies' album], no. 7, 12 February 1854.
- Manso, J. 1854d. *Album de señoritas* [Young ladies' album], no. 8, 17 February 1854.
- Manso, J. 1868. *Comentarios a las lecturas de Horace Mann* [Comments on the readings of Horace Mann]. Buenos Aires.

- Mira López, L.; Homar de Aller, A. 1970. *Educación preescolar* [Pre-school education]. Buenos Aires: Troquel.
- Morales, E. 1941. Una gran mujer argentina: Juana Manso [A great Argentine woman: Juana Manso]. *La Prensa* (Buenos Aires), 28 December.
- Santomauro, H. 1994. *Juana Manso y las luchas por la educación pública en la Argentina* [Juana Manso and the struggles for public education in Argentina]. Buenos Aires: Corregidor.
- Sarmiento, D.F. 1944. *Diario de un viaje* [Diary of a journey]. Santiago de Chile: Edit. de Santiago de Chile.
- Vitale, L. 1987. *La mitad invisible de la historia: el protagonismo social de la mujer latinoamericana* [The invisible half of history: social protagonism of the Latin American woman]. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana-Planeta.
- Zucotti, L. 1994. Gorriti, Manso: de las veladas literarias a las conferencias de maestra [Gorriti, Manso: from literary evenings to teachers' lectures]. In: Fletcher, L., ed. *Mujeres y cultura en la Argentina del siglo XIX*, p. 96. Buenos Aires: Feminaria Editora.

Other texts consulted

- Auza, N.T. *Periodismo y feminismo en la Argentina 1830-1930* [Journalism and feminism in Argentina 1830–1930]. Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1988.
- De Cicco, G. Blues para Juana Manso. *Página 12* (Rosario, Argentina), June 1999.
- Duayén, C. et al. *Las escritoras (1840-1940)* [Women writers (1840–1940)]. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1993.
- Furgione, J. Antología pedagógica argentina [Argentine anthology of education]. Buenos Aires: El Ateneo, 1949.
- López, J. *La mujer y la historia argentina* [Women and Argentine history]. Buenos Aires: Plus Ultra, 1991.
- Masiello, F. *La mujer y el espacio público: el periodismo femenino en la Argentina del S. XIX* [Women and the public arena: female journalism in nineteenth century Argentina]. Buenos Aires: Feminaria Editora, 1994.
- Monserat, M. *Historia y sociedad en la Argentina del siglo XIX* [History and society in nineteenth century Argentina]. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1993.
- Verdevoeye, P. *Costumbres y costumbrismo en la prensa argentina desde 1801 a 1834* [Customs and local colour in the Argentine press from 1801 to 1834]. Buenos Aires: Academia Argentina de Letras, 1994.

Other writings on Juana Manso

- Area, L. 'Album de Señoritas' de Juana Manso: periodismo y frustración para un proyecto 'doméstico' de fundar una nación [Juana Manso's 'Young ladies album': journalism and frustration for a 'domestic' project for founding a nation]. Final Report, National University of Rosario, Argentina, 1996.
- Area, L. El periódico 'Album de Señoritas' de Juana Manso (1854) una voz doméstica en la fundación de una nación [Juana Manso's newspaper 'Young ladies' album' (1854), a domestic voice in the founding of a nation]. *Revista Iberoamericana Siglo XIX: Fundación y fronteras de la ciudadanía* (Pittsburgh, PA), nos. 178–79, January–June 1997.
- Britos de Dromanich, O. La proeza sin límites de Juana Manso [Juana Manso's limitless prowess]. *La Nación*, (Buenos Aires), 24 May 1970.
- Cutolo, V.O. Manso de Noronha, Juana Paula. In: *Nuevo diccionario biográfico argentino (1750-1930)*, tomo IV. Buenos Aires: Edit. Elche, 1975.
- Guaglianone de Delgado Fito, M. *Juana Manso, una vida al servicio de la cultura argentina* [Juana Manso: a life in the service of Argentine culture]. Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos Cadel, 1968.
- Guerrero, C. *Mujeres de Sarmiento* [Sarmiento's Women]. Buenos Aires: 1960.
- Luna, F. *Sarmiento y sus fantasmas: encuentros imaginarios* [Sarmiento and his ghosts: imaginary encounters]. Buenos Aires: Atlántida, 1997.
- Mercante, V. Juana Manso. *Revista de educación* (La Plata, Argentina), vol. 71, no. 13, January–February 1930.
- Mizraje, M.G. *Argentinas de Rosas a Perón* [Argentine women from Rosas to Perón]. Buenos Aires: Biblos, 1999.
- Percas, H. *La poesía femenina argentina (1810-1950)* [Argentine women's poetry (1810–1950)]. Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1958.
- Santomauro, H. Juana Manso, Sarmiento y el *Compendio* [Juana Manso, Sarmiento and the *Compendium*]. In: *Todo es historia* (Buenos Aires), no. 212, December 1984.
- Sosa de Newton, L. *Narradoras argentinas (1852-1932)* [Argentine women narrators (1852–1932)]. Buenos Aires: Plus Ultra, 1995.
- Velasco y Arias, M. *Juana Manso, vida y acción* [Juana Manso: life and action]. Buenos Aires: Porter Hnos., 1937.

Veronelli, C. Los grandes maestros: Juana Manso [The Great Masters: Juana Manso]. *Limen*, vol. 3, no. 7, April 1965.