

Alberdi and the Alberdian educators

Discuss Carlos Escudé and his Failure of the Argentine project

A.Herrero

Universidad Nacional de Lanús-Universidad del Salvador-CONICET

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4726-5236>

alejandro.herrero@usal.edu.ar

Submitted 05/01/2024 - Accepted 01/12/2025

DOI: 10pts.15628/holos.2025.18558

ABSTRACT

Carlos Escudé in *The failure of the Argentine project. Education and ideology* (1990), investigates the publication of the National Council of Education Común. Its main thesis consists of showing that at the end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th, educational policy, at the primary level, vindicates the liberal ideology of the Alberdi Bases, and betrays it by adopting a patriotic, chauvinist, illiberal education, a

sentence that he tries to justify with his analysis of the publication *El Monitor*. From liberal positions, and edited by a liberal institution (at that time: Di Tella Institute), the historian Escudé places central figures such as Joaquín V. Gonzalez and a leading elite always valued by Argentine liberals in the dock. In this communication I am interested in reviewing the statements of this historian.

KEYWORDS: Alberdi; Escudé; Liberalism; Education; Argentina

Alberdi y los educadores alberdianos

Discutir a Carlos Escudé y su Fracaso del proyecto argentino

RESUMEN

Carlos Escudé en *El fracaso del proyecto argentino. Educación e ideología* (1990), investiga la publicación del Consejo Nacional de Educación, *El Monitor de la Educación Común*. Su tesis principal consiste en hacer ver que a fines del siglo XIX y primeras décadas del XX, la política educativa, en el nivel primario, reivindica el ideario liberal, de las *Bases de Alberdi*, y lo traiciona adoptando una educación patriótica, chauvinista,

antiliberal, sentencia que trata de justificar con su análisis de la publicación *El Monitor*. Desde posiciones liberales, y editado por una institución liberal (por entonces: Instituto Di Tella), el historiador Escudé sienta en el banquillo de los acusados a figuras centrales como Joaquín V. González y a una élite dirigente siempre valorada por los liberales argentinos. En esta comunicación me interesa revisar las afirmaciones de este historiador.

Palavras chave: Alberdi; Escudé; Liberalismo; Educación; Argentina.

1 PRESENTATION

In other studies I discussed the theses of Carlos Escudé (1948-2021) disseminated in this book *The Failure of the Argentine Project. Education and Ideology*, published in 1990, limited to his interpretations of the political leader J. V. González and the common education law called 1420 (Herrero, 2004, pp. 76-98; Herrero; 2017. Pp. 1-15; Herrero, 2018, pp. 15-20; y Herrero, 2021, pp. 34-67). As a continuation, in this article, I am interested in excerpting his reading of the Bases and of Alberdi (1810-1884) associated, in Escudé's understanding, with liberalism alone.

This exploration is relevant because Escudé's thesis is part of a certain common sense in different spaces, including the academic and school textbooks: Alberdi, Bases, Constitution of 1853 and liberalism are identified, form a continuity; and linked to liberal doctrine.

Furthermore, it is relevant to me because it intersects with my research in the history of education.

Yes, Escudé invokes Bases and Alberdi in this research on common education; at my work table was forced to return to my studies of said work and author (Herrero, 2009), because when investigating its reception in the political field, a record that was also the object of reception and discussion in the educational space at the end of the 19th century, in debates by educators of common education, and in various government spaces.

A record that invokes it positively; that they think and define policies appropriating passages from Bases, and that some even construct the image of an "Alberdi thinker of Argentine education", or of an "Alberdi thinker of Argentine education", or of an "Alberdi thinker of education who was 50 years ahead" (Herrero, 2011, pp. 63-84; and Herrero, 2014, pp. 34-67).

While Escudé invokes Bases and Alberdi to put the political and educational elite, which in this eyes is falsely liberal and a traitor to Alberdi's postulates and liberalism, in the dock, I observe, on the contrary, that at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, a group of educators, ministers of public instruction, general directors of provincial schools, proposed liberal educational policies legitimized by the figure and book Bases.

To put it bluntly. First, I discuss Escudé's assertion that Alberdi's Bases fully adheres to liberalism. In a second section, I discuss and qualify that the educational elite at the end of the century betrays the liberalism of Alberdi's Bases; and for reasons of space, I Will give at least one example with the Alberdian educator Benjamín Zubiaur.

2 ALBERDI, BASES, LIBERALISM AND EDUCATION

Carlos Escudé explains in a few lines, what liberalism is and then presents Alberdi's Bases as the best representative. "The concept of liberalism will be defined," says Escudé. "as an ideology and scale of political values according to which the only reason for the existence of the State is the defense of the individual; his rights and, to a certain extent, his interests" (Escudé, 1990, p. XXIII).

In his eyes, in a liberal society and government “the individual is supreme, and the limitations to his freedom arise only from the functional needs linked to the protection and defense of other individuals and their rights” (Escudé, 1990, p. XXIII). His fight against nationalism forces him to indicate that the nation, in a liberal society and government, is made up of “a group of individuals who (to a certain extent) are united around a common territory, a shared culture, generally also a language, and sometimes (although not in the case of countries like Argentina or the United States) an ethnicity” (Escudé, 1990, p. XXIII).

Once he has explained what liberalism is, Escudé affirms what he wants to maintain: “An authentic liberal was –needless to say- Alberdi” (Escudé, 1990, p. XXIV). He reproduces a passage from Alberdi’s Bases: “Let us remind our people that the homeland is not the soil. We have had soil for three centuries and we have only had a homeland since 1810. The homeland is freedom, it is order, wealth, civilization organized on the native soil, under its banner and in its name” (Escudé, 1990, p. XXIV). The Alberdian expressions allow him to argue that “Patriotism, in Alberdi’s thought, could only focus on ensuring the freedom and progress of the specific individuals who inhabit Argentine soil” (Escudé, 1990, p. XXIV).

Two questions deserve a first answer: Can it be argued, as Escudé writes, that in the Bases Alberdi simply adheres to liberalism? What place does education have in this Alberdian book?

When Escudé invokes Alberdi’s Bases he reproduces a passage to show that the idea of the Alberdian homeland is built on liberal premises.

If this book were only that definition and those lines, we would undoubtedly have to agree with Escudé, however the general argument of Bases has sections constructed with liberal notions and others, with anti-liberal notions¹.

Escudé only highlights some liberal passages in Bases and hides or ignores others, which violate the basic principles of this political doctrine.

A necessary clarification: studying liberalism or liberals in universal terms, as something given, in my view, is misguided: when speaking of liberalism and liberals specifically, we refer to premises and their uses in specific contexts and concrete practices.

Limits of powers, minimal government, individual liberty, civil and political liberties are some of the concepts that underpin liberal theoretical foundations and that Alberdi selects and uses in his arguments.

In this research, I investigate when he invokes them and how he uses them in his argumentative organization. For the sake of length, I will only provide a few illustrative examples.

Alberdi wrote the Bases in response to the circumstances of 1852: in February, General Justo José de Urquiza defeated Juan Manuel de Rosas, Governor of the province of Buenos Aires and representative of the Argentine Confederation, and proposed the need to achieve national

¹ There are numerous studies on liberalism in Alberdi, and for this article, the research from liberal positions by Botana, 1977; Halperín Donghi, 1980; Botana, 1984; Zimmermann 1994; Zimmermann, 2011; Gallo, 2008 were very enriching.

organization and the drafting of a constitution. The Bases were published in May of that year to provide the basis for the constitution that Alberdi believed should be drafted to promote order and progress².

Urquiza responded positively, immediately published an edition of Bases, adopted it as his published an edition of Bases, adopted it as his banner, and appointed Alberdi as his foreign delegate in Europe. In 1856 and 1858, the government officially published Bases and other books: Political Organization of the Argentine Confederation (Pérez Guilhou, 1984; Terán, 1996). Alberdi's work in the 1950s was not only that of a writer but also the official voice of the very authorities guiding the new political course³.

Alberdi envisions a political order and a constitution aimed at overcoming permanent armed conflicts and creating, in his own words, order and progress.

² Alberdi edited several editions of Bases during his lifetime, each with different content and expanding the number of sections. In 1881, Alberdi edited *La República consolidada* and stated that, with this book, he continued and completed his Bases. For Alberdi, Bases is always a work in progress. In *La República consolidada*, Alberdi constructs an appendix with sections from Bases, and it is noted that in the first document, he reproduces a section from another edition. He is forced to use different editions of Bases because their content is different, and where a section appears in one edition, it was not present in previous editions (Alberdi, 1881). Alberdi never defines a single edition of Bases as his Bases. For this work, I use one of the editions of *Alberdi crítica* published by Jorge Mayer (1959) because, like its author, I would not know which one I should use for this research.

³ Alberdi presents his Bases for contributing to the new constitutional moment: "The victory of Monte Caseros alone does not place the Argentine Republic in possession of everything it needs. It puts it on the path of its organization and progress, under which aspect, this victory is an event as great as the May Revolution, which destroyed the Spanish colonial government. Without being able to say that we have returned to the starting point (for states do not walk the path of suffering without profit), we find ourselves, as in 1810, in the need to create a general Argentine government and a constitution that serves as a rule of conduct for that government. The entire gravity of the situation resides in this requirement. A change in government personnel presents fewer inconveniences when there is a constitution that can governs the conduct of the government created by the revolution. But the Argentine Republic today lacks a government, a constitution, and general laws to serve as its substitute. This is the point of difference between the recent revolutions in Montevideo and Buenos Aires: with a constitution there, all evil has disappeared from the moment the new government was appointed. The Argentine Republic, a mere tacit and implicit association for now, must begin by creating a national government and a general constitution to serve as its rule. But what will be the tendencies, purposes, or aims in view of which the coming constitution should be conceived? What will be the bases and starting point of the new constitutional order and the new government soon to be installed? This is the subject of this book, the fruit of many years of thought although written with the urgency of the Argentine situation. In it, I propose to help the deputies and the constituent press establish the basis of criteria for proceeding on the constitutional issue. Dealing with the Argentine question, I need to touch on the question of South America, to explain more clearly where the Argentine Republic comes from, where it is and where it is going, in terms of its political and social destiny" (Alberdi, 1959, p. 160).

He argues that a republic can only be established if it is a possible republic, and for this, the president must have the power of a king—that is, greater than that of the other branches of government—to act quickly and put an end to any renewed armed uprisings⁴.

A strong executive branch, Alberdian's answer to the problem of permanent war, violates basic premises of liberalism: limits on powers, minimal government, and individual liberty.

An interpretive framework organizes his arguments: improving society in order to improve governments⁵.

For Alberdi de Bases, the Spanish in the 15th and 16th century were the guides of European civilization and civilized South America, but as it entered into decline, they must be replaced by Saxons, who drove the civilization of the 19th century. The new values of civilization are the production of wealth and trade, and, in Alberdi's eyes, only the Saxons drive it, as evidenced, in his eyes, in Great Britain and the United States.

Alberdi speaks of a “natural law of civilization” that is fatal; and it is inevitable, the author maintains in Bases, because it is a law of nature. Argentina in 1852 must choose: let itself be conquered by Saxon civilization, as happened to Mexico, or adapt and promote mass immigration exclusively of Saxons and open its economy to free trade⁶.

⁴ Recalling an example from the past as response to the problem of creating a government that would end the cycle of war, Alberdi says: “This profound and spiritual saying is attributed to Bolívar: The new states of the former Spanish America need kings with the name of presidents” (Alberdi, 1959, p. 227).

⁵ In his Bases, Alberdi states that the task consists of “improving the government for the improvement of those governed; improving society to obtain the improvement of power, which is its expression and direct result (...) Fortunately, the republic, so fruitful in forms, recognizes many degrees and lends itself to all the demands of age and space. Knowing how to adapt it to our age is the whole art of constituting ourselves among us. This solution has a happy precedent in the South American republic, and it is the one we owe to the good sense of the Chilean people, who have found in the energy of the president's power the public guarantees that the monarchy offers to order and peace, without violating the nature of republican government”. Bolívar is credited with this profound and spiritual saying: “The new states of formerly Spanish America need king with the name of president.” Chile has solved the problem without dynasties and without a military dictatorship, by means of a constitution that is monarchical in substance and republican in form: a law that links the tradition of past life to the chain of modern life! (...) How, then, can we make our democracies in name, democracies reality? (...) by the means that I have indicated and that everyone knows; by the education of the people, brought about by the civilizing action of Europe, that is, by immigration, by civil, commercial and maritime legislation on adequate bases; by constitutions in harmony with our times and our needs; by a system of government that support the action of those means” (Alberdi, 1959, p. 221-222).

⁶ Alberdi affirmir: “América ha sido descubierta, conquistada y poblada por las razas civilizadas de Europa, a impulsos de la misma ley que sacó de su suelo primitivo a los pueblos de Egipto para atraerlos a Grecia; más tarde a los habitantes de ésta para civilizar las regiones de la Península Itálica; y por fin a los bárbaros habitadores de Germania para cambiar con los restos del mundo romano la virilidad de su sangre por la luz del cristianismo. Así, el fin providencial de esa ley de expansión es el mejoramiento indefinido de la especie humana, por el cruzamiento de las razas, por la comunicación de las ideas y creencias, y por la nivelación de las poblaciones con las subsistencias (...) Nos hallamos, pues, ante las exigencias de una ley, que reclama para la civilización el suelo que mantenemos desierto para el atraso. Esta ley de dilatación del género humano se realiza fatalmente, o bien por los medios pacíficos de la civilización, o bien por la conquista de la espada. Pero nunca sucede que naciones más antiguas y populosas se ahoguen por exuberancia de población, en presencia de un mundo que carece de habitantes y abunda de riquezas” (Alberdi, 1959, p. 157-158).

This fatalistic conception, which underpins his arguments, undermines the basic premises of liberalism: there is no room for individual freedom, everything will be inevitable. In this case, individuals do not build their lives in a space of freedom but must do what the Saxons, that is, England and the United States, dictate.

Nor do the legislators who will draft the constitution have the freedom to think and decide, because they must draft laws that adapt to the “advance” and “drive” of Saxon civilization.

On what topic does Alberdi organize his arguments with concepts of liberal doctrine? For Alberdi, freedoms are rooted in the economy: freedom of labor and trade; he promotes civil liberties associated with the production of wealth.

ON the other hand, he views civil liberties associated with freedom of thought and opinion as a threat. Why? The Revolution for Independence took place with weapons in hand, and from the war for independence, the independence period led to a civil war.

The ruling elite kept their weapons in their hand, and every argument led to reopening the cycle of war.

For Alberdi, in this context of an armed elite permanently ready to use them, freedom of opinion leads inexorably to the battlefield. This situation makes the peace that commerce and daily work require for progress impossible.

Alberdi invokes civil liberties associated only with economic progress, and curtails all freedom of thought and opinion because, in his eyes, it makes peace impossible for order and material progress.

To put it bluntly: Alberdi is liberal when he speaks of the economy and anti-liberal when he speaks of the economy and anti-liberal when he speaks of public opinion, of political citizenship (Muzzopappa, 2023).

His oft-repeated maxim: we must leave the warriors behind and advance with the workers, abandon the cycle of war and continue with the cycle of labor.

This maxim entails encouraging civil liberties linked to the production of wealth and limiting the freedoms associated with discussion linked to the political sphere, or with reflection unrelated to economics, such as commerce.

For Alberdi, the encouragement of freedoms and their curtailment could perfectly coexist. From any liberal premise, one would have to criticize societies where slavery is still legalized in the 19th century.

In this Bases, Alberdi, on the contrary, praises the political liberties of Brazil and the United States, despite the fact that slavery prevails in both nations; He praises the political freedoms of the parliamentary empire of Brazil and the Federal Republic of the United States, where free trade prevails, and in the first, an excellent commercial relationship with England.

Now, what about Alberdi's liberal definition of the homeland? This definition is introduced by Alberdi at the moment he must justify the need to create a space of freedom for the arrival of the massive immigration of Saxons; who need civil liberties associated with the economy to

produce wealth; they need the security of order and respect for the law to carry out their work, to engage in commerce, in short, to enrich themselves and, in doing so, enrich the Argentine nation.

Although Escudé does not address it, the section “Education is not instruction” associated with the formation of citizenship, the fundamental subject of the Argentine Republic, is also constructed with anti-liberal premises.

Alberdi distrusts and describes instruction in schools, colleges, and universities as dangerous, because they train students for political discussion that leads to reopening the cycle of war. Alberdi states directly and forcefully:

“What good did the common man gain by knowing how to read? It was a motive for being ingested as an instrument in the management of a political life he was not familiar with; for being instructed in the poison of the electoral press, which contaminates and destroys rather than enlightens; for reading insults, slander, sophistries, and proclamations of arson, the only thing that stings and stimulates his uncultured and coarse curiosity (...) Higher education in our republics was no less sterile and inadequate to our needs. What have our institutes and universities in South America been, if not factories of charlatanism, idleness, demagoguery, and entitled presumption? (Alberdi, 1959, p. 232-233).

He points out that education is not only dangerous but also ineffective in civilizing and moralizing people, because in his eyes, morality is linked to principles of the world of work, of the economy almost exclusively; and must be separated from the principles of the economy almost exclusively; and must be separate

from the principles of the political field, of public affairs⁷.

Educating by example changes people; and if change occurs, in Alberdi’s view, in economics, the space for education is necessarily located in the workplace itself, where one merchant teaches another the practices of commerce, where a railroad the practices of commerce, where a railroad engineer teaches another how to drive a locomotive.

Not teachers or professors, but one worker teaches another, and in doing so, they not only teach them how to work and trade, but also transmit the values of 19th century civilization: the value of work, the value of respecting the laws respecting the authorities constituted in government, etc.

⁷ Alberdi explains the orientation of education: “nuestra juventud debe ser educada en la vida industrial, y para ello ser instruida en las artes y ciencias auxiliares de la industria. El tipo de nuestro hombre sudamericano debe ser el hombre formado para vencer al grande y agobiante enemigo de nuestro progreso: el desierto, el atraso material, la naturaleza bruta y primitiva de nuestro continente. A este fin debe propenderse a sacar a nuestra juventud de las ciudades mediterráneas, donde subsiste el antiguo régimen con sus hábitos de ociosidad, presunción y disipación, y atraerla a los pueblos litorales para que se inspire de la Europa, que viene a nuestro suelo, y de los instintos de la vida moderna. (Alberdi, 1959, p. 233).

Work, Alberdi says again and again: moralizes, civilizes, educates⁸. Alberdi states that “coastal towns, by the mere fact of being so, are more instructive lyceums than our pretentious universities” (Alberdi, Bases, 89).

In his view, the coastal zone involves navigable rivers for the country’s domestic and foreign trade; it entails ports, customs, and the connection between the provinces and between the nation and its neighbors, with the sole purpose for producing wealth.

For Alberdi this is the space where education lies.

Marlity is the morality of work, not that of philosophy books or the clergy. Alberdi maintains that “industry is the great means of moralization” (Alberdi, 1959, p. 233).

Reason, in his view, is simple: it facilitates “the means of living, prevents crime, which is most often the product of poverty and idleness” (Alberdi, 1959, p. 233).

If the principles are embedded in the everyday world of work, he sees the danger in the education created during the colonial period and later during the independence period. Alberdi writes: “In vain will you fill the intelligence of youths with abstract notions about religion; if you leave them idle and poor, unless you consign them to monastic beggary, they will be dragged into corruption by the desire for comforts they cannot obtain due to lack of means” Alberdi, 1959, p. 233).

On the contrary, there is a different and effective path. Alberdi maintains that “England and the United States have achieved religious morality through industry; and Spain has not been able to achieve industry and freedom” (Alberdi, 1959, p. 233).

It is important to bear in mind that Alberdi does not only speak of education in than section, but in several parts of Bases when referring to the major issue of mass immigration with a work culture, trained in the civilization of the 19th century; who in the different areas of commerce and wealth production would educate in the culture of work, in the morals of commerce, in respect for laws, for order, for governments (Herrero, 2014; Muzzopappa, 2015).

⁸ But if schools, colleges, and universities are to exist, Alberdi asserts, they should focus solely on studies in commerce, agriculture, and livestock.

In other words, “To govern is to populate” represents Alberdi’s slogan of Bases, which encapsulates his program called “possible republic”.

It is an educational and liberal slogan because, for Alberdi, Saxon immigration, with its principles and values of the world of work and the economy, “civilizes and moralizes, educates” (Alberdi, 1959, p. 239).

Alberdi’s great slogan not only speaks of government, of the society to be built, but also of education and liberal premises, because one immigrant worker teaches another worker, one individual teaches another in the economic sphere.

In other words, “To govern is to populate” represents the Alberdian slogan of Bases, which encapsulates their program called “possible republic”.

This is an educational and liberal slogan because for Alberdi, Saxon immigration with its principles and values of the world of work and the economy “civilizes and moralizes, educates” (Alberdi, 1959, p. 239).

Alberdian’s great slogan not only speaks of government, of the society to be built, but also of education and liberal premises, because one working immigrant teaches another worker, one individual teaches another in the economic sphere.

At the same time, “to govern is to populate” will only become a reality if an order is first established that violates individual liberties with a strong executive branch, a president with the power of a king, with power greater than the other two branches, who ends the cycle of war and curtails freedom of thought and opinion.

Liberal and anti-liberal, this movement articulates Bases’s Alberdian argument, that movement articulates Bases’s Alberdian argument, that is, the complete opposite of the Alberdian thesis presented by Escudé.

3 FROM ALBERDI TO ALBERDI EDUCATORS: THE B. ZUBIAUR CASE

Benjamín Zubiaur (1856-1921) was a prominent educator who held various government positions.

He founded the National Education Association (hereinafter: ANE) in 1886 and its publication, *La Educación* (Education) (Herrero, 2022; Visaguirre, 2023). From this publication, he preached, from its first issue, the distinctly liberal concept of popular schools and popular teacher training colleges.

This liberal concept of popular schools maintains that popular education societies made up of residents should be created, and that this society's objective should be to create, manage, and sustain schools without state aid, called Popular Schools (hereinafter: EP) and Popular Teacher Training Colleges (hereinafter: ENP).

Several members of the ANE, including Zubiaur, promoted this concept and promoted these primary level EPs with a patriotic and scientific orientation, focused on industrial, agricultural, and livestock education, and ENP in order to train teachers, who are called popular teachers⁹.

From the National Education Agency (ANE) and from management positions, as a member of the National Education Council and the Ministry of Justice and Public Instruction, Zubiaur supports, and disseminates the various experiences of popular schools in the provinces of Corrientes and Buenos Aires.

Contrary to what Escude maintains, I have been able to identify in my research a group of elite educators who advocate a liberal conception; specifically, they publicly support and defend these EPs and ENPs in their management positions (Herrero, 2022).

At the same time, one of them-I refer again to Zubiaur-participated in the promotion of these EPs and ENPs, he also defended national or provincial public school, since 1880 the public education system, which was still unable to educate the majority of the school population, was the one that sustained the public education system.

In the various national and provincial statistics, the majority of schools were public schools, and private schools (of religious denominations, foreign communities, or private schools (of religious denominations, foreign communities, or private schools) were rare. From the ANE and from various government positions, Zubiaur defended and encouraged public schools (which in fact sustained the system) and popular schools.

Zubiaur defends compulsory and free state-supported schools and public schools without state aid.

By defending compulsory and state-supported education, Zubiaur takes an anti-liberal position, and by defending public schools, he takes a liberal position. He defends both at the same time.

What prevails in his view is that children and adults receive schooling at a historical stage where the level of illiteracy is alarming for all educators, not just Zubiaur.

Zubiaur's arguments combine his adherence to Sarmiento's citizens' republic with

⁹ Laura Guic's studies on patriotic education were fundamental to the thinking of Alberdian educators at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20 th century (Guic, 2023).

His adherence to Alberdi's postulates of education for work. José B. Zubiaur's lecture, "To govern is to educate" (1896), his book Practical and industrial teaching in the Argentine Republic (1900) and his speech of 1904, at the inauguration of the Juan Bautista Alberdi school in the Belgrano neighborhood of the capital, are three texts, of different genres, which will allow us to show, in an illustrative and limited example, how a discourse is articulated where arguments from Sarmiento and Alberdi coexist (Zubiaur, 1896, pp. 626-631; Zubiaur, 1900, p. 6; and Zubiaur, 1904, pp. 104-108).

Sarmiento, in his writings from the 1980s, points out that the major problem is the possibility of a new colonization (and its target is, above all, the Italian community), and that the response must focus on training Argentine citizens.

Zubiaur treasures this observation, but also sees another problem, since immigrants become rich much more easily, and in greater numbers, than Creoles (poorly suited to economic enterprise).

Therefore, the response must not only focus on training them to compete in the labor market.

Here, Alberdi's book "Bases" is introduced, and more specifically, those few pages that support an education for work. To govern is to populate is redefined by Zubiaur as To govern is to educate, establishing that the answer to national problems (immigrants who can colonize the country, the possibility of losing self-government, and a market that shows that foreigners get rich in contrast to Creoles who cannot do so, or do so very precariously) will come from the school¹⁰, children of natives or foreigners will be educated as Argentine citizens, and will also be prepared for successful insertion into the labor market¹¹.

¹⁰ "La pretensión de algunas colectividades extranjeras de dar a sus hijos una enseñanza reñida con nuestra historia y nuestras instituciones, no subsistirá el día en que nuestras incipientes escuelas y colegios preparen al hombre y a la mujer para la vida completa y no lo entreguen, como ahora, mutilados de cuerpo y espíritu sólo capaces de convertirse en esclavos de sus pasiones, de sus apetitos o de sus sentimientos egoístas (...) La suprema aspiración argentina, concorde con las más elevadas propensiones humanas, debe ser, pues, la de impartir una educación nacional que se caracterice por una tendencia que involucre estos elementos: ciencia, americanismo, democracia, liberalismo, y que viva al calor de la influencia popular y sea eficazmente secundada por la acción oficial." (Zubiaur, 1896, p.628).

¹¹ Dije entonces que el censo que se levantaba en el país importaría una decepción (...) El demostrará (...) que, después de haber fundado nuestros padres una nacionalidad a costa de grandes sacrificios; de haber ayudado a constituir cuatro más; así como a sacudir el yugo extranjero en toda la América latina; estábamos, en caracteres sociológicos primordiales importancia, tales como el comercio, la industria y la agricultura que son las primeras y las más fecundas fuentes de la riqueza, en condiciones muy inferiores a los elementos extranjeros que en forma de aluvión han inundado casi todo el país y se han adueñado de sus partes más importantes mediante el trabajo propio o la riqueza importada. (...) Es de suponer que esa gran masa que forma el éxodo moderno y llena las fértiles riberas de nuestros grandes ríos y se lanza ya, en alas de locomotora, a conquistar pampas, valles y montañas mediterráneas, no se adapte a nuestros usos y costumbres, y trate de imponer los suyos, no solo en el orden privado y social, lo que podría ser ventajoso, sino también en el político, que no puede, en realidad, según el concepto institucional moderno, mejorarse nada más que en la práctica, porque en la teoría y en la letra nuestras instituciones son las más perfectas, es decir, las que mejor realizan, en el momento actual, el ideal filosófico para el amplio desarrollo de la entidad humana y de la entidad social, molécula de aquel átomo, y hasta haga peligrar la integridad nacional. Las tituladas colonias extranjeras, con sus escuelas y tendencias propias, no serían, entonces, más que el primer jalón puesto en el campo de conquistas futuras (...) Deduje de estas simples premisas la forzosa conclusión de que la fórmula de Alberdi, "gobernar es poblar"

Sarmiento, in his view, failed to visualize the problem of a teacher training college to train rural teachers, or a higher teacher training college, and this is one of the various proposals that the new school points to as innovators in this educational tradition.

Closely related to this, Zubiaur points out that by redefining the Bases ruling, he does so without denying Alberdi's legacy, since "to govern is to educate" means to educate in an Alberdian manner, that is, by training for work. He emphasizes that this ideology has been accepted "by the entire civilized world"¹².

Zubiaur cites a passage from Alberdi to further argue that his ideology is being put into practice:

"The National Council is already practicing these truths by legal prescription; education is secular, and workshops and kitchens, gardens, orchards, and school excursions already break the monotony of theoretical teaching, which only forms pretentious know-it-alls, declaimers, and demagogues; and under the aegis of the industrial workshop that will be used, from today, by the students of the higher grades of this district, just as the students of those grades will use the kitchen inaugurated in the Castro-Munita school until it becomes a truth that within our primary institute, good future mothers and useful men are prepared, who have the first rudiments of manual labor that is always honorable and a guarantee of material and moral independence". (Zubiaur, 1904, p. 108).

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of his article was to discuss Escudé and, ultimately, some images that still circulate today. I discuss the of Alberdi and his Foundations as liberal, and the idea that liberalism exists in itself, a once-and-for-all reality.

Neither liberalism, nor socialism, nor Peronism, among other ideological archives, can be studied as if they existed once and for all and with fixed, universal postulates.

In any case, as I propose in this article, we must ask ourselves what we are talking about when we postulates from that archive are invoked, appropriated, and used in specific arguments and contexts.

Escudé defines what liberalism is and, based on this definition, judges whether the protagonists he studies can be classified as liberal, anti-liberal, or traitors to liberalism.

ha hecho ya su reinado, no porque necesite más población extranjera que signifique progreso moral o material, sino porque la corriente inmigratoria está ya establecida debido a la libertad de nuestras leyes y a la fecundidad y riqueza de nuestro suelo, y que debe ser reemplazada por la que tienda a mantener, estimular y desarrollar el espíritu genuinamente nacional-americano y democrático-liberal." (Zubiaur, 1896 pp. 626-627).

¹² New times bring new needs. "The eminent Alberdi's best-known formula has not expired; but it must be replaced by this more comprehensive one that better meets the needs of the current moment: "To govern is to educate", and to educate in the sense he preached and now ratified by the entire civilized world" (Zubiaur, 1904, p. 1108).

Thus, liberalism and liberals are fixed; there is no movement. Alberdi, for example, was liberal for Escudé. As if everything Alberdi says, his practices, inevitably always carry the content of liberal premises. This approach cannot be demonstrated with any protagonist, and as I have noted in this article, neither with Alberdi.

We all argue with principles, values, and premises from different ideological archives. We don't speak a single doctrine: liberal, socialist, Catholic, Muslim, etc.

My criticism of Escudé's study is not only focused on the study of Alberdi's arguments, but also on any object that defines him as liberal or anti-liberal.

When I analyze Alberdi in Bases, I always do so in his context and historical moment.

Alberdi must consider and respond to specific problems of government, constitutional, economic, and other issues. One of these, the great tragedy for Alberdi, is the constant armed uprisings. This problem was pointed out by Alberdi and by the entire

Argentine ruling elite, who considered and sought to provide a solution from position of government throughout the 19th century, at least from 1819 to 1880.

What does Alberdi warn? Time and again, he makes it clear in his Bases that the liberal archive lacks the premises to respond to this problem; all of its concepts, instead of providing a solution, aim to end the war, fuel it even more.

For Alberdi, basic notions-freedom of opinion, public debate in an armed society-inexorably led to the opening of the cycle of war. In his eyes, a liberal society, a purely republican society, instead of ending the war, generates it in a vicious circular.

Alberdi needs to resort to certain ideological archives that undermine liberal premises to respond to the problem of permanent armed uprisings.

His so-called "possible republic" the first step toward the "true republic" has little to do with liberal or republican principles; But, Alberdi argues, with a strong executive branch and massive immigration of workers, it would transform this reality, dominated by civil war, into a space for trade and wealth production.

The other fundamental issue is that Alberdi's educators invoke and appropriate the Bases from another historical moment, where difficulties quite different from those of Alberdi prevailed. The cycle of permanent wars had ended in 1880, and the question of self-defense and self-government prevailed in a society largely made up of foreigners.

We are in a period of crystallization of imperialist capitalist at the European level, and a large part of the population is made up of Italian immigrants who establish Italian schools and educate their Argentine-born children as Italians. At the end of the century, the Italian parliament voted a sum of money for the Italian community. It was thought that Italian community. It was thought that Italians could take over the Argentine government and run it in Italy's interest. At that time, Italy was seen as a colonialist empire. In other words, this was not a fantasy of the Argentine leadership.

Educating the children of Italians, and the children of Argentine-born immigrants as Argentines, became the main objective of government and educators.

Cosmopolitism is associated with liberal premises and with Alberdi de Bases, who called for massive immigration of Saxons. On the contrary, for the Argentine Leadership at the end of the 19ts century, for educators, and for Zubiaur, cosmopolitanism was a problem to be solved.

For educators and for Zubiaur, cosmopolitanism, a concept they repeatedly use pejoratively, had to disappear so that all the country's children could think and feel like Argentines, defend the Argentine government and institutions.

Zubiaur, and the Alberdian educators, drew from Bases their the Alberdian educators, drew from Bases their educational conception, oriented toward training for productive labor, training children and adults to sustain the liberal subject through their work. At the same time, they rejected Alberdi's idea of the homeland in order to teach a patriotism that unifies all Argentines under a single idea and sentiment. They educated following a program called "patriotic education".

When I study the reception of the work, the same thing always happens to me: the reader is never faithful to the author they read, but rather invokes and uses them to benefit their values and interests.

Neither Alberdi nor the Alberdian educators who claim to be liberal and speak from the perspective of government administration are interested in the fidelity of liberalism, but rather in responding to the problems they face.

5 REFERENCES

Alberdi, J. B. (1984). Fragmento preliminar al estudio del derecho. Editorial Biblos

Alberdi, J. B. (1881). La Republica Argentina consolidada en 1880 con la ciudad de Buenos Aires por capital. Librería La Publicidad de M. Reñé.

Botana, N. (1998). El orden conservador: la política entre 1880 y 1916. Sudamericana.

Botana, N. (1984). La tradición republicana. Alberdi, Sarmiento y las ideas políticas de su tiempo. Sudamericana.

ESCUDÉ, Carlos. (1990). El fracaso del proyecto argentino. Educación e ideología. Di Tella.

Gallo, E. (2008). Vida, libertad, propiedad: Reflexiones en torno al liberalismo clásico y la historia, Eduntref.

Guic, L. (2023). El gobierno de la educación común. Estudio de las políticas educativas del Consejo Nacional de Educación hacia el Centenario de la Revolución de Mayo, Ediciones de la UNLa-Teseo Libros.

Halperín Donghi, T. (1980). Proyecto y construcción de una nación (Argentina, 1846-1880). Biblioteca Ayacucho.

Herrero, A. (2004). "¿Fue Joaquín V. González un liberal chauvinista? Su experiencia en la Universidad Nacional de la Plata (1905-1918)". H. Biagini y A. Roig (directores), Pensamiento

alternativo en la Argentina del siglo XX. Tomo I. Identidad, Utopía, integración (1900-1930). Biblos, p. 76-98.

Herrero, A. (2009). Ideas para una república. Una mirada sobre la Nueva Generación Argentina y las doctrinas políticas francesas. Edición Edunla.

Herrero, A. (2011). "La República Posible y sus problemas en Argentina. Normalistas e industriales debaten el plan educativo alberdiano de las dos gestiones presidenciales de Julio Argentino Roca (1880-1886 y 1898 y 1901)". Secuencia. Revista de Historia y Ciencias Sociales. (80), p. 63-84.

Herrero, A. (2014). "Juan Bautista Alberdi pensador de la educación argentina": una invención del roquismo para defender el programa de la república posible a fines del siglo XIX". Revista Quinto Sol. (18), p. 34-67.

Herrero, A. (2017). "Joaquín V. González y sus libros. Sus intervenciones en el espacio científico-académico, literario y del sistema de instrucción pública". Estudios de filosofía práctica e historia de las ideas. (19), p. 1-15.

Herrero, A. (2018). "Las leyes de Educación Común y la implantación de la enseñanza religiosa en las escuelas. El estudio de dos casos: el Consejo Nacional de Educación y la provincia de Buenos Aires". Dialogando, Buenos Aires. (6), p. 15-20.

Herrero, A. (2021). "La formación de patriota. Gutiérrez, Sarmiento y González: el uso de la ficción en la dirigencia política Argentina". Revista Inclusiones. Chile. Vol. 8, Julio-Setiembre, pp. 34-67.

Mayer, J. (1959). Las Bases de Alberdi, Sudamericana.

Muzzopappa, H. (2015). Educación y trabajo en el orden conservador. Alberdi y la vanguardia normalista. Editorial Biblos.

Muzzopappa, H. (2023). "Alberdi y Adam Smith". A. Herrero y L. Guic. Gobierno y políticas públicas en Latinoamérica. Perspectivas filosóficas, históricas y educativas. Ediciones de la UNLa-Teseo Libros, p. 15-38.

Pérez Guilhou. (1984). El pensamiento conservador de Alberdi y la Constitución de 1853, Editorial Depalma.

Terán, O. (1996). Escritos de Juan Bautista Alberdi. El redactor de la ley. Universidad Nacional de Quilmes.

Visaguirre, L. (2023). Autoritarios, taxonomistas, emancipadores. Una crítica epistemológica a las pedagogías argentinas, Ediciones del FEPAI.

Zimmermann, E. (1994). Los liberales reformistas. La cuestión social en la Argentina 1890-1916. Sudamericana.

Zimmermann, E. (2011). Liberalismo y conservadorismo en el pensamiento político de Juan B. Alberdi. Alberdi et l'indépendance argentin. La fuerza del pensamiento y de la escritura (Directora) Diana Quattrocchi-Woissen. Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle.

Zubiaur, B. (1896). "Gobernar es educar. Conferencia leída por el Dr. J. B. Zubiaur. Rector del Colegio Nacional del Uruguay. En los salones de la "Sociedad Unión Uruguaya", La Educación, 15 de octubre y 1 de noviembre. (243). pp. 626-631.

Zubiaur, B. (1900). La enseñanza práctica industrial de la República Argentina. Editor F. Lajouane.

Zubiaur, B. (1904). "Discurso de inauguración de la escuela Juan Bautista Alberdi", en: Monitor de la Educación Común. (361), pp. 104-108.

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Herrero, A. USAL-UNLa Alberdi y los educadores alberdianos: Discutir a Carlos Escudé y su Fracaso del proyecto argentino. HOLOS, 3(41). <https://doi.org/10.15628/holos.2025.18558>

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:**A.Herrero**

Universidad del Salvador-Universidad Nacional de Lanús-CONICET

E-mail: alejandro.herrero@usal.edu.ar.

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4726-5236>

Editor : Francinaide de Lima Silva Nascimento

Ad Hoc Reviewer: Miguel Cabral de Macedo Neto e Silvana de Fátima dos Santos



Recebido 5 de janeiro de 2024

Aceito: 1 de dezembro de 2025

Publicado: 22 de dezembro de 2022