

María Alicia Rueda, *The Educational Philosophy of Luis Emilio Recabarren. Pioneering Working-Class Education in Latin America.*

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Luis Emilio Recabarren (1876-1924), the founder of the Chilean Communist Party, is an unavoidable figure in the constellation of Chilean political and social history. However, it is not usual to find studies on his educational thought (under the premise that he had one based on original ideas) and his efforts to foster education for exploited workers in Chile. Maria Alicia Rueda tackles this dimension of the legendary working-class leader in a book halfway between history and philosophy of education, according to her statement. Regarding the former, Rueda builds a work over different soil. The book testifies to how historical research expands the capacity to analyse our time and circumstances through comparisons and gives place to empathy and acknowledgement to those who fought for the adults' education a century ago. Rueda's raw analysis is informed by the 'underdevelopment' perspective, which is rare in contemporary literature. Although, the literature she uses to draw a Chilean general historical context is outdated, Rueda mentions more updated studies as she presents Recabarren's biography. On the latter, the author displays an engaging analysis of different aspects of Recabarren's ideas. This is the most essential and original part of the book and shows how the researcher navigated through a vast sea of dispersed documents and dealt with them successfully. Chapter 5 deserves special recognition as Rueda offers an excellent general overview of the crucial relationship between workers' press and education, even though the author tackles this issue with a limited bibliography.

The Educational Philosophy of Luis Emilio Recabarren is a book written kindly, far away from excessive academicism, devoted to a general audience and seeking to declare that the Chilean revolutionary leader was "the most notable Latin

American Marxist thinker of the early 20th century". That statement is difficult to demonstrate because Recabarren's thought is unavailable as an organized collection of books with a logical or evolutive sequence. On the contrary, it is accessible as an archipelago of articles, manifestos and pamphlets, which is hard to navigate. Besides, it is hard to say that Recabarren devoted himself to education as the main issue among the uncountable organizational, political and journalistic work he made throughout his life. As Rueda develops her analysis, it becomes clear that the most effective educational labour that Recabarren did was through his commitment to the workers' press. In her final remarks, the author identifies working-class organizations and newspapers as Recabarren's ultimate educational legacy. Therefore, it might not be entirely accurate to state that he had an educational philosophy (if we understand it as an articulated and systematic body of ideas).

Rueda disclaims that she does not study Recabarren as a "great man" and prefers thinking of him as an "organic intellectual" of the working class. Nevertheless, the author's enthusiasm for Recabarren's heroic image may lead her to underline his ideas without a balance with their actual impact in his historical context. In any case, the analysis of Recabarren's educational doctrine carried out by the author is of great value to understand a facet of the social movement at the beginning of the 20th century that is usually undervalued in favour of its political aspects.

After presenting the historical context and the biography of Recabarren, Rueda proposes an evaluation of his pedagogical ideas. She frames them in a civilizing process of a liberal matrix from which Recabarren would emancipate himself by delving into the liberating character of socialism. From this philosophical and political definition, the labour leader would underline the importance of the education of workers and, therefore, would constitute a crucial milestone in adult education.

In sum, the book partially opens the door to historic knowledge about marginalized groups. Given its biographic, intellectual and ideological focus, there is brief direct evidence or testimonies of men and women who were part of the labour movement in Chile. The general public, scholars and students might be interested in this book as it joins and analyses testimonies of Recabarren's ideas and practices as a revolutionary social leader who realized the role of education in the emancipation of workers.