

## Editorial

### Social Work, Political Project and Human Rights

2023 marked the 50th anniversary of the coup d'état in Chile. September 1973 marked the abrupt end of the "Chilean road to socialism" and, with it, the Movement for the Reconceptualisation of Chilean Social Work, ushering in the civil-military dictatorship. To commemorate this event, the Department of Social Work of the University of Chile invited students, academics and civil servants to reflect on that historical transition, to bring to the new generations the memory of those who witnessed these processes, to know their testimonies, both of the Social Work of the final years of Popular Unity and of the spaces of resistance to military repression, with an important objective: to keep their voices alive, to learn from their fears, their dreams, and to draw lessons to ensure there was no repeat of the serious human rights violations that occurred during the Chilean civil-military dictatorship.

A series of activities including book launches, talks, and video-documentary exhibitions were carried out between April and November 2023 by the 50th Anniversary Commission. The articles presented in this seventh issue of the journal *Critical Proposals in Social Work* are part of this process and respond to the call we made a year ago to present academic articles that had as an object of study/analysis the history of Social Work, particularly discussions on its theoretical-political positioning, processes of memory and human rights, in the context of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the coup d'état of September 1973.

Papers were received that fall within this perspective and include theoretical discussions on the dimensions and scope of human rights, the results of research with a historical perspective, and three testimonies from people who witnessed the events that took place during this period, both in Chile and in other countries in the region.

This issue, coordinated by members of the 50th Anniversary Commission and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Work (NEITS), sought to position the importance of the study of memory in professional history and to offer readers diverse perspectives that are a legacy of the visions of Social Work in those periods, from which to advance proposals for the future.



Thus, the reader will find in this special issue studies and analyses on the ways in which Social Work and the challenges of each period (before and after the coup) approached each other, in which it is possible to identify debates on human rights, links with popular sectors, reparation policies, memory collectives and professional work in contexts of political violence, both in Chile and in other Latin American countries.

The articles by Carla Cubillos and Daniela Aceituno address conceptual and theoretical dimensions of the perspectives and learning from human rights approaches, reparation policies and the scope of transitional justice.

The collaborative work by Véliz, García and Troncoso presents the results of their research on the experience in **Chile** of the Social Work Collective, with emphasis on the reflections and learning of those who were its protagonists. The article by Munizaga, Miranda, Espinoza and Orellana also presents the results of their research. They highlight, as an object of study, the link between the Social Work student body and the popular sectors in the period prior to the coup, based on a particular experience, in this case, at the Catholic University of Valparaíso.

4

Inés Martínez's article offers a reflection on human rights with an international scope, specifically analysing the experience of Franco's dictatorship and the need to recover the memory and do justice to past events, even when several generations have opted for oblivion in **Spain**.

Political violence, forced disappearance as a strategy of intimidation, the absence of state policies for the reparation of victims and the lack of a cross-cutting human rights perspective are included in Karla Salazar's work on the disappearance of people in **Mexico**, contributing elements with a gender perspective to the debate on human rights. This issue is also addressed in Samboy Spies' article on human trafficking and human smuggling in South Africa, which was originally published in *Social Work/ Maatskaplike Werk* and whose translation is presented in this volume.



Finally, readers are offered three interviews that we have called "Witnesses of an era", which were developed within the framework of the activities organised by the 50th Anniversary Commission and are intended to offer some personal views and reflections on the events unleashed by the dictatorships in Chile and Argentina.

The articles published in this seventh volume do not aspire to be conclusive about the debate around Social Work, the need to always think and rethink its political project and its inalienable commitment to human rights; rather, they seek to propose analytical perspectives that contribute to the reflection on the different political projects and the dimensions of justice that are deployed in each of these approaches. We invite you to make your own reflections and to debate with the authors on the analytical and conceptual keys that each one offers.

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