Trying to learn after the Great Recession: Spanish Social Work Education and Privatization

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Working metaphor: Spanish social work education as a building

• The slow and difficult construction of social work as a university discipline (1932-2007)
• The fast demolition of the social work educational building (1979-present)
• the history of Spanish social work education is indistinguishable from the history of social work as a profession and the history of Spanish social protection

• We could go back a long way in time, but to be brief, we will start at the moment when the first Spanish school of social work is founded.
The Construction

• **Late nineteen-1930. foundational period**
  – Before 1927. figures who reflect on how to better serve the poor.
  – 1927. First School of Social Service by Dr. Roviralta and Mrs. Antonia Farreras.

• **1930-1950. Authoritarian beneficence period.**

• **1950-1970, Expansion and developmentism period.**
  – 1958. Social work becomes vocational training
  – 1968. First Congress of Social Assistants. Social Work is adopted as a term. University status for social work studies is requested
The construction

- **1970 -1980 Technical period**
- **1980-2000 First golden period**
  - Creation of the Autonomous Communities Public Social services systems
  - 1981 University status
- **2000-2007 Second golden period**
  - Dependency Law
The demolition

• 1979 – present. The privatization and liberalization period.
  – The management of public services has been privatized,
  – Social workers are precarious employees
  – Major cuts in all public services.
  – Higher education is not a good personal investment.
  – In some autonomous communities, university tuition fees have grown exponentially in recent years.
  – Growing inequality in access to basic services in education between regions
  – Specific attacks to the Schools of social work.
The demolition

• Maybe demolition can't be avoided.
• Perhaps the aluminosis process is too intense.
• But paradoxically, at the heart of these processes is where many of our students are learning more and more significantly.
Unwanted and unexpected Learning opportunities

– La Marea Naranja / The orange tide
  • a protest campaign against the cuts in social services.
  • [https://www.cgtrabajosocial.es/marea_naranja](https://www.cgtrabajosocial.es/marea_naranja)

– Trabajo Social se Queda / Social work stays
  • A campaign of resistance to save the Faculty of Social Work at Complutense.
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No a la eliminación de la Facultad de Trabajo Social
Andradas aún estás a tiempo.
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many thanks!