Presentation

With this issue, 125, *Relaciones* celebrates its 31st anniversary. It began in the winter of 1980 with an article by Luis González and a document by Heriberto Moreno who, for many years, were two of its principal pillars. Their labors were carried on by other directors; here we would like to recall, especially, Conrado Hernández. This is quite a respectable age for a journal and *Relaciones* is now a full-fledged lady, one always courted. Thus, it is no surprise that its format has been renew, though without changing its personality, thanks to the *savoir-faire* of Natalia Rojas, or that a new team has taken her arm. This is a moment to congratulate and thank the previous Editorial Council and Director for their dedication and excellent performance.

The *Thematic Section* focuses on the "agrarian heritage and rural identities", from a Mexican perspective (a country were peasants still exists), and with an essentially anthropological approach that examines a broad range of realities. This section explains that this space has suffered violent transformations through the 19th to 2st centuries. Moreover, land has been a central topic for humanity, at least until very recently and who knows… This brings to mind an affirmation from around the year 1700 by the Indians of the Sierra Zapoteca during their struggle for their territory: "their land is like their blood". Emile Zola's vision of 19th-century French peasants has not change this reality, which is perpetuated by the modern Indians of Mezcala, presented in this issue. There is a biological element in the relationship between land and peasant society that is expressed not

only in terms of survival, but also in cultural terms. Therefore, memory is essential and, together with it, history also finds its place here.

José Eduardo Zárate's study opens the *Thematic Section* with a review of Purépecha communities from the late 19th century to the early 21st. Along his itinerary, he reveals a historical fact of very long duration: the continuous adaptation of "*Indian peoples*" (to use the Vicereagal term to those peasant communities), that have always known how to bend the instruments of power to their benefit. Their adaptive capacity made them "actor with diverse, but not necessarily contradictive, identities", as they were both royalist in colonial times and "popular liberals" during the "Porfiriato". As such, they always defended their soul, that is, their communal lands through a series of concessions, vindications and recoveries. This often occurred as backlashes, as in the case of San Juan Parangaricutiro, a community that succeeded in keeping its lands thanks to the support of its traditional authority. On occasion, they admitted "modernity"; that is, the individualization of land, until the arrival of new times and modernity, this one post-revolutionary, that allowed them to recoup "their blood", their territory, and vindicate their indigenous identity.

This has led some authors to speak of "hybridization" in order to define this phenomenon, as in Zárate's case, while others, perhaps with undue hurry, use the term "syncretism" (Annino). Once again, this is inscribed in a long-term history in which biological and cultural miscegenation ("mestizaje"), new beliefs –called Catolicism, liberalism, communalism– intertwines with, or is super imposed on, existing circumstances according to the temporality. Without question, reforms in the Mexican universe and, even moreso, in its rurality, are a persistent reality. Indirectly, here we are taking up the lessons of Fernand Braudel. Permanence is possible thanks to the capacity for negotiations of those "indigenous communal citizens", as the community of Tanaco was defined in 1869; and also, to their pragmatism that allows them to determine their priority objectives: first, to insert themselves as specific subjects in a new project of the nation, because as "an independent corporation or community of neighbors", but with shared beliefs, traditions and costumes, they form part of a "uniform and conciliatory" community (once more, Tanaco 1869).

Though they vindicate their own modernity by speaking of contract and society, they are well aware that they have been molded by over three hundred years of history while conserving nostalgia for "the uses and customs of many years", as well as the apprehension that plagues them, given the "ruining of their small properties".

From times immemorial, at least the seconds half of the 18th century, conflicts with other peoples and individuals over the defense of their territories continued and constituted the second priority in the second half of the 19th century, though it is also possible that, as in the case of Pichátaro (1896), and Nahuatzen (1895), we are dealing with an artifice designed to delay as long as possible the feared repartition of lands.

Forests are an essential but fragile resource in the Meseta Purépecha and their defense also became fundamental in the early 20th century, when logging companies appeared on the horizon. But here, the economic interests are diverse because they confronted "smallholders", "poor Indians" –for whom common forest lands were an indispensable resource– with local authorities who "were bargaining with the woods". Such conflicts were another factor that impeded land reform.

Despite all of this, and a more or less affirmed appearance of benevolence, it is clear "that the process of land privatization was left unfinished", according to Zárate. Through these elusive struggles during the 20th century, a territory was declared, people became conscious of a valuable resource and a community was strengthened. But because the fundamental access was land, the community diluted part of its "ethnicity" and shored up its "peasant" aspect.

Jorge Uzeta's worjk on Atarjea and Xichú situates us in the time of the *cardenista* land reform in the northeast region of the state of Guanajuato. The vision of the anthropologist leads the reader to the domains of microhistory through figures, agrarian leaders, who were both examples and exceptions. Their field of action is a complex and delicate context of confrontation that, from its small-scale ambience mirrors a situation that was regional and even national. As the title indicates, the debate centered on the mediation that both Guerrero Tarquín –author of the certain very interesting memoirs– and the

members of the González family (led by its patriarch, Perfecto), managed to carry out. They served as liaisons between local communities and the different strata of an ever more centralized power.

In addition to being a "good person… and very political", Guerrero Tarquín knew how to take advantage of Obregon's "carriage of the State". In 1924, Atarjea became an *ejido*, but Tarquín soon had an *approchement* with the González family, merchants in Xichú; together they fought against the *Cristiada*. Tarquín organized rural Sierra towns with the aid of Perfecto González. His ability to convoke people in the Sierra was exceptional, especially during attempts to meet with the governor, by distributing *ejidal* parcels to dispossessed peasants. Weakened both politically and militarily in the 1940s, Tarquín had to confront new rivals because the *avilacamachismo* was not in his favor. But two levers served as his support until the 70s. A post as an executive of the CNC and his role as the patron of the González clan, "merchants, politicians and school teachers" in Atarjea and Xichú, as they imposed municipal presidents as the wished, received 5% from the Delegation of *Ejidal* Promotion and were the local leaders of the PRI.

Was this an all-powerful consortium? Only in part, because at least from the 1930s, the silhouette of another cacique, Luis Ferro, from San José Iturbide, emerged with the ambition to extend his base towards the east with a view to eventually obtaining the governorship, and able to organize huge banquets for four thousand people in San Miguel de Allende. Ferro y Tarquín, the politician and the agrarian fighter, were destined to confront each other again in the 1960s when there were no more lands to be distributed. All that was left to them was to use the power in their different spheres: one a federal congressman, the other a bureaucrat in the CNC.

And this brings us back to the Sierra. What do these destinations tell us? Without doubt, they were exemplars of the heritage of the "deep", patriarchal Mexico. But more than that, their renewed, politicized and bureaucratized actions, from the CNC or the PRI, based on foundations partly violent and archaic, were determinants of the post-revolutionary pacification, for the arrival that for decades and through their intermediation allowed the exploitation of the Mexican countryside in favor of the urban world; that is modernity.

For many, especially the members of its community, the name Mezcala means a history inscribed in textbooks. Mezcala is the island that for four years, 1812-1816, resisted the siege of the counterinsurgent troops, even achieving an honorable armistice. This is not just an idealized history, as the island has become a true sanctuary that radiates identity and protects the entire territory: "the island, the heart of the community [and] symbol of our history of resistance".

On a more prosaic plane, "the locality" has a surface area of 3,602 hectares (8,900 acres) that has belonged to the indigenous population since 1974, as an inalienable property that for the *comuneros* reaches back to "times immemorial", as its colonial Primordial Title affirms. Achieving this protective status of the "indigenous community" involved a long internal struggle against those who doubted the efficiency of that norm; *i.e.*, caciques who feared they would no longer be able to act freely. In reality, only a small minority of those with rights supported this initiative until 1960. But this history reveals an interesting parallel with the aforementioned case of the Meseta Purépecha. In the late 20th century, rediscovering one's indigenous identity (here, Coca) constituted another means of affirming one's peasant roots and identity, beyond any ethnocentrism: history and territory occupy a privileged place in that definition.

But Mezcala did not live only on its memories. In the 21st century, amidst the process of globalization –emanating from the United States or Guadalajara– innovations have been introduced and, with them, the pressures of tourism and the real estate market, two influences long present in the northern area of Lake Chapala. A new confrontation has emerged, accompanied by a generational renewal. The existence of new *comuneros* is now manifested and they are encouraging assemblies and activities across a broad political spectrum. They are united by their membership in the community and its defense. Well aware that past divisions were a severe burden, they strive to conciliate modernity, even seeking international legitimacy through the tradition of their uses and customs. Once again, the pragmatism and flexibility that we noted in the cases from the Meseta Purépecha are present. Their actions give rise to a deep pride in their origins, their present and their past. "The community of Mez-

cala on the shore of Lake Chapala is a bastion of indigenous resistance that reached its apogee during the independence struggle". Note the cultural, geographical and historical references where past and present come together.

We are in the presence of a process of "recomunalization", as proposed by Santiago Bastos. Will the imagination of a few hundred young people, involved in a battle for the island and *Zapatista* ideals, suffice when "the train of modernity" advances at a great speed? This is the bet that all indigenous peoples and, indeed, all the peasant communities that still exist, and even ourselves, are making.

At least two of the three articles in the *Thematic Section* are concerned with memory and more or less remote times. Jorge Uzeta's essay refers explicitly to a patriarchal society dominated by memories of the *hacendado*. This same view penetrates de article by Fernando Calonge on the remembrances of former hacienda laborers in Xalapa. Though this contribution does not form part of the section's initial project, we did not wish to separate it totally. Thus, we invite the reader to leave aside for a moment the document on anarchism, and go on to the *General Section* so as to obtain a more integrated reading, one that might be stimulating for a debate. This article demonstrates the interplay between voids of memory ("neglect of the past of the haciendas") and it counterpart: no identity can exists where memory has been annihilated ("memory opens identity").

So, what happen to the forty former laborers interviewed, who had been active between 1930 y 1970? Time tends to be tricky, and in terms of the predominance of the patron the post-revolutionary epoch resembles greatly the pre-revolutionary period. In the memory of those peasants, one figure became partially mythified: "the hacienda represented the identity of the boss", the land "allowed [the *hacendado*] to express his personality", "the bosses were the owners of everything", even the social and moral environment. A feudal sense emerges from both the reality and memory, from exploitation and accusation, from patriarchy and its condemnation. What is to be remembered? Nothing, nothing. They didn't teach us anything, only how to work, to work and to work". Memory cannot overcome such a rampart; no support, only the perversion of that society, adopting

the *hacendados'* morality: "my only vice was working". This is another form of dispossession, even of one's sense of community, one's identity: according to the author, the tricks of memory assure that the only identity that emerges from their accounts is that of the *hacendado*, which by itself impedes any true reclamation, *in fine*.

It's time to go back and, as it were, go forward with the history by, first, looking at the article entitled "Agreement for Extradition and Protection from Anarchism" by Juan Carlos Yáñez Andrade. The author's timely and precise comments that accompany this document exempt us from elaborating more observations. We would only extend the context from Europe to America, and from the years 1880 to 1936, with terrible figures and circumstances, the mythical Ravachol, the assassinations of Tsar Alexander II (1881) and the president of France Sadi Carnot (1894); the charismatic Durruti… without forgetting the famous *bande à Bonnot* (1907-1912), the shadowy North American Pinkerton agency, a kind of White Guard of capitalism. The agreement mentioned in the title is situated among these currents. Two circumstances deserve to be recalled here: first, the bad faith of the parties involved, that clarifies the purpose of the pact in article 2, that finally names anarchism as the principle prey; it backslides in article 13, which decrees that anarchism was a separate case. The second point that calls our attention, given its early date, is that Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras and Nicaragua expressed reserves about handing over "delinquents that deserve the death penalty, according to the legislation of the petitioning countries". The struggle against capital punishment is a long one and, as far as we can see, one that has not reached its end.

With the article "The Public Image of Freemasonry in New Spain, 1761-1821", we enter the agitated universe of the Atlantic revolutions", and the murky mysteries of the so-called conspiracies: here, the Jesuit and Mason are two figures in high relief… hence, the article is built around the representation of an essentially European Freemasonry, one that was transported to America. This image presents certain singularities: it was born in the 18th century with public opinion; that is, that newspapers, libelous and otherwise, played an important role in its development. In the nations of the Spanish

Monarchy, at least, it is probable that the hostile representation of Freemasonry anteceded its implementation, and participated in its diffusion, like the *Centinela contra los franc-masones* of 1752 that circulated in New Spain well before any Mason appeared on the horizon. We may ask to what degree, in prerevolutionary times, a negative images appears more attractive that a positive one that proceeds from power.

Of course, the concept of a Masonic conspiracy and the image of the "sect" acquire new strength in 1789, by initiating the great international conspiracy of philosophers, led by Voltaire. In Mexico in 1794, the Inquisition began to hunt down the French Freemasonry. Thus, we note that its thinking takes on a somewhat exotic French form and, therefore, does not seem to have contaminated the healthy tissue of New Spain, which was nourished much more by the ancient Thomist and pactist current (suffice to mention Friar Servando Teresa de Mier). It was for this reason that the insurgents had no qualms when it came to denouncing the new Masonic ideas that emanated from a corrupt France.

By 1808, the possibility existed to knit a double conspiracy, one Bonapartist (French) and Masonic, that was close to implicating Hidalgo, according to Beristáin and others, such as Friar José Ximeno. For the latter, Hidalgo was a heretic contaminated by "his brothers, the Freemasons" (1811). With regards to Agustín Pomposo Fernández, suffice the title of one of his works, *Desengaños que a los insurgentes de Nueva España, seducidos por los francmasones agentes de Napoleón dirige la verdad de la religión católica y la experiencia* (1812). With Napoleon gone, in an unfavorable terrain, the topic of Freemasonry was hidden until Independence introduced a certain freedom that allowed discussion, and Freemasonry once again became a central topic.

It continued to be so in certain circles, on both sides of the Atlantic, throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th. Another circumstance that endured: the Freemasons and their thought continued to be perceived from the bastions of the reaction, at times the most closed, such as the case of don Ricardo Muñoz Carbonero, a victim of *Franquismo*, whose file is found in the tribunal for the repression of freemasonry and communism (TERMC).

Tracing step-by-step the process against this physician resident in Valencia, Élio Cantalício Serpa attempts to penetrate his mental universe in the face accusations, fear, the pressures of power, and his strategies to form a careful selection of his memories during the interrogations in the *Modelo de Valencia* prison. On a personal note, I can add to those summaries my own experience as a child in Valencia, born shortly after the end of Civil War: I lived less than two kilometers from the prison and past by it in streetcar thousands of times before I turned five. There, people lowered their voices and turned away. Only the child dared to gaze upon that imposing square in the neo-Gothic military style with its civil guards at the entrance and a long line of expectant women. For decades, "*la Modelo*", was a reference point, then a myth, just like San Juan de Ulúa for the rebels of New Spain.

Like the end of all civil wars, accusations were the principal feeders of the prisons and, in this case, it was another doctor who denounced don Ricardo for his actions as President of Red Cross, when he was responsible for hygiene in the republican jails of Valencia. Later documents give testimony to both his deep liberal roots and his membership in the Masonic movement, aspects that complicated his situation even more, "as a leftist militant… Mason, a dangerous red". The idea was not only to instill fear in him but also, as in the times of the Holly Inquisition, obtain the names of other co-believers or, at least, suspects. For almost five years, until his death in 1944, the prosecution continued. In his conclusions, the author mentions Ariadne's thread, though it would perhaps be better to emphasize her double web: one that accused had woven during his past, and that which descended over don Ricardo, his power and instruments, in the dungeons of the *Modelo de Valencia* prison.

As we close this issue of *Relaciones*, we try to move away from this dramatic view of repression during the Franco era. When all is set and done, the whole is more hopeful that it might seem: the 1902 treaty did not put an end to anarchism, quite the contrary. Freemasonry continued its mysteries, nourishing novel-like fantasies such as André Gide's *Las cuevas del Vaticano*; when it left them behind, it became an honorable club… But what of the other universes portrayed herein?

Each one seeks its equilibrium, some finding it in a partial mythification of the past (the hacienda laborers in Jalapa), others in opportunity and flexibility (the Purépechas in the early 20th century), others in the resistances, fed by prideful memories (Mezcala).

At this time, we must also render homage and bid farewell to a member of *Relaciones*' Editorial Council, who left us this past 21st day of October 2010. Antonio Alatorre (Autlán 1922-Mexico 2010) participated enthusiastically in the journal in recent years. Philologist and translator, Alatorre was a recognized scholar in the study of Spanish literature from Mexico, who enjoyed an international reputation. His work entitled *Los 1001 años de la lengua española* condensed decades of experience and love for the Castilian language and its diverse expressions. A member and paisano of the generation of Rulfo and Arreola, Alatorre was a tireless journal director and editor, but also a scholar and director of renowned institutions, such as the Center for Linguistic Studies at *El Colegio de México*. His trajectory led him to be named to *El Colegio Nacional* and as an honorary member of the *Academia Mexicana de la Lengua*. Rest in peace, Antonio Alatorre Chávez.

Traducción al inglés de Paul C. Kersey Johnson