

## Presentation

Academic journals need to renew themselves periodically to continue responding adequately to the demands of the scientific communities they attend. Some of the changes adopted will be profound and transcendent, while others are simple, transitory adjustments that, however, may be quite noticeable. Twenty years—precisely 82 issues—ago, *Relaciones Estudios de Historia y Sociedad* took a fundamental step when it reconfigured its profile by incorporating the *Thematic Section*, thus adopting the format that has characterized it up to today. In each issue, that space was devoted to an important topic of a specific field of the social sciences and humanities, which was addressed collectively by a group of researchers. The other three sections that usually appear in *Relaciones* (*General*, *Documents* and *Book Reviews*) have been published continuously, but we later added *Notes and Debates* to include revisions, notes, commentaries, replies or materials deemed timely and significant for expanding knowledge in the social sciences and humanities.

Today, without diminishing in any way the importance of the *Thematic Section*, the fact is that the *General Section* has formed the backbone of *Relaciones Estudios de Historia y Sociedad* since the journal's founding, for it is the space for publishing articles on the wide range of pertinent, but miscellaneous, topics that our editorial team receives and processes, and so reflects the diversity of scientific production in our fields of interest. Also, most of the articles submitted

for consideration are conceived for publication in this section. Recently, however, a series of circumstances –including, especially, the problem of the limits imposed on the physical spaces available for publications– has obliged us to delay publishing articles in the *General Section* that, some of which have been ready for several months. One strategy we have adopted to relieve this unfortunate backlog has been to publish *pre-prints*; that is, definitive versions of articles that have been accepted through the peer-review process, but have not yet gone through the final editing procedure. While this solution allows us to disseminate those refereed articles as quickly as possible, by no means do we consider it an adequate solution. For this reason, and with the full support of our new Editorial Council, we decided to devote the two final issues of 2017 –151 and 152– exclusively to *General Sections*. This does not mean we have eliminated the *Thematic Section*, or set it aside, for it continues to be fundamental to the journal's objectives and profile. Indeed, since 1997 no trimestral issue of *Relaciones* has appeared without that space, and only the “extraordinary” issues (132bis in 2013 and 148bis in 2016) were published as “miscellaneous” contributions. At this time, then, we have opted to give our *Thematic Section* a brief hiatus, placing it, if you will, in a holding pattern. Our purpose in doing so is to benefit not only those authors who for months –in some cases even a year... or two– have been waiting for their articles to appear, but also our readers, who will now be able to peruse a series of fresh, timely texts for academic discussions that, in these vertiginous times of the Internet and open access to knowledge, at times seem unreachable; though, once one understands how to administer these new means of communication they turn out to be very productive. The outcome is that the final two issues of 2017 do not include *Thematic Sections*, and that we will avail ourselves of this opportunity to rethink the nature of this space through discussions that, we are sure, will see it emerge with renewed strength.

The current issue presents eight interesting articles. José Manuel Martínez Aguilar presents “The Confraternities of New Spain in Tzintzuntzan. Goods, practices and spaces of worship”, in which he examines the role of Confraternities in indigenous towns as pillars of

religious identity. Sergio Eduardo Carrera Quezada wrote “Between regularization and alienation: compositions, denouncements and sales of vacant lots in Yucatán, 1679-1827”, a text that analyzes the problem of defining unappropriated lands in relation to community holdings in the always elusive space of the Yucatan Peninsula. Moisés Guzmán returns to his research on the Constitution de Cadiz and insurgency, but now from the perspective of a small, but important—even mythical since it was visited by Father Hidalgo—locality in the state of Michoacán: the village of Charo, in his essay, “Cadiz, insurgency and the crisis of jurisdictional lordship in New Spain. The case of the Village of Charo, 1808-1825”. Selene Quiroz and Zulema Trejo analyze statistics from northern Sonora in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in “Liberalism and scientific pretensions in Statistical Notes of the state of Sonora”. A compelling text linked to a document is Adam T. Sellén’s “‘Mexican Canarids’: a source for the history of natural medicine”; while in “Rites and cornfields in Amatlán de Quetzalcóatl, Tepoztlán, Morelos, Mexico”, Erika Román Montes de Oca leads us to reflect on the relation between the planting of cornfields and associated rites in a community in the state of Morelos. In his essay, “Observations of mobility in Mexico: two methodological problems in migratory studies”, Philippe Schaffhauser Mizzi critically theorizes studies of migration, while in theirs, Leticia Díaz Gómez and María da Gloria Marroni analyze the experience of elderly women in relation to migratory phenomena. Finally, Luis Sánchez Amaro presents an interesting document, the “Report related to the revolutionary movement in Michoacán”, written by General José Rentería Luviano.

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