

XV years of the Center of Research and Advanced Studies on the Population

We are before time which registers everything and in this case marks that the center of Center of Research and Advanced Studies on the Population, CIEAP because of its initials, is 15 years. And what a better date when the 180th anniversary of the foundation of the Scientific and Literary Institute of Toluca (*Instituto Científico y Literario de Toluca*), antecedent of our university takes place; with this we honor the illustrious liberal doctor José María Luis Mora, who proposed back then the creation of the aforementioned institute.

Creating a center of research in a demographic context so complex and fraught with challenges turned out to be a real adventure, which on our own, we, who started it, would not have been able to put our shoulders to the wheel. Let us see what the situation was: an irrepressible growth of world's population circa five thousand five hundred million people, a figure that fifteen years later increased in a thousand million; this in the time span of the centers' life. These figures have a vital meaning if one thinks of the social processes and of the relation of men with their environment; indeed this is a scientific and academic preoccupation. In this same line, in 1993, the year when our center was created, the population in our country was 88 million; nowadays it is close to 107 million. These tendencies of growth are also reflected on the State of Mexico, which by then had eleven million inhabitants, however nowadays it has fifteen million people.

In order to avoid boredom with figures and also because demographers use them every day, it is worth mentioning that in the back of these data in relation to our country and our state the drastic changes in birthrates, mortality and migration are to be found. These demographic changes have created new realities, such is the phenomenon of population aging; this new reality is immersed into social and economic circumstances marked by inequality, poverty and misery that most of the population experiences. This situation causes large flows of domestic and international migration which in virtue of their social and economic weight has become a deliberate governmental policy that prefers

forcing the population to migrate to boosting sustainable policies of human development. In the international context, the demographic problems, altogether with the economic, social and political ones, to which Mexico contributes, become the largest difficulties of the present and future of a world more globalized by the day. In the face of this reality our research strategy has considered that policies as for demography should be considered an integral part of the policies of social and economic development; never should they be considered substitute of them.

This has been *grosso modo* the demographic panorama that our research centre has had before it, and I repeat it has been an adventure to sail in the study and research of all of these phenomena and it is here where it is worth mentioning that other institutions with greater trajectory and experience have helped in the formation and consolidation of this center of research, I want to mention: El Colegio de México, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, institutions where most of our researchers have studied; our gratitude and recognition go towards these institutions. Also the Institute of Social Researches (*Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales*) from UNAM, whose prestigious researchers have found the time to support the academic and research programs here carried out.

In the course of fifteen years the center has been guided by the institutional compass stated in the university's policies of development and currently established in the Master Plan of administration headed by our rector Dr. Martínez Vilchis. Heeding the policies of institutional development the center nowadays has an academic body with research lines and projects properly recognized by the Secretary of Research and Advanced Studies, and certified by the Secretariat of Public Education in its Program of Improvement of the Faculty (*Programa de Mejoramiento del Profesorado, Promep*) and by the National Council of Science and Technology (*Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, Conacyt*), to whose National System of Researchers (*Sistema Nacional de Investigadores, SNI*) belong several of our researcher-professors.

The center has among its substantive functions to teach, and because of that in the course of its fifteen years it has offered various academic programs, some of them are: Diploma in Population and Development, three courses; Diploma in Demography and Electoral Processes, two callings; and currently the Superior Diploma in Demography. The center already has accumulated experience in teaching academic programs that might work very well when the center attains a new modality in the structure of research in the university in accordance with the legislation that is in its course of approval by the Honorable University Council; this is to say, the status of Institute of Research.

Eight months after being founded, the center starts the edition of the journal *Papeles de POBLACIÓN*, whose most recent issue is the hands of the Presidium and I must proudly say that it keeps up with its periodicity and that we have edited 55 numbers. In its fourteen-year history, the pages of *Papeles de POBLACIÓN* have been written by the most prestigious demographers and scholars of Mexico and other latitudes in the world. A number of the authors are here, you have our recognition for having shared your knowledge and talent with the readers of the journal.

Because of the scientific quality of the articles, the Journal *Papeles de POBLACIÓN* was certified in 1999 by the National Council of Science and Technology, being indexed in the list of Mexican Journals of Scientific and Technological Research; it is also indexed to other 17 indexes, among them, ISI Thompson. These indexes have given the journal a broad coverage and international positioning, mainly in the Spanish-speaking countries; the journal is part of the Network of Scientific Journals of Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal (*Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina, el Caribe, España y Portugal, Redalyc*). In the registration of references in Redalyc, *Papeles de POBLACIÓN* holds the sixth place in the most consulted national journals; to mention some facts, in 2007 it reached 288 086 article downloads, and in this year the user of said network have downloaded 52216 articles of *Papeles de POBLACIÓN*. Likewise, the editorial structure of CIEAP is able to edit, in addition to the journal itself, research books and notebooks.

The academic work of the researchers of the center and our publications have enabled us to create links to governmental organisms and academic institutions and networks; in this respect, it is worth mentioning the relations with the Mexican Society of Demography, here represented by its distinguished president Ms. Patricia Vargas, MSc. The National Council of Population and the State Council of Population with which we have close links that have made the organization of academic events of great interest for the society possible, we our recognition for Ms. María Cristina Moctezuma Lule, Eng., technical secretary of Coespo State of Mexico.

Currently, the links of the center are broad and diverse; the center is part of the Latin American Council of Social Sciences and the relations with the Latin American Association of Sociology are of mutual academic cooperation. The center has also kept relations with the popular representation of the State of Mexico, this is to say the Chamber of Deputies of the State, which recently approved the budget to finance two research projects: one on international

migration, and the other, a study on the process of demographic aging in the State of Mexico, I here on behalf of our center the recognition to the deputies for their support and, particularly, to the Deputy Mr. Joel Cruz Canseco, President of the Commission of Demographic Planning.

Once those research works conclude, the results will be presented before the academic community, society and its popular representatives. We determined to do so because in the case we are concerned for the resources come from society, thus there is a commitment from the center to account and we will do so.

The struggle has been hard however we have found the comforting institutional and personal solidarity of great professors and colleagues, whose greater trajectory and experience have been fundamental in forming and consolidating this center of research. I also have to pay homage in memory of the distinguished professor and our mentor, Mr. Gustavo Cabrera Acevedo, who in the dawn of the center did not spare any effort to contribute to this project called Center of Research and Advanced Studies on the Population. Also in the memory of CIEAP is present the contribution from Dr. Benitez Centeno. In this anniversary we honor their memory as they have passed away.

I express my gratitude as well and recognition to Dr. Ordorica Mellado, who nowadays is still, besides our professor, a friend and colleague in the center.

The history of the center has also been one of ups and downs, yet its rugged history has strengthened it, as it is seen in this narration. Thanks to the effort and the work of those who make it up, after 14 years we have managed to have facilities of our own. Having our own building means there is social and institutional recognition for the work we perform here; I acknowledge the devotedness of those who make up the center, my recognition and gratitude for my colleagues without distinction for the activity, either manual or intellectual, for you my recognition and affect.

Also I want to mention that during the last seven years Dr. Arriaga Jordán has accompanied us in this journey, in the first phase as Coordinator of Research and currently as the Secretary of Research and Advanced Studies, he has always supported the center. Mr. Arriaga you have our recognition.

Mr. Martínez Vilchis, rector of this university, you have always honored the XIX century liberals, who gave us culture and ideology to strengthen our fatherland, today your rectorate retakes those ideals in the thesis that public university constructs the future, the Center of Research and Advanced Studies on the Population is framed in this context. It is worth mentioning that the concept of illustration expressed by the liberals, is nowadays education, science and technology.

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This has been the journey of the center of research along 15 years and as a conclusion I ratify that our academic and research task bear some hope to be useful in defining the policies of population for the different demographic groups and so contribute from science to the development of our country in all of the spheres, either economic, social or political. This hope leads us to the question: demographic studies, what for? In a country where the policies of population, which should be defining not only the present but also the demographic future of our nation, are largely ignored.

I congratulate our rector with a warm hug because all the support given to this center.

I am grateful to all of you to share these first fifteen years of the center and my best regards for it to have a long and prolific life.

Jaciel Montoya Arce