

SCIENCE *VERSUS* HUMANISM?

The traditional approach in the academic environments has been to separate sciences and humanism, as two facets of the activity and creativity of man that have no relation between them. Thus, higher education institutions, as well as the journals and publishing houses, have established a clear separation between the two areas. In current times, however, the points of contact of science and society are becoming ever more numerous, and the need for interactions between the two fields of knowledge increases accordingly.

Interciencia offers a clear example of the feasibility, in the sphere of scientific journals, of harboring simultaneously the two fields, maintaining for both a high level of thoroughness and quality, and in consequence, of acceptability by the academic community. The current issue illustrates two aspects of the topic being dealt with: on the one hand the co-existence and, on the other, the possibility of establishing parameters that, although they might not be completely equivalent, at least permit to reach a level of formal homogeneity that makes it possible to reach a formal homogenization level that allows to appreciate the similarities and differences existing in those who are dedicated to the corresponding disciplines.

Two articles and two of the research reports included in this issue serve to clarify the above mentioned. The first one of the published articles deals about a topic that has become rather common in the contents of the journal. The author seeks to model the relationship between sustainable development and information technologies, two aspects of the highest relevance in the present day and, therefore, of a great academic interest. This work pokes into that which is called as “hard” sciences, in trying to quantify real life phenomena, in search of reducing environmental contamination.

The second article, on the other hand, refers to an aspect that, although it cannot be considered as “diametrically opposed” for addressing an inquiry of a different nature, circumscribes itself to the search and analysis of historiographic evidence about the life of a personage of another

epoch. The findings reported by the authors illustrate the actions and tensions that take place among human groups in post-war conditions.

At the same time, the two research communications that we refer to, correspond to cases which illustrate the “basic”, “hard” or “natural” science (in curious contrast to the other one, the “humane”) that characterizes most of the so-called “scientific” journals that, traditionally, has filled the pages of this journal. One of them informs about aspects of the chemical composition of leaves that are consumed by a kind of bats and its possible relationship to the hormonal development of the latter. The other paper is centered on the biochemical mechanisms through which an extract of a widely distributed tropical plant succeeds in exerting an insecticide action on a common pest of lettuce crops in many countries of the world.

The remaining papers that complete the current issue of *Interciencia* can also be analyzed from the point of view of the interdisciplinarity and complementarity of the different fields of science and humanism. They deal with population structure, a central aspect in human geography, with the worms that increase soil fertility, something of undeniable usefulness in agricultural sciences and human nutrition and, finally, with the role played by the nationality in human migrations.

In all the papers described herein the universally accepted standards of scientific journals have been equally taken into account, inasmuch as the general format, the form of citations and bibliographic references, the refereeing by peers with demonstrated expertise in the corresponding field, the writing style, etc.

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