Very few pedagogical research journals reach the age of 75 and even fewer celebrate this milestone without having changed their name. Therefore, at the start of 2018, it was clear that the revista española de pedagogía should celebrate its diamond anniversary with an especially significant initiative, as mentioning the fact that it was our 75th anniversary on the cover of every issue during the year was not enough.

After several brainstorming sessions, we decided not to devote an issue to a historical review of the journal’s contributions, as it seemed to us to be too self-referential, just as we avoided repeating what was done for the golden anniversary, where we presented the situation of the various educational sciences in that year, a practice followed by other journals. We concluded by deciding that it was time to devote a monographic issue to the current importance of pedagogical journals in shaping the world of education, while at the same time pointing out the main problems that they face today.

A remembrance of May 68, the anniversary of which has been in the press all over the world, was implicit in this decision. This is not the time to attempt to evaluate the events that took place at that time and their consequences, not least because very few political phenomena have promoted such a considerable avalanche of books as the one that gave rise to that event, books that have sometimes brought to light considerable errors that were promoted there and that, from other perspectives, have described it with a romantic, new generational tinge. I was particularly interested in the clash between Jean Paul Sartre and Raymond Aron, members of the same advocacy of L’École Normale Supérieure and who Sirinelli describes as enemy brothers, because, with the passage of time, they ended up maintaining very different ideas, as first demonstrated in Aron’s famous book (1955), where he dismantled many of the Sartrian theses in an extraordinary exercising of lucidity, to which Sartre responded bitterly, particularly with regard to May 1968. Indeed, in an interview in June 68, Sartre launched a strong attack on university professors, as personified by Aron. Specifically he pointed out:

The professor is almost always, as in my day, a man who has written a thesis and who recites it for the rest of his life. He is also someone who possesses a power to which he is fiercely attached: that of imposing on people, in the name of a knowledge that has accumulated his own ideas, without those listening to him having the right to discuss them.
However, knowledge that is not constantly criticised, improved and reaffirmed on the basis of this criticism, has no value. When Aron, having aged, repeats the ideas of his thesis, which was written before the 1939 war, indefinitely to his students, without those who are listening to him being able to exercise the slightest critical control over him, he exercises a real power, but one that is certainly not based on a knowledge worthy of the name (Sartre, 1972, pp. 185-186).

For his part, Aron defended himself by recalling how he had denounced various perverse practices in university work. But it is true that, in those days, the words of Sartre could be applied to many lecturers, as it is true that the current horizon is nothing like it was at that time.

Of course, it is impossible to determine the influence of Sartre on the changes introduced into the academic outlook of the professors. But it is clear that nowadays, nobody can limit themselves to teaching their doctoral thesis, nobody can expect to silence the voice of students, just as nobody can hope to advance in their teaching career without being part of the scientific discussion that today finds a medium that is especially in line with the Internet civilisation in which we operate, such as publication in quality scientific journals.

That is why we chose this topic for the Round Tables and why we decided to go first to the editors of the most relevant educational research journals in Spain. Therefore, we contacted the editors of all of the Spanish journals in the Journal Citations Reports, in its section of education and educational research, where we found warm support for our proposal to hold a Round Table —which ended up being held on 19 April of this year— and then went on to present a written paper, which could be included in a monographic issue of the journal, which would analyse the mission of educational research journals today, presenting data on the history of their journal in recent years and making proposals on policies that these journals can follow to carry out better educational research.

Naturally, both the current phenomenon of globalisation and the international vocation of the revista española de pedagogía made it impossible to limit this number to Spanish-speaking journals, so we went to a similar number of specially qualified foreign journals, from whose editors we also received a positive reception. As a result, the event on April 19 consisted of two Round Tables, in which representatives of ten journals, published in England, Mexico and the United States, as well as Spain, took part in the alphabetical order of their journals, which we have kept to in this issue. My warmest thanks go to those who were involved in the success of this initiative, the articles from which I will summarise below.

We will start this issue with an article produced by representatives of the American Journal of Education, one of the oldest journals in the educational world, as it began in 1893 under the name of The School Review, the historical evolution of which they give
an account up to the current day. It points out their initiatives for carrying out new measurements of impact and their initiatives for bringing journals closer to a growing number of readers, and also their desire to translate scientific results into operational strategies, in order to facilitate the solution of complex educational problems.

The next work —produced by Baker and Connolly, who were the editors of the British Educational Research Journal until a few months ago— presents an overview of educational research journals from a UK perspective, analysing the evolution of their journal over time. The article painstakingly analyses what the greatest challenges for this type of journal are today. The first relates to a discussion about whether journals should find a way to get their content to the widest possible readership, removing all financial barriers, or whether, on the contrary, payment for access to their content is still important. The second deals with the challenge of how to promote the social concern of debating reforms that would make it easier to overcome educational and economic inequalities from a research journal.

Lars Malmberg, editor-in-chief of the Oxford-based Journal of Learning and Instruction, has produced a well-thought-out article weighing up the importance of quantitative methods in educational research and presenting emerging methods used to record learning and teaching processes over time, which take place in multiple contexts.

The next article is by Professor Ordorika, editor of Revista de Educación Superior, one of the most respected in its field, which is not only limited to Mexico. Ordorika points out new problems that have arisen in the world of journals with the appearance of impact indices, which have contributed to a certain stratification between academics and academic institutions. Ordorika warns that journals have gone from being tools for communicating knowledge to instruments for the advancement of teachers. A particularly perverse consequence of this change has been the establishment of impact factors, which do not always reflect the quality of content, as a result of which they have been heavily criticised by various branches of knowledge, which met in Washington in 2013 to sign a Declaration on Research Evaluation, calling for its elimination.

This is followed by an article entitled «Comunicar: quality, visualisation and impact [Comunicar: calidad, visualización e impacto]», in which the editor and two other members of the Comunicar journal’s editorial team give a detailed account of the path taken by this journal to reach the extraordinary positioning it has achieved today worldwide, in record time. The article provides many ideas for advancing the visibility and impact of a journal, as well as identifying issues of interest beyond the local or individual.

The following article is written by Marta Ruiz-Corbella, editor of Educación XX1, and shows the transformation of scientific journals into social science journals as they have moved from printed to digital issues. Dr. Ruiz-Corbella criticises the time that many Spanish social science journals have taken to be included in the best internation-
al indices and the slowness of incorporating new initiatives into journals to enhance the product on offer and which have been made possible by the digital environment.

The editor of Revista de Educación, Professor Gaviria, is the author of an article specially dedicated to analysing the current role of scientific journals in the academic-administrative context, the characteristics of which are appraised. Professor Gaviria calls for the evaluation criteria of scientific journals to be more transparent, more objective and more automatic, as well as constant over time, so as to provide authors with the assurance that their efforts will be appraised without arbitrariness. He also calls for a revaluation of the academic profession, both in order to increase the number of levels and to link it to individual merits closely linked to six-year research periods, and opening up the possibility that access to the upper echelon will not depend on the different circumstances of each university.

The issue closes with an article by me, in which I provide the main data on the past and present of the revista española de pedagogía, while at the same time making a proposal on the future of a journal, which is now 75 years old and that has kept itself alive by cultivating the imagination, in response to the challenges of each era and its concern for taking care of both the material details of the publication and the quality of the articles published, which cannot be confined to formal criteria, but must be creatively engaged in the search for pedagogical answers to the main problems of education today.

Clearly, the world of research journals is very broad and constantly moving. Most of those that we have published in this issue have already published other works on this subject, but it seems to me that we have managed to obtain a very plural monographic issue, which provides a broad, profound view of the role of scientific journals in the growth of pedagogical knowledge.

José Antonio Ibáñez-Martín
Editor of revista española de pedagogía

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This is the English translation of the studies and book reviews in the original Spanish printed version of issue 271 of revista española de pedagogía. The complete Spanish version of this issue can also be found on the journal’s website (http://revistadepedagogia.org).