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“The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward.”¹

—Winston Churchill

I feel truly honored to have been appointed as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Oral & Facial Pain and Headache*. Immediately my thoughts focused on where we, as a profession, should be striving to reach, but reading into the future is a perilous activity. Sir John Eric Erichsen, a surgeon from the 1870s, has been famously misattributed as saying: “The abdomen, the chest and the brain will forever be shut from the intrusion of the wise and humane surgeon.”^{*} Say no more!

Analyzing the past is much easier, and the lessons learned may be extremely useful when applied judiciously. The history and establishment of the science and practice of orofacial pain have been tremendously assisted by the fact that we have a successful scientific journal representing our various societies. The journal's success to date can be largely attributed to the enlightened leadership provided by the previous editorial board. Our Editor-in-Chief for the past 20 years, Dr Barry Sessle, is one of the most established and respected international neuroscientists. With him were Drs Ilana Eli, Christian Stohler, Sandro Palla, and Greg Murray, each an individual with a specifically rich history in research, clinical care, and teaching in the field of orofacial pain. We owe them our deep gratitude for their work and for bringing our profession the recognition and respect we have attained. These are some of the “giants” in our profession, and “filling their shoes” will be a challenging task.

My primary aim will be to maintain the level of prestige the journal currently enjoys. To this end, the new editorial team consists of researchers and clinicians known by the breadth and depth of their knowledge in the fields of pain, orofacial pain, temporomandibular disorders, sleep, psychology, and headache. I expect they will act as a magnet to attract the very best articles in our field, and I am hoping we will see an incremental growth in the journal's impact factor. Together the editorial team will be formulating a strategic plan for the journal, slowly laying the stones for the path we must create. I invite you to contact me with any creative suggestions for our journal.

The journal's updated name (*Journal of Oral & Facial Pain and Headache*) offers parameters that

we can implement as one strategy moving forward: The journal should be the major forum for research on the spectrum of pains that involve the oral, facial, and head structures. It sounds obvious, but it is more uncommon than we imagine with journals (and the professions they represent) to be deeply entrenched in strict geographic pain delimitations; eg, toothache, other orofacial pain, and headache. Although we are a predominantly clinical journal, we can and should accommodate basic research. The trigeminal nerve is largely ignored in the neuropathic pain literature, and there are many reasons why we should be publishing clinically relevant laboratory work.

Compared to other medical specialties, we are relatively young, and that may possibly explain why we are still lacking a thorough classification of oral and facial pain. Much misdiagnosis of regional pain originates from a lack of knowledge regarding dentoalveolar, oral, and less common facial pains. These often present with overlapping symptomatology and complex referral patterns that make diagnosis difficult. We lack research on facial pain originating from dentoalveolar structures, its differential diagnosis, and the associated misdiagnoses. The bilateral interactions between facial pain and headache continue to challenge us and our medical colleagues. Multiprofessional research into these key areas is essential for the good of our patients. However, these areas of research will not be possible without first establishing a complete classification of oral and facial pains.

I am optimistic that such a classification will appear in the literature very soon as the International Classification of Orofacial Pain (ICOP), the result of over 2 years of collaborative and hard work by

^{*}The correct quote is actually from a biography of Joseph Lister and reads: “Mr Erichsen believed that the abdomen, the brain, and the chest would be for ever shut from the intrusions of a wise and humane surgeon.”² The statement has been inaccurately attributed to Erichsen himself, but the sentiment is not upheld by Erichsen's own writings.

international experts in the field. ICOP will integrate seamlessly with the International Classification of Headache Disorders and the upcoming International Classification of Diseases (v. 11), whose section on chronic pain was prepared by members of the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP). The newly named Special Interest Group on Orofacial and Head Pain of the IASP initiated this teamwork together with the American Academy of Orofacial Pain, the International Network for Orofacial Pain and Related Disorders Methodology (previously: International RDC/TMD Consortium Network), and the International Headache Society. The future looks a little brighter when working together and reminds me of the African proverb: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

I invite you all to work together with us. We will go far.



Rafael Benoliel
Editor-in-Chief



References

1. Red herrings. In: Langworth R (ed). Churchill by Himself: In His Own Words. Newburyport: Rosetta, 2013.
2. Wrench GT. Lord Lister: His Life and Work. London: Fisher Unwin, 1914.