



Editorial

## Editorial RICMA

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The *raison d'être* of this Editorial is to publicize the launch of the website of the Ibero-Latin American Group for Surgery of the Hand (ILA Group), which had its starting point in 1993, in a joint congress of the SECMA, the SBCM and the AACM held in Vigo. At that time, it was impossible to know how far it would go, but we had the hope of a long survival, based on the friendship of its promoters and the excellent relations that the three Hand Surgery Societies mentioned had.

Its evolution since then has had - as expected - periods of greater and lesser activity, but its existence has stood the test of time, organizing or participating in 13 Congresses in many different countries. Another factor of great importance in the field of ILA hand surgery was the fortunate transformation of the Spanish Journal of Hand Surgery becoming the Ibero-American Journal of Hand Surgery (RICMA) which, gradually, has been improving its scientific quality and its dissemination. Its current simultaneous publication in Spanish and English, and its free access, predict a hopeful future for it. Its very name indicates that this journal is open to all specialists in the ILA field and, in addition, to authors from other countries.

That being said, without a doubt, the weakest point of the ILA Group has been until today the non-existence of a proper website, an essential tool to obtain the continued connection of all hand surgeons within the ILA scope. The website that is now born will take time to reach the maximum level we aspire to, but this deadline will be shorter if we all work together.

I would like to use this editorial to say once again that the ILA Group should not have any inferiority complex regarding the other more renowned Societies, Federations or Associations, mostly English-speaking. I accept that language is very important, but by itself it does not give a journal or a website a higher scientific level. The ILA countries have been the cradle of hand surgeons of extraordinary value. The great pioneers such as E. A. Zancolli and F. Enríquez de Salamanca

were followed by a second generation of enormous quality, made of surgeons such as Julio Taleisnik, Luis Scheker, Alberto Lluch, Santos Palazzi, Walter Albertoni and Jorge Orbay, among others. Some have been authors of high-level books, although in some cases they were only published in English, as happened with the one entitled *Structural and dynamic bases of Hand Surgery* by Eduardo A. Zancolli and the one called *The Wrist* by Julio Taleisnik.

In the current generation, the ILA countries continue to provide a good number of excellent and renowned surgeons, whose names we all know and who I avoid mentioning, in order not to make the mistake of leaving some off the list. Also, our role in multiple congresses and international organizations has been and continues to be very relevant. Taking this into account, I do dare to mention Arlindo Pardini and Marc García-Elías, who became the presidents of the very prestigious International Federation of Societies of Surgery of the Hand (IFSSH). The celebration in 2016 of the IFSSH Congress in Buenos Aires under the direction of Eduardo R. Zancolli, was another great achievement, both personally and for the AACM.

For all these reasons, in my opinion, I believe that we should have more 'ILA pride', and I encourage our younger Spanish and Portuguese-speaking colleagues to dedicate at least part of their time and effort to collaborating with the RICMA magazine and with the Grupo ILA website, and to preferably attend its future congresses.

In recent years, I have spent a lot of time reviewing the past of Traumatology and Orthopedics in general, and of Hand Surgery in particular, as well as reading numerous books and magazines on our specialty, and reviewing the scientific programs of the conferences and courses I have attended over half a century. I have come to the conclusion of the veracity of what was said in his day, by the prestigious American gynecologist and writer Oliver Wendell Jones: 'There is a dead medical literature and another alive. The

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dead is not all ancient, and the living is not all modern'. For this reason, I believe that it is necessary to reserve a space on this website to review our history, analyzing the successes and mistakes of our past, which would also be convenient to do in our future congresses.

I have also found out that, as if by ignorance or lack of professional dignity, findings and techniques described by authors in various forums and in publications of little diffusion, are 'rediscovered' later by other authors that give them other titles in highly prestigious journals. This occurs more frequently in journals from English-speaking countries - with the USA at the head - whose managers do not bother to check if what they publish has predecessors, or what is worse, because of the authors of the articles, who they knowingly choose to hide. The list would be long and the only remedy would be surveillance and systematic denunciation.

Also, I would like to comment on the recklessness with which new materials of all kinds are frequently presented on websites, magazines and conferences, a risk that Mark Coventry (a Mayo Clinic surgeon) warned us about in his presidential speech at The 1977 Congress of the American Orthopedic Association: 'We must be alert to maintain the balance between the necessary financing of our congresses and journals, and the preservation of the dignity and scientific value of the content of our publications'. These words from Coventry - to which he added 'and presentations' - were justified by the high percentage of failures in the short or medium term of many new materials and prostheses, a scenario that is still valid, and that must continue to be combated. That will be our attitude from the first moment.

In a nutshell, I want to share with all of you my enthusiasm for this newly born ILA website, whose link I add. Its future is in your hands. In advance, thank you for your collaboration.

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