Editorial

All sciences are subject to constant change, and medicine is no exception. Research and clinical experience continuously expand our understanding, so that medical knowledge doubles every 4 years, and every 10 years only 25% of it is still relevant. With today's information technologies, 'new' ideas pour out and are received without question. For the scientific community it may be more important today than ever before that new insights and research results are published only after being critically assessed by competent colleagues in the field. This process has proven itself since the 19th century, just as *Ophthalmologica* has served as a trusted platform since 1899 for new findings in ophthalmology.

Since 1993 I have had the privilege and pleasure to serve as Editor of *Ophthalmologica*. Back then it was still possible to publish articles in German, French or English. However, internationalization led automatically to English becoming the main language of science. We have received articles from over 40 countries and every continent, and the number of submissions has grown enormously, in particular those from Europe and the USA, but also from Turkey, the Arabic countries, Japan and China.

The quality of submissions and, in particular, the assessment of those papers finally published depends on the tireless efforts of the Associate Editors and Editorial Board. I would, therefore, like to express my sincere thanks to them: working with such scientists and clinicians was rewarding and fruitful. Apart from those col-

leagues listed in *Ophthalmologica*, over the years roughly 1,000 scientists actively participated in the reviewing process. In order to maintain high quality standards, only 25% of all submitted papers have been accepted. I am also much indebted to these colleagues.

Without a publisher, a journal could not exist, and in this context Dr. Thomas Karger has to be mentioned as a remarkable personality. Karger Publishers have been producing medical and scientific journals for generations, so Thomas Karger grew up with this profession and possesses an intuition and instinct for current trends in science and science policy. Whenever it was right and made good sense, he played a part in the events of *Ophthalmologica*; however, he also always left enough freedom for the Editorial Board to develop the journal. On behalf of the Editorial Board and authors I offer Thomas Karger our warmest and most heartfelt thanks.

As I now step down as Editor, I bring to mind the formations taken by the grey geese during their northward spring migrations. There is a lot we could learn from them. During their long flights they change leaders regularly so that none wears itself out unduly and each is able to find new energy to continue the flight. A prerequisite for this model is that all can fly equally well and can be trusted to lead in turn. I think this is a very fitting image as I now hand over leadership with very best wishes and great confidence in the future to my colleague and friend José Cunha-Vaz.

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