

Anniversary Issue Editorial

50 years *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* (1957 – 2007): Keeping thoughts and blood in flow

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Once in a lifetime a successful scientific journal eventually reaches its 50th anniversary: In 2007 *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* is celebrating with the present issue half a century of scientific publication service in the field of Vascular Medicine. Founded under the name *Thrombosis et Diathesis Haemorrhagia* in the early summer of 1957 by Erwin Deutsch, Rudolf Jürgens, and Fritz Koller together with Paul Matis (Schattauer Publishers), our journal has gained international reputation as a reliable and respected publication platform. This is especially due to the fact that virtually all renowned scientists in the thrombosis field have published key papers in *Thrombosis and Haemostasis*, the former official journal of the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis (ISTH). Thus, during the previous 50 years many of the more than 15,000 published articles on basic and clinical topics contained principal discoveries and breakthroughs in blood coagulation research. The numerous outstanding papers that appeared in the journal directly mirror the enormous development in this biomedical field. Moreover, in the best sense of translational research and reflected by the responsibility of researchers and clinicians, our field influences virtually every medical discipline and is of utmost importance for the diagnostic and therapeutic approaches to be taken for appropriate interventions in cardio- or cerebrovascular diseases.

Producing a scientific journal of this calibre requires many thoughtful brains, helpful hands and dedicated hearts: The indicated Swiss-Austrian-German group of founding editors of *Thrombosis et Diathesis Haemorrhagia* from 1957–1961 (photos on page III) aimed to collect the scientific news for a growing readership and successfully managed to combine basic research and clinical medicine papers in a single journal. For the subsequent decade from 1962–1972, one of the New World fathers of coagulation, Kenneth M. Brinkhous, joined the editor-in-chief crew and thereby established Chapel Hill as the American base for the ISTH and the society journal.

Although since 2003 the journal's organisation, manuscript submission and the reviewing process are managed with the support of an electronic online system, in the early years of *Thrombosis et Diathesis Haemorrhagia*, other rules governed the making of publications, as indicated by Profs. **Klaus Lechner** and

Michael Fischer (Vienna), who both were directly involved in the evaluation of papers in those days: "In the mid-1960s we were both associates of Prof. Erwin Deutsch, who was one of the founders of *Thrombosis et Diathesis Haemorrhagia* and who was one of the three editors of the journal at that time. In 1964 he became head of the first Department of Medicine at the University of Vienna which meant that he had an enormous workload to be covered every day. Therefore, he asked us to assist him in the journal's editorial work, which he had carried out essentially by himself. Our duty was to provide our written (but informal) opinion on the quality of the submitted manuscripts, and we thereby got some insights into the processing and handling of research articles. At that time, no fax or e-mail was available. The authors submitted their manuscripts in triplicate per mail to one of the editors (Brinkhous, Deutsch, Koller), usually the Americans to Brinkhous and the Europeans to Deutsch or Koller. Manuscripts could be written in English, German or French with summaries in all three languages. At that time no external reviewers were asked to independently evaluate the incoming submissions, but usually, manuscripts were reviewed by the three editors (or their associates); yet, we had no influence on the editors' decisions. The final judgement and the decisions in favour or against publication were made by all three editors. The reviewing process of a large number of manuscripts was a heavy workload for us, but also provided an advantage, because we received a lot of new scientific information and gained experience to evaluate the quality of scientific papers. For most of the manuscripts we also saw the incoming reviews by Brinkhous and Duckert (who essentially made the reviews for Koller) and we were impressed by their great experience, their ability of critical assessment and their fairness to authors. This was an important experience for our future scientific career."

This growth and consolidation period of the journal was followed by an eight-year time span (1972–1980) under the leadership of Rosemarie Biggs (Oxford), the only female editor-in-chief to date, whose commitment also resulted in rephrasing the journal's name into *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* in 1976. Thereafter, within a rhythm of about six years each, Francois H. Duckert (1980–1986), Jan J. Sixma (1986–1993) and Jos Ver-

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mylen (1993–1999) took over the duties as editor-in-chief and, together with Harold R. Roberts and other associate editors, expanded the scope and visibility of the journal among scientists inside and outside the thrombosis field. Thereafter, Pier M. Mannucci was responsible for a strong interactive journal until, in 2002, the ISTH and *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* separated. With a board of forty dedicated section editors, since 2003 I have been responsible for the scientific editorship of our "independent" journal, and we try our very best to keep the tradition of publishing papers with biomolecular and medical contents side by side and to strengthen the position of *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* in the field of Vascular Medicine.

In order to give our readers an authentic insight into some discoveries and the researchers behind them, several outstanding investigators including former editors-in-chief and associate editors provide insightful contributions and personal views as well as snapshots from the "world of clotting" for this anniversary issue. Other authors review the development of a special topic that was particularly influenced and driven by their visionary work. All in all, the 24 articles collected provide a potpourri of birthday presents that are meant to reflect the many directions and views of haemostasis and thrombosis, both from the basic science and the clinical medicine point of view. I am extremely grateful to all authors who immediately agreed to submit a paper for this anniversary issue under the pressure of a tight publication timeline. Unfortunately, I could not ask many more potential authors who would have liked to contribute: There will be another chance in 10 years time!

On the following pages readers will be entertained with some historical sketches by fathers and mothers of modern coagulation, with backgrounds of great discoveries in the field as well as memories and (sentimental) retrospects on the "good old days", where principal clinical observations paved the way for breakthroughs in medical science. You will appreciate how enjoyable coagulation reaction kinetics can be, supported by lots of footnotes or by philosophic insights, respectively. We will be surfing on both sides of the Pacific as well as being taken on a calmer North Sea sailing trip for approaching tissue factor. As everyone knows: there is no proper wound healing without platelets, and especially their adhesion molecules will be viewed by

some outstanding "plateologists": looking back without anger into the past and forward into the future. Moreover, two individualists who perfectly manage to handle the electron microscope over several decades, will uncover some morphological secrets of platelets. Thus, "without this bit of glue, you (the platelet) wouldn't look like you" is true indeed for the smallest cellular wound sealing unit.

Both, the contact-phase system and the intrinsic coagulation pathway are always linked in virtually all textbook drawings, although nature plays another more complex game to distinguish between physiological haemostasis and pathological thrombosis: Interesting insights are provided here by reviews on the plasma kallikrein-kinin system and the role of factor XI in thrombosis and haemostasis. To balance coagulation reactions and the explosion of thrombin formation and action, natural anticoagulants, including antithrombin I and antithrombin "III", heparan sulfates or hirudin are reactive on many fronts and for diverse purposes as outlined in additional contributions. A special tale is reserved for protein S and its link with the complement system, a unique case for interactive relations between two biological defense systems. We finish off with the omnipotent vitamin "Koagulation" and its role for the function of non-clotting proteins, as well as with a more than 150-year-old observation that has stimulated intensive work on thrombosis and cancer. The final note will take us even further back into evolution and reports on the ancestor clottable protein from *Limulus*.

I hope this bouquet of contributions with diverse themes and topics to celebrate the "golden anniversary" of *Thrombosis and Haemostasis* will find interested readers who should be stimulated and encouraged to continue surfing through this or other issues of the journal. If you get tired of reading, start writing your own paper and submit your best work to *T&H*.

On behalf of the editorial board, the editorial staff and the publisher,


Editor-in-Chief