



A farewell after challenging times

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Editor-in-Chief

In August 2016, I was appointed as the Editor-in-Chief of *Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology (DIR)*. Before this role, I had the opportunity to serve as the Section Editor of *DIR* for over four years, which introduced me the editorial point of view. After ten years in the *DIR*'s editorial team, and after over six years as the Editor-in-Chief, the time has come to say goodbye, as I am leaving this renowned position. During my tenure, I learned a lot and I loved the craft itself. As I mentioned in my first editorial in *DIR*,¹ I consider the scientific publishing a “shared madness”, “where the authors, reviewers and editors are collectively searching a needle in a haystack as they try to find the best methods to test, best words to express, best sentences to connect, best figures to demonstrate”. Now in my last editorial in *DIR*, I would like to thank everybody, who shared this madness with me.

The best term that I could find to define my years as Editor-in-Chief is the “challenging times”. The challenge of the first three years was to rearrange the pivotal roles, of the Section Editors, Reviewers and the Editorial Staff in a meaningful way. With distinguished *Section Editors*, who were all respected experts in their field and the constituted synergy of our team, this early challenge turned to an opportunity. I would like to thank all my friends in the Editorial Board, who spent their valuable time with me and with *DIR*. *Reviewers* are the nameless soldiers, the volunteers of the scientific battle, and of course, it is not easy to find the best warriors. During my period, I tried to produce an accessible, punctual, and accurately responding reviewer pool, by making a list of the contributors of *DIR*, either as an author or a reviewer, who might be called the “fan club” of *DIR*. I thank to all these reviewers for their priceless past, current and future contributions. The workers of the *Editorial Staff* are the people who turn the wheels of a journal, giving meticulous attention to commas, brackets, letters and words (together with the editors, and of course mostly more than the editors). Depending on the situation, they function as the brain or the arm of an editor in the publication process overall. I would like to thank all the editorial staff that I had found to the opportunity to work with in my editorial capacity.

The challenge of the second three years' included the “COVID-19 pandemic and the post-COVID era”. At the beginning, understanding of the disease itself was a big issue, which was followed by the emerging topic of the proper use of radiology during the pandemic. The disease was declared as pandemic by WHO on March 11th, 2020. I am proud to say that our journal contributed to this global health conversation in a timely manner with publications on the “Chinese experience” online on 25 March 2020,² “Italian experience” online on 31 March 2020,³ and “Interventional Radiology and COVID-19” online on 27 March 2020.⁴ These three commentary articles were not only scientific communication papers but also were regarded as guidelines in the very early times of this unknown contiguous disease, in the days that nobody knew what and how to do in their profession together with COVID. During the early weeks and months of the pandemic, *DIR* transitioned from a periodical scientific journal to a dynamic medical newspaper or magazine to provide the real knowledge about the condition as quickly as possible. Our goal was contributing simultaneously to the literature and professional practice, which was favorably received by our community with high article downloads and considerable subsequent citations.

The challenge for *DIR* in the following months was the explosion of the number of submitted manuscripts, mostly related to COVID topics, but also of various kinds, and of various author experiences in writing. We addressed this demanding situation with the help of active editors and reviewers who had been generous with their time due to their devotion to *DIR*, and probably due to their professional curiosity about the trend topic of COVID. With support of our editors and reviewers, our mean turnaround time for 2020 was as low as 14.2 days from submission to first decision, and 22.0 days to from submission to final decision. The COVID wind in radiology literature and in our journal resulted a rise in JCI-impact factor (IF). In 2021 the announced IF of *DIR* (for the year 2020) was as 2.63, representing a significant rise when compared to the previous years (1.87 for 2019 and 1.46 for 2018). The IF for 2021 (announced in 2022) reached to 3.34, which now stands as the new standard that has to be maintained.

The last but probably not the least challenge was the “post-COVID era”, which we entered with a sense of exhaustion

personally and professionally. The idea of surviving through the pandemic and the attitude related to that was tiring by itself for every individual. However, in addition to that, the professionals in healthcare have suffered from the enforcing daily work life due to postponed routine workload because of the COVID time. As a matter of life, maybe due to burn out, the time spent for scientific investigation, writing, revising, reviewing, editing and all the procedures in the publication cycle have been interrupted in some way in the post-COVID era. The duration of the reviews of the manuscripts has been prolonged overall, not only because of trying to find enough reviewer responses or due to the delay of the reviewers or the editors, but also due to the delay of the expected revisions by the authors, as well. While as medical community we are not in the trenches as much as we used to, impact of COVID-19 pandemic is still unfolding.

Finally, I would like to thank to all the respectful presidents of Turkish Society of Radiology and all the Executive Board members, who I am privileged to call them my

friends, for supporting me during my position of editing and managing *DIR* between 2016 and 2022. I also would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all members of the Turkish Society of Radiology, who are actually the real supporters, financers, and owners of *DIR*.

I would like to thank everybody who had trusted and trusts me.

Sincerely,

References

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