Changing of the guard at *The Journal of Headache and Pain*

As our readers can see, *The Journal of Headache and Pain* is experimenting a phase of evolution, from grub to chrysalis. Even if the neonatal phase has only just passed, it is still a reminder of the actual adolescent phase which presented itself full of fears, courage, uncertainties and dreams. It is right that it should be so. The will to grow is always full of such emotions.

The necessity to bid an almost simultaneous and sad farewell to Virgilio Gallai (as Founding Editor-in-Chief) and to Francomichele Puca (as Founding Associate Editor) has left a feeling of deep loss among our ranks. On the *humus* (breeding ground) of different views and on a normal and healthy exchange of ideas has bred a solid reality which has been nurtured and taken root. I remember how our editorial initiative was considered a too ambitious project, even opposed, and can only hope that it was just a natural response to the *res nova*. Perseverance towards an ideal has won over scepticism. Our idea was to propose to the international scientific world a side window to the areas of headache and pain and it continues to gradually develop without interference with old and solid editorial realities. If we all support the idea that today only one-quarter of patients suffering from migraine receive adequate diagnosis and cure, we cannot deny that there exists space for stimulating products to be investigated or that clinical, social or basic research in this area of medicine has not been saturated. No, indeed!

Mention must also be made of the Italian Society for the Study of Headaches, the *raison d’être* of this *Journal*. This scientific society is now well-established, and has reached its twenty-eighth year since foundation without fears of international integration, and is also the only non-Anglophone scientific society to have twice hosted the congress of the International Headache Society, in 1987 in Florence and in 2003 in Rome.

Now, *The Journal of Headache and Pain* is to embody a strategic priority for the next five years. It is not my desire to appear before you today as a neurotic innovator – a too-often practice for incoming Editors-in-Chief – outlining a list of what should be modified, changed, innovated. The natural, human desire to leave forever a personal imprint often brings chaos to valuable works that maybe only needed a little restoration.

Instead I would like to reiterate to all of you what I stated in the strategic proposition which accompanied my application for this position. I think that the future of this *Journal* must base itself on four solid cornerstones which have already been in operation for some time [1–3]: the internal joint leadership of the Editorial Board concerned with the management of sub-
mitted manuscripts; the exclusive man-
agement via the Web of these manu-
scripts; the enhancement of interest
towards the neglected topic of the
impact of headache disorders on public
health; and promotion of the multidis-
ципinary study of painful pathologies.

On the other hand, the recent
International Classification of
Functioning, Disability and Health
(ICF) of the World Health Organiza-
tion (WHO) has stressed a priority that no
one can ignore [4]. We cannot voice
sufficiently loudly our sense of
achievement that the area of headache
is no longer the “Cinderella” within
the panorama of clinical medicine,
considering that the ICF has placed
migraine in the nineteenth position
among the most debilitating illnesses.
Instead, we must busy ourselves in
order to favor the growth of the culture
of the single and the collective in the
area of social medicine applied to
headache and painful syndromes, in
their formulation and research [5].

Regarding the new plan for the
Journal, I would like to offer in each
issue a concise opening stage to the
sector leaders who will be invited to
express their opinions regarding evalu-
ation, critique, indication of tenden-
cies, innovations. The policy regarding
the sections dedicated to specific sub-
jects will continue as in the past. In the
wake of the pioneer section “On the
Web” I think that it is now time for a
“Public Health Section” and an inter-
esting and culturally lively “Historical
Section”. The medicine of headache is
a many-faceted area and as such I feel
it must be realized in all its various
connotations. These new sections will
be entrusted to recognized experts in
their respective fields.

Above all, I hope that in my role as
Editor-in-Chief I may serve as a coor-
dinating link of scientific excellence
and so enable the Senior Editor-in-
Chief, the Deputy Editor and Associate
Editors to work with maximum direc-
tional autonomy within the Journal.
Finally, the sincere wish that I offer to
the entire Editorial Board and to all
readers is that The Journal of
Headache and Pain may represent not
only a simple gym where one can prac-
tice when one feels like it, but instead a
green rugby field where we may con-
front each other, even roughly, but with
well known rules respected by all.

The continuous tracking of the sta-
 tus of one’s own manuscript, the possi-
bility to choose among one of three ref-
erees, and the maximum sense of tim-
ing of the publication represent some
of the new keys in the editorial offer
we are making to the scientific world.
We will be able to give a stage to the
development of the tripod of the sci-
cence of headache: scientific research,
academic teaching methods and the
formation of new researchers. Thus we
will be able to contribute in a non-
unrealistic extent and thereby enable us
to render the area of headache medi-
cine the dignity of a new discipline.

I hope that after having inherited a
chrysalis, in my turn I may be able to
leave to my future successor a splendid
multicolored butterfly free to fly.

Paolo Martelletti
Editor-in-Chief

References
1. Martelletti P (2003) Web-based sub-
mision of manuscripts to The Journal
of Headache and Pain. J Headache
Pain 4:42
2. Martelletti P, Leonardi M (2003) The
global impact of migraine. J Headache
Pain 4:S1–S2
3. Martelletti P (2002) The unfinished
war. J Headache Pain 3:115–116
4. – (2001) International classification of
functioning, disability and health.
World Health Organization, Geneva
(available at http://www3.who.int/icf/icftemplate.cfm,
viewed 9 March 2004)
5. – (2000) Headache disorders and pub-
lic health. Education and management
implication. World Health
Organization, Geneva
(WHO.MSD.MBD/00.9)