

# Editorial



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*“All true life lies in encounter...”*  
Martin Buber

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**On behalf of myself**, the Art and PR-Director—Ms Lili Maas, the Associate Editors and the Editorial Board, I very cordially invite all of you, old and new subscribers, colleagues and friends, colleagues-editors from other journals related to the topic of the Neurosciences, to this new volume of the *Neuroendocrinology Letters* (NEL) with its new layout, new format, four-color print and, most importantly, with its new aim and scope. This “new look” of the NEL represents a real ENCOUNTER between sciences, methodologies, approaches, different views, philosophies; encounters between Science and Art; basic research, clinical research and practice; encounters between the editors and readers, colleagues from different fields on the basis of inter- and transdisciplinarity; encounters between senior and junior researchers; encounters between scientists as human beings.

**Presenting this advanced inaugural of the NEL** we continue in the legacy of the founder and Editor-in-Chief of this Journal, the late Professor Derek Gupta, while developing it further in the new directions and visions for the next Millennium.

During the time I served as a member of the Editorial Board of the NEL, I became familiar with Professor Gupta’s editorial intentions and policies. In the last weeks of his life, he and I discussed his wish that I would take over the editorship of NEL. I humbly accepted this legacy which was both a great honor and an enormous responsibility. Many of my distinguished colleagues on the Editorial Board have strongly supported me and remained on the Board. During the last two years while editing this Journal (Vol. 18, 1997 and Vol. 19, 1998), I have enlarged the Editorial Board by inviting more distinguished colleagues from different fields around the world to join us. Without the most appreciated help of the members of the Editorial Board and without the indispensable role of Mr Kurt Mattes of Heidelberg, who published the last two volumes, it would not have been possible to continue without a break to edit and publish the NEL after Professor Gupta’s death. I am very much obliged to our two Associate Editors, Professor Russel Reiter and Professor Michal Karasek, for their consistent support and advice.

In the Obituary for Derek Gupta (NEL, Vol. 18, Nos. 2/3, 1997), I quoted some lines from his poetry:

*“What we call the beginning is often the end.  
And to make an end is to make a beginning.  
The end is where we start from.”*

**Starting today** with the “new” NEL, we make the new beginning of the great work which Derek Gupta devoted many years of his life to. He was not only one of the most talented and beloved members of the scientific community, but he was also a great humanist, an artist of life, a man of literature and a poet. He approached both science and poetry from his heart, probing deeply into the processes of the human condition, with enthusiasm for life and people. He understood that life is an indivisible continuity from the very beginning. It was not by chance that he came much closer to the neuroendocrinology of the fetus and prenatal conditions in the last years of his life. He died in office as the president-elect of the International Society of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine (ISPPM) and for many years served as a co-editor of the International Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine (ISSN 0943–5417). Both the Prenatal Journal and the NEL are in very close cooperation with each other and some colleagues serve on the editorial boards of both of them.

Professor Gupta was always helpful and supportive to young scientists. He supervised and inspired 140 postgraduate candidates to the completion of their Doctoral Theses. He promoted young, promising researchers who later became leaders in their fields and who were given their first publication opportunity in the NEL. In this issue, we publish a work of two young researchers from the Department of Histology and Embryology from the 3rd Medical Faculty at the Charles University in Prague. In this issue, I would like to introduce you to Ms Lili Maas who joined the Journal as Art and PR-Director and subsequently became the NEL’s co-publisher and co-owner. Thanks to her we are able to start the new era of editing and publishing the NEL with its new look, presenting it with this issue and also to enliven the Journal with contributions from art, literature, psychology, philosophy, etc., fulfilling our vision of the indivisibility of science from the other aspects of human life.

**NEL invites** the interdisciplinary discussions where the same topic can be viewed from different aspects. It should serve as a unique opportunity for the cross-fertilization between the different sciences and practices, rather than the more multidisciplinary approach.

Currently, there is an enormous development in biochemistry, molecular biology, endocrinology, genetics, psychological sciences, etc., with the interdisciplinary approaches, such as in psychoneuroendocrinology and psychoneuroimmunology which are gaining momentum. We can no longer limit the classical school medicine model to the established theory of pathology with its disease-based creed.

**In order to understand** the integrative approach to human life and to life as a whole, there are no distinctions made between the somatic and psychological dimensions. Semantics, a prerequisite for a dialogue between researchers and practitioners from different scientific and clinical divisions, is one of the most essential issues in understanding the unifying process in the human being. It was best expressed in a leading article of Lancet in 1985: “Psychiatrists and immunologists do not meet much and when they do they tend to speak in different tongues.” One could even add that they often do not even realize that they do not understand each other.

The true vision of the NEL is the interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and integrative aspects of sciences and their entree into the twenty-first century. Integration means also amalgamation, blending, assimilation, combining, incorporation, unification and harmony. This last mentioned, harmony, should be stressed and underlined specifically: a harmony between different views and approaches, between different methods and methodologies, different theories and practices. It also means that there is a great deal of space for respect, tolerance and generosity without compromising on strict scientific tasks.

**The bridge** between the neuroendocrinology, the immune system and the rest of the central nervous system opens the gateway to more common understanding and acceptance across disciplines. The NEL is an umbrella for the endeavor that unites various scientific fields in their attempt to elucidate the processes of experience involved from the earliest stages of human life.

**Integrated psychoimmuno-neuroendocrinology** represents a unique opportunity for the primary prevention of psychological, emotional and physical disorders.

Thus, the NEL is an international, peer-reviewed transdisciplinary Journal, covering the fields of neuroendocrinology and related areas, including immunological, psychological, oncological and other aspects in the normal and pathological physiology.

It publishes work from different fields of *basic research*, such as molecular and cellular biology, anatomy, histology, biology, normal and pathological physiology, chronobiology, biophysics, pharmacology, biochemistry, neurochemistry, enzymology, receptor studies, embryology and teratology, endocrinology, immunology and neuroimmunology, animal physiology, animal breeding, ethology, human ethology, psychology and psychopathology, psychopharmacology and others; and from different areas of *clinical research*, such as neurology, psychiatry and child psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, endocrinology, immunology, cardiovascular studies, internal medicine, oncology and others. Original papers, review articles, systematic reviews, state-of-the-art reviews, meta-analyses, case reports, discussions, book reviews, congress reports and other categories of articles are welcomed for consideration for publication. In addition, articles on Art, Philosophy, Literature, Life Sciences, Medical History and related topics will be considered.

**During the process of innovating and developing the NEL** in its current shape, the words of William Saroyan crossed my mind: "The beginning of a new work is always a decision about what and how a writer shall write. The decision is a half book for any writer, more than half for some, and for myself all of it. The actual sitting and writing is no more than that, and writers get good at it."

**To edit a journal**, especially a scientific one, and on top of it a scientific inter- and transdisciplinary journal, is a real challenge. In order to undertake such a challenge, a new scientific theory and a common language is required, the language should be understood across disciplines and should be able to assist in getting beyond semantic problems. I took this challenge eleven years ago when I founded the International Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Medicine, a true interdisciplinary publication which crosses and integrates completely the different sciences and fields.

Different approaches encompass both introspectively and experimentally oriented methods where we tried to find a common language to diminish semantic differences and enable the true scientific dialogue to flourish. One of the problems of semantics is how we define science. According to Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged, Second Edition, Collins World (1978) science is: "state of fact of knowing, knowledge, often opposed to intuition, belief, etc., systematized knowledge, derived from observation, study, and experimentation carried on in order to determine the nature of principles of what is being studied; a branch of knowledge or study especially one concerned with establishing and systematizing facts, principles, and methods as by experiments and hypotheses...the systematized knowledge



Prof. Derek Gupta and  
Prof. Peter G. Fedor-Freybergh at  
the 8th International Congress of  
the ISPPM in Badgastein 1986.

of nature and the physical world...,” etc.

Science certainly should not be the only pure statistical evaluation of observations collected but also the observation itself if it is performed for scientific purposes with the scientific methodology. As for myself, I would not exclude intuition from science. Intuition can become one of the most essential sources of scientific thinking, analyses and conclusions.

Here we approach another indivisible connection which exists between science and art. As the recently deceased Sir Yehudi Menuhin put it, the creative act is the common bond between science and art as well as in every single sign and expression of life. In this connection I would like to quote another artist Marc Chagall: “*The visible is not the only truth, nor is it the whole truth; the invisible must be penetrated with the aid of the visible.*”

**The Embryo**, the photograph and a bronze sculpture by Swedish sculptor Axel Nordell on the cover page symbolizes the idea of the continuity of life processes. It also expresses the indivisibility of all developmental stages, a continuum, where the individual represents an indivisible entity of all functions on both physiological and psychological levels, where all developmental stages are equally important, interdependent and inseparable from the whole individual’s life continuum which begins in utero.

In our integrative and holistic approaches in the NEL, we tried to analyze and explain the disturbances and failures of discontinuum, such as infertility and other disorders of the reproductive system, deteriorations in the course of pregnancy, such as miscarriage, prematurity, intrauterine growth retardation, deviations during the sexual differentiation of the brain, issues of functional teratology, etc.

In the early postnatal life impairment of the immune system, allergies, weakness of the endocrine system, sudden infant death syndrome, etc. occur.

Later in the individual’s life we encounter syndromes and illnesses, such as AIDS, cancer, mental disorders, chronic fatigue syndrome, Alzheimer’s disease, general deterioration of the brain, of the quality of life and the general vulnerability towards the influences from the inner and outer environment.

**I would like to welcome** the three new distinguished colleagues who have joined the Editorial Board of the NEUROENDOCRINOLOGY LETTERS:

*Professor Franz Halberg*, MD, Director, Chronobiology Laboratories, Dept. of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, University of Minnesota, the father of modern chronobiology;

*Professor Richard Jelínek*, MD, DrSc., Director, Dept. of Histology and Embryology, 3rd Medical Faculty at the Charles University in Prague, the pioneer in the fields of teratology and functional teratology;

*Professor Kazuyoshi Tsutsui*, Professor of Brain Science at the Faculty of Integrated Arts and Sciences at the Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, Japan. Professor Tsutsui was proposed to join the Editorial Board of the NEL by Professor Hidashi Kobayashi, who resigned from his membership on the Editorial Board because of retirement.

I would like to take this opportunity to graciously thank *Professor Hidashi Kobayashi* from the Research Laboratory of Zenyaku Kogyo, Toho University and the University of Tokyo for all the years he served on the Editorial Board of the NEL and for all the support he gave to the late Editor-in-Chief Professor Derek Gupta and to me in editing this Journal. We wish him all the best, and I am confident that Professor Kobayashi will cooperate with us even in the future and continue to support the NEL.

**The requirements for publishing in the NEL** are in accordance with the “Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals” (the Vancouver Group and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors).

In this issue you will find the revised Instructions to Authors, valid for all the papers submitted to the NEL from Vol. 20, Nos. 3/4.

**For the first time** we introduce the new headings and the new divisions which we plan to continue with on a regular basis: Guest or Invited Editorials, Invited Reviews (NEL-Reviews), The Story Behind, Philosophy Behind Science and the Season's Appreciations. We encourage and solicit young scientists to submit synopses of their Doctoral Theses or Dissertations for consideration for publication. I would like to invite you to propose new ideas for us on the above-mentioned topics and send us your contributions. Information on the forthcoming scientific events, congress reports, book reviews and Letters to the Editor would be most appreciated.

We look forward to your reactions concerning the "new look" of the NEL. We also look forward to receiving your papers for consideration for publication. We will try to shorten the time from receiving to publishing your peer-reviewed and accepted manuscripts in the shortest possible time. If you have a special reason for accelerating the publication of your manuscript, please let us know in your cover letter, and we will do our best to consider your request.

*Our correspondence column* is open for your comments, criticisms, questions, etc. We would appreciate Letters to the Editor, which we will treat on a liberal basis. However, we reserve the right to make a possible editorial restyle of them, mostly concerning their length.

As we pointed out in our promotion flyer of this journal at the end of the last year: NEUROENDOCRINOLOGY LETTERS is YOUR JOURNAL. It is the reader's journal and as Per Bergsjø, the previous outstanding Chief Editor of the Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica pointed out, "among the readers are also the Journal's authors."

We look forward to cooperating with you and creating the NEUROENDOCRINOLOGY LETTERS together with you!

*Peter G. Fedor-Freybergh*  
*Editor-in-Chief*