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EDITORIAL

J BUON in MEDLINE/PubMed

Three people are lying on the damp dirt floor of the cave. They are obviously very ill. A mother with her child are coughing blood and the third, a young man, is badly injured; he had been attacked by the big wild animal the hunting team had managed to trap. Bent over them the tribe's witch-doctor is using his therapeutic potions and mysterious herbal mixtures, chanting at the same time incomprehensible sounds.

Miraculously, some days later all three are in good health.

The news spreads by word of mouth to the neighboring tribes, making the witch-doctor known to an area much larger than the tiny one inhabited by his own tribe.

Ever more sick people start visiting the healer.

Many centuries later, a team of qualified-doctors treat patients of their own big tribe with remarkable success. But no one beyond the boundaries of their tribe knows anything about their successful activities. It's true that they tried to make their work kn own to everyone, but the really significant paper they submitted for publication was accepted only by a small regional journal with a very limited readership. There is no recognition or ethical reward for them.

Do you find similarities between these two stories?

If no, it's okay.

If yes, then I believe it would be useful to discuss some aspects of these parallel situations, divided by an immense span of time but closely connected by the invariably diachronic need to treat diseases and restore health.

Spreading news by word of mouth, tam-tam or other such communication methods is somewhat obsolete for our very large global tribal population. Newer methods have emerged but the target remains exactly the same.

Speaking of medical communication, journals (printed or www-available) constitute the modern basis of spreading (good or bad) news. A new therapy should be made known to the scientific community in the shortest time possible. The same applies to new diagnostic methods, new epidemiological observations, new achievements in diseases' prevention, new successes in deciphering some parts of the labyrinthine cell machinery (here I don't examine whether all of these "new" are real or not; that is a different matter of concern, outside the scope of this editorial).

But, which journals to choose? Where authors can send their personal contribution in the hope their work will be visible by many eyes?

Surely those journals publishing crystal-clear works by honest authors; and those with high quality papers; and the ones participating in the peer-review system; and those... and those... This is enough for a journal's editors to be satisfied and happy and calmly prepare the next issue.

Or maybe is it not?

In today's global tribe living in the global village a journal should have a global-wide voice, otherwise it will live unnoticed no matter how excellent its content may be.

Powerful electronic loud speakers (important databases) can speak of the usefulness of a certain publication, making it globally visible and known, much to the satisfaction of the editors and contributing authors.

A short time ago J BUON succeeded in entering the most popular biomedical database, MEDLINE/PubMed, meaning that our publication reached maturity quickly, even though its growth history is relatively short. As a consequence, new responsibilities and challenges emerge for the editors and the scientific staff.

J BUON, a truly international publication, now has a stronger voice and we are confident that its contribution to the advancement of science in general and to the fight against cancer in particular will grow steadily.

Our thanks and congratulations to all coworkers and contributors, past, present and future.

A.E.Athanassiou
Editor-In-Chief