On the centenary of The Spanish Journal of Gastroenterology (REED)

INTRODUCTION AND A BRIEF HISTORY OF REED

The specialty of Digestive Diseases (DGD) was born in our country as an area of knowledge within Gastroenterology and Hepatology which competed with different techniques used in other specialties. Thus, endoscopy of the esophagus was performed as part of the ENT specialty and endoscopy of the stomach and colon, by surgeons, and later on ultrasound, by radiologists. It is only from this historical perspective that the transfer of techniques and technology from one specialty to another, sometimes in the inverse direction as happened in DGD with laparoscopy, currently used by surgeons or shared, as is the case of ultrasound, can be analyzed.

In the first decades of the 20th century, before this journal was born, few specialized DGD services existed, and these came under the umbrella of Internal Medicine. As F. Vilardell states in “Gastroenterology between the second and third millennium” (1) the first true specialists were in Madrid, Granada and especially Barcelona, where the School of Digestive Disorders of the Santa Cruz and San Pablo Hospital organized the first courses on digestive diseases (1).

In 1918, Ramón de Luis y Yagüe, Fidel Fernández Martínez and Luis Urrutia y Guerezta founded the Archivos Españoles de Enfermedades del Aparato Digestivo y de la Nutrición (Spanish Archives of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition). This would be one of the oldest specialty journals in the world. In the 30s, when the Sociedad Española de Patología Digestiva (Spanish Society of Digestive Diseases, SEPD) was founded, before its counterparts in France, Germany or England, the publication became the official journal of the SEPD with the title Revista Española de Enfermedades del Aparato Digestivo y de la Nutrición (Spanish Journal of Disorders of the Digestive System and Nutrition), whose publication was only interrupted by the Spanish civil war. In the 50s, “nutrition” was dropped from the title. In 1976, the journal was referenced for the first time in Current Contents (ISI) (2) and finally since the 90s it has become what we now know as the Revista Española de Enfermedades Digestivas (The Spanish Journal of Gastroenterology, REED) currently recognized as being of public utility.

After the Second World War, with the naval use of the sonar, this knowledge was transferred to ultrasound as used in the clinical setting, which instead of submarines in DGD detected lithiasis, evoking memories of those first procedures which were performed with patients submerged in a bathtub filled with water. Dr J. M. Segura Cabral (†), who recently passed away, was the person responsible for first introducing this technique in our country and generations of specialists, among them this Editor, worked at the Hospital La Paz in Madrid contributing to disseminate this knowledge throughout our country.

In the early 70s, the first Hepatology Unit of the Hospital Clínico in Barcelona was created under the auspices of Dr J. Rodes (†), who was a pioneer from the very beginning in differentiating this field from others (3).

As years went by, REED published studies which were originally doctoral theses, reviews, etc., but giving increasing importance to original research papers. REED’s impact factor (IF) before the late 90s was less than 0.1 but in 1996 it jumped dramatically to 0.26. In 1997 (already 20 years ago) it was decided to make the journal bilingual, publishing both in Spanish and English, and the IF underwent a progressive rise.

However, with the incorporation of the Internet, the editorial world was revolutionized, and the publishing environment became exceedingly competitive, demanding high levels of scientific rigor, dedication and professionalism. Thus, in 2001 REED began its publication on-line (www.reed.com) and in 2004, following the Budapest Open Access Initiative, access to REED became open. This open access to peer-reviewed scientific literature involved free availability on the Internet, allowing any user to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search for or add links to the full text of these articles, track them for indexing purposes, incorporate them as data into software, or use them for any legal purpose without financial, legal or technical barriers excluding those implicit in Internet access itself.

REED prepublish began in 2015 by using the digital object identifier (DOI) system, which makes its articles citable before their assignation to a physical journal issue (on-line first, pre-publication of accepted articles), including trackability in the DOI register agency CrossRef and indexation in databases. In this same year the computerized platform was made automatic and, via www.reed.com, monitoring the complete editorial process, from authors sending their manuscripts to the multiple actions leading to acceptance or rejection of a manuscript in a more agile and manageable way, became possible.

Behind this story, there are individuals who have left their own mark through their dedication and vision, both of which were absolutely essential for such changes to be implemented. These were the outstanding Chief Editors Drs E. Arias Vallejo (currently holder of an award to honor the best paper in the Congress of the SEPD), F. Vilardell, M. Díaz-Rubio,
Recently, REED sought to recover its historical memory and in 2016 the complete historical archive, which was physically made up of 149 volumes, was digitalized, including issues from 1935 which were unbound and made freely available over the Internet (Fig. 1).

CURRENT SITUATION OF THE JOURNAL AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

In 2018, REED is the publication with the highest IF within the DGD field in Spanish and is the official organ of expression of the SEDP (www.sepd.es), the Sociedad Española de Endoscopia Digestiva (Spanish Society of Digestive Endoscopy, SEED; www.wseed.org) and the Asociación Española de Ecografía Digestiva (Spanish Association of Digestive Ultrasound, AEED; www.ecodigest.net), and in its pages welcome the scientific production of the members of these three associations as well as from external sources. The front page and the web site have been recently updated, as can be seen for the first time in this issue.

The sustainability of a journal such as REED, with its own and fully automatic computer platform, has only been possible thanks to the support and high levels of professionalism of the SEPD, which have been extended to this area. REED is a journal where articles are assessed by double-blind external review. This involves that the manuscripts are evaluated by, at least, two reviewers who do not know who the authors are, with the authors themselves being unaware of the names of the reviewers. According to Web of Science (WoS) (Clarivate Analytics), the journal is positioned in the fourth quartile of the Gastroenterology and Hepatology category with a 1-year IF of 1,401 and a 5-year IF of 1,524. In the WoS there are currently 6,829 articles and reviews indexed with an average of 3.03 citations and an H-index of 26. If the document type filter is omitted and all content published in the journal is taken into consideration, the H-index does not vary but the average number of citations per documents decreases. With regard to journals placed above it (Journal of Citation Reports, JCR), it has a lower H-index and a lower average number of citations.

Without a doubt, the main objective of the Editorial Board is to improve the journal’s position. We would like to see it rise to the third quartile as soon as possible. In spite of the limitations and criticism of IF, this index is an objective measure of the amount of citations of a journal (4) and it depends on the number of citations that a journal attracts in relation to the number of citable documents published in the last two years. In general terms, citable documents include original research papers, reviews, editorials, and letters to the editor. Tables 1 and 2 show the most frequently cited articles in the last five years (5-14) and the five most frequently cited articles from the journal (WoS) (5,6,15-22).

Figure 2 shows the number of articles published per year in the last five years and the number of citations received per document over that period of time. The increase in the number of articles and reviews published is clear. This figure also reflects the average number of citations received per document and highlights the interest in original research papers and reviews. The levels of co-authorship have remained relatively stable, around 5.12 authors per article.

Figure 3 shows a word map based on the weight of the key words used in the original articles and collected in the Web of Science, where the words “management” and “therapy” stand out. In 2017 REED had collaborations from several countries (Fig. 4).

As part of our editorial strategy, the Editorial Board has introduced the following innovations: increasing the number of original research papers from five to six, assigning one review per issue (preferably systematic reviews or meta-analyses), and limiting the number of clinical cases to two, the number of images in digestive disorders to one, and letters to the editor to six. To make this strategy fit in the pagination of the paper issues, word count has been reduced to 3,500 words for original research papers and to 1,500 words for clinical cases in the new guidelines.

Currently, REED is a monthly publication with 12 issues per year, plus indexed supplements containing the papers presented at the Semana de las Enfermedades Digestivas (Week of the Digestive Diseases), a measure we are prepared to adopt in the future for SEED and AEED should these associations wish to. Also starting from 2018, a yearly monographic issue is going to be published, which this year, in March, will focus on sedation in digestive endoscopy.

This year REED has an expanded Editorial Board with certain areas such as Endoscopy and Hepatology having their own associate editors.
In 2017, an open call was made for new reviewers and recommendations for the assessment of manuscripts were published. We would like to acknowledge and express our most sincere gratitude to the reviewers for their invaluable work in maintaining the scientific quality of the journal.

Table 1. Articles published in the 2013-17 period receiving the most citations (Nov. 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Ref. REED</th>
<th>Nº citations</th>
<th>Ref.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ortiz-Lucas M et al.</td>
<td>Effect of probiotic species on irritable bowel syndrome symptoms: a bring up to date meta-analysis</td>
<td>2013;105:19-36</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perdices E et al.</td>
<td>Hepatotoxicity associated with statin use: analysis of the cases included in the Spanish hepatotoxicity registry</td>
<td>2014;106:246-54</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodríguez-Sánchez J et al.</td>
<td>Effectiveness of serological markers of eosinophil activity in monitoring eosinophilic esophagitis</td>
<td>2013;105:452-8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borges-Canha M et al.</td>
<td>Role of colonic microbiota in colorectal carcinogenesis: a systematic review</td>
<td>2015;11:559-71</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
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Table 2. Ten most cited articles in the Web of Science (Nov. 2017)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Nº citations</th>
<th>Ref.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>García-Fuster MJ et al.</td>
<td>Venous thromboembolism and liver cirrhosis</td>
<td>2008;100:259-62</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>Loza A et al.</td>
<td>Effect of the administration of rectal indomethacin on amylase serum levels after endoscopic retrograde choangiopancreatography, and its impact on the development of secondary pancreatitis episodes</td>
<td>2007;99:330-6</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
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<td>Ortiz-Lucas M et al.</td>
<td>Effect of probiotic species on irritable bowel syndrome symptoms: a bring up to date meta-analysis</td>
<td>2013;105:19-36</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>García-Cortés M et al.</td>
<td>Liver injury induced by “natural remedies”: an analysis of cases submitted to the Spanish Liver Toxicity Registry</td>
<td>2008;100:688-95</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolz C et al.</td>
<td>Transvaginal cholecystectomy (NOTEs) combined with minilaparoscopy</td>
<td>2007;99:698-702</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
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Fig. 2. Year-on-year evolution of the manuscripts published in the 2013-17 period. The columns show the mean cites per document.

Fig. 3. Representation of key words from original articles (2013-17).

Fig. 4. Geographic representation of the original published according to the country of origin.
During this last year, 561 articles have been received, with a rejection index of 52%. The mean response time to the first editorial decision was 21 days, being 58 days for original articles. We are going to publish these data in our new front page, which will have an updated design. The fact that REED is bilingual (Spanish and English) increases the delay for studies to be referenced in PubMed and, for the same reason, the original versions of articles are published ahead of print as soon as possible, so that manuscripts are accessible from the major bibliographic repositories (Google Scholar, Science Direct, Scielo, REDALyC).

Furthermore, we are aware of the importance that social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blogger) have earned regarding the diffusion of scientific content, as has been confirmed by the number of visits to our webpage (with a total of 59,606 visits during 2017, which means an increase of 74% with respect to 2016), as well as informing authors following publication of the diffusion, follow-up and repercussion of their studies: citations received, etc. Certain concrete measures have been implemented in this area such as communication to authors cited and those who cite REED. However, we still have to develop post-publication communication, which requires a major revamp of the website coordinated by an Associate Editor who is a specialist in social media.

REED aims to be the leader in the diffusion of research and knowledge in the field of digestive diseases in Spain, Latin America and other countries, becoming thus a reference point for other scientific professional journals.

In line with this, members of the Asociación Mexicana de Gastroenterología (Mexican Association of Gastroenterology) have been incorporated into REED on the International Editorial Committee with a reciprocal arrangement in their journal, and there is special collaboration with the Sociedade Portuguesa de Gastroenterologia (Portuguese Society of Gastroenterology), which distributes REED among its members institutionally.

In Spain, Gastroenterología y Hepatología, the other main Spanish journal in the field of DGD, published in 2010 the article by G. González Alcaide, J.M. Ramos Rincón and J. Pérez Gisbert (23) “Colaboración científica y ámbitos de investigación en Gastroenterología y Hepatología y Revista Española de Enfermedades Digestivas 2000-2009,” which analyzed the fruitful relationship between both publications, with half of the authors who had published two or more studies having participated in both journals.

In the Editorial Board of REED we aim in the near future to introduce complementary material such as videos with BIDI code access on mobile devices, reference the ORCID (open researcher and contributor ID) code (https://orcid.org), and reduce editorial times, amongst other improvements. Therefore, we are fighting on many fronts. For this reason, we need people who are preferably young and have the time available to meet all these challenges and allow the necessary editorial work to evolve so as to adapt to all these changes, most probably in ways which at present we can hardly imagine.

Finally, on such a special date, we would like to express our most sincere gratitude and acknowledgment to the whole editorial team and the extraordinary professionals who have made the consolidation and continuity of the journal possible over these last 100 years. Although the objectives are many and we are acutely aware of our limitations, we can only repeat as our own Isaac Newton’s famous quote “If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants” (24).

**REFERENCES**


