From the Editor

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Liver surgery, as we know it today, is a relatively new area of the abdominal surgery, compared with upper gastro-intestinal (gastric resections were performed in the second part of the XIX century), lower gastro-intestinal (major rectal surgery was introduced at the beginning of the XX-th century) and even pancreatic surgery (the classical Whipple procedure was described in the first part of the XX-th century).

But major liver surgery (and first of all major liver resections and liver transplantation) was introduced in the second half of the last century, after general anesthesia and intensive care made the necessary progress to support such formidable operations. In the case of liver transplantation I would say that this happened even after the medical community was convinced the operation is really possible and it is the merit of Thomas Starzl that, finally, proved that.

Today, liver surgery is an accomplished area of surgery, with tens of thousands of liver resections, liver transplantations and other major surgical procedures performed yearly all over the world.

In Romania, liver surgery knew a pioneering era in second part of the last century, with the first major liver resections performed by Th. Burghele and I. Fagarasanu, and experimental work in liver transplantation done by S. Duca, V. Fluture and D. Popescu-Falticeni.

Important contributions in liver resection were brought also by V.E. Bancu in Targu-Mures and M. Stancescu and D. Setlacec in Fundeni Hospital.

A large volume of work and publications was devoted to hydatid cyst surgery, because of the high incidence of the disease in this geographical area.

Later on, major liver surgery was developed mainly in the “Dan Setlacec” Center of General Surgery - Fundeni Hospital (Bucharest) where the major series of liver resections came from and where liver transplantation was introduced in this country. Other centers that contributed to the development of liver surgery in Romania were Sf. Maria Hospital and “Carol Davila” Military Hospital in Bucharest, the University Hospitals in Cluj-Napoca, Targu-Mures and Iasi (“Sfintul Spiridon” Hospital).

In 2006 The Romanian Association of Hepato-Bilio-Pancreatic Surgery and Liver Transplantation has been founded.

A new speciality, Hepato-Bilio-Pancreatic Surgery has been established later (following the model of UEMS- European Union Medical Specialities) and many surgeons have been already trained.

In this issue, I tried to bring together some

of the most representative experiences and authors both in Romania and abroad.

The two major topics above-mentioned (liver resection and liver transplantation) are presented together with some of the major liver pathology (hepatocarcinoma, cholangiocarcinoma).

Distinguished authors from the United States, Italy and Turkey made us the honor to contribute to this special issue, together with the Romanian authors.

We are grateful to the Chief Editor of *Chirurgia*, Professor Silviu Constantinoiu, for offering us the possibility to present a state-of-the-art image of liver surgery. Of course, this image is not complete because the area is too large. But I hope that the reader will have an idea of what possibilities has liver surgery today and, last but not least, of what Romanian surgery has accomplished in this difficult but fascinating area.