EDITORIAL

Stepping Into a Visionary’s Shoes

This is the last issue of the year 2007, a year marked by the loss of the founder of the World Journal of Orthodontics, T. M. Graber. Many vignettes have been written on the pages of the world’s orthodontic journals and many memories were brought about, as Dr Graber has influenced our specialty so very rigorously, in many ways—scientifically, politically, and directorially.

I would like to focus here on his directorial impact and the “philosophical” way of thinking in Orthodontics. Our specialty developed very early within the medical field and, in fact, it is the second specialty recognized as such (the first being otolaryngology). It counts more than 100 years, during which it slowly shifted from a medically oriented specialty involved in the treatment of craniofacial entities to a more technical one, dealing with the alignment of the dental arches and the arrangement of the occlusion. This shift resulted in the shrinkage of the specialty and remoteness from our medical roots. When scientific clinical data provided evidence of our important role in growth modification of the face, Dr Graber was the one who redirected the specialty and gave it its lost breadth. Dentistry’s oldest specialty, dentofacial orthopedics and orthodontics came closer again to its medical origins and in today’s era of molecular medicine it is called on to give in-depth answers to fundamental questions still remaining unanswered. That was Dr Graber’s vision for the stride of our specialty in the 21st century.

In this issue, interesting case reports from around the world are presented. Drs Haralabakis, Sifakakis, and Papadakis from Greece report on the etiology and management of posttraumatic occlusions of 4 patients, suggesting that in patients with maxillofacial trauma special care should be taken to obtain a functional posttraumatic occlusion.

Drs Celli and Gasperoni from Italy describe the treatment and present the long-term outcome of a patient with open-bite malocclusion. By aiming at the modification and rehabilitation of the tongue-thrust habit, they succeeded in correcting the difficult malocclusion without removing teeth. Eight-year posttreatment records proved that the corrected tongue function provided the desired stability.

Dr Komatsu and colleagues from Japan report on face mask use for correcting anteroposterior crossbite in a patient with cleft lip and palate. The co-application of maxillary expansion and face mask improved the sagittal skeletal relation, while bone grafting stabilized the obtained result.

Drs Türk, Elekdag-Türk, and Güneren from Turkey report on a skeletal Class III adult patient treated with orthognathic surgery employing “rectangular” mandibular body ostectomy of 5 mm. The fact that the patient had edentulous gaps in the first premolar regions of the mandibular arch facilitated the whole treatment approach.

Dr de Figueiredo and colleagues from Brazil present the orthodontic treatment of a 10-year-old skeletal Class III patient. Dentoalveolar compensations seem to be a solution in brachyfacial pattern patients, while long-term follow-up of the patient will prove the success of this treatment choice.

The difficulty in treating open-bite malocclusion is well documented. Half of the treatment success can be attributed to the correct diagnosis of the problem. A very interesting diagnostic suggestion comes from Spain and is provided by Drs Alió Sanz and Iglesias Conde. They propose a new cephalometric technique, the vertical cephalometric analysis, to precisely identify the skeletal and dentoalveolar components of the open bite. Systematic employment of this method will provide concrete scientific evidence for the validity of the technique.

Drs Moin and Bishara from the US report on the effects of buccal shields on mandibular dental arch parameters. In a study of 44 consecutively treated orthodontic patients, intercanine and intermolar arch widths and arch length differed significantly from normal age-related changes, providing evidence on the decisive role that the surrounding soft tissue plays in the development of the dental arch dimensions.

The study of monozygotic and dizygotic twins is a powerful research tool to assess environmental and genetic influences on various parameters. Drs Kawala, Antoszewska, and Nećka from Poland employed this method to assess malocclusions susceptible to orthodontic prophylaxis. They concluded that environment plays a much more significant role than previously thought.

From the time Dr Graber put the World Journal of Orthodontics on the world publishing map, the very enthusiastic acceptance of the effort supported WJO with a plethora of manuscripts. Due to the large backlog of accepted articles on file and to the fact that articles should be published in a timely manner, we have decided to publish 2 extra articles each issue online only (with full Medline benefits). The titles and abstracts of these online articles will also appear in the print journal. This issue’s first online article comes from the UK. Dr Naini and colleagues report on the use of a functional appliance, termed Medium Opening Activator, in the management of a Class II, deep-bite malocclusion. In this issue’s other online-only article, Drs Manni, Ciruli, and Grassi from Italy describe the laboratory and clinical procedure for correct vestibular and lingual bracket placement.

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