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Original

Passing the Baton / Barla, M.. - In: INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF GEOMECHANICS. - ISSN 1532-3641. - STAMPA. - 20:9(2020).

Availability:

This version is available at: 11583/2853936 since: 2020-11-26T18:47:32Z

Publisher:

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)

Published

DOI:10.1061/(ASCE)GM.1943-5622.0001816

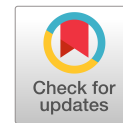
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Passing the Baton

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[https://doi.org/10.1061/\(ASCE\)GM.1943-5622.0001816](https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)GM.1943-5622.0001816)

Dear Readers,

It is an honor and a pleasure to become Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Geomechanics*. I would like to share with you my sincere gratitude to Prof. Musharraf Zaman for the recommendation as Chief Editor and the Geo-Institute for appointing me to this role.

I have served for many years as Associate Editor for the *Journal* and I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary achievements of Prof. Zaman, Prof. Desai, and the Co-Editors that have positioned our journal among the leading ones in our discipline.

I would like to let you know that I am working closely with Prof. Zaman and the ASCE staff to assure a smooth passing of the baton. The priceless dedication of Prof. Zaman in this transition period is unique. I wish to acknowledge him once more for this help and commitment.

The *International Journal of Geomechanics* was launched by a group of editors in 2001, with Prof. C. S. Desai as the Editor-in-Chief. The *Journal*, after a few volumes published by CRC press, joined the ASCE Library in 2003.

Under the guidance of Prof. Desai first and Prof. Zaman later, the *Journal* grew significantly and now holds a position of high standard and leadership in the field. Statistics show an increasing impact factor (reaching 2.45 in 2018). This impressive result mirrors the high quality of the published papers and of the review process, that is, the quality of the authors and the reviewers.

The success of the *Journal* is also shown by the number of submissions, which has grown tremendously in the last five years and has now reached approximately 1,200 papers per year. The acceptance rate has been within 20%–25% in the last four years, witnessing a remarkable work by the editorial board and the reviewers.

It is nice to read back this extract from the original editorial in 2001, which I still have on my bookshelf: “The objective of the *International Journal of Geomechanics* is to provide the profession a high-quality journal that covers important and emerging topics in Geomechanics at a low and affordable cost. Furthermore, the IJOG will emphasize both theory and application with the theme fundamentals through applications. It will recognize the need for a rational process of simplification tool integration of theory, experiments, and the verification towards the development of procedures for the solution of practical industrial problems.”

It is my commitment to follow this path marked by the former distinguished editors of the *Journal*.

Undoubtedly, geomechanics has become a very interdisciplinary field and covers a wide variety of topics. New developments have been put forward by international working groups and leading conferences, such as the IACMAG series, and constantly draw our attention. Computational methods are today applied to emerging topics that address issues in the field of energy, climate change, environment, and multiphase modeling, to name a few. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for the *Journal* and for the discipline.

The future of the *Journal* is to be written and it will be written only with the unique contribution of the authors and by the invaluable work of the editorial board members and the reviewers, which is voluntary. Needless to say, I am excited about the opportunity to work with all of you. Let’s witness together the new developments and elevation of geomechanics to a higher level over the coming years.