

Pflügers Archiv historical article—a new category of papers in Pflügers Archiv—European Journal of Physiology

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The development of scientific research is like a tower built over a number of generations. We build on and develop our new research concepts on findings obtained, reported, and published by others, in the same way that the tower becomes taller as more rows of bricks are added. Others will, in turn, use the bricks laid by us to continue building and developing the tower. Due to the enormous volume of available data, modern physiology research on average only looks back over one or two decades. This time period, however, is often too short to recognize the real roots from which our scientific projects and experimental strategies result—the first rows of bricks, so to say. By publishing research findings, Pflügers Archiv—European Journal of Physiology has a lasting impact on the field of physiology and related areas. The journal was founded by the German scientist Eduard Pflügers in 1868, and since then, it has established an enviable reputation among physiologists. This, together with the limited number of other journals in the field in the past, has meant that Pflügers Archiv has attracted seminal and groundbreaking research papers. Many of these papers were written in German, because until

the 1990s, Pflügers Archiv—Eur J Physiol was multilingual and published research articles in English, French, and German. Language issues, together with the limited availability of and difficult access to research papers in the “predigital period,” mean that the scientific roots of modern physiology published in Pflügers Archiv in the past remain little known to today’s generation of young physiologists. The editorial board of Pflügers Archiv has therefore decided to create a new category of publications termed “Pflügers Archiv historical article” to draw attention to important articles published in the journal several decades ago. These articles could be an English translation of a paper published in another language, or an invited editorial review of a paper already published in English. We plan to publish up to two such articles per year.

The first article in this category will address the description of the “readiness potential” by Kornhuber and Deeke in 1965 which has since become textbook knowledge. The readiness potential is measured by electroencephalography (EEG) and describes typical changes of the EEG potential associated with the intended movements.

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