I want to acknowledge the privilege that *ALES* offered to me to write the preface for this book. *ALES* is doing an enormous effort looking for an strong place in the world of scientific publishing, and this book is a palpable sample of the imaginative and creative way of understanding new ways of publishing and managing scientific knowledge.

The book that you have on your hands is a compilation of papers published recently by ALES, grouped by a common theme that is the minimally invasive approach to colorectal diseases. These contributions have the common denominator of a high quality because they are the results of a peer reviewed process of evaluation. These papers have been sorted in 7 chapters that include most of the hot topics on this area of MIS. Surgical approach to colorectal disease has evolved in a significant way during last decades. Probably, the most seminal advance was the definition and understanding of the concept of total mesorectal excision for rectal cancer, following the ideas from Heald, and becoming a standard of care nowadays. Just as an extension of this concept, during last years we have also seen the raise of the concept of total mesocolon excision, conceptual and technical aspects well covered in this book. But the most important advances in the surgery of colon and rectum are technologically related as it has been the widespread development of minimally invasive approach. Minimally invasive approach does not mean only laparoscopic surgery. As a heritage of NOTES, flexible endoscopic endosurgery with the new concepts of ESD and EMR will be an important alternative of surgery for large benign or initial colon or rectal cancer. Minimally invasive colorectal surgery, in spite of its higher technical difficulty has become the standard of care in many centers around the world. This book covers the development of hese techniques when applied to colon or rectum. Technical description includes multiport as well single port, reduced port and the last invited TaTme. The reader will find in the bunch of papers devoted to these topics a clear description of surgical concepts, as well technical pearls, tricks and tips.

The future of MIS surgery is without doubt robotic. Robotic surgery is as well covered in a chapter of this book giving and idea of its advantages, pitfalls and controversies.

I am convinced that the reader will found in these pages clear and useful knowledge, that will improve their daily practice. By other hand, the curious surgeon would also found a number of controversial issues around this topic, and may induce to new trials challenging the current established knowledge. I hope that the reader will appreciate the care that ALES has had when compiling all these papers to create this useful new issue.

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