

# Foreword

Twenty years following the launch of the Millennium Development Goals, malaria and neglected tropical diseases remain pervasive, especially among the world's poor. Information from the recently published Global Burden of Disease Study 2017 confirms that the world's major tropical infections, including malaria and the 20 major neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) identified by the World Health Organization, exert a horrific toll on human life<sup>1,2</sup>. Together these diseases kill an estimated 720,000,<sup>1</sup> while causing chronic and disabling effects measured in DALYs (disability-adjusted life years) that exceed almost any other cause of illness.<sup>2</sup> Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS are also devastating infections that disproportionately occur in tropical developing countries.

Even beyond their adverse health impact, the leading tropical diseases are significant causes of economic underdevelopment. Indeed, malaria and the NTDs are probably the most common diseases of poor people and have been shown to thwart economic productivity through their negative effects on child health and the productivity of agricultural workers.<sup>3</sup> So far in 2020, we have also seen how a coronavirus, a zoonotic disease from bats, can profoundly affect the world's second largest economy – China. Yet another important effect – tropical infectious diseases also disproportionately devastate girls and women through their ability to damage the female urogenital tract or cause disfigurement and stigma.<sup>4</sup> Tropical diseases are the secret scourge of girls and women.

Despite their enormous global importance, there is a surprising lack of knowledge about tropical diseases among health care professionals including physicians. For example, recent studies from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that very few US medical doctors know how to recognize and diagnose Chagas disease (American trypanosomiasis) even though it is now an important cause of heart disease in the US.<sup>5,6</sup> As a result, thousands of Chagas disease cases may go undiagnosed every year and patients inadvertently denied access to essential trypanocidal medicines. This finding emphasizes an emerging concept in tropical medicine that many parasitic and related infections occur outside of the poorest countries, with high levels of transmission also occurring in generally wealthy countries such as in the US or Eastern and Southern Europe.<sup>7,8</sup> The term 'blue marble health' has been coined to account for the finding that many of the world's neglected tropical

diseases are found predominantly among the extreme poor living amidst wealth.<sup>9</sup> In other words, poverty has emerged as the overriding social determinant of neglected tropical diseases. But poverty is not the only social or physical determinant now driving 21<sup>st</sup> century diseases, as increasingly, we increasingly see how war or political collapse, urbanization, and climate change influence disease patterns<sup>10-12</sup>.

*Clinical Cases in Tropical Medicine* ('*Clinical Cases*') is a key companion volume to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Edition of Manson's Tropical Diseases, but it will also be useful alongside other complete tropical medicine textbooks. An important role for *Clinical Cases* is to provide important practical applications and illustrative case reports in order to reinforce the material in these comprehensive texts. Comprised of over 100 detailed clinical cases from as many tropical medicine physicians across the world, *Clinical Cases* provides an excellent learning opportunity to reinforce concepts on practical approaches to the diagnosis, management, and treatment of the major tropical diseases endemic to Africa, Asia and the Americas. This new edition also contains important updates regarding emerging tropical diseases such as Zika virus infection and malaria caused by *Plasmodium knowlesi*, among other conditions. The book should be useful for trainees and practitioners working in disease-endemic developing countries, as well as those working in clinical settings that see immigrants or travelers from affected regions and now people living in poverty in North America and Europe who also suffer from these afflictions. *Clinical Cases* should serve as a powerful learning tool for years to come!

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