
Introduction

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Despite new advances in every field of medicine, the blood film remains a crucial diagnostic tool. The evaluation of blood film is particularly useful in the field of tropical and travel medicine. Major protozoal and helminthic infections are readily recognised by blood film examination, and many diseases in the tropics — infectious, genetic, metabolic, or malignant — frequently manifest themselves in the blood. In large areas of the tropics, common haematological problems include iron deficiency anaemia, malarial anaemia, eosinophilia, abnormal haemoglobin syndromes and a wide range of malignant haematological diseases. The blood film plays an important part in the diagnosis of these disorders, but it is reliant on the expertise of the individual microscopist. In addition to morphological skills, an adequate travel and clinical history is important for accurate diagnosis of tropical diseases.

As the number of refugees and migrants grows, and the popularity of international travel to more exotic and remote parts of the world continues to increase, haematologists increasingly need to recognise diseases of tropical and travel medicine under their microscopes. The study of the morphological features of these disorders is thus very important.

I have been involved in teaching morphology to haematology registrars in the seminars of the Hellenic

Society of Haematology and the Foundation of the Hellenic Society of Haematology. This book was written from the morphology instructor's viewpoint. The focus for the text has been directed towards detailing the morphological characteristics of tropical diseases; epidemiological, microbiological and clinical information that permit one to distinguish these disorders have also been included. This book includes more than 160 high quality colour photographs of microscopical preparations of peripheral blood and bone marrow. Each of the photographs was selected as a visual reinforcement to the written instruction. I have included mostly photographs from my personal collection of blood films and bone marrow aspirates.

The book is published, for practical purposes, in two parts: part one deals with infections and part two deals with miscellaneous haematological problems in the tropics (ethnic neutropenia, genetic blood dyscrasias, nutritional disorders, and neoplastic conditions).

The purpose of this book is to provide the haematologist with an instruction manual to assist in the learning of microscopical characteristics and also with a reference manual to be used in the making of precise, accurate morphological identification of tropical haematological problems.