



**Expeditions into the Empire of Plagues
In early times of Globalization and Global
Warming**

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This book is the enlarged and updated international edition of the German version of the *Expeditions Into the Empire of Plagues*, which was published in 2004 with great success. The publication date is the 27th of May 2010 exactly hundred years after the death of the Nobel Prize winner Robert Koch, who opened the world of microbes and the fight against infectious diseases. On occasion of this event contributions are added by Prof. Dr. Hacker (former president of the *Robert Koch Institute*), Prof. Dr. Aguzzi (Winner of the *Robert Koch Prize*), Prof. Dr. Omura (Discoverer of the *Ivermectin*) and Prof. Dr. Mori (Director of the *Kitasato Memorial*).

Globalization and Global Warming are the most disputed terms of our times, which are often willingly misused for several political, religious and financial interests. However, both may bring the threat of emerging diseases, as did the Black Death in the Middle Ages or typhus, tuberculosis, diphtheria, cholera etc. during the 18th century at the beginning of the industrialization and first globalization.

From 1840 until 1920 millions of people became homeless, entered overcrowded towns and often left their countries to seek freedom and survival overseas in colonies in Asia, Africa and in the Americas. This migration introduced, however, the easy spreading of agents of diseases on all continents, but also inspired scientists such as Robert Koch, Emil von Behring, Louis Pasteur, Alphonse Laveran, Sir Ronald Ross, Shibasaburo Kitasato, Battista Grassi or Howard T. Ricketts and many others to dedicate their lives to the fight against such threatening diseases.

Without their activities and findings our world would look different, since today many agents of disease may enter new continents within a few hours and may become endemic due to travelling and migrating humans and global warming.

The present book looks into the personal diaries of the scientists, reports from dangerous expeditions into the Empire of plagues and elucidates important discoveries which were often paid by death, pain or long lasting disease of the international expeditioners and their comrades. Some of them like Koch, von Behring, Laveran, Golgi or Ross were laureated by the award of the Nobel Prize or other honours. All of them the known and unknown were heroes serving and saving mankind.

The authors describe in a comprehensive and illustrative manner the fights against infectious diseases ranging from Robert Koch s fundamental discoveries of the agents of anthrax, tuberculosis and cholera to the enormous threats of recently emerging diseases (such as Dengue-, Yellow-, West Nile virus, Bird-, Pig- and Human flu, AIDS, SARS, BSE, Malaria, Syphilis etc.). All symptoms, transmission pathways and measurements for prophylaxis are explained in an understandable way. The inclusion of more than 250 coloured pictures makes it easy to follow this expedition into the Empire of Plagues.