Foreword

I felt a deep sense of privilege and honor when I was asked to write this foreword, not only because I believe deeply in the need and value of a comprehensive textbook, such as this, for hand surgery, but also because David Chiu and the entire author line of this monumental work have been my friends and colleagues for close to four decades. ***Fu-Chan Wei***, recognized as being one of the most influential and innovative surgeons in the history of plastic surgery and microsurgery, is world renowned for pioneering several techniques. Today he is not only recognized for his surgical innovations and skills, but also for his role as a visionary, leader, and teacher in the field. ***Joseph Upton***, a plastic surgeon, created one of the most sought-after Hand/Microsurgery Fellowship programs. His plethoric contributions to the scientific record are a testament of the magnitude and significance of his clinical and research activities across the years. ***Guy Foucher*** is an orthopedic surgeon renowned for his innovative work in hand surgery and trauma and is an internationally acclaimed leader in hand surgery. More importantly, he is considered among the world-renowned pioneers of microsurgery. As a member of the faculty of Medicine Strasbourg, Foucher mentored numerous students from around the world. The late ***J. William Littler*** was one of the founders of the specialty of hand surgery, with fundamental contributions to the basic principles of hand surgery. A recognized authority on reconstruction of the hand and upper extremity, he served as a mentor to many generations of inspiring hand surgeons from around the world. ***David Chiu,*** a clinician, educator, and researcher, is recognized as an innovator in reconstructive microsurgery and peripheral nerve surgery and has earned an international reputation for excellence. A respected voice in the field of medical education, he teaches clinical and preclinical sciences at the undergraduate as well as postgraduate level and mentors a whole generation of young plastic surgeons and neurosurgeons. Like his mentor, J. William Littler, David Chiu is a true renaissance man who adeptly blends his wealth of classical philosophy with art and mastery of upper extremity surgery and microsurgery.

The skills of a hand surgeon are acquired in many ways. Most surgeons learn their craft from an experienced surgeon and then modify their practice in the light of their own experience and dexterity and, of course, their patients' needs. It is not surprising that changes in operative techniques usually occur slowly, and only made a major change with the emergence of microsurgery, which has provided new methods for the reconstruction of many major defects. Hand surgery exploded with the innovative techniques that were provided by the rapid advent of microsurgery, ultimately fulfilling the prophecy of Dr. James R. Urbaniak that "there is no end in the World of Microsurgery." With the exponential growth of medical information in the new "fourth wave" of the "Age of Bio Intelligence," where clinicians are flooded with an unprecedented volume of medical information (the proverbial "drinking from a fire hose"), the clarity and experience offered in this textbook are a rare gem. This textbook is a refreshing authoritative medical reference covering all new technical developments and techniques in hand surgery and will take its place as one of the most comprehensive yet readable textbooks in the field.

Prepared by outstanding researchers, clinicians, and teachers in the field, the monumental collection of expertise gathered in a single corpus serves, without doubt, as the most complete volume on the application of microsurgery in hand surgery in the world today. The format of this textbook has been shaped by the standards and practice of its renowned authors into 22 chapters that present the principles and methods of thumb and finger reconstruction. The first chapter provides a comprehensive overview of anatomical and functional eloquence of the hand, within the framework of detailed descriptions of the musculoskeletal system, principles of thumb and digit reconstruction, and a detailed classification of defects. The authors introduce a comparative digital defect indexing system (DDI) that they have devised, which addresses the surface involved, the critical zone of injury or loss, and the sum of tissue loss. This novel system is then systematically applied to the remaining chapters.

The remaining 21 chapters present the principles and methods of thumb and finger reconstruction in each of the major categories of defects according to the concepts outlined in detail in the first chapter: transverse defects of thumb in Zones I–X (Chapters 2–10); transverse defects of the digits in Zones I–IV (Chapters 11–16); and longitudinal palmer defects, longitudinal dorsal defects of digits and thumb, as well as longitudinal oblique defects of digits and thumb, lateral surface (Chapters 17–19); one chapter on skin incision design (Chapter 20), one on avulsion injury (Chapter 21), and one on mutilation injury (Chapter 22). In each chapter, the authors systematically approach the material, providing: (1) a detailed descriptional analysis of the normal functional anatomy, (2) the structural–functional changes associated with the deficit or deformity, (3) the reconstructive objectives and principles, (4) reconstructive options available to the surgeon, (5) preferred option of the author, and (6) a plethora of impressive case illustrations that are discussed in detail.

In their introduction, the authors state that they hope this text will serve as a platform to share their experience in the management of a broad spectrum of defects within the

hand, using microsurgical methods. The authors' purpose is brilliantly reached in this masterpiece, and they, without doubt, achieve their goal.

In addition to providing a practical resource containing the core principles of hand surgery, it will serve as a clinical companion for hand surgeons and microsurgeons, a valuable resource for those preparing for specialization certification examination, and a document that recognized both the common body of knowledge and unique skills that microsurgeons and hand surgeons impart while dealing with complex injuries of the hand. Indeed, all hand surgeons and microsurgeons, from the novice to the seasoned, who seek the insight, experience, and perspectives outlined in each chapter, welcome the arrival of this corpus. There is no doubt that this textbook will provide an effective learning experience and referenced resource for microsurgeons and hand surgeons. No microsurgeon or hand surgeon should be without it, as this corpus will prove to be an essential and invaluable resource. I believe it will become the standard reference and should be compulsory reading for all hand surgeons. This will be the Hallmark of its success. As a medical educator, the authors have provided us with a book that will serve as a tribute to the commitment to medical education and training of young physicians, in a field "where we are remembered best by the lives we touch, those of our patients and our students" (D. Cameron).

One of the most well-read texts of the ancient Greek philosopher Plato (c. 385–370 B.C.) is the *Symposium*, which depicts a lively exchange of ideas by a group of intellects of the time, including Socrates (a philosopher), Alcibiades (a political figure), Aristophanes (a playwright), among other noble figures. Since the time of Plato, a "Symposium" has taken on the meaning of a dialogue and exchange of ideas or opinions among a group of experts. In the words of Dr. David Chiu, this opus magnus serves as a "consensus of opinion in the form of a symposium." My assessment of this symposium is that Dr. David Chiu, Dr. Fu-Chen Wei, Dr. Guy Foucher, Dr. Joseph Upton, and Dr. J. William Littler have given us not only the facts, but also have instilled the understanding of a deeply complex subject. Indeed, serving as a testament to the advances made in hand surgery with the introduction of microsurgical methods, this textbook will become a classic in the field. I am honored to commend the exceptional efforts that have gone into the preparation of this book. I am confident it will serve as an informative reference well into the foreseeable future.

Panayotis N. Soucacos, MD, FACS
Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery
"The Panayotis N. Soucacos" Orthopaedic Research & Education Center "Attikon" University Hospital
National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
Athens, Greece