LAUDATIO

Zhennan Xue – ad multos transannos

Zhennan Xue was born on April 12, 1925, in Songjian, Shanghai. (According to Qinfa Ye [1]: “In China, people take the first day of the Chinese New Year in (the) lunar calendar as the starting point of a new age. No matter in which month a child is born, he is one year old, and one more year is added to his age as soon as he enters the New Year ... a child [may be] two years old when he is actually two days or two hours old. This is possible when the child is born on the last day or hour of the past year.”)

Hence, according to Chinese custom, Professor Xue is 80 years old now, although by Western reckoning he will not be 80 until 2005, and from a transyear point of view, his age is merely over 60. He graduated from the Medical College of West China University and obtained another degree from the State University of New York. Thereafter, he worked in the biomedical engineering department of West China University and became president of the Chinese Society for Chronobiology and eventually professor of biomechanics at Sichuan University. He received many honors during his productive scientific life, including the special gratitude of the People’s Republic of China government. His many laboratory studies include work on goats and yaks, and the use of heart valves from yaks.

Zhennan Xue was chairperson of committees organizing international symposia of chronobiology in 1988, 1991, 1994, 1996 and 2000. In 1987, he became a member of the advisory board of Chronobiologia, and was active concomitantly in teaching and publishing over 200 scientific titles. He tutored five post-doctoral fellows, guided 20 graduate students for doctoral and over 50 students for master’s degrees.

We all live through our students. Two major figures in current Chinese chronobiology are his students. Zhengrong Wang is now vice-dean of the school of basic medical sciences at Sichuan University and remains the leading figure in Chinese chronobiology [2–52], now directing a large study on cancer chronotherapy while also active at a chronomolecular level. Jinyi Wu [53–133, besides some of 2–52] is vice-president of the China-West Yak Industry Group. He gathered China’s biomedical leaders to acquaint them with Western chronobiology via lectures starting in 1981. He has enthusiastically represented the field ever since. The meetings organized by Professor Xue were occasions to introduce new topics [134–162]. We appreciate these opportunities and wish Zhennan Xue many further productive activities.

We dedicate to him our most recent finding in biology of components with a length beyond (=trans) the calendar year. These about 1.3-year cycles, originally found in the solar wind [163, 164] have their counterpart in the human circulation [165–167]. At Professor Xue’s age, the transyear can be greater in amplitude than that of the signature of winter and summer. We wish Zhennan Xue many healthy, happy and productive future transyears and an elucidation of the underlying probably partly solar, partly geomagnetic, yet already genetically coded [165–167] mechanisms.

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