

## Preface

Chronobiology is a discipline in expansion. For a long time, its principles and methods have been regarded as hermetic, and chronobiologists have been considered as a caste. Indisputably, the merit of its modern diffusion is to be attributed to the high quality of scientific reports written by chronobiologists worldwide. Accordingly, there has been great satisfaction when the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, in the person of Prof. Paolo Pasquini, offered me the chance of publishing a monographic issue on the journal *Annali dell'Istituto Superiore di Sanità* entirely dedicated to chronobiology. This publication in the *Annali* constitutes another sign that chronobiology is accepted by the scientific medical community at large.

Currently, there are several prestigious schools of chronobiology. Given the limitation of space, the number of potential contributors had to be drastically limited. The invitation criteria were dictated by the topics of interest for the readers, with a preference for medical chronobiology. The authors who participated are some of the most distinguished chronobiologists. Their biography and bibliography is an example of their dedication to chronobiology. It is acknowledged that Prof. Franz Halberg is a pioneer in this discipline as the developer of chronobiologic methods and concepts documented by facts that are summarized in the glossary of chronobiology.

Epistemologically speaking, a scientific discipline is a body of principles and methodology. The authors of this volume have all contributed with their scientific and educational work to make chronobiology into a discipline by virtue of both principles and methods that lead to incontrovertible facts.

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