

PREFACE

This volume is a tribute to the professional life of Dr. Louis L. Jacobs. While no single book can replace a lifetime of accomplishments by a great vertebrate paleontologist, everyone who knows him will feel the meaningful value of this volume, even if it comes late.

His career in vertebrate paleontology, which began in graduate school in 1970, has been passionately and successfully pursued for the past 53 years and will continue in the future. His extensive and significant research achievements are well reflected in his bibliography. However, Louis remains highly passionate and actively engaged in vertebrate paleontology, indicating that his scholarly accomplishments will continue for a long time.

The essays in this volume were presented by Louis' friends, colleagues, and students. Sixty-eight professionals from 16 countries willingly contributed to this volume. It demonstrates that Louis has a close network of professionals from all around the world. Louis began his professional career focusing on rodent fossils but expanded his expertise to various reptiles, including dinosaurs and mosasaurs. Accordingly, the organization of this book is divided into sauropsids and synapsids, reflecting the significant contributions of Louis to the study of the evolution of these two major groups in vertebrate paleontology, and the title of the book is a tribute to his achievements.

We have discussed this volume for the past 15 years, with the intention to publish it in line with Louis' retirement. However, it was postponed several times. At last, this year, the 5th Asia Dinosaur International Symposium, sponsored by Hwaseong City, South Korea, allowed us to publish this book. We reached out to Louis' colleagues, friends, and students to participate in this project. In each contributor's acceptance responses, we could feel how successful Louis' life has been. We are especially grateful to Dr. Lawrence Flynn, who introduced us to Louis' longtime colleagues and friends in the field of mammal fossil studies. We would also like to express our gratitude to Dr. Louis Taylor, a member of 'Red Fireballs' and one of Louis' closest friends, who reached out to us first, expressing his desire to write a detailed biography of Dr. Louis Jacobs.

Finally, all of us (someone called us 'Asian Mafia' as a joke) are deeply grateful for the golden times in our lives at SMU, thanks to Dr. Louis Jacobs, and we take very pride in being his students. We are very fortunate we have him as our mentor. We learned from him what friends are for when watching Louis, who brought Will Downs' ashes to the Flaming Cliffs in 2006.

Louis has significantly contributed to studying rodents in Pakistan and Kenya and researching dinosaurs and marine reptiles in Malawi and Angola. However, the five years of KID expeditions with us in the Gobi Desert of Mongolia will forever remain cherished memories of happy times.

We have been very delighted and honored to organize a tribute for 'a wonderful human being' as one contributor referred to Louis.

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Junchang Lü, Louis L. Jacobs, Yoshitsugu Kobayashi, Yuong-Nam Lee at Flaming Cliffs in 2006