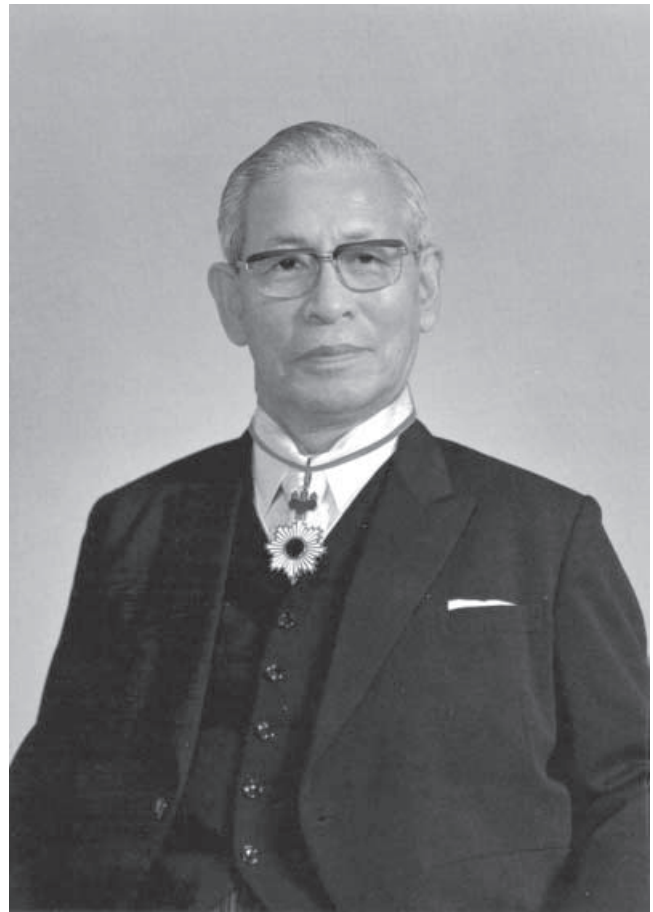


## *Obituary*

### **Akira Inamoto (1909–2001)**

Professor Akira Inamoto died on May 29, 2001. His lovely wife, Hideko, died on February 2, 2000. They were inseparable for the 58 years of a superb, warm marriage. Hideko devoted her full energy to ensuring Dr. Inamoto's professional success, nursing him when he suffered from tuberculosis, maintaining their home, and taking care of their two sons, Atsushi (who died in 1997) and Takashi. She was a typical Japanese wife in the best sense of the word. She, unfortunately, died 15 months before her husband. Professor Inamoto is the real founder of modern Japanese anesthesiology. He is mourned not only by family and friends both in Japan and overseas but also by all Japanese anesthesiologists and colleagues in the medical profession.

Akira Inamoto was born in Kyoto in 1909, and graduated from Hiroshima High School (in the city which, of course, gained notoriety as the first city to suffer atomic bombing). He graduated from Kyoto University Faculty of Medicine and received his M.D. in 1933. He then undertook training in surgery, with a focus on neurosurgery, and researched the histopathology of brain tumors for his Doctorate of Medical Sciences. Upon completion of his training in neurosurgery and his dissertation, he was promoted to Lecturer of Surgery. His research activities ended when he was drafted into the army during World War II. He served as an Army surgeon in China. At the end of the war, he returned to Kyoto University Hospital as a lecturer. Several months later he developed lung tuberculosis and underwent thoracoplastic surgery. Three years later he developed tuberculosis in the spine and underwent laminectomy. He contracted these diseases before modern anesthesiology and pain management were introduced to Japan, and he suffered terrible pain during the intra- and postoperative periods. After recovery, he made up his mind to introduce and establish modern anesthesiology in Japan. At the time, very few physicians were eligible for teaching positions, and he was nominated to the departmental chair of Anesthesiology at Kyoto University in 1956. He subse-



quently visited the United States and Canada to study modern anesthesiology, with financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation. Before his trip to the United States, he called on Dr. Masao Fujita, who had finished resident training in anesthesiology at Albert Einstein Medical School Hospital and had a fellowship in pediatric anesthesia at Boston Children's Hospital, to come back to Japan as his associate professor.

In the United States and Canada, Professor Inamoto visited Cornell University Hospital, Columbia University Presbyterian Hospital, Harvard Medical School Hospital, Boston Children's Hospital, the Mayo Clinic, McGill University, and the University of Montreal Hospital, during which trip he met with many world pioneers of anesthesiology, including Professors Artusio, Lund, and Griffith. He also met with young Japanese anesthesiologists studying in the United States who later served as professors of anesthesiology in Japan. He learned of the new anesthetic, halothane, during his visit to the United States, and was immensely impressed by its non-flammability, because during his past career in neurosurgery, electrocautery had been essential for operations. After returning to Kyoto, he extended his research field to include a comparative study of the effects of halothane and diethyl-ether on the histopathology of the lungs, as well as studies of the neurophysiology of anesthetics, the use of gas chromatography for measuring inhalation anesthetics, and the use of hypothermia for brain protection.

Professor Inamoto was elected President of the Japan Society of Anesthesiology in 1960. He then hosted the post-congress meeting of the second Asian and Australasian Congress of Anesthesiology in 1966. Another great contribution was as the Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the 5th World Congress of Anesthesiologists, held in Kyoto in 1972. He was subsequently elected Vice President of the World Federation of the Societies of Anesthesiologists, from 1972 to 1976.

In 1976, Professor Inamoto was admitted by election as a Fellow of the Faculty of Anaesthetists, Royal

College of Surgeons of the United Kingdom. Professor Inamoto was the first Japanese anesthesiologist on whom this honor was bestowed. Of his students, nine became professors and departmental chairmen of anesthesiology in Japan. Professor Inamoto authored or co-authored 13 chapters in textbooks and handbooks of anesthesiology and 177 papers in Japanese and overseas journals, including *Anesthesiology*, the *British Journal of Anaesthesia*, and *Anesthesia and Analgesia*. He served for 17 years as a distinguished editor of the *Japanese Journal of Anesthesiology*. In addition, he served as a president of the Japanese Society of Dental Anesthesia, and as a president of the Japanese Society of Blood Transfusion.

After retirement from Kyoto University, Professor Inamoto established a new anesthesia department, at Aichi Medical School in Nagoya, in 1973. He then moved to Osaka Dental School in 1976 to inaugurate another department of anesthesiology, for dentistry. In 1981, in recognition of his successful academic career, he was honored by the Emperor, being bestowed with the Third Order of the Rising Sun, which he wears proudly in the photograph.

Professor Inamoto is survived by his son, Takashi, Professor of Surgery at the College of Medical Technology, Kyoto University. Encouraged by Takashi, both Professor and Mrs. Inamoto converted to Catholicism prior to their deaths, and were given the Christian names, Joseph and Maria.

Kenjiro Mori, M.D., D.Med.Sc., F.R.C.A.  
Kyoto, August 22, 2001