



Editorial

An appreciation: Professor Tsuneji Nagai [Editor-in-Chief (Japan and Far-East), 1989–2006]

If a poll were taken to name the most prominent researchers in pharmaceutics in the late 20th Century the name of Professor Tsuneji Nagai would certainly be high amongst them. He is known throughout the pharmaceutical and wider scientific world and has been one of the most outstanding Japanese pharmaceutical scientists, as evidenced not least by the award of the Japanese Imperial Prize, the Medal of Purple Ribbon by the Emperor of Japan in 1999. His 65th birthday in 1998 was appropriately celebrated by an International Conference on Challenges for Drug Delivery and Pharmaceutical Technology in Tokyo with the many friends he has made from many continents. When others might have been taking life more easily, his distinguished academic career culminated in his appointment as President of Hoshi University, Tokyo between 2001 and 2004.

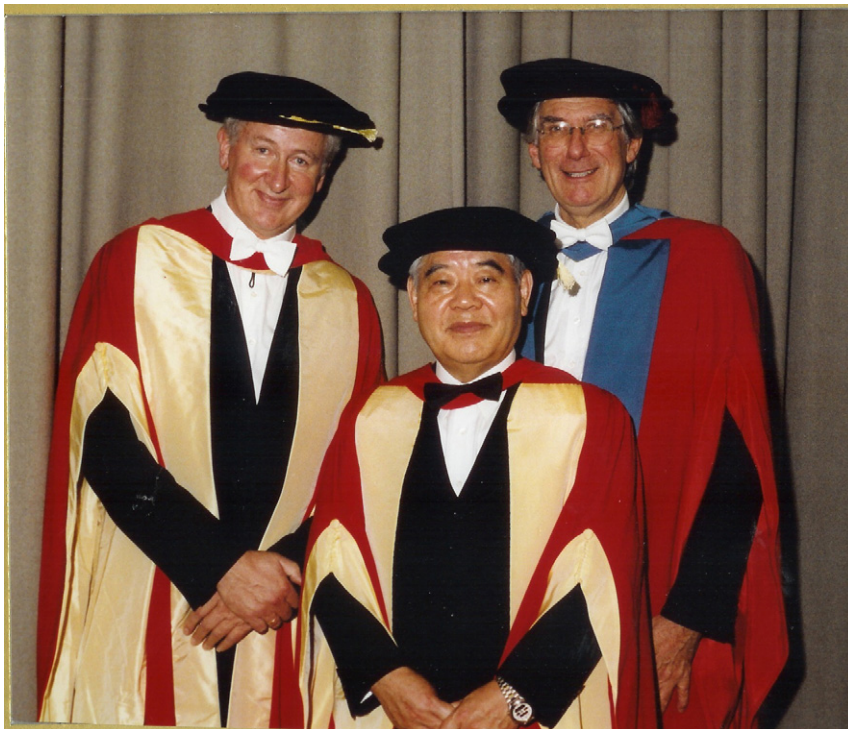
There have been many tributes written on Prof. Nagai and his career. This appreciation is composed to celebrate his retirement as Editor-in-Chief (for Japan and Far-East) of the *International Journal of Pharmaceutics*. His has been a most significant input during the period from 1989 to 2006, some 17 years. Due largely to his efforts, and more recently of Prof. Tak Sonobe, scientists from Japan and the Far-East contribute significantly to the journal's pages.

For 29 years he held the position of Professor at Hoshi University; during that time he and his research group published some 575 original papers and an almost equal number of review articles and book chapters in the fields of bioavailability and controlled drug release. Not only this but his name appears on 55 Japanese and 8 international patents. His reputation and standing was such that he was elected President of the Controlled Release Society during 1996–1997. Rare in academic spheres, his work has led to three marketed medicinal products: “Aftach[®]”; “Rhinocort[®]” and “Salcort[®]”. However, he has been an innovator and encourager in other ways. Prof. Nagai has had critical inputs to scientific bodies; he was Founder President of the Academy of Pharmaceutical Science and Technology of Japan (APSTJ) from 1985 to 1987, President of the Soci-

ety of Cyclodextrins, Japan (1993–1996) and, if that were not enough, of the Federation of Asian Pharmaceutical Associations Colleges of Pharmacy (FAPA-CP) (1997-present). He has also served as a Vice-President of the Federation International Pharmaceutique (FIP) for some 8 years.

Currently Professor Nagai is President of the Nagai Foundation Tokyo, which he set up on his award of the Høst-Madsen medal – he was the first Japanese scientist to win it – in 1986. The foundation amongst its many other works has helped many young scientists to attend international conferences. One feels that Prof. Nagai gains much satisfaction seeing his many protégés doing well in the world of science and industry. Many national and international awards bear his name: there is the CRS Nagai Innovation Award, The Nagai Award Thailand for Research, The FAPA-CP Nagai Award, APSTJ Nagai International Woman Scientists Award, Japan DDS Society Nagai Award, and APSTJ Graduate Student Award. There are very few scientists who have had this eponymous recognition, a result of tremendous contributions to science and to organizations which promote science, to his encouragement of the young and not least, to his constant humour and infectious enthusiasm. He seemingly has wings as he has been present and made his presence felt at innumerable conferences and symposia throughout the world, usually in the company of his wife, Kiyoko. He has been and still is of course an ambassador for Japan, and for pharmaceutics. He exemplifies the best.

All this, then, a long way from the young Tsuneji Nagai at the University of Tokyo clutching first his diploma of BS in pharmacy, then his MS and finally his PhD. Perhaps it was his postdoctoral work in the Universities of Columbia and of Michigan that gave him his international outlook. Hataceppe and London Universities have bestowed on him honorary doctorates. The photograph which accompanies this piece shows him in the Doctor of Science regalia of the University of London in 2001 along with Professor Douwe Breimer, at that time Rector Magnificus of Leiden University, and myself as the orator for the day.



More important than all the honours he has received and the prizes is the affection in which he is held worldwide. Those of us who are involved with the *International Journal of Pharmaceutics* salute him for his commitment to it and for raising the profile of the subject. We have indeed been fortunate to have a person of the stature of Tsuneji Nagai being part of the team for so long.

This special issue consists of papers contributed by his friends and admirers. It has been edited by Professor Tak Sonobe, who

has in his own right has also made significant contributions to *IJP* as Editor for Japan and The Far-East. The volume is presented with our thanks and with our good wishes.

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