

Obituary

MITSUGU NISHIURA MD 1920–1985

Dr Mitsugu Nishiura, an emeritus professor of Kyoto University, died in New Delhi from a cerebral haemorrhage on 18 January 1985. He was studying at the Central JALMA Institute for Leprosy in Agra where he had been sent by the Japanese International Cooperative Agency. It had been a long-cherished desire of his to devote himself to study at JALMA, Agra on his retirement from Kyoto University.

Professor Nishiura was born in Kobe on 4 March 1920. After graduating from the Faculty of Medicine, Kyoto University, in March 1946, he worked in the Department of Dermato-urology, Kishiwada Municipal Hospital, and then in 1952 he started to work as an assistant in the Leprosy Research Laboratory of the Department of Dermatology, Kyoto University. In 1959, he visited the Indian National Cancer Centre in Bombay to study abroad for 1 year under a Rockefeller fellowship and received a Doctorate of Medicine later that year. In 1960, he became a professor in the Faculty of Medicine, Kyoto University, and continued his medical career as a head of the Leprosy Research Laboratory until he became an emeritus professor upon his retirement in 1983.

Professor Nishiura published many excellent studies on the pathology of leprosy, and above all, the results of his study on the application of electron microscopy to the bacteriology and pathology of leprosy won worldwide recognition. He was given the Sakurane Prize by the Japanese Leprosy Association in 1962 and the Seto Prize by the Japanese Society of Electron Microscopy in 1976. Furthermore, his technological studies of electron microscopy led to the production of a freeze replication apparatus of his own design, and contributed to the diffusion of the freeze-etching technique.

Professor Nishiura took great interest in giving medical students the opportunity to learn the clinical practice of leprosy, since the Leprosy Research Laboratory was one of the few national facilities where outpatients and inpatients with leprosy could be treated. This contributed to the diminishing prejudice against leprosy on the part of medical doctors and students, leading to many doctors becoming skilled in this field, and who are now actively conducting studies on leprosy.

Professor Nishiura visited Thailand, India, Cambodia, Bangladesh and Venezuela where he participated in international cooperative studies with native researchers. It is specially significant that he had stayed in the Central JALMA Institute for Leprosy and he had been studying as well as teaching his juniors since the faculty was constructed by the Japan Leprosy Mission for Asia (JALMA). He also contributed to the smooth transfer of its control from JALMA to the Indian government.

His memory will be kept alive by his friends, and also by all those who benefited so greatly from his advice or his assistance in training.

MASAHIDE ABE