Asura-statue

Takashi YOSHIMOTO, M.D., Ph.D.

First Executive President of JNNS (2003–2007)

Former President of JNNS (2002–2003)

President, National Center for University Entrance Examinations, Tokyo

When I was the president of Tohoku University, one of the Former Imperial Universities in Japan, I once discussed the 'Asura-statue' at the end of a school entrance ceremony in the following terms.

'At the end of today's ceremony, I would like to discuss a cultural issue, that of the Asura-statue, one of the Eight Statues of the Kofukuji-temple in Nara. This work of art from the middle of eighth century, which has been saved by the efforts of many people during several wars over the centuries, still has a strong impression on

the observer. The Asura-statue represents a Sun god, which provides life as indicated by the execution of this statue. At the same time, the statue does not represent the God almighty but the God of war, who fights against 'Taishakuten.' Therefore, the Asura-statue contains paradoxical characteristics, which account for the complex facial expression. This statue is just one example of Japanese culture. I recommend that you all continue to study the long history and tradition of Japanese culture after graduation from this University. Such self-imposed challenges are indispensable when you are young. We believe that the task of our University is to provide a satisfactory education for future leaders in any field. I hope that all of you will maintain strong motivation, and make great advances toward the future, and in the world. I would like to close by wishing you all happy lives in the future.'

I would like to applaud the 50th Anniversary of *Neurologia medico-chirurgica*, the official

journal of the Japan Neurosurgical Society. As is well known, this journal has contributed greatly to the progress of neurosurgery in Japan. I would like to express my sincere respect to the many members of Japan Neurosurgical Society, especially to the previous chief editors; Dr. Shozo Ishii from Junendo University, Dr. Keiji Sano from Tokyo University, Dr. Akira Yamaura from Chiba University, and the current editor-in-chief Dr. Yoichi Katayama from Nihon University, who have supported the development of this journal.

Neurosurgery in Japan started in a difficult period after World War II. Continuous efforts have been required to catch up with neurosurgery in Western countries, as well as the sincere responsibility to help sick people. These efforts have contributed, in accordance with the improvements in public medico-social administration, to the remarkable development of neurosurgery in Japan. When I think about the past 10 years, much further

progress have been based on the modern technologies of operative tools, diagnostic modalities, and neuroendovascular procedures. In addition, younger neurosurgeons have developed techniques and abilities acquired from more senior neurosurgeons. Neurosurgery appears to become more and more understood and perfected

in Japan.

Neurologia medico-chirurgica, the official journal of the Japan Neurosurgical Society, is thought to have made a special contribution to the progress of neurosurgery in Japan, despite the history of *Neurologia medico-chirurgica* as short as 50 years. From the viewpoint of the long history of humanity,

no one can predict how science, medicine, and neurosurgery will progress in the future.

I go to the treasury in Kofukuji-temple every time I have the chance to visit Nara, naturally to consult the Asura-statue.