In Memory of the Late Professor Tomoo Nakayama:
A Tribute

By

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Tomoo Nakayama was born at Kōjimachi in Tokyo as the first son of Hyōma and Maki Nakayama on January 22, 1909. After his father’s death in his childhood, he moved with his mother to Nagasaki. The Nakayama family had served as official interpreters of Dutch at Hirado, Nagasaki in the Edo era.

After attending the Middle School of Nagasaki and the High School of Saga, Tomoo Nakayama began to study medicine at the Imperial University of Tokyo in 1929. He graduated from and became an unpaid Subassistant in anatomy at the same university in 1933. Six months later, he was conscripted for military service to train as an army surgeon for two years. Thereafter, he returned to his previous post at the Imperial
University of Tokyo, and in 1936 he was promoted to Assistant in the Department of Anatomy. After three months, he moved to the Imperial University of Taihoku in Taihoku (Taipeh, Formosa) under Professor Otto Mori (1890–1967), and became an Assistant Professor of anatomy in 1937. He began studies on some histological and embryological themes in the new department, but in 1941 he was called to serve as an army surgeon until the end of the war in 1945. As Formosa was then returned to China, the Imperial University of Taihoku was closed in 1946, and all of its facilities became the National Taipeh University.

Returning to Japan, Nakayama was appointed as a Professor of anatomy at Nihon University in September, 1946, where he began to study one of his life works, the vasa vasorum. In 1957, he received his doctorate of medicine from the University of Tokyo for a study on “Vasa vasorum, especially on the aorta, and its development.” Besides various investigations on the vascular system, he studied the functional anatomy of the esophagus and also organized a research group to study anomalous cases of the muscular system in cooperation with anatomical departments of other medical schools in Tokyo. He gave special addresses entitled “A functional anatomy of the esophagus, mainly on the construction of its muscular layer” at the 38th Annual Meeting of the Japan Broncho-Esophageal Society in 1963, and also “Vasa vasorum” at the 70th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Association of Anatomists in 1965. At Nihon University, he served as a Superintendent during 1955–1965 and as a Curator of the Medical Library in 1968–1969. He retired from Nihon University under the age limit in 1974. After a while, he was appointed as the first Vice-President of the National Defense Medical College, which had been founded in 1973. For about 10 years he devoted all his efforts to the establishment of the medical college until his retirement in 1983. He paid particular attention to develop the college as an excellent, and at the same time, a harmonious medical school. He was appointed a Professor Emeritus of Nihon University in 1975 and of the National Defense Medical College in 1983. He served as a President of the Japanese Association of Anatomists from 1972 to 1975, being a Councillor since 1946, and he was also the President of the 10th International Congress of Anatomists in Tokyo in 1975. Thereafter, he became an honorary member of the Japanese Association of Anatomists. He was an Esperantists because of his wife’s father, Professor Seiho Nishi (1890–1978).

Nakayama suddenly developed cerebral hemorrhage on February 11, 1985. After an operation on a subdural hematoma at the Hospital attached to Nihon University, he was recuperating for a long time at his home in Mitaka, Tokyo and later at Tsurukawa Sanitarium at Sagamihara, Kanagawa, where he died of peritonitis following an intestinal obstruction on February 26, 1989.