

## **Tetsuro Hori (1937-2009), in memoriam**

By Clark M. Blatteis



Photo courtesy of Toshihiko Katafuchi

Thermal physiology lost an icon on August 22, 2009 when Tetsuro Hori, MD, lost a long battle with Parkinson's disease. Prof. Hori was a world leader in the field of neuroelectrophysiology and, with his students, many of whom became well established investigators in their own right, contributed importantly and extensively to our understanding of the operation of hypothalamic neurons in controlling body temperature.

I first met Prof. Hori in Pecs, Hungary, during the IUPS Satellite Symposium on Thermal Physiology held there in the summer of 1980; we met, as it happened, on the way to the first session. We knew of each other's work, of course, but we had never interacted before. It was a very cordial meeting from the start and the beginning of a long friendship that lasted throughout his life. I remember he was accompanied to that first session by several of his students and assistants, one of whom would eventually join me in Memphis, Dr. Masaaki Shibata. To my best recollection, we never had any disputes over our own results, but often vigorous discussions over the results of others! I knew that he had started his own research work under the tutelage of Prof. Teruo Nakayama at Nagoya and that he eventually had earned a professorship at Saga, but I was not well informed about his career path until then. He was at this post when we met, and it was there that I visited him on my first visit to Japan a couple of years later. Again, it was a lovely occasion for professional discussions, touring and socializing – the more so the latter because my wife Yolanda accompanied me on this trip and, despite the language barrier, developed a cordial relationship with Kumiko, Tetsuro's wife. We met again, of course, many times over the years at various meetings around the world, he came to visit me in Memphis, and we again traveled to Japan to visit him in Fukuoka where he had meanwhile accepted the headship of the First Department of Physiology and developed a new group of young scientists, now also on their way to successful, independent careers. I was greatly honored when he invited me to Fukuoka again on the occasion of his retirement and asked me to make a presentation. We then also met his children whom, until then, in accordance with characteristic Japanese modesty and privacy, we knew little about. They were very

impressive and sweet. Indeed, we were looking forward to seeing them all again last summer. Anticipating that my wife and I would attend the PPTR 09 meeting in Matsue, I had written to Prof. Hori in May, suggesting that, if he were unable to attend that meeting, we would like to go and visit him in Fukuoka afterwards. But I did not get an answer and, indeed, we were unable to attend the meeting ourselves because I underwent back surgery in June to correct my lumbar spinal stenosis and was not sufficiently recovered in July to make the long trip. Hence, sadly, we lost the opportunity to meet Tetsuro once more.

I have deliberately not discussed Prof. Hori's many scientific accomplishments because these are available from other sources and will no doubt be reviewed by Dr. Katafuchi, his pupil and colleague in Fukuoka. Rather, I have tried to depict the simple humanity and sympathy of this eminent, sadly departed colleague. I miss him, as I am sure we all do. On behalf of his friends and colleagues worldwide, I wish hereby to record our profound sympathy and deepest condolences to his wife Kumiko and his children. I would also like to wish to his former pupils and associates all the very best as they trace their own way in our field, in Prof. Hori's memory.

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