

## OBITUARY

# Professor Akira Yazawa

Professor Akira Yazawa, an international giant of copper and non-ferrous smelting passed away suddenly at his home on 14 August 2010 at the age of 84. He earned his Bachelor and PhD degrees at Tohoku University in 1948 and 1960, respectively and became a Professor at the same university. He served as Director of Research Institute of Mineral Dressing and Metallurgy (SENKEN)/Tohoku University (currently known as IMRAM) from 1981 to 1986 and as President of Miyagi National College of Technology from 1989 to 1995. He was President of the Society of Calorimetry and Thermal Analysis, Japan from 1987 to 1989 and President of Mining and Metallurgical Institute of Japan (MMIJ) from 1989 to 1990.

Professor Yazawa was renowned worldwide for his impact in extractive metallurgy of copper as well as Zn, Pb, Ni, Sn, Sb, Au, Hg and Cd. He published more than 300 publications that dealt with a variety of subjects such as slags, alloys, mattes, speiss, aqueous solutions, alcohols, algae, etc. As a truly international professor and industrially oriented academician, he brought many overseas graduates to his laboratory at Tohoku University, where he raised 17 international PhD students, in addition to a number of Japanese engineering doctors. He taught pyrometallurgical thermodynamic courses at many overseas institutions: Kosice Technical University (Slovakia), Santa Maria University (Chile), Melbourne University (Australia), to name a few. Professor Yazawa has been recognised worldwide with many awards, prizes and honours such as:

- Meritorious Award – Japan Institute of Metals – 1965
- Silver Medal for Academic Contribution – Government of Czechoslovakia – 1967
- Best Paper Award – Mining and Metallurgical Institute of Japan – 1978
- Extractive Metallurgy Lecture Award – TMS-AIME – 1979
- Tanigawa-Harris Award – Japan Institute of Metals – 1979
- Best Paper Award of Canadian Metallurgical Quarterly – CIM – 1981
- Hofmann Prize – International Consortium for Lead – 1983
- Best Paper Award – Japan Institute of Metals – 1984
- Best Paper Award – Mining and Metallurgical Institute of Japan – 1984
- Best Paper Award – Mining and Metallurgical Institute of Japan – 1985
- Honorary Professor – Institute of Chemical Metallurgy, Chinese Academy of Science – 1987
- Honorary Professor – Central South University of Technology, China – 1989
- Honorary Member – Korean Institute of Metals – 1991



- Best Paper Award – Mining and Materials Processing Institute of Japan – 1991
- Honorary Doctor – Kosice Technical University, Slovakia – 1992
- Order of Sun Rise Decoration (third class) – Japanese Government – 1999.

His prolific research and publication career saw no slowdown with age and in his seventieth, he published more than 30 high valued papers in the fields of slag thermodynamics and environmental chemistry.

Today Professor Yazawa has become one of the most quoted authors in extractive metallurgy, and in the last quarter of the century, his works have been cited in virtually all the pyrometallurgical reference books published in any language, including the four texts books written by Professor Yazawa and his collaborators.

He was honoured in 2003 by the massive Yazawa International Symposium that I had the privilege to organise in San Diego, CA, 2003. This symposium was a record of the time in its class in terms of the number of papers received around the world (about 300 from 520 authors in 37 countries), the massive proceedings published of about 3000 pages, the sponsorship of about 28 professional organisations worldwide, the financial support of 10 industrial corporations and more than 60 individual donors.



My colleagues and I have had the privilege to have been working closely with him in the last 12 years in several industrial copper smelting projects funded by several corporations. We have also been honoured to publish numerous scientific peer reviewed articles and conference papers (many yet to be published) together with him and to have presented along with him several lectures in international conferences and other venues.

Professor Yazawa always managed a fit and a very healthy life and his sudden death came as a shock. You could not associate the death with him or at least it always looked very far away from him. Despite his age, he was very young in spirit and always strived for new

modern developments. He embraced and also pioneered new realities easily. As a practicing musician, he used to compare his stronghold, equilibrium thermodynamics, with the classical music of Johan Sebastian Bach. He especially had a great esteem for us and our work and expressed this in numerous occasions during his lectures in international conferences and other venues.

He will be greatly missed by all of us, his colleagues and ex-students around the world but especially by his wife Kimi, his son and two daughters.

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