

Enryo Inoue,

The Founder of Toyo University

His Spirit Handed Down Generation by Generation

Toyo University Founder Enryo Inoue developed the founding spirit of Toyo University: "The basis of all learning lies in philosophy," through a long process of thinking and practice. We should teach not only the meaning of the words, but also his enthusiasm and attitude toward learning that underlies the words, which will help us take up new challenges in present times.



Putting Philosophy into Practice Gave Birth to the Philosophy Academy

In 1858, Enryo Inoue was born to the family of the chief priest of Jiko-ji Temple in present-day Nagaoka City, Niigata Prefecture. He spent his impressionable boyhood under the influence of both Buddhism as a traditional religion and the Meiji Restoration as the dawn of modern Japan. In an era of drastic changes, he devoted serious efforts to both classic Chinese literature and Western learning.

Later, Enryo was awarded a scholarship by Higashi Hongan-ji Temple, Kyoto, to study in Tokyo. At 23 years of age, he entered the Department of Philosophy of the newly founded Tokyo Imperial University's Faculty of Literature, as its sole inaugural student. At the university, while becoming interested in Western philosophy, he discovered Eastern philosophy in the teachings of Buddhism, which he was familiar with. He dedicated a great deal of energy to his philosophical studies, finally establishing the following principles: "the basis of all learning lies in philosophy," and "philosophical studies and their permeation are requirements for the development of national and social civilization." After graduating from the university, he struggled to establish a new educational institution on his own, and in 1887, when he was just 29, he founded the private Philosophy Academy. This marked the beginning of Toyo University's history.

AY2020 Founder's Festival Celebrated

After devoting his life to opening a door to new education in modern Japan, Enryo Inoue collapsed while giving a lecture in Dalian, China, and passed away in 1919 at age 61. On June 6, 2020, the 101st anniversary of his passing, the Founder's Festival was celebrated at Renge-ji Temple, Nakano-ku, Tokyo, with attendance limited to those involved in the University to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infection.



Personality of Enryo Inoue

Toyo University dedicates some classes of Philosophy and Thought as a General Education Course to education about the University itself. Many students who have attended these classes express their surprise, saying, "I didn't know that Dr. Inoue had been such a great figure," and are impressed by his personality. Let's explore what kind of person he was from the instances below.



◆ Cool-Headed Even in Difficult Situations

Enryo's lifetime was actually a series of accidents. He called the following three occurrences "my three most unlucky days" in hindsight.

Storm disaster

In 1889, a large typhoon hit Tokyo and destroyed an almost completed new school building at the Philosophy Academy. Enryo gave instructions calmly, and construction work resumed soon.

Fire disaster

In 1896, a fire broke out at the neighboring junior high school, and completely burned down the school buildings of the Philosophy Academy. Enryo again remained calm, and reconstructed and relocated the school buildings.

Human-made disaster

In 1902, the Japanese Ministry of Education recognized the content of an ethics exam and the methodology of teaching ethics at the Philosophy Academy as inappropriate, and revoked the Academy's privilege of exempting its students from examinations for secondary education teacher's licenses.

Although all these incidents were serious, Enryo was very prompt in taking action in response and succeeded in settling the situations. These challenges suggest that he had a bold personality, and was always cool-headed and calm.

◆ Traveling Around Japan and All Over the World

In 1888, Enryo embarked on his first overseas inspection tour. In an era when international travel was much more difficult than it is today, he made three world inspection tours during his lifetime, and used the latest knowledge obtained from around the world to provide education in Japan. Moreover, Enryo made nationwide lecture tours to spread philosophy all over Japan and offer opportunities for education to the general public. This was a pioneering initiative for lifelong education. Records reveal that he gave 5,291 lectures to approximately 1.4 million people during his last 13 years. Traces of his journeys can be found in about 60% of present-day municipalities in Japan.



◆ Pioneer of Mystery Studies

Enryo was also famously known as the "Mystery Doctor." Even some works by Shigeru Mizuki, a Japanese manga artist who often depicted traditional Japanese monsters, introduce Enryo Inoue. Enryo called superstitions, folk beliefs, and stories of supernatural phenomena found around Japan "mysteries," and studied them systematically with the aim of explaining them scientifically and abolishing those superstitious beliefs. The results of his studies were compiled in the book *Lectures on Mystery Studies*, which was presented to Emperor Meiji. While Enryo made nationwide lecture tours as a missionary for philosophy, *Mystery Studies* was a popular subject of his lectures. In this way, he also strove to eliminate superstitious "mysteries" through research and education.

