



**Speaker: Richard Stone (Waseda-U)**



**Title: Death, Peace of Mind, and Mysteries  
Revisiting the Moral Philosophy of  
Inoue Enryō's Mystery Studies**

**Abstract:** Among many of Inoue Enryō's (井上円了, 1858-1919) contemporaries, it was believed that his "Mystery Studies (*Yōkaigaku*; 妖怪学)" was but a mere hobby. Yet, although it may seem easy to look at Enryō's systematic study of various ghost stories or superstitions in this way, Enryō himself would almost certainly disagree with this characterization of his work. To the contrary, throughout his career Enryō himself posed his "Mystery Studies" as the key to reforming Japanese education, morality, and religion.

Keeping this in mind, we will attempt to ask: why would this seemingly curious study of ghosts, monsters, and superstitions have such a fundamental moral or value? While answering this question, we will focus on the surprising centrality that the fear of death has in Enryō's writings about the importance of Mystery Studies. In doing so, we will find both a novel approach to pursuing peace of mind in the midst of fearing the unknown as well as assess the political implications of Enryō's "cure" for those who fear death.

**Keywords:** Inoue Enryō, Mystery Studies, Yokai, Death, War

**Japanese Philosophy Network 6th Meeting**

18:00-19:30, 28th May 2024

Seminar Room (24) 2F. Bldg. 101

The University of Tokyo Komaba Campus I

**Co-organizers:** East Asian Academy for New Liberal Arts, the University of Tokyo (EAA) and The University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy (UTCP)