

## What Ikeda Daisaku Learned at “Toda University”<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

“Toda University” is a term that refers to the education that Soka University founder Ikeda Daisaku received from his mentor Toda Jōsei. This was a term used between Toda and Ikeda.

In a 1969 essay titled “Do Not Be Defeated in Life,” Ikeda wrote as follows: “If I did not have Toda Jōsei as my mentor in my life, I would have become someone who hardly amounted to anything. I came to this realization much later [in life]” (Aragaki, 1969, p. 17).<sup>2</sup> Further, in his [1996] lecture at Teachers College, Columbia University, he stated, “Ninety-eight percent of what I am today I learned from him” (Ikeda, 2021a, p. 12). The purpose of this article is to examine what this so-called Toda University was.

In examining the meaning and significance of Toda University, I believe we must consider the following three points.

First, Makiguchi Tsunesaburō, who published the first volume of *Sōka kyōikugaku taikei* (The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy) in November 1930 and who wished to establish an elementary through university education system that practices his value-creating pedagogy (Makiguchi, 1981-1996; “Sōka Kyōiku no Genryū” Hensan Inukai, 2021), and Ikeda Daisaku, who established schools and universities with the name “*Sōka*” in Japan and around the world, never met. Toda, who was Makiguchi’s disciple and Ikeda’s mentor, was the bridge

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<sup>2</sup> This and subsequent quotes without reference to published English sources were translated by the translator or taken from an existing unofficial translation provided by the Sōka Gakkai translation department.

between these two. What kind of education did Ikeda receive at Toda University? The answer to this question is critical in considering the foundation of “*Sōka*”<sup>3</sup> that has been inherited from Makiguchi to Toda, and then from Toda to Ikeda.

Second, a true picture of Toda becomes clear by looking at him from the perspective of what Ikeda learned from him. I was a member of the editorial board that published *Hyōden: Makiguchi Tsunesaburō* (Makiguchi Tsunesaburō: A Critical Biography) (“*Sōka Kyōiku no Genryū*” Hensan Iinkai, 2017) and *Hyōden: Toda Jōsei jō-ge* (Toda Jōsei: A Critical Biography Parts 1 and 2) (“*Sōka Kyōiku no Genryū*” Hensan Iinkai, 2019, 2021). Working on Toda’s biography immediately after finishing the serialized publication of the manuscript of Makiguchi’s biography in the monthly magazine *Daisan Bunmei* (Third Civilization) was very useful in publishing [a revised and updated version of] Makiguchi’s biography as a complete book. Therefore, [just as research on Toda’s biography helped improve the critical biographical research on Makiguchi], I believe biographical research on Toda requires a similar engagement with research on Ikeda’s biography.

In the abovementioned lecture at Teachers College, Ikeda (2021a) stated as follows: “The integrated Soka education system, which promotes value creation, was founded out of a desire that future generations should have the opportunity to experience this same kind of human education [that I received from Toda]” (p. 12). Thus, the third significant point is that knowing what kind of education Ikeda received from Toda is key for understanding what Ikeda means by “human education,” [which is Ikeda’s principal educational philosophy].

### When Was the Term Toda University First Used

#### Toda University Is a Term First Used By Toda

I would like to start by discussing how the term Toda University was born. According to Ikeda (1988-2015, Vol. 69), Toda was the first to use it:

Once Mr. Toda spoke to me as follows: “I want very badly to send you to college. Unless you go, you may be at a disadvantage in society. However, you will be fine if you go to ‘a university of humanity,’ ‘a university of faith,’ that is, this ‘Toda University.’ Consider it a college for polishing all aspects of your character and acquiring your greatest power as a human being.” (p. 472)

On another occasion, Ikeda (1988-2015, Vol. 87) further stated:

Rousseau concluded, “true education consists less in precept than in practice.” These

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<sup>3</sup> The author uses the term “*Sōka*” to encompass a broad meaning that includes the thought and practice of Makiguchi, Toda, and Ikeda.

are deep and important words. I fully received training from Mr. Toda. As a foremost representative [of his disciples], I was at his side from morning to night. It was a strict training and education. Mr. Toda called it “Toda University.” It was a university of just the two of us. Receiving such education is the pride and happiness of my youth. (p. 406)

### When Ikeda Started Using The Term Toda University

The first instance of the term Toda University appearing in print is in a book titled *Asu no Sōka Gakkai* (Tomorrow’s Sōka Gakkai) (1970) by Asano Hidemitsu, a journalist at the *Yomiuri Shimbun*. He wrote the following based on his interview with Ikeda:

During the ten years from when he stopped attending night courses at Taisei Gakuin<sup>4</sup> until he turned 30, Ikeda attended “Toda University” all day on Sundays and one hour in the morning on other days. We can say these lectures created who Ikeda is. (p. 232)

After this, we do not see Ikeda using the term Toda University until 25 years later in 1996. Nevertheless, as in the following quotes, starting in 1986, Ikeda began sharing his experiences of receiving one-on-one instruction from Toda, and thus we might infer this is when he began thinking of talking about Toda University.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Toda taught me one-on-one as his student and, to this day, I am filled with deep appreciation. (1988-2015 [1986], Vol. 59, p. 297)

My mentor said to me, “I’m sorry to bring such hardship upon you, to ruin all your plans [by having you work for me instead of attending college].” To compensate, Mr. Toda personally tutored me in various subjects on Sundays and each morning from Monday through Saturday. Everything he taught me has made me what I am today. It was like attending my own, private university; it was the greatest education anyone could have, surpassing any established higher educational institution. (1988-2015 [1993], Vol. 82, p. 251)

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<sup>4</sup> Taisei Gakuin later became Fuji College and is present-day Tokyo Fuji University. Ikeda entered the night program in politics and economics at Taisei Gakuin in April 1948.

<sup>5</sup> The term “Toda University” was never used in Ikeda’s novel *The Human Revolution* when it was serialized in the *Seikyo Shimbun* from January 1, 1965 to February 11, 1993, nor when it was first published as a 12-volume book series. When Vols. 4 and 7 of *The Human Revolution* were edited to be included respectively in volumes 145 and 147 of *The Complete Works of Ikeda Daisaku*, references to Toda University were added.

After the Second World War, I studied at the “Toda Academy.”<sup>6</sup> Toda Jōsei, the second Sōka Gakkai president, was the teacher. I was the only student. Every morning for ten years, I studied a diverse range of subjects under my mentor. Finally, Mr. Toda said to me, “I have taught you everything I know.” (1988-2015 [1994], Vol. 60, p. 302)

Every morning for a period of ten years, Mr. Toda gave me instruction. He was my personal tutor; it’s as though I studied at the “Toda Academy.” (1988-2015 [1995], Vol. 57, p. 296)

The first time Ikeda used the term Toda University was in a speech at the commemorative photo session for incoming students at the Soka Junior and Senior High School on April 17, 1996, where he shared: “Every morning for ten years, I studied privately with Mr. Toda, covering every subject. One could say I was a student at Toda University” (1988-2015 [1996], Vol. 58, p. 27).

Three years later, the term Toda University was used for the first time in the title of Ikeda’s essay series “Thoughts on *The New Human Revolution*,” published on November 26, 1999. Ikeda provided detailed recollections of Toda University in this and two other essays titled “The Superlative Classes at Toda University” and “The Heart of Human Education: The Relationship Between Teacher and Student,” published respectively on December 7 and December 18, 1999.

Why did Ikeda start using the phrase Toda University in 1996? And why did he start discussing it in more detail three years later in 1999?

It could be because more than 25 years had passed since the opening of Soka Junior and Senior High School and Soka University and, in June 1996, a plan to open Soka University of America as a liberal arts college was announced. In other words, it was when the Soka school system had entered a period of further development. Moreover, although the exact date is unclear, this is when Ikeda began referring to Makiguchi, as well as novels and words of great philosophers, more than he had been. Further, the Sōka Gakkai separated from the Nichiren Shōshū priesthood in November 1991, which the Sōka Gakkai calls its “spiritual independence.” I believe that [with these events] Ikeda further deepened his commitment to passing onto the next generation the foundation of “*Sōka*” that he inherited from Toda and Makiguchi, as well as the “human education” he received from Toda.

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<sup>6</sup> In these initial instances Ikeda used the term *Toda juku*, which is translated here as Toda Academy. Thereafter, he has consistently used *Toda daigaku*, which is translated here as Toda University.

Toda University Was Private Instruction by a Master in “The Study of Humanity” <sup>7</sup>

Ikeda wrote about the education he received from Toda in the following passages:

I had to quit Taisei Gakuin, but thereafter Mr. Toda taught me not only Buddhism, but all subjects, such as the humanities, sociology, natural science, economics, as well as etiquette, trend analyses, methods of decision making, and organizational management...It can be said that working under Mr. Toda itself was an education. For me, his every word and action have become the foundation of my own action as a human being, and it is as if an intangible asset has been imprinted in my life. (1988-2015 [1975], Vol. 22, p. 260)

I learned the full spectrum of disciplines under the private tutelage of my mentor Mr. Toda. In other words, I studied at Toda University. (1997, p. 278)

The school of my youth was the private instruction I received from Toda Jōsei, a master in “the study of humanity.” He gave me a thorough and complete grounding in an encyclopedic range of subjects, including politics, economics, law, Chinese classics, chemistry, and physics. I studied at Toda University. (1988-2015 [1999], Vol. 130, pp. 248-249)

When I was young, I learned a wide range of subjects and the “study of humanity” from my mentor, Mr. Toda. This has become an indestructible foundation for me. (1988-2015 [2004], Vol. 96, p. 380)

Through the lives of great people in history, my mentor Toda Jōsei always taught me the study of humanity and the art of leadership. (1988-2015 [2002], Vol. 128, p. 127)

As the above quotes indicate, the daily educational training Ikeda received from Toda was “a university that cultivates a person’s entire character for the achievement of their highest potential as a human being” (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 69, p. 472), something that can be called private instruction by a master in “the study of humanity.” Toda University not only used regular teaching materials for instruction, but through the study of Nichiren’s writings and the Lotus Sutra, there seemed to be a focus on passing on the ultimate principles of Buddhism to which Toda had awakened. Ikeda wrote as follows.

Besides the various fields of study, what [Mr. Toda] taught with most vigor was the

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<sup>7</sup> This is a translation of *ningen gaku*, which is a key term for Ikeda. It refers to a deepening understanding of humanity and how to live more fully through the study of great individuals.

Buddhist philosophy of life. By thoroughly explaining the Buddhist scriptures and Nichiren’s writings, he taught them in contrast to contemporary thought. (Aragaki, 1969, p. 23)

Later Ikeda reflected:

Mr. Toda often taught that the highest thought should be deeply pursued from the beginning. He also said, “The teachings of Nichiren Daishonin are the highest philosophy of life. Therefore, if you probe into these deeply, you will naturally know the basis of all knowledge.” (1988-2015 [1998], Vol. 89, p. 123)

### **Analysis of Different Periods of Toda’s Educational Training for Ikeda**

After 2000, Ikeda often introduced the educational training he received from Toda in his essays and speeches. In his 1999 essay, the term Toda University was used to refer mainly to the lectures conducted before work at Ōkura Shōji, Toda’s business, but later Ikeda used the term to refer broadly to the following: 1) all the education and training Ikeda received since he joined the Sōka Gakkai in August 1947; 2) all the education and training Ikeda received since he started working for Nihon Shōgakkai, Toda’s publishing company, in January 1949; and 3) the private one-on-one instruction Ikeda received from Toda since January 1950. In this article, I use this first [definition of Toda University], which is the broadest [of the three] and, dividing the time from Ikeda joining the Sōka Gakkai to Toda’s death into five periods, I examine what kind of educational training Ikeda received during each period.

### **From Joining Sōka Gakkai to Starting Employment at Nihon Shōgakkai (August 1947 – January 1949)**

In the following passage, Ikeda recalled August 24, 1947, when he decided to join the Sōka Gakkai and pursue the path of faith.

At that time, I still did not fully comprehend the profound teachings of Buddhism. My family was also strongly opposed to my decision. But transcending these surface problems, I was deeply drawn to the character of Toda Jōsei.

He believed in me, saying: “Come on! Don’t hesitate! Challenge your seeking spirit with me! Study and courageously practice, as befits a youth!” And I, with the intuition of youth, was convinced that I could follow this man who had been imprisoned during the war for the sake of peace and Buddhism. In that sense, August 24 marked my entrance into Toda University. (1988-2015 [2002], Vol. 133, p. 125)

The main activities of the Sōka Gakkai around this time were Toda’s lectures on the

Lotus Sutra and the writings of Nichiren at the headquarters located in Nishikanda in Chiyoda ward, along with the discussion meetings conducted once a month in each chapter. Ikeda started attending these lectures in the Fall of 1947, and from September 13, 1948, to February 5, 1949, as a member of the seventh class he attended the lecture three days a week—on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays—for five months. [In a diary at that time,] Ikeda (2004) reflected on his impressions of the lecture as follows.

What great fortune to know the infinitely profound and compassionate teachings of the Lotus Sutra. I admire Mr. Toda as a teacher for all humankind...

I am a student of the Mystic Law. Am I not ashamed of my behavior until now? Do I not have delusion in the back of my mind? I myself doubt and hesitate.<sup>8</sup> Religious revolution equals human revolution, one that will be followed by revolutions in education, economics and politics...

I am only twenty years old, and I have discovered the most glorious path to follow in youth! (p. 349)

Toda's lecture on the Lotus Sutra was not a mere commentary or explanation. It was encouragement for each attendee to transform their way of life—human revolution—based on Toda's own enlightenment in prison which moved Ikeda deeply.

### **From Starting Employment at Nihon Shōgakkān to the Cessation of Publishing Boys' Magazines (January 1949 - December 1949)**

In January 1949, Ikeda entered Nihon Shōgakkān, a publishing company that Toda operated. He was in charge of editing the monthly boys' magazine *Bōken Shōnen* (Boy's Adventure), and he also became responsible for soliciting and receiving manuscripts from the writers and illustrators, which was something Toda used to do. Working with writers and illustrators who were extremely busy caused a lot of worry. Forming relationships with them was critical, and yet Toda entrusted Ikeda, who was only 21 years old, with this responsibility. Half a year later, Ikeda was appointed chief editor.

Ikeda wrote about the education he received after entering Toda's company in the following way.

I started working for Mr. Toda's company on January 3, 1949. It was right when I turned 21 years old. During the following ten years, Mr. Toda strictly trained me every single day. Every morning before work, he gave me private lectures. We of course studied Nichiren's writings, but also various subjects in the fields of humanities

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<sup>8</sup> In his diary, Ikeda sometimes addresses himself in the third person, and therefore a more literal translation of this sentence is closer to "You yourself are the one to have faith. You yourself are the one to save the nation."

and natural and social sciences. (1988-2015 [1992], Vol. 23, p. 251)

The first assignment entrusted to me at my mentor’s publishing company was editing a children’s magazine called *Boy’s Adventure* [*Boken shōnen*] (later changed to *Children’s Japan* [*Shōnen nihon*]). I was 21 at the time. I was responsible for all aspects of the publication, from planning to soliciting manuscripts as well as editing and proofing. At times when it seemed that a solicited manuscript would not arrive in time and there would be a lack of content, I would have to make up for it by writing material myself. In short, this was when I was pressed, by necessity, to seriously devote myself to writing. I began developing my writing under the strict tutelage of Mr. Toda, and this has been the most valuable experience of my entire life. (Yong & Ikeda, 2013, p. 24)

During this period, Ikeda received educational training from Toda through the process of editing magazines. Ikeda often states that he received education from Toda every morning for ten years, and if this is literal and we calculate from Toda’s death in April 1958, the morning lectures must have started even before Ikeda began working at Nihon Shōgakkai in January 1949. However, Ikeda sometimes uses expressions such as “every morning for about ten years” and “every morning for almost ten years,” and based on the reason Toda started these morning lectures, which is explained in the following section, we can infer they began after January 1950.

### **The Period of Working at Tokyō Kensetsu Shinyō Kumiai, Toda’s Credit Association (January 1950 – August 1950)**

In December 1949, the publication of *Shōnen nihon* (Children’s Japan), the boys’ magazine of which Ikeda was editor, was suspended, and the entire staff became employees of Tokyō Kensetsu Shinyō Kumiai, a credit association Toda was starting in the same building. However, starting a new business amid the Dodge Line financial and monetary contraction policies issued in March 1949, which caused many small businesses to go bankrupt, portended many difficulties. Knowing this, on the new year’s day of 1950, Toda asked Ikeda, “Work will become busy, so would you quit night classes? Instead, I will take full responsibility and provide you one-on-one instruction” (Ikeda, 1988-2015 [1975], Vol. 22, p. 260).

Ikeda gave up attending [night classes at] Taisei Gakuin and devoted himself to supporting Toda. Toda kept his promise and started offering private instruction to Ikeda on days off. He then extended this to mornings before work and, in 1950, he started lecturing on



the five major writings of Nichiren<sup>9</sup>. Ikeda wrote as follows:

In my own case, most of my education was under the tutelage of my mentor in life, Josei Toda. For some ten years, every day before work, he would teach me a curriculum of history, literature, philosophy, economics, science and organization theory. On Sundays, our one-on-one sessions started in the morning and continued all day. (2021a, p. 12)

When I was young, for about ten years, I received Mr. Toda's private instruction almost every day. (1988-2015 [1999], Vol. 90, p. 236)

Further, starting around spring of 1950 until the following April, Toda gave lectures on Nichiren's "The Record of Orally Transmitted Teachings" to some leaders of the Sōka Gakkai. Although Ikeda was not included in the list of participants, he also attended the lecture; as Ikeda (1988-2015) wrote, "When I first began studying Buddhism [with Toda Jōsei], we started with the 'The Record of Orally Transmitted Teachings'" (Vol. 132, p. 278).

#### **From Toda's Resignation as Sōka Gakkai General Director Because of the Suspension of His Business to His Inauguration as Sōka Gakkai President (August 1950 – May 1951)**

Because the business conditions of his credit association worsened, as a last resort Toda appealed to the Ministry of Finance to act as a merger intermediary between his company and another credit association. However, on August 22, 1950, the Ministry notified Toda that his business would be suspended. So as not to affect the Sōka Gakkai members, he resigned from the position of the Sōka Gakkai General Director on August 24.

In November of that year, Toda, anticipating the worst (of being found guilty of criminal charges regarding the management responsibilities of his credit association), started giving lectures on Nichiren's writings to seven trusted members of the Sōka Gakkai, including Ikeda (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vols. 36, 134). Toda also gave Ikeda Hall Caine's *The Eternal City* and Victor Hugo's *Ninety-Three* and told him to read them (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vols. 89, 131).

The following February, Toda, still dealing with his business issues, held a session with 14 young males that Ikeda recommended to share their impressions on reading *The Eternal City*. He also started lecturing on the writings of Nichiren to these same members (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vols. 78, 131). Around the same time, he also created a reading circle with 15 young females, using *The Eternal City*, *Ninety-Three*, and Dazai Osamu's *Run, Melos!* as

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<sup>9</sup> They are 1) On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land, 2) The Opening of the Eyes, 3) The Object of Devotion for Observing the Mind, 4) The Selection of the Time, and 5) On Repaying Debts of Gratitude.

materials (“Sōka Kyōiku no Genryū” Hensan linkai, 2021).

In these ways, during this period, in addition to one-on-one instruction to Ikeda, Toda strove to create groups of people who shared the same spirit through group instruction. This method was later used in the Suiko-kai [Water Margin Group] and the Kayō-kai [Flower Sun Group]<sup>10</sup>.

## **From Toda’s Inauguration as President of Sōka Gakkai to His Passing (May 1951 – April 1958)**

### ***From May 1951 to April 1952: One-on-One Lectures Before Work for Ikeda***

It seems to be around May 1951 that the teaching materials for the morning lectures changed from the writings of Nichiren to general educational materials. Kusayanagi Daizō, who interviewed Ikeda, listed 21 books that were used as materials for Toda’s one-on-one lectures.<sup>11</sup> Among them, the following six seem to be from this period: Odaka Tomoo’s *Introduction to Law*, Kokka Gakkai’s *Study of the New Constitution*, Hayashi Nobuo’s *Japanese Labor Law*, Ōta Tetsuzō’s *Study of Accounting*, Takada Yasuma’s *Introduction to Sociology*, and Hitotsuyanagi Juichi’s *Introduction to Geology*. In addition, it seems that Wada Kojirō’s *Principles of Law* was used.

### ***From May 1952: Other Employees Join the Morning Lectures***

The year after Toda was inaugurated as the President [of Sōka Gakkai], several young males were employed at Ōkura Shōji. On May 8, 1952, these employees joined the morning lectures that had been solely for Ikeda (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 130, p. 262). The main materials used during this period include the following, listed in the order they were used: Hatano Kanae’s *Introduction to Economics*, Hayashi Nobuo’s *Introduction to Law*, Frank Sherwood Taylor’s *The World of Science*, Ozawa Eiichi’s *Document of Japanese History*, Yada Toshitaka’s *World History*, Nakanishi Kiyoshi’s *Revised Edition of Advanced Chinese Classics* (Vol. 2), Suzuki Yasuzō’s *Politics*, and [Nichikan’s] “The Interpreting the Text Based upon Its Essential Meaning.”<sup>12</sup>

Based on records by a former employee of Ōkura Shōji, these morning (8:30-9:00am) lectures were terminated due to issues with Toda’s health. Around September 1957, Toda

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<sup>10</sup> These groups will be discussed in detail in the following section.

<sup>11</sup> The list includes books from a wide range of subjects such as Japanese and world history, law and the Constitution, Japanese and world politics, Japanese labor laws, economics, accounting, sociology, geography, earth science, chemistry, and astronomy.

<sup>12</sup> This is the third volume of *The Six-Volume Writings*, a work by Nichikan, the twenty-sixth chief priest of Taiseki-ji temple and scholar of Nichiren’s teachings, completed in 1725.

expressed his wish to resume the lectures, but it is unknown whether that happened. These records include no mention of study materials after “The Interpreting the Text Based upon Its Essential Meaning.”

***From December 1952: Establishment of the Suiko-kai at a Meeting of Young Men’s Division Representatives***

The Sōka Gakkai Young Men’s Division was established in July 1951, and the Suiko-kai was established in December 1952 to train a group of young men who would shoulder the future of the Sōka Gakkai. After a while, Ikeda became the de facto organizer and the meetings were held once or twice a month. Along with current events, these novels were used in the following order as curricular material: *The Water Margin*, translated by Satō Haruo, Alexandre Dumas’ *The Count of Monte Cristo*, Ozaki Shirō’s *Wind and Frost* (the title was later changed to *Takasugi Shinsaku*), Muramatsu Shōfū’s *Wind and Waves*, Victor Hugo’s *Ninety-Three*, Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, Nikolai Gogol’s *Taras Bulba*, Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, Yoshikawa Eiji’s *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, and Yoshikawa Eiji’s *New Biography of Toyotomi Hideyoshi*.<sup>13</sup>

Both *The Water Margin* and *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* are novels Toda had read since his youth (“Sōka Kyōiku no Genryū” Hensan Iinkai, 2019, p. 48). Since both depict various characters in China, using these as materials, the group discussed topics on character and personality, and then Toda added his perspectives (“Sōka Kyōiku no Genryū” Hensan Iinkai, 2021, pp. 225-228).

Along with the Suiko-kai, the Kayō-kai was also created with 20 representative members of the young women’s division in October 1952. Just like the Suiko-kai, they met once or twice a month with Toda, using the following novels, in the following order, as material: Charles Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities*, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Ozaki Shirō’s *Wind and Frost*, Rafael Sabatini’s *Scaramouche: A Romance of the French Revolution*, Natsume Sōseki’s *Botchan*, Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, Nikolai Gogol’s *Taras Bulba*, Zhao Shuli’s *Marriage Registration and Family Treasure*, Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, Yoshikawa Eiji’s *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, Sakaguchi Ango’s

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<sup>13</sup> These are based on records created by members of the Suiko-kai, as well as Ikeda’s own writings included in the following volumes of *The Complete Works of Ikeda Daisaku*: Vols. 16, 23, 76, 78, 86, 87, 90, 92, 95, 97, 99, 100, 119, 127, 133, 134, 135, 137, 138, 139, as well as the following publications: Ikeda (1991), Unkart-Seifert and Ikeda (2015), and Wang and Ikeda (2017). Also, according to personal communication with Einosuke Akiya, who was a young men’s leader under Toda and later became the fifth Sōka Gakkai president, these materials were selected by Suiko-kai members.

*Nobunaga*, Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s *The Last Days of Pompeii*, and Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*.<sup>14</sup>

### Toda’s Daily Educational Training

#### Devoting Every Spare Moment to Educational Training

Toda devoted every spare moment to educating Ikeda. Ikeda stated as follows: “Wherever we traveled together, be it by car or plane, that place was a lecture hall of Toda University” (2010, p. 31); “I often traveled with Mr. Toda. Whether it was on the plane or train, he asked me many questions. That was how he trained me” (1988-2015, Vol. 96, p. 381). The following passages by Ikeda also describe Toda’s efforts [in this regard].

While traveling on train, even when he was tired, without taking even a moment of rest, [Mr. Toda] spoke on various topics, such as philosophy, world leaders, Mr. Makiguchi, and advice for the Sōka Gakkai’s future. (1988-2015, Vol. 135, p. 231)

Since I met Mr. Toda, he trained both my brain and heart by asking daily, “What have you read today? What was written in it?” He often said, “Although you believe in Buddhism, you should not become self-righteous. It is important to sincerely study various fields of scholarship, literature, and the theories of first-class philosophers. By so doing, you can further your understanding of Buddhism.” (Zgurovsky & Ikeda, 2011, pp. 60-61)

Mr. Toda often asked me, “Daisaku, what have you read today?” He was strict and fierce. I felt terrible. It was in the middle of a fierce battle to protect my mentor. There was not much time to devote to reading. When I saw him, I felt distressed having to answer what I read and what I learned from it. (1988-2015, Vol. 138, pp. 210-211)

Such educational training continued until March 1958, a month before Toda’s passing (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 99).

#### Discussion on Books and Historical Figures

In many of Ikeda’s essays and speeches, such as those from which the following passages come, there are episodes about his discussions with Toda on various books.

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<sup>14</sup> These are based on records by members of the Kayō-kai, as well as Ikeda’s dialogue with Sarah Wider (Wider & Ikeda, 2014).

In the evening, I went with Mr. Toda to visit K. in Koiwa. Discussed various business matters on the train. On the way back, Mr. Toda treated me to sushi near Koiwa Station. On the train home, we talked enthusiastically about Rousseau's *Emile* and other aspects of literature. Saw Mr. Toda off at Meguro Station. (2000, p. 51)

In my youth, I read many books by Tolstoy. I fondly remember an occasion when President Toda and I were riding a train together, and he asked me which of Tolstoy's writings I was reading that day. My reply was *A Calendar of Wisdom*. Mr. Toda smiled and nodded approvingly. (1988-2015, Vol. 136, p. 251)

Major writers and books that Ikeda indicates he and Toda discussed (excluding those used in the morning lectures before work and the materials used for the Suiko-kai) include the following: Hall Caine's *The Eternal City*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile, or On Education*, Rafael Sabatini's *Scaramouche: A Romance of the French Revolution*, Christian Johann Heinrich Heine's *Germany. A Winter's Tale*, Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, Carl Hilty's *Eudaemonics*, *Shiba shilue* [Eighteen Histories in Brief], *Records of the Grand Historian*, Yoshikawa Eiji's *New Tale of the Heike* and *Kuroda Josui*; various works by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, Arthur Schopenhauer, Socrates, Stefan Zweig, Charles Dickens, Leo Tolstoy, Carl Hilty, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, Charles-Louis de Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Sun Tzu, Du Fu, Yamamoto Shūgorō; works on the personality and character of historical figures such as Albert Einstein, Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig, Christen Kold, Rabindranath Tagore, Leonardo da Vinci, Napoléon Bonaparte, Thomas Carlyle, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Benjamin Disraeli, Plato, Henri Bergson, Victor Hugo, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sun Yat-sen, Nikolai Alexandrovich Berdyaev, Walt Whitman, Zhou Enlai, Zhuge Liang, Kitasato Shibasaburō, Tanaka Shōzō, Yoshida Shōin, Takasugi Shinsaku, and Takayama Chogyū.<sup>15</sup>

Toda's private instruction was not a one-way transmission of knowledge, but was a cultivation of wisdom through dialogic, mutual learning. Ikeda (1988-2015, Vol. 126) wrote as follows:

My mentor said, "You are young, so tell me what you learned. Tell me everything you know." I believe this is based on his thought that the current age was a time of competition based on information and that those who are not keen on new knowledge

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<sup>15</sup> These are based on Ikeda's writings included in the following volumes of *The Complete Works of Ikeda Daisaku*: Vols. 21, 23, 57, 60, 62, 67, 68, 69, 72, 73, 75, 78, 79, 85, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 97, 98, 100, 111, 128, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 143, as well as from the following publications: Henningsen and Ikeda (2009), Ikeda (2006a, 2006c), Mingyuan and Ikeda (2012), Napoléon and Ikeda (2011), Wang and Ikeda (2017), and Wider and Ikeda (2014).

are disqualified from being a leader. He even strictly stated that “those who do not share [what they have learned] are acting as enemies.” I was therefore desperate. I voraciously read everything—from daily newspapers to books in various fields—and each time I shared with Mr. Toda what I learned and felt from them. (pp. 372-373)

Regarding Ikeda around 1953 when he was the leader of the young men’s division first corps, Sonehara Toshio (1999) wrote as follows:

At that time, I was a group leader in the young men’s division. Ikeda quoted from various books in society, such as those on history, science, literature, poetry, and philosophy, to provide encouragement. This was in the midst of his extremely busy schedule with work during the day and the Sōka Gakkai activities at night, even sending poems and messages to members of the young men’s division as encouragement. I once asked, “When do you study?” He replied, “Everything I am sharing is what I learned from Mr. Toda.” I remember I was deeply moved that because he has engraved everything he learned from Mr. Toda in his heart, he can talk without a script. (p. 7)

### **Toda and Ikeda’s Exchange of the “Poetic Spirit”**

Toda and Ikeda not only discussed poetry, including Japanese *waka* poems and classical Chinese poems, but they also exchanged them to express their appreciation and determination. When Toda’s credit business was suspended and his life hit rock bottom with no money or support from people, [all Toda could offer was] a flower which he inserted in Ikeda’s lapel as a badge of honor [of completing the courses at Toda University and remaining by his side]. This is an anecdote that emerged from their “poetic spirit.”

Toda presented Japanese *waka* poems to members. These were not literary works with scenic descriptions or lyrical expressions. On this, Ikeda stated as follows:

I recall my mentor often writing Japanese *waka* poems and presenting them to members. He often pondered what to write with a pen in his hand. When he finished, he took off his glasses and revised the poems with his face close to the paper as if to rub against it. Mr. Toda was a math genius, but from the perspective of literary technique, he was not a professional. However, poetry is “a state of life.” My mentor’s poems were filled with love that spread in the hearts of those who received them. They were infused with the heart of encouragement, a strong determination that roused people to stand up. (1988-2015, Vol. 126, p. 316)

Ikeda has also sent poems to many members as encouragement. Although he had written poems even before he met Toda, it was from Toda that he learned to use poems as a

form of encouragement.

### **Study Groups for Lecturers on Nichiren's Writings and Members of the [Sōka Gakkai] Study Department**

Toda held study sessions for Sōka Gakkai leaders who lecture the writings of Nichiren twice a month at the district level. In addition, at the study groups for the members of the Study Department, Toda had members present the study materials and asked them one question after another. Ikeda also attended these study sessions as the lecture of Nichiren's writings for the districts and as a member of the Study Department.<sup>16</sup> Ikeda wrote as follows:

Those who became responsible for giving district-level lectures [on Nichiren's writings], including myself, were mostly youth. The local level and practice are of foremost importance. This was the training of Mr. Toda, who was an unprecedented mentor. Therefore, his lectures preparing those responsible [for speaking on Nichiren's writings] were rigorous and strict. (1988-2015, Vol. 132, p. 129)

Ikeda also received a one-on-one lecture on [Nichiren's] "The One Hundred and Six Comparisons" from Toda, and he wrote about it in the following passages.

Mr. Toda selected study materials such as "The One Hundred and Six Comparisons," "The Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings," and "The Object of Devotion for Observing the Mind," and had [representatives of the Study Department] study them. The one I was responsible for was "The One Hundred and Six Comparisons," and I always went to his place in the evening after work to study. (1962, p. 4)

Mr. Toda also lectured me on "The One Hundred and Six Comparisons." One day, when he was lying down resting, my mentor suddenly said: "All right! Let's start!" and he happily gave me a lecture right then and there. However, if I was ever less than attentive, he promptly rebuked me: "That's enough! I'm not a machine." (1988-2015, Vol. 130, p. 284)

### **Training Received within the Sōka Gakkai Organization**

The training Ikeda received from Toda was not only through books. Toda appointed Ikeda to various positions within the Sōka Gakkai and provided strict training through these, such as by having him learn how to take measures for new developments and even placing him in difficult positions. Some examples include chief of staff, head of the public relations

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<sup>16</sup> This will be further discussed in the section "Sōka Gakkai is a 'University without a Campus.'"

department, and person in charge of the Osaka district in the national House of Councilors election.

### The “Great Resolve” to Save All People

Toda often said “the way of life means one’s resolve. The depth of one’s life is determined by their depth of resolve” (1988-2015, Vol. 128, p. 127). His mentor Makiguchi Tsunesaburō died in prison in November 1944, before Toda was released from prison in July 1945. Around that time, through deep contemplation Toda became aware that he himself was a Bodhisattva of the Earth depicted in the Lotus Sutra. Through further contemplation, he made it his mission to save all people through Nichiren Buddhism. A passage that clearly describes this is the following excerpt from Toda’s remarks at his inauguration ceremony as the second Sōka Gakkai President on May 3, 1951.

I will achieve 750,000 member-households with my own hands while I am still alive. If this goal is not achieved by the time I die, do not bother holding a funeral for me; just throw my ashes into the sea off Shinagawa! (Toda, 1981-1990, Vol. 3, p. 433)

The resolve to save all people through Nichiren Buddhism was something Toda inherited from his mentor Makiguchi. On June 27, 1943, in the midst of the Pacific War, Makiguchi was urged by the Nichiren Shōshū high priest that the Sōka Kyōiku Gakkai (Value-Creating Education Society) also accept the militarist government’s policies on religion. Makiguchi not only rejected these, but urged the high priest to remonstrate with the government to abandon its mistaken religious policies even if that led to the oppression and destruction of Nichiren Shōshū. Makiguchi believed there was something more important than the survival of a religious organization. That was not to push people into the depths of unhappiness (Rees & Ikeda, 2018; “Sōka Kyōiku no Genryū” Hensan Iinkai, 2017).

On July 6, only nine days after Makiguchi made this suggestion, both Makiguchi and Toda were arrested by the Special Higher Police. Makiguchi died in the Tokyo Detention Center in November 1944, and Toda ended up spending two years there.

In order to understand Toda and his successor Ikeda, I believe it is extremely important to understand this “great resolve” that was in Toda’s heart. Ikeda later wrote about July 1956 when he and Toda discussed their vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

At that time, as if predicting the future, Mr. Toda said, “Daisaku, in your later years, the Sōka Gakkai will become an essential core of humanity’s peace and culture.” He further stated, “The Sōka Gakkai will undoubtedly become the monarch of the religious world. As such, it will be able to send truly capable people into all spheres



of society, such as politics, economics, education, and the arts. That is our mission. A great human revolution in each one of such people will contribute immensely toward society in the century to come.” This was Mr. Toda’s vision for the Sōka Gakkai in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (1988-2015, Vol. 92, pp. 144-145)

Toda also shared with Ikeda the following two weeks prior to his passing: “Last night I dreamed that I went to Mexico. They were all waiting, waiting...seeking Nichiren Buddhism. ... The world is your true stage” (Ikeda, 2021b, p. 315).

What was in Toda’s heart was the realization of a society where all people in the world can live a happy life. I would like to list three of his statements that clearly express this “great resolve.”

### **“I Want to Eliminate Misery from the Earth”**

First is “I want to eliminate misery from the Earth,” which Toda stated on many occasions. According to Ikeda, Toda also said these words in August 1947 when they first met (Yamamoto, 2013). Ikeda (2016) also wrote as follows:

During World War II and its aftermath, it was women who suffered the most and were forced to endure the greatest privations...Their lives and daily experiences were filled with bitter tears. It was an existence of endless hell. My mentor Josei Toda dedicated his life to the struggle to open the great path leading to security, fulfillment, and happiness for women such as these. “I want to rid the world of misery!” —this ardent desire was the core of Mr. Toda’s philosophy. (pp. 23-24)

Toda also kept in his heart the people in other countries who were afflicted by war and in dire circumstances. In regards to the Korean War that started in June 1950, Toda wrote the following:

Look at the upheaval on the Korean peninsula. Who can save the Korean people from the hell of suffering? What can give light to the Asian people—no, to all people in the world—who wander aimlessly without knowing tomorrow. It is none other than the compassion of Nichiren Daishonin. (1951b, p. 1)

I lament that, because of this war, there are many people who lost their husbands and wives or those who are searching for their children or parents. (1951a, p. 1)

Further, regarding the Hungarian Revolution that started in October 1956, Toda (1957a) wrote as follows:

Last winter, the Hungarian Revolution attracted the attention of the entire world. I cannot fathom the details of the circumstances...However, I can imagine the people

there are in painful, heartrending conditions. On top of a life of poverty and suffering, what they received was gunfire....I wish that my comrades who share the same resolve all strive to eliminate misery from individuals, countries, and the world. With this I want to welcome a hope-filled new year. (p. 1)

Toda (1957c) further wrote in the foreword of the April 1957 issue of the *Daibyakurenge* as follows:

Prosperity of society should not be the prosperity of just one society. The whole world should become one society where people all over the world can enjoy the prosperity of society....We should not sacrifice people in other countries for the happiness of the Japanese people, nor should we sacrifice the Japanese people for the happiness of the American people. For the sake of the happiness of one communist leader, people in other countries should not be sacrificed. The prosperity of society in which all the world's people rejoice must be one in which every individual can live in happiness. (p. 1)

### Global Nationalism<sup>17</sup>

Second is “global nationalism.” On February 17, 1952 at a youth meeting, Toda (1952a) said, “If I may express my own philosophy, mine is absolutely neither Communism nor Americanism; it is of the oriental race and, ultimately of the global race” (cf. Yatomi, 2006, p. 99). A perusal of the *Seikyo Shimbun* and *Daibyakurenge* indicates that this is the only time Toda used the term “global nationalism.” What then is this “global nationalism” ? To understand this, I would like to quote the following passages from Ikeda.

After saying, “Let me state my philosophy,” my mentor used the phrase global nationalism for the first time. It was an unfamiliar phrase, but it inevitably made me realize that the journey of *kosen-rufu*<sup>18</sup> is to go out into the world. At that time, the Korean War had not yet ceased, and the antipathy between the East and West had led to the danger of a potential third World War. The conflict in ideology and political systems deepened the rift [between the two worlds], and distrust and hatred spread throughout the world. Mr. Toda must have advocated for global nationalism as a guide

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<sup>17</sup> This is a translation of Toda's unique term *chikyū minzoku shugi*, which literally means something like “global race-ism,” “global people-ism,” “global ethnos-ism,” or “global nationalism.” It has been translated in works on and by Ikeda as “one worldism,” “global family,” “global nationalism,” and “global citizenship,” but the term also includes dimensions of race and ethnicity and indicates Toda's belief in the underlying unity of the world's peoples (Goulah, 2020).

<sup>18</sup> This is a term from the Lotus Sutra that means to declare and spread widely. Here, it refers to the Sōka Gakkai's effort of spreading Nichiren's teachings to create a peaceful society.

to stop this serious divide and lead people toward peace and creative coexistence. It was truly a clarion call of warning to “return to the prime point of humanity” and “awaken to the spirit of a global citizen.” (1988-2015, Vol. 133, p. 197)

Having grasped the essence of Buddhism, which is the fundamental law of the universe, Mr. Toda always thought from a cosmic or universal perspective. In February 1952, as the rift between the Eastern and Western blocs was deepening, he advocated for global nationalism. He firmly believed that humanity must transcend its ethnic, national, and ideological differences and, based on the awareness that we are a global family sharing one, unified world, blaze a new path of creative coexistence. (1988-2015, Vol. 129, pp. 247-248)

Mr. Toda...also called for a “global nationalism” transcending state borders, while asserting that no people should be victims of war or the suppression of human rights. I will never forget Mr. Toda telling us youth that the United Nations represented the distillation of wisdom of twentieth-century humankind and was a bastion of the world’s hopes that needed to be protected and developed into the next century. (Clements & Ikeda, 2019, p. 144)

**“I Believe It Is the Mission of Every Member of the Youth Division in Japan to Disseminate Throughout the Globe the Idea that Anyone Who Uses Nuclear Weapons Should Be Viewed as Devils, as Evil Incarnate”**

Third is the following statement by Toda, which he called “the foremost of my instructions for the future” and was made on September 8, 1957 at the [Sōka Gakkai’s] Fourth East Japan Youth Sports Festival. This later came to be called the “Declaration Calling for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons.”

I wish to declare that anyone who ventures to use nuclear weapons, irrespective of their nationality or whether their country is victorious or defeated, should be sentenced to death without exception. Why do I say this? Because we, the citizens of the world, have an inviolable right to live. Anyone who jeopardizes that right is a devil incarnate, a fiend, a monster. I propose that humankind applies, in every case, the death penalty to anyone responsible for using nuclear weapons, even if that person is on the winning side.

Even if a country should conquer the world through the use of nuclear weapons, the conquerors must be viewed as devils, as evil incarnate. I believe that it is the mission

of every member of the youth division in Japan to disseminate this idea throughout the globe. (Toda, 1957b)

On the morning of November 20, two months after the “Declaration Calling for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons,” Toda collapsed as he was about to head to Hiroshima, where the atomic bomb was dropped twelve years earlier. Thereafter, Toda had to rest and recuperate at home. The day before, on the 19<sup>th</sup>, Ikeda, worried about Toda’s extremely frail health, had tried to persuade Toda to cancel his trip to Hiroshima. However, at that time Toda stubbornly rejected, saying, “I can’t turn my back on something once I’ve decided to do it. I will go even if it kills me!” (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 37, pp. 218-219).

A dentist, Asai Tōru (1960), wrote the following memoir from which we can surmise Toda’s feelings toward the survivors of the atomic bomb.

Once when Mr. Toda visited Osaka, he asked me when we were riding in a car, “Asai, can radiation sickness caused by atomic bombs be cured?” When I answered, “Well, today when science cannot even elucidate its sphere of influence, there is no way to find a medical treatment,” he responded, “The Gohonzon can surely cure it.” Soon after, in September 1957, at the Mitsuzawa Stadium in Yokohama, he boldly made the nuclear abolition declaration, a lion’s roar to the entire world, as the foremost of his instructions for the future. (p. 70)

“I will never let anyone use the atomic bomb. I want to wholeheartedly encourage those who are suffering from the after-effects of the atomic bomb and lead them to a healthy life.” This was Toda’s heart. Ikeda wrote that “as a practicing Buddhist, my mentor acutely understood from the depths of his soul that nuclear weapons would become the greatest threat hanging over humankind” (Rotblat & Ikeda, 2007, p. 5). Ikeda further stated:

Nuclear weapons threaten our right to exist and are an absolute evil. Unless we rid the world of them, peace will remain an illusion. Forty-five years ago, in his declaration against them, Toda clearly identified the true nature of nuclear weapons not from the standpoint of ideology but from that of all human life...

Of course, as a Buddhist, Toda opposed capital punishment. He spoke of condemning to death to emphasize the severity of the consequences of the demonic impulse represented by the wish to possess nuclear weapons. He wished to eradicate the evil that makes people want to use them, using the word *death* to underscore the importance of its antonym, life. (Krieger & Ikeda, 2002, pp. 129-130)

My Mentor, Josei Toda, repeatedly emphasized the importance of presenting a clear and concrete plan for progressing toward peace for humanity. He stressed, “Even

if the goal is not achieved immediately, ultimately, your efforts will serve a kindling, and the warm glow of peace will spread. Empty theories are useless, but a clear and concrete plan serves as a pillar supporting the structure that will protect humankind.” (Rotblat & Ikeda, 2007, p. 12)

### What Ikeda Learned at Toda University

Ikeda (2006b) stated, “Almost every morning for ten years, my mentor Mr. Toda taught me various subjects. Further, on various occasions, he also taught me the study of humanity and leadership theories” (p. 2). Ikeda also described the mentor and disciple relationship in the Sōka Gakkai in the following manner:

The greater the ideal, the more difficult to actualize it in one generation. Therefore, it is necessary to have a successor. This ideal will come to shine brighter as it steadily takes root in society by being passed on from one generation to the next. In that sense, mentor and disciple can be characterized as the best and unparalleled comrades who, by sharing the same ideal, fight to make it a reality. (Henningsen & Ikeda, 2009, pp. 208-209)

What then did Ikeda learn from Toda? I analyze this question based on Ikeda’s speeches and essays and present them below.

### Nichiren Buddhism Is for All People

Ikeda stated, “What [Mr. Toda] placed at the foundation of my training was reading *The Writings of Nichiren*, a book that saves the people in the latter day of the law. This was because without a firm foundation, everything becomes a castle built on sand” (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 134, p. 135). Toda believed the reason many Sōka Gakkai leaders abandoned their faith during the war period was because they did not deeply study Nichiren Buddhism. And, based on his own understanding of the essence of Buddhism developed through a thorough reading of the Lotus Sutra in prison, Toda made efforts to lecture on the Lotus Sutra and Nichiren’s writings to awaken each member to their mission to save people as Bodhisattvas of the Earth (Xianlin et al., 2002). Regarding Toda’s enlightenment in prison, Ikeda also stated as follows:

Through thoroughly pursuing the question “What is the Buddha?” Toda came to realize that the Buddha is none other than the self and the great life of the universe; that these two—the self and the universe—are in fact one...when we dig into the inner reaches of our own being, the common foundation of life that all people share comes

into view. This foundation is none other than the eternal life of the universe. President Toda became enlightened not only to the wellspring at the core of his own being, but also to the foundation of life that all people share. He realized that, as he put it, “in essence, all people are in fact Bodhisattvas of the Earth.” (Ikeda et al., 2001, p. 266)

Even during the most dire circumstances when not only his business but even the Sōka Gakkai organization could be ruined, Toda used the time before work and continued to offer lectures on Nichiren’s writings as the foundation of his training for Ikeda. These lectures directly from Toda later became the basis of Ikeda’s activities.

Further, these lectures based on Toda’s awakening in prison aroused courage and hope in people. This was different from the understanding of Buddhism inherited by the priests. Because of this, as the number of Sōka Gakkai members increased, there were many instances leading to strife and discord (“Sōka Kyōiku no Genryū” Hensan Iinkai, 2021). Overcoming these difficulties, Toda published *The Collected Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* and established the Sōka Gakkai as a religious corporation, creating the foundation of a religion for all. Ikeda worked closely on and supported all of these efforts.

Ever since he started working for the Nihon Shōgakkai, [Toda’s publishing company,] Ikeda had overcome many difficulties alongside Toda and closely observed Toda’s actions and behavior. Ikeda stated as follows:

What Mr. Toda taught me was to “love the people.” He often said that “leaders should work for the people.” He was strict to those with status and authority who looked down on ordinary people. He was someone who lived among the ordinary people and loved them from the bottom of his heart. (1988-2015, Vol. 23, p. 313)

Most of all, however, I learned from his example. The burning commitment to peace that remained unshaken throughout his imprisonment was something he carried with him his entire life. It was from this, and from the profound compassion that characterized each of his interactions, that I most learned. (2021a, p. 12)

### **Firm Resolve to Realize a Peaceful Society**

Among the articles published in the boys’ magazines during the time Ikeda served as the chief editor, one that warrants particular attention is the special series on the nuclear energy and the atomic bomb in the October and November 1949 issues of *Shōnen Nihon*. The November issue included a short story called *Genshino no hana* (Flower in the Atomic Wasteland) [written by Akinaga Yoshirō] that depicted the aftermath of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima.

At that time, Japan was under the GHQ occupation, and all publications were subject to censorship. In particular, anything related to the atomic bomb was strictly censored. Under such conditions, Toda published a novel that illustrated the atrocity of the atomic bomb. Depending on the results of censorship, the publication of the magazine could have been banned. The fact that this series was planned even with such high risk shows Toda's strong will to actualize a peaceful society; Ikeda also learned from this experience.

On September 8, 1957, seven months before his passing, in front of 50,000 [Sōka Gakkai] members, Toda made his declaration calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Eleven years later on September 8, 1968, Ikeda, who kept Toda's words in his heart, called for the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations. Further on September 8, 1974, he visited the Soviet Union for the first time and, three months later, visited China again, engaging in citizen diplomacy for the peaceful relations between the two countries.

In May, 1969, two years before the opening of Soka University, as its founder Ikeda proposed "Be a fortress for the peace of humankind" as one of the university's fundamental principles. He asserted that one of the aims of establishing Soka University is to protect peace and happiness of the people.

### **Leadership Theory for the Development of the Sōka Gakkai**

At the core of the education Ikeda received from Toda was how to develop the Sōka Gakkai. The following statements by Ikeda (1988-2015) attest to this:

Mr. Toda's teaching was never an abstract theory. It was practical wisdom grounded in reality. When discussing history, for example, he asked questions such as, "Why did this ethnic group thrive?" "Why did this country decline?" and "Why did this religion thrive or decline?" In other words, whether individuals or groups, he focused on various "histories of the rise and fall." In this way, he cultivated in young people a keen and deep perspective toward history and taught them how to create a history of kosen-rufu that would develop for many generations. (Vol. 71, p. 270)

[Classes at] Toda University were conducted sometimes in a one-on-one setting and sometimes together with several members. During this time, Mr. Toda taught me various subjects that can be called a "great leadership theory for justice." (Vol. 134, p. 134)

During the lectures at Toda University, Mr. Toda often said, "Continue to study and learn! Unless you become a person of wisdom of the Mystic Law, you cannot fulfill

your great mission in the future. In addition to gaining a broad understanding of society, you must place yourself within the destiny of the entire world and formulate all of your ideas from this perspective. (Vol. 138, pp. 147-148)

### **Sincerity as a Human Being**

In October 1949, Toda decided to leave the publishing business. This was because the management of his company became difficult as more and more big publishing companies with larger capital emerged. The employees started working for Toda's credit association in the same building. Ikeda's responsibilities also changed to selling monthly savings plans and collecting money. Whether a small credit association can earn trust from customers depends on first impressions of the sales person. Ikeda cherished each encounter and walked around to make sales until late at night every day.<sup>19</sup>

In fact, that year, in order to recover the Japanese economy from inflation, the government issued many policies that would close many small and medium-sized businesses, which led many companies to go bankrupt. The business conditions of Toda's credit association also declined, and in August 1950, the Ministry of Finance notified him to suspend his business. Employees quit one by one, and Ikeda was the only one left. For Ikeda, who was sick with tuberculosis, this was a physically and mentally difficult time. Ikeda (1988-2015) wrote, “Mr. Toda often told me that in this society formed by human connections, ultimately the most important thing comes down to sincerity” (Vol. 18, p. 155). Ikeda (1988-2015) also wrote the following:

Mr. Toda interacted with the creditors with sincerity and made efforts to settle all matters. I was often called to accompany him on those occasions, and I believe this was not merely because I was an employee, but because he considered these to be opportunities to educate me. He thoroughly taught and trained me on matters of public relations such as recognizing each person's personality, making decisions, and taking actions after negotiations. (Vol. 18, p. 154)

Kobayashi Haruo (1992), who was chief of the Finance Division of the Kantō Regional Finance Bureau in The Ministry of Finance during this time, later wrote that “today, even after 40 years, I cannot forget the bright light inherent in the character of Mr. Toda with whom I developed trust and relationship” (p. 27).

When the credit association was closed down, a newspaper reporter who heard this came to write sensational articles. However, because Toda and Ikeda sincerely explained the

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<sup>19</sup> This is based on the record of an interview with Tsuchiya Setsuko, who joined the Sōka Gakkai after being introduced by Ikeda.



situation, the reporter decided not to write about it (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 137, pp. 281-282).

In his final years, Toda met many journalists, writers, and critics. Among them were also a previous member of the Communist Party Central Committee and a priest of other Buddhist sects. When we read what they wrote, most of them are very favorable toward Toda. Through his frank and unpretentious behavior, Toda was able to reach their hearts. This is also most likely a result of the sincere efforts of both Toda and Ikeda, with Ikeda becoming chief of the public relations office of the Sōka Gakkai in December 1954.

Further, around 1954, Toda developed a close relationship with Kishi Nobusuke, who served as Prime Minister from February 1957 to July 1960. Because of their relationship, Kishi, who was Prime Minister at the time, decided to attend a ceremony on March 16, 1958 at the Taiseki-ji temple, where 6,000 [Sōka Gakkai] youth awaited. Ultimately, Kishi did not attend due to strong opposition from those close to him, but he attended Toda's funeral a month later on April 20 conducted by the Sōka Gakkai, which surprised the mass media.

### **Toda's View on the Education to Be Conducted at Soka Schools**

What was Toda's view of founding schools, a vision entrusted by Makiguchi? In November 1950, 20 years after the publication of the first volume of *The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy*, Toda shared with Ikeda his vision of establishing Soka University, but the details remain unknown. However, I believe a clue for understanding his vision can be found in Toda University.

Ikeda described Toda University as "private instruction by Toda Jōsei, a master in the study of humanity." According to Asano (1970), at the opening of Soka University in 1971, Ikeda had envisioned establishing the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of International Studies. Okayasu Hiroshi (2005), who served as the secretary general of the Soka University Establishment Preparation Committee, stated,

The Founder wanted to first create the Faculty of Humanities. At that time, it was a pioneering idea with no such example at any other university. When we asked the Ministry of Education whether this was possible, we received a response that this was difficult. (p. 178)

In the 1970's, the Ministry of Education had a policy that did not allow the establishment of any new Faculty other than what already existed. Therefore, the Soka University Establishment Preparation Committee decided to apply for approval of the Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics, and Faculty of Letters, which were likely to be approved.

About 20 years later, Ikeda suggested creating the Faculty of Humanities to the administration of Soka University. By this time, the Ministry of Education had greatly changed

their policies, approving many faculties and departments with “human” in their name and with a diverse curriculum. As a member of the university’s review board of the new faculty, I discussed with other staff and faculty what the “Faculty of Humanities” at Soka University should entail. What emerged from these discussions was something similar to what is known as a liberal arts college in the United States. However, this was similar to the vision for Soka University of America that was about to open in 2001.

The reason why I started conducting biographical research on Makiguchi, Toda, and Ikeda can be traced to this experience serving on the review board. I asked myself, what is something that cannot be done at Soka University of America? I came to the conclusion that it is building the foundation for research on Makiguchi, Toda, and Ikeda.

On another note, about three years after the opening of Soka University, Ikeda suggested putting benches in the open space surrounded by trees so that classes can be held outdoors. Students agreed and joined in creating plazas and pathways surrounded by plants and trees. In May 1974, Ikeda was welcomed for the opening ceremony of the Greenery Hill and Sunny Hill. This suggestion may have come from the importance of the dialogic education Ikeda once experienced at Toda University.

Robert Maynard Hutchins (1956), who served as the President of the University of Chicago from 1929 to 1951, advocated for education based on the “great books,” which became one of the origins of liberal arts education in the U.S. I believe the education Ikeda received from Toda at Toda University has similarities with this education through the “great books.”

Since the 1970’s, Ikeda has conducted dialogues with many scholars from around the world, many of which have been published as books. The education he received at Toda University has fully blossomed.

### **Sōka Gakkai is a “University Without a Campus”**

More than anything, Toda spent his time talking with and encouraging individual members. Soon after his credit business was suspended in August 1950, he became the executive advisor of Ōkura Shōji. When Toda became the second president of the Sōka Gakkai in May 1951, the office of Ōkura Shōji was moved to a building in Ichigaya, and the satellite office of the Sōka Gakkai was created next door. Although it was called a “satellite office,” it was just a room with one desk. On weekday afternoons, this became a place where Toda conducted guidance sessions for Sōka Gakkai members. Toda (1952b) said that even if he met 50 people in a day, he could only meet 15,000 people in a year. This continued for two and a half years until the Sōka Gakkai headquarters moved to Shinanomachi in Shinjuku ward, so

it is estimated that he had met a total of 40,000 people. In the aftermath of WWII, Toda faced members with serious problems every day, sharing their suffering and encouraging them (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 134, pp. 109-112).

Toda also thoroughly listened to each member's worries at discussion meetings, sometimes warmly and sometimes strictly giving guidance. Dialogue with members often continued on the trains after the meetings, and he felt joy in visiting members at their homes (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 17, p. 56).

I heard the following story from a men's division member in Saitama. He was still a high school student when Toda passed away. When his mother and older sister heard the news of Toda's passing, they cried for a whole week. About 250,000 people attended Toda's funeral, but it was not that they were told to gather; rather, they could not help but see him off. Each member felt connected to Toda in their hearts.

According to Ikeda (1957), Toda used to tell chapter men's leaders, "In the past, feudal lords knew everything about each of the 20,000 or 30,000 people who worked under them" (p. 5). We do not know if this was true for the feudal lords, but Toda met and encouraged members many times more than this.

As the number of members increased, it became increasingly difficult for Toda to directly talk with every member. Therefore, Toda created opportunities for any member to be able to hear his lectures. Wanting to hear his lecture, members rushed to the lecture halls to listen to him, so the lecture halls were packed sometimes even to the stage. Toda gave lectures on Nichiren's writings with a sense of humor (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 132, p. 115). He also took time for Q&A, ensuring that everyone was able to understand.<sup>20</sup> Ikeda closely observed such behavior.

After Toda became the second president of Sōka Gakkai, Ikeda was appointed to many important positions in the organization. Every time, Ikeda responded by achieving results that met Toda's expectations, which revitalized the entire organization. At the root of all his actions was Toda's one-on-one dialogue and encouragement. Ikeda faithfully practiced [what he learned from Toda].

Toda often described the Sōka Gakkai as a "university without a campus" (Ikeda, 2013, p. 186). Toda, raised hundreds of thousands of people—men and women, young and old—who uphold the same resolve as he through one-on-one dialogues.

According to [fifth Sōka Gakkai president] Akiya Einosuke, one of the reasons the Sōka Gakkai quickly developed in such a short span was the local district-level lectures held twice a

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<sup>20</sup> In the *Seikyo Shimbun* and *Daibyakurenge*, more than 600 questions from members and Toda's answers were published.

month. As the number of members grew around the country, the number of members who had never met Toda also increased. To address this issue, members of the Study Department who directly heard Toda’s lectures went to each area and conducted district-level lectures. This became the springboard to awaken the life force inherent in each person. Those who conducted these lectures varied in age, gender, and educational level. The Sōka Gakkai was at that time ridiculed as a gathering of the sick and the poor, and these lecturers were no exception.

Toda often said, “This Buddhism is for those facing adversity to become happy. Those who suffer can bring forth incredible strength when they overcome their sufferings. Those are the people who can truly become an ally to others who are suffering” (Hachiya, 1977, p. 23). As those who faced serious problems gathered to study together, the circle of people who aimed for the happiness of self and others quickly spread.

### Conclusion

Makiguchi was an educator, and Ikeda established many educational institutions such as Soka University. Toda, who connected these two, was also an educator. The first volume of *Toda Jōsei: A Critical Biography* gives a detailed account of Toda’s life before July 1945, such as educational practices at elementary schools and his private school, Jishū Gakkan, and his publications of study guides and educational magazines.

However, when we look from the perspective of Toda University and the Sōka Gakkai as a university without a campus, I think it was actually after July 1945 that Toda revealed his true potential as an educator. This is because not only because Toda educated the youthful Ikeda to grow into a person who could engage in heart-to-heart dialogues with leaders and intellectuals from all around the world, but also because he cultivated in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of people the same “great resolve” to save all people, the core and foundation of “Sōka” that was inherited from Makiguchi to Toda, and then to Ikeda.

Today, we face global problems such as climate change, requiring each country to discard the conventional thinking of placing utmost importance on national interest and to shift perspectives to aim for the mutual prosperity of a global society based on the interest of all humanity (Krieger & Ikeda, 2002). However, this is not something that is demanded of just national and local governments or companies, but it also requires the awareness and actions of all of us who live on earth (Díez-Hochleitner & Ikeda, 2008; Swaminathan & Ikeda, 2005).

Toda wrote the novel *The Human Revolution* [serialized in the *Seikyō shimbun*] based on his own experiences from his encounter with Makiguchi in 1920 to [his enlightenment in prison in] 1944. In a novel with the same title, Ikeda chronicled Toda’s life after July 1945, after

his release from prison to his passing in April 1958. In the preface to *The Human Revolution*, Ikeda (2004) wrote, “A great human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change in the destiny of a nation and, further, will enable a change in the destiny of all humankind” (p. viii). This sentence succinctly and clearly expresses Toda’s “great resolve” to save all people.

[The spirit of] human revolution started from the inner transformation of Toda alone. It was then inherited by Ikeda through Toda University and, at the same time, has become possible for anyone to learn and put into practice through the Sōka Gakkai, a university without a campus. Toda often said, “The Sōka Gakkai is a noble organization doing the Buddha’s work to save all suffering people. It is an organization more important than my own life” (Ikeda, 1988-2015, Vol. 96, p. 269).

In the Sōka Gakkai, people in the depths of suffering transform into people who, with the aim of the happiness of self and others, take others’ problems as their own and encourage them. This circle of people [encouraging each other] has spread widely. I believe the path to solving the many challenging global issues we face today can be found here. The [path of] human revolution that Toda and Ikeda demonstrated is a movement to create a stream of people who strive for the happiness of self and others.

Toda dedicated his life after July 1945 to encouraging and educating members. If the warp is the Toda University for Ikeda, the weft was a university without a campus in the Sōka Gakkai.

This article focused on presenting an overview of Toda University where Ikeda studied. I will leave it to future research to analyze the content and educational methods of Toda University.

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