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Legendary Patriot or Corrupt Egotist? An Analysis of Tōyama Mitsuru Through an Interpretation of Dai Saigō Ikun

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LEGENDARY PATRIOT OR CORRUPT EGOTIST?
AN ANALYSIS OF TŌYAMA MITSURU THROUGH AN INTERPRETATION OF
DAI SAIGŌ IKUN

A Thesis Presented

by

PETER T. SIUDA

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the latter half of the Taishō period (1912-1926) a great number of books were published in Japan whose purpose was to remind the people of the ideals that were originally set forth with the onset of the Meiji Restoration and continued in the subsequent Meiji period (1868-1912).¹ These ideas centered on the concept of *kokutai* (“national essence/polity”), which was a form of nationalism affirming that since the Emperor was of divine descent, it was the duty of every Japanese to worship and serve him; additionally, the people were called upon to serve the nation with utmost devotion in order to promote a sense of unity. The establishment of the Meiji Constitution in 1889 combined the essence of *kokutai* with recognizing the Emperor as the sovereign supreme, creating a constitutional monarchy that ran smoothly throughout the remainder of the era. However, in the Taishō period, a number of factors in both the international and domestic spheres caused this system to wane:

The victories over China and Russia, cooperative diplomacy and a growing affinity with the West, the advent of parliamentary democracy, continued industrial growth, the establishment of universal education, the appearance of mass media, and an infinity of other factors flowed together in the 1910s and 1920s in ways that encouraged many to question received values and envision new lifestyles.²

Despite its overall improvement after Japan’s participation in World War I (1914-18), the Japanese economy fluctuated annually and, as a result, discontentment grew among the poorer classes, leaving them susceptible to other types of philosophies such as

¹ The Meiji Restoration (1866-69) represented the movement to forego feudal ideas of class stratification and neglecting internationalization in favor of replacing it with social and political structures modeled after Western nations.

² James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History* (New York London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), 345.

communism, socialism, and liberalism.³ For this reason, many books were published during the later years of the Taishō period, which sought to reaffirm the imperialist ideals of the Meiji period by emphasizing reverence to the Emperor.

Dai Saigō Ikun (1926) is one of these books, and it is a particularly compelling piece in the sense that, while incorporating anti-Western sentiment, it also focused heavily on chastising the Japanese themselves for allowing Western ideals to mingle with their culture and for not pursuing expansionism into Asia vigorously enough.⁴ *Dai Saigō Ikun* is actually a compilation of three authors whose backgrounds encompass the ideals of both the Meiji and Taishō eras. The first part of the book contains the words of Saigō Takamori (1828-1877) who, for his endeavors of championing the underprivileged and the samurai, was exiled twice for dissentious behavior.⁵ During his time in exile, Saigō would continue to teach equality and virtue, and these teachings were recorded and eventually molded into the form of fifty-five points, with each doling out certain moral or cautionary advice. These points were not published until 1891, and were reprinted a few times over the following two decades.⁶ It was through *Dai Saigō Ikun* that the points amassed the heartiest reception, as the sagacity of Saigō's teachings were expounded

³ Japan waged war against China from 1894-95 (First Sino-Japanese War) and then with Russia in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05).

⁴ The title *Dai Saigō Ikun* can roughly be translated as "The Great Saigō's Dying Instructions." Throughout the remainder of the thesis this book will be referred to in full as *Dai Saigō Ikun*, as there are other similarly titled publications and it will help to avoid confusion.

⁵ Saigō was a famous samurai who was continually torn between acting on what he thought was right and remaining loyal to his masters. His rise to legendary status will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 2. NOTE: Throughout this thesis Japanese names are given in the traditional manner of family name preceding given names.

⁶ With the 1891 publication of *Nanshū Ō Ikun* (*The Dying Instructions of the Venerable Nanshū*) by Mitsuya Fujitarō, Saigō's fifty-five points would collectively become known as his *Ikun* and were referred to as such from that period on. Saigō was also known as Nanshū, which roughly translates as "Southern Land."

upon by the nationalist legend, Tōyama Mitsuru (1855-1944), who had claimed to be a disciple of his.⁷

Tōyama was one of the individuals who lived through the Meiji Restoration and was shaped by an education similar to Saigō's, which necessitated subservience to the Emperor and the perpetuation of Japanese tradition. Although born into an impoverished samurai family like Saigō was, Tōyama did not gain prominence as a capable warrior or shrewd politician; rather, he obtained personal power and prestige through forming nationalist organizations dedicated to upholding veneration to the Emperor and to militarily expanding into China and Korea. Throughout the Meiji and Taishō periods, Tōyama continued to accumulate popularity as he promulgated expansionism as a means of completing the Meiji dream of modernization. He often referred to Saigō's character as the pinnacle of Japanese achievement. This is clearly represented in the second half of the *Dai Saigō Ikun*, where Tōyama analyzes each of Saigō's fifty-five points and simultaneously praises the genius of the hero while castigating others for their inability to uphold such morality. His ability to place blame on a number of factors that hindered Japan's prominence, while simultaneously encouraging his readers to take a more militarily aggressive stance, suggests how persuasive an individual he was. In summary, *Dai Saigō Ikun* was an incredibly successful book due to three main reasons: the sagacity of Saigō's teachings, Tōyama's analysis and interpretation of Saigō's words, and the actual compilation of the book done by Saiga Hiroyoshi (1891-1947), the third author

⁷ Tōyama Mitsuru was an ultra-nationalist patriot, was fervently anti-Western and pro-Japanese, and was the leader of several nationalist/patriotic organizations.

who originally approached Tōyama with the idea of asking for his assistance in producing *Dai Saigō Iku*.⁸

The *Dai Saigō Iku* is somewhat hypocritical, however, as for all of Tōyama's glorifying the Emperor and Saigō, his words contradict his personal behavior and past actions. Throughout his critiques Tōyama assumes the role of a councilor, who openly castigates those he feels are significantly lacking in sufficient moral qualities, which are necessary to support and advocate a stronger Japan. It is this image that Tōyama has carefully built up throughout his lifetime, and when combined with his samurai upbringing and his gift of oration, it helps explain how he attained his popularity and influence.⁹

Despite the image he portrayed and the plethora of materials published which commended his patriotism, there remains an abundance of evidence that contradicts Tōyama's altruistic veneer. His various organizations have been linked to such illegal activities as gambling, prostitution, supporting foreign revolutions, and assassinations; some of the nationalist groups he helped found were even supposedly linked to the deterioration of relations first between Japan and China and then between Japan and Russia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Tōyama's reliance on coercion through intimidation and brutality has also been documented, which contradicts the ideals promoted by Saigō that emphasized understanding and enlightenment as essential in accepting the views of others. This contradiction is most readily apparent in

⁸ Saiga Hiroyoshi was an author who wrote extensively on Saigō Takamori during the early twentieth century and was a believer in militant expansionism. His contribution to the book was limited to only recording what Tōyama said and including a few pages of praises to both Saigō and Tōyama as the book's conclusion.

⁹ For more details regarding stories that accentuate Tōyama's integrity see Alfred A. Byas, *Government by Assassination* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1942) and J.W. Sabey, "The Genyōsha, the Kokuryūkai, and Japanese Expansionism" (PhD diss., Michigan University, 1972).

Dai Saigō Ikun, which contains the largest collection of Tōyama's opinions ever printed, and perfectly encapsulates his ability to portray himself as the voice of morality for the people.¹⁰ However, if these critiques are to be closely analyzed, Tōyama's ulterior motives can be detected, especially when supported by a thorough examination of his volatile personal history.

The objective of this thesis is to reveal that, despite the nigh-messianic image Tōyama Mitsuru had among rightists and militarists for his staunch expansionist beliefs, he was a rather inconsequential, boorish figure who had little impact on Japan's political or economic spheres. Like Saigō Takamori, Tōyama also wished to see Japan colonize East Asia and gain military strength comparable to any Western nation; it was this type of thinking that Tōyama would promulgate in order to gain popularity and influence, and many of his contemporaries would thus view him as a disciple of Saigō's teachings. However, it is my belief that Saigō and Tōyama differed greatly in terms of character and respectability, as Saigō gained influence through steadfast devotion to his superiors and teaching others of maintaining moral integrity, whereas Tōyama opted to use violence as a means of expressing his own opinions.

The difference between the two men will become more apparent as I carefully analyze and interpret ten key points in *Dai Saigō Ikun* which best exemplify the opinions and thoughts of both Saigō Takamori and Tōyama Mitsuru, as Saigō's *Ikun* and Tōyama's subsequent criticisms were seen by many to perfectly represent the core ideologies of what both men believed in. I picked these ten points specifically because they contain the most pertinent information regarding the individual opinions of either

¹⁰ Tōyama, although having been credited with writing many books, has actually published very little of his own writings; he has often relied on others to publish his thoughts, much in the same way that Saiga Hiroyoshi has done in the *Dai Saigō Ikun*.

Saigō (through his counsel) or Tōyama (through his criticism), and best reflect how these opinions were affected by various events that occurred during their lifetimes.

Comparisons will be made from the intonations of both the points and their accompanying criticisms, and it will become evident that Tōyama's personality differed considerably from Saigō's in terms of directness and reservation (or lack thereof). I will also examine the histories of both men, which will help further highlight their differences as well as reveal aspects of them that many historical texts often overlook or exaggerate. By examining his words and analyzing the conduct he displayed throughout his life, my thesis will disprove the illusion of Tōyama Mitsuru's philanthropy and will show that, despite the abundance of books published that portray him as a selfless hero and how popular he became among right-wing advocates, he was an unsophisticated individual whose crude behavior served only to fuel the propaganda of Japanese militarism through justifying Japan's colonization efforts into East Asia, which ultimately proved to be his sole goal in life.

CHAPTER 2

AN ANALYSIS OF SAIGŌ TAKAMORI: LEGEND VS. REALITY

Perhaps one of the most important questions regarding Tōyama's decision to critique Saigō's work is why did Tōyama glorify him to the extent that he did? There were a number of men who were chiefly responsible for the success of the Meiji Restoration and the Meiji Period, but Tōyama's appeal and reverence for Saigō's actions continued well into the Taishō period.¹¹ Despite his military genius and dedication to promoting enlightenment, Saigō accomplished very little in making any lasting changes in the economic or social spheres and, despite the prominence he held as a founder of the Meiji bureaucracy, would gradually lose importance in the political arena for clinging to his antiquated ideals.

What made Saigō Takamori such a legendary figure was that he was a samurai who perfectly embodied the ideals of what essentially comprised the foundations of the Meiji Restoration: loyalty to tradition and to Japan. His inability to waiver from his beliefs would be seen as sign of irritating stubbornness, and he would eventually be seen as too old-fashioned to accept and implement Western concepts of modernizing. Former samurai and those in the agrarian communities, however, perceived Saigō to be a true patriot who realized that all Japanese were equal and had the potential for greatness, regardless of their social status. His entire life could be viewed as one enormous struggle, as his samurai nature required him to obey faithfully and without hesitation, yet inwardly he was not comfortable with how the Meiji bureaucracy focused more on

¹¹ While many people were responsible for making the Meiji Restoration succeed, Saigō, along with Kido Takayoshi (1833-1877) and Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830-1878), were known as the *Isshin no Sanketsu*, which could be roughly translated as "The three excellencies of the Restoration." Harold Hakwon Sunō, *Japanese Militarism: Past and Present* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975), 27.

modernizing the economy than on strengthening the military. Even after being exiled and clashing with lifelong friends over the fate of the samurai, Saigō continued to accept the decisions the government made until he resigned from politics altogether in 1873 out of frustration over the government's unwillingness to invade Korea and the dismantling of the samurai class. This suggests that he understood his limitations and surrendered to the inevitable. Saigō's return from obscurity in 1877 to lead the samurai in defiant battle was heroically painted as a struggle that saw the death of a part of traditional Japan through the obliteration of the samurai. It is this romanticized image that captured the imagination of the militarists of the late-Meiji and early-Taishō periods, who saw Saigō as an individual who was willing to go against the government in order to do what he felt was best for Japan; this would result in the rise of aggressive militarism in Japan in the years leading up to World War II (1939-45).¹²

As will become apparent through analyzing his points in *Dai Saigō Ikun*, Saigō's inclination toward enlightenment reflects the core essence of his teachings. His devotion to the Emperor, his proficiency as a military tactician, and the sagacity of his teachings are what comprise his character. However, his status as the legendary samurai who died fighting and whose actions exemplified true patriotism was exaggerated to a high degree, as exemplified when Tōyama continuously praises Saigō in the *Dai Saigō Ikun*. However, if Tōyama were truly as close to Saigō as he claimed and if he realized the difference between the legendary Saigō (often referred to as *Dai Saigō* in texts) and Saigō the man, he would not have deified him to the extent that he did. This is not to say that Saigō was an unimportant figure who was undeserving of praise, but a thorough analysis

¹² For an overview of the rise of militarism through the Imperial Army and Imperial Navy see Kitaoka Shin'ichi, "The Army as a Bureaucracy: Japanese Militarism Revisited," in *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 57, No. 5 (Jul., 1992), pp. 67-86.

of the types of doctrines he prescribed to, as well as an overview of the events which defined his outlook on the Meiji bureaucracy, will illustrate how Saigō's legend arose more from circumstances than anything else.

The Philosophies of Saigō

Saigō was born in January 1828 in the town of Kagoshima (located in the Satsuma domain), where he lived a relatively normal childhood and spent most of his time either in school or farming. He gained an in-depth understanding of the farming community through his first job as an assistant clerk of the office of the district magistrate, where he worked from 1844 until 1854. It was during this period that “Saigō frequented the countryside, where he developed a detailed and sophisticated first-hand knowledge of what peasant life involved, and these experiences gave him a lifelong interest in rural administration.”¹³ So from a relatively early age Saigō began to develop a resonance for the farmer class, something that many of the samurai at the time did not.

Despite forging a keen understanding of the social stratification in Satsuma, the rest of Saigō's upbringing was common for samurai of his time. At the local schools, samurai children were taught basic education and basic military/martial techniques. His youth was spent at an institution called *gōjū kyōiku* (roughly “village education”), where the samurai boys were divided into the younger boys (*chigo*) and older boys (*nise*). Boys would enter into *gōjū* at age six, and would remain *chigo* until they became *nise* at age fourteen; *nise* would help tutor *chigo*, and all students were taught Confucianism and “emphasis was placed on cooperation, and the mastery of traditional values such as

¹³ Charles Yates, *Saigō Takamori: The Man Behind the Myth* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1995), 27.

loyalty, obedience, duty, honor, propriety, and righteousness.”¹⁴ The rest of Saigō’s education was completed at a local university-like establishment called a *Zōshikan* (“Confucian academy”), where he acquired his affinity for Chinese classics and poetry.¹⁵

It was through his first position as an assistant clerk that Saigō was able to see how the farming communities were being over-taxed due to the high amount of samurai living in Kagoshima; local officials were compelled to heavily tax the commoners in order to pay the samurai their stipends.¹⁶ It was here that Saigō developed his ability to understand the agrarian community’s need for proper representation, while also understanding what it meant to be part of a stipend-receiving samurai family. This dual perception allowed Saigō to write memorials in regards to improvements in rural administrative policies of such insight that it attracted the attention of the Satsuma *daimyō* Shimazu Nariakira (1809-1858).¹⁷ Shimazu, who was looking for ways to improve rural conditions, appointed Saigō as his assistant and brought him along to Edo (which is now present-day Tokyo) in 1854, where Saigō would gain popularity among scholars and *daimyō* for his attention to the plight of the farming class, as well as for his opinions regarding how poorly the Tokugawa government handled Admiral William Perry’s (1794-1858) recent intrusion.¹⁸ Shimazu would use Saigō as an intermediary between other *daimyō* as Saigō’s position was obscure enough to allow him to move

¹⁴ Yates, *Saigō Takamori*, 26.

¹⁵ Mark Ravina, *The Last Samurai: The Life and Battles of Saigō Takamori* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004), 34.

¹⁶ By 1830, the Kagoshima domain “consisted [of] about 240,000 men, women and children [who] belonged to families with some kind of claim to samurai status, out of a population of 724,000.” W.G. Beasley, “Politics and the Samurai Class Structure in Satsuma, 1858-1868,” in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1967), 51.

¹⁷ Shimazu Nariakira was the ruler of the Satsuma region from 1851-1858. The term *daimyō* refers to the ruler who officiated a certain allotted amount of land that was his territory, known as a *han*. The Satsuma region was therefore known as the Satsuma *han*.

¹⁸ In 1853 the United States sent envoy ships to Japan to, effectively, force the Japanese to open harbors and ports to international trade. Admiral Perry entered Japan and, under orders from America, forcibly opened Japanese harbors to trade with the Treaty of Kanagawa signed in 1854.

freely through Edo without raising suspicion from the Tokugawa *bakufu*. Through his time at Edo, Saigō would learn a great deal of national polity and acquired many friendships.

In addition to his staunch ardor and fealty to Japan, Saigō, through his education, gained an affinity for such teachings as Confucianism, Buddhism, and *kokugaku*, which is a term that pertains to nationalism and nativism:

Those who believed in this sought a return to a perceived golden age of Japanese culture and society; by drawing upon Japanese poetry and Japanese classics (such as the *Manyōshū* and *The Tale of Genji*) they searched for a true and original Japanese spirited untainted by foreign beliefs.¹⁹

Although Confucianism had been around in Japan since the seventh century, it had lost popularity before the Tokugawa period and was replaced with Buddhism, which introduced a sense of uniqueness to the Japanese. However, with the beginning of the Tokugawa era came an attempt for the government to unite the country, so with this came a return to Confucianism:

Reasons for Confucianism's spread at this time were due most notably to the dramatic increase in literacy levels and the absence of political and military conflict; it also complimented Shintō in that it places an importance on the interdependence of individuals within a group.²⁰

Additionally, these schools of thought advocated the idea that there was a certain social structure to things, and so the master should dutifully rule over the servants as, conversely, the servants should faithfully serve the master. In order to fully understand the world, one must completely understand the concepts of nature and of the cosmos in their most basic sense.

¹⁹ Peter Nosco, *Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Harvard University: Harvard University Press, 1990), 94.

²⁰ Ronald Dore, *Taking Japan Seriously: A Confucian Perspective on Leading Economic Issues* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 94.

During the Tokugawa period the most popular brand of Confucianism was known as Zhu Xi Confucianism, in honor of the scholar who created it (Zhu Xi, 1130-1200), and was the fundamental teaching used at the *Zōshikan*.²¹ Zhu Xi focused heavily on inward exploration and quiet meditation, and on humanism and perfecting the human world (in stark contrast to otherworldly realms as in Buddhism). Its was based on the maintenance and protection of the five essential relationships: father/son, husband/wife, two friends, older/younger brothers, and ruler/subject, and focused primarily on duality:

It is a dualistic system based on the concepts of *ri* (principle) and *ki*, a term that has been rendered as ‘ether’ or ‘substance’. The fundamental purpose is to calm one’s turbid *ki* to allow one’s *ri* to shine forth. The person who achieves this purpose becomes a sage, his *ri* seen as one with the universal principle, known as the ‘supreme ultimate’ (*taikyoku*), which governs all things.²²

These structures appealed greatly to the Tokugawa government (who established Zhu Xi as their official religion in the seventeenth century) and to the fledgling Meiji government as well, as these relationships “called upon people everywhere to accept without question their lot in life and to place highest value in the performance of such duties as filial piety to their parents and loyalty to their overlords.”²³ Saigō was raised on this belief and found it appealing through its rigid structure, practicality, definitions of proper social/moral deportments and especially its humanism, which placed control of one’s destiny into one’s own hands.

²¹ Zhu Xi philosophy was actually Neo-Confucian by definition, which was a variation of Confucianism that arose sometime during the Sung Dynasty (960–1279) in China. For more information regarding the differences between Neo-Confucianism and Confucianism see Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, “A New Direction in Confucian Scholarship: Approaches to Examining the Differences between Neo-Confucianism and Tao-hsüeh,” in *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Jul., 1992), pp. 455-474.

²² Paul Varley, *Japanese Culture: Fourth Edition* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), 171.

²³ *Ibid.*, 172.

Yet Saigō would further his studies outside of Zhu Xi, as his stoicism was also balanced with an interest in morality and self-enlightenment. He grew very interested in Wang Yang-ming, a philosophy similar to Zhu Xi but was not as widely practiced, given how the Tokugawa made Zhu Xi Neo-Confucianism the official religion of the time.²⁴ Where Zhu Xi drew upon inner strength and naturalism, Wang Yang-ming stressed intuition, experience, and action; although Yang-ming did not ignore scholarship, he did believe that everyone had the innate capacity for good and evil, and that outside enlightenment was necessary to determine one's worth. In contrast to Zhu Xi's neutrality, Yang-ming thought stressed one's own intuition and experience as a means of bridging the gap between thought and action:

Actions based on one's innate knowledge of what is good and just are therefore transcendental, whereas if one's knowledge of good and evil becomes clouded by personal desires and selfish motives then one's actions are in direct violation of the will of Heaven. For Wang Yang-ming, the intelligibility of the world lies at the core of the universe, and at this core is man, intimately related to the supersensible world above and the world of nature below. The universe is unity, with man at its center.²⁵

Needless to say, this appealed to Saigō, as it justified selfless actions while maintaining an air of divinity about them, and its inclination for intuition as guidance was reminiscent of Zen Buddhism as well. Yang-ming also helped Saigō to develop the belief that enlightenment and self-improvement were virtues that could not be attained through inaction but rather through meditation and education.

²⁴ Wang Yang-ming (Japanese name *Ō Yōmei*; 1472–1529) was a Ming Chinese idealist Neo-Confucian scholar-official. A point of irony lies with the fact that the father of his childhood friend and future political rival, Ōkubo Toshimichi, introduced Saigō to Wang Yang-ming. Yates, *Saigō Takamori*, 25.

²⁵ Carson Chang, *Wang Yang-ming: Idealist Philosopher of Sixteenth Century China* (New York: St. John's University Press, 1962), 15.

The Creation of the *Ikun*

Despite gaining further prominence among scholars and leaders with his eventual role in the Boshin War (1868-69), Saigō was almost executed by the Tokugawa government a decade earlier for his seditious discussions with other samurai.²⁶ In what was known as the Ansei Purge (1858-59), the Tokugawa government began a crackdown on anti-*bakufu* activity, which systematically targeted leading figures of imperialist movements that opposed the government's policies in trade and succession disputes. Saigō, remaining in Edo as a representative for Shimazu (who returned to Satsuma), had learned of his lord's death and decided to return to Kagoshima to commit suicide. However, the imperial loyalist monk Gesshō (1813-1858), whom Saigō had befriended in Edo, convinced him to continue living as a means of properly honoring his lord's wishes. Gesshō accompanied Saigō in his return to Kagoshima, but en route word reached them that Gesshō had been targeted for arrest and, most likely, execution. Although when he reached Kagoshima Saigō learned that his *han* would hide him, this courtesy would not be extended to Gesshō for fear of openly opposing the wishes of the Tokugawa. Yet, due to his placing honor above all and feeling dishonorable for being unable to provide safe haven for his friend, Saigō chose to commit suicide with Gesshō, who had planned to drown himself in the icy waters off of Kagoshima Bay rather than be arrested. When the two of them jumped together into the waters, some boatmen were able to rescue Saigō while Gesshō unfortunately drowned.

²⁶ The Boshin War was a civil war in which those who sought to restore the imperial family to power fought to bring down the Tokugawa *shōgunate*, a system of ruling in which the government is controlled by a *shōgun* ("Generalissimo") and his relatives/confidants. The imperialists won, and *shōgunate* rule would never be used again in Japan. Saigō was one of the field generals and gained renown for his military prowess.

Although it was reported that he had committed suicide, Saigō was still wanted by the government for befriending Gesshō, and so he was forced into exile at Amami Ōshima in 1859 in order to protect the Satsuma *han*.²⁷ During his time there, Saigō became acclimated to the social life, befriending many of the islanders and teaching many how to read and write. When matters calmed down and the government pardoned those who were accused during the Ansei Purge (as many of those victimized were found to be not guilty), he returned to Kagoshima in 1862. However, Shimazu Hisamitsu (1817-1887), who took command of Satsuma after Nariakira died, sought to meet with other leaders in Kyoto to discuss the future of the Tokugawa; there, a great number of samurai gathered who perceived this meeting as the beginnings of open conflict against the *bakufu*. Saigō left two days prior to Hisamitsu in order to quell the potentially violent situation, which Hisamitsu saw as deliberately trying to challenge his own authority. For this reason, Hisamitsu had Saigō arrested and sent him back into exile in 1862; thus, Saigō spent less than a year in Kagoshima before being exiled yet again. Hisamitsu felt troubled at the ease which Saigō could influence the younger samurai and that Saigō's name "had already begun to acquire a kind of magic power that his superiors found difficult to understand but easy to fear."²⁸

Saigō was sent to Okinoerabu Island, where he would remain until officially pardoned in 1864. While originally confined to a cage that provided little comfort or movement and was intended to hasten Saigō's demise, his caretakers moved him out of the cage and into a larger dwelling where he remained comfortably for the remainder of

²⁷ Although Shimazu Nariakira had already died, his family continued to favor Saigō and since they could not allow Saigō to move about freely in Satsuma for fear of him being spotted, they sent him to the Shimazu-controlled islands of Amami, located off the coast of Satsuma.

²⁸ Yates, *Saigō Takamori*, 53.

his time there. In total, Saigō had spent the better part of five years among the inhabitants of the Amami islands, whose occupation and social standing closely resembled those of the farming community with which he was well acquainted. It was during this time that Saigō began to openly teach the islanders the virtues he himself believed in, and to relate to them his insistence that the government employ men of virtue and intelligence despite their social standing. He came to the realization that all those in service to the Emperor were extensions of the authority of Heaven, and therefore the will of Heaven, through the vessel of the Emperor; they should be heeded by all and should not be hampered by any political restraints. Saigō had developed a disregard for the views of the Tokugawa *bakufu* and developed an intense ardor toward serving the will of the Emperor directly, through which he felt it would be best to educate all Japanese on how self-improvement, discipline and devotion to one's work were essential to fulfilling their duty as servants of the Emperor.²⁹ This line of thinking is what Saigō had shared with the islanders during his time in exile, and it was these thoughts that created the foundation of the teachings found in the *Dai Saigō Iku*.

As Saigō's teachings began accruing popularity, his words were meticulously copied and stored away, where they would not be utilized again until many years after Saigō's death. With Saigō's official pardon through the Meiji Constitution in 1889, the regent of the Shōnai region, Sakai Tadazumi (1853-1915), ordered one of his vassals, Mitsuya Fujitarō (Dates unknown), to go to the islands to collect Saigō's teachings in

²⁹ Although Saigō's teachings were seditious at the time, intense anti-*bakufu* (Japanese for "government") sentiment was already prevalent by the mid-1860s. A large factor was the fact that the *bakufu* was forced to submit to foreign intrusion, and other factors (such as a decaying economy) helped many to realize that changes were necessary in order to avoid further victimization.

order to publish them and spread his teachings to the rest of Japan.³⁰ Mitsuya and a few unknown others compiled Saigō's teachings into a series of points (fifty-five in total) that cover various topics, ranging from critiques of inept politicians to guidance on the benefits of attaining righteousness. The book was published under the title *Nanshū Ō Ikun (The Dying Instructions of the Venerable Nanshū)* in 1891. It would be the first time these teachings were to be printed after Saigō's demise.³¹

Saigō's Political Views and the End of the Samurai

Upon his return from exile, Saigō found that Japan had become more chaotic, with both Satsuma and Chōshū increasing their anti-*bakufu* stances and the Tokugawa regime rapidly losing support due to instability. Saigō was appointed to administer peace pacts between Satsuma and Chōshū, as his popularity upon returning from exile endowed him with ample political influence. The successful Satsuma-Chōshū alliance began pressuring the Tokugawa government to initiate changes in 1866 and, with negotiations proving ineffective, began militarily mobilizing an anti-*bakufu*/pro-imperialist army. By 1867, Tokugawa rule had officially ended, as the Meiji Emperor was sworn in and the *bakufu* system was dissolved, with the remaining pro-Tokugawa forces being obliterated in the Boshin War; Saigō gained critical acclaim for his tactical abilities and for ending the War swiftly and with few casualties for the pro-imperialist side. Although Saigō would return to Kagoshima after the war in order to recuperate from his ordeals, his

³⁰ Shōnai (also known as Tsuruoka *han*) was located in Dewa province and had fought alongside their close ally Satsuma during the Boshin War. Saigō had made a great impression due to his aptitude to lead, and as such was respected by the Shōnai populace.

³¹ For more details regarding the collation of the data and subsequent publication of the book see Tōyama Mitsuru and Saiga Hiroyoshi, *Tōyama Mitsuru Genshiroku* (1926, Reprint, Tokyo: Shoshi Shinsui, 2006).

legend would continue to grow due to his participation in completing the Meiji Restoration and his help in establishing the Meiji era.

However, despite the good intentions of the samurai in helping re-establish the prominence of the Emperor and the dissolution of *shōgunate* rule, the Meiji period would prove to be horrifically disastrous for them. A number of edicts were passed which effectively eliminated their importance to society. In order to create a more centralized form of government, the Meiji oligarchs issued a decree in 1871 which disbanded all *han*, forcing each territory to give their land back to the Emperor: this was done to establish a more unified population and to lessen any chances of insurrection.³² This was seen as a devastating and insulting blow to the samurai, especially to those in Satsuma and Chōshū, who had been instrumental in the downfall of the Tokugawa. Both domains had a long and proud history which was now, in effect, negated as their respective homes became the property of the government. However, as the samurai sought to establish a more modern and unified nation they accepted this state of affairs. Saigō, who had become the supreme commander of Satsuma's military forces after his participation in the Boshin War, would be called upon to help run the government while many of the oligarchy would embark on the Iwakura Mission in 1871, named after its organizer Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883).³³ Before leaving, all members of the Meiji oligarchy signed a petition that declared that no major changes were to occur under the supervision of the

³² The Meiji oligarchy was originally consisted of Satsuma-Chōshū members who sought to abolish social divisions and focus on economic reforms. However, throughout the Meiji period the goal of the oligarchs would vary depending on the circumstances, although all sought to continue the modernization of Japan by using Western models as guidelines. For a detailed analysis of the role of the Meiji oligarchs throughout the Meiji period see Bernard S. Silberman, "Bureaucratic Development and the Structure of Decision-making in Japan: 1868-1925," in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Feb., 1970), pp. 347-362.

³³ The expedition consisted of a large group of Japanese elite scholars and politicians who traveled through most of Europe and the United States, gaining first-hand experience of the political and economic systems of the West, and worked on treaty revisions with the United States.

Saigō “caretaker” government. This act displeased Saigō as he had envisioned the Meiji government focusing on increasing military strength rather than pursuing interests abroad, and this dissatisfaction would continue to grow throughout the remainder of his political career.

The return of the Iwakura Mission in 1873 brought about two immense changes within the Meiji government which fomented rebellion from the samurai. The first was the conscription of a national army mandating two-years of service from every Japanese male over twenty. It also forced them into reservist status for six additional years afterwards. Those in the Iwakura Mission saw how mandatory military service provided nations with a more orderly population and gave those in the poorer communities opportunities for advancement and change. Samurai would become known as *shizoku* (“descendants of samurai”), and were no longer allowed to strike down commoners who showed disrespect to them. They would also no longer be able to carry swords in public and were forced to discontinue the traditional method of placing their hair in a topknot, which signified their samurai status.³⁴ This was seen by the samurai, who had historically been seen as the warrior class and had been the primary defenders of Japan, as disrespectful. Yet what is surprising about this edict is that it was supported by Saigō, who himself felt that everyone should have the opportunity for advancement and that social distinction was harmful to the poorer citizens.³⁵ Furthermore, in 1873 the government began taxing the samurai stipend on a rolling basis, and in 1874 gave them the option to convert stipends into government bonds, which would put the samurai

³⁴ For further information on the *shizoku* and their economic status in the Meiji Period see Harry D. Harootunian, “The Economic Rehabilitation of the Samurai in the Early Meiji Period” in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Aug., 1960), pp. 433-444.

³⁵ Saigō was not wholly comfortable with the deregulating of the importance of the samurai, but was torn between his loyalty to his fellow samurai and his loyalty to the nation.

further into the pocket of the government. By 1876, the government made this conversion compulsory, which officially heralded the economic downfall of the samurai.

The second major event in which impacted the samurai status was the resignation of Saigō from government service following the *Seikanron* debates (“Debate to conquer Korea”) in 1873. When the Emperor was restored to power in 1868, a delegation was sent to Korea in order to proclaim the change in government as well as to offer diplomatic and commercial relations. However, the Koreans rejected the envoy, which was viewed as an insult to some, especially Saigō. He hoped to use this incident as a catalyst for military action against Korea but was overruled by the others, who felt it too soon to begin invasion plans after initiating such massive societal and economic changes in Japan. Saigō would not forget or forgive this insult, and had a chance to exact revenge with the departure of the Iwakura Mission in 1871, where the majority of those against invasion would be overseas and unable to prevent his plans. In 1872, Saigō made plans to send another envoy consisting solely of samurai warriors, who would force the Korean government to accede to Japanese demands for trade and to make amends for their earlier insult to the Meiji Emperor. In Saigō’s eyes, a foreign war would not only return prominence to samurai but would also “stop the moral decline as represented by rampant materialism and loss of traditional values, and lead the fundamental reforms that the present government was unable or unwilling to put into effect.”³⁶ However, the return of the Iwakura mission from abroad halted Saigō and his supporters: those on the mission felt that invasion at such a critical and fragile time would bring ruination to Japan. They raised such questions as: “How could the government fund education, local

³⁶ Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), 254.

administration, industry, the colonization of Hokkaido, and legal reforms if it became entangled in war?” and “How could the Japanese truly call themselves enlightened or equal to the West if they fought the Koreans for glory but did not become truly wealthy and strong at home?”³⁷ Saigō saw the rebuffing of his plans as an insult to the samurai and, displeased with the oligarchs’ lack of interest in military expansionism, resigned from active government duty rather than openly contend against them.

Upon retiring, Saigō returned to Kagoshima and, while not becoming involved in political affairs, kept busy by setting up a series of local private schools called *shigakkō* which were used to instruct the last of the bloodlines of the samurai in the ways of their heritage. These schools were structured around the *gōjū kyōiku* and *Zōshikan* institutions where Saigō himself had studied, and so emphasized honor and discipline as being key elements to serving the Emperor. The *shigakkō* schools would continue to grow in size and would begin to influence the local Kagoshima government, inspiring disenchanted former samurai to openly protest against the Meiji government in the former areas of Satsuma and Chōshū. Fearing Saigō’s persuasions, the government began to send spies to these schools, as they felt that he opened these schools in order to build an army pledged to the samurai cause. However, Saigō’s intention in creating the *shigakkō* was “not to create an army loyal to him, but rather to inculcate samurai values in which he undoubtedly realized would be the last generation of birthright samurai.”³⁸ When one of these spies was discovered, the students became more dedicated to preserving the

³⁷ Marlene Mayo, “The Korean Crisis of 1873 and Early Meiji Foreign Policy,” in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Aug. 1972), 814.

³⁸ Charles Yates, “Saigō Takamori in the Emergence of Meiji Japan,” in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (July 1994), 467.

samurai ideals at any cost, and turned to loathing the politicians who sought to eradicate their heritage.

With their espionage uncovered, tensions continuing to increase and the government dispatched a warship into Kagoshima in 1877 to ascertain the situation; this, combined with the elimination of samurai rice stipends that same year, was seen as open hostility against the former samurai. The samurai began to mount an army, and through some coercion forced Saigō to lead them against the Meiji bureaucracy. In what would become known as the Satsuma Rebellion, Saigō and his troops (numbering only about 14,000) would engage the Meiji forces in a number of skirmishes in 1877. His troops were forced to use hit-and-run tactics against the larger and better-supplied Imperial Army, which incorporated considerably superior firepower and numbered at least 300,000. Although Saigō and his troops gained various minor victories, eventually they faltered before superior numbers, which culminated in the former samurai retreating to Kagoshima where they made a final stand. The final battle occurred in September 1877, and although Saigō and the samurai were obliterated during this final stand, dying for their cause resulted in the samurai regaining their honorable image and in Saigō becoming a martyr. Despite the government's attempt to crush the imagery that Saigō represented after his fall, he remained so popular a figure that the official pardon he received posthumously was almost inevitable. It was due mainly to his struggles with the government and his participation in the Satsuma Rebellion that Saigō Takamori earned his legendary moniker of *Dai Saigō* ("The Great Saigō").

The Contradictory Image of *Dai Saigō*

Given the fact that he has been seen as a hero, a rebel, a traitor, a sage, and a warrior all within his lifetime, there remains a great deal of contradiction when discussing how Saigō should be historically portrayed. It becomes difficult to determine how best to classify him:

In one widely accepted view, Saigō was the inspiring genius behind Japanese imperialism, and is directly responsible for half a century of military oppression in Korea, Taiwan, and China. In another view, he was the last pure repository of all that is essential, noble and true in the Japanese character. Yet another view sees him as Japan's first authentic egalitarian, champion of the common man and a lover of peace and harmony.³⁹

The image that has retained the most popularity in Japanese myth is that of *Dai Saigō*, the humble samurai who gained popularity by being both the voice of the poor and a sage to the samurai, and whose rebellion against the government immortalized him as heroic. Yet much of what has been reported about him, and which has subsequently become accepted as true, has been exaggerated, and there are facets to Saigō's character that do not correspond to what has been popularized about him.

The two most controversial events in Saigō's career, the *Seikanron* debates in 1873 and the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877, are typically known as his most rebellious actions against the Meiji government, but the truth is that Saigō did not wish to invade Korea purely for impugned honor, nor did he seek to overthrow the Meiji government through the samurai rebellion. Rather, he hoped to lead the army to Tokyo to convince his former colleagues to modify some of their policies regarding the samurai. In the weeks leading up the *Seikanron* debates, Saigō sent letters to his friend Itagaki Taisuke

³⁹ Yates, "Saigō Takamori," 451.

(1837-1919), who was advocating military action against Korea.⁴⁰ In these letters, Saigō “argued repeatedly that unprovoked aggression would be morally intolerable, and in any case would discredit Japan in the eyes of other nations, but that his own death at the hands of the intransigent Koreans would give Japan a suitable pretext for retaliation.”⁴¹ However, these letters are among the only pieces of evidence which suggest Saigō’s hesitancy to invade Korea. Having already established that he was more concerned with increasing Japan’s military might than with stabilizing the economy, it is apparent that, while Saigō may have preferred not to resort to force, he would not have hesitated to do so, as annexing Korea was an important precedent for him.

In regard to the Satsuma Rebellion, it would make very little sense for Saigō to launch an attack on the government just as a means to show the importance of the samurai. Although as a samurai he was obligated to uphold his duties to his superiors, in reality Saigō was a quiet, frugal man who preferred solitude to being a public figure. He wrote letters after the fall of the Tokugawa in which he explained how he wanted to retire from political affairs in 1869. Other letters, written in the early 1870s, relate how his body was often wracked with intense physical pain that forced him to pursue a more leisurely lifestyle.⁴² So, although he officially retired from politics over the *Seikanron* debates, he had long preferred to live a relatively peaceful lifestyle back in his hometown of Kagoshima. His participation in the Rebellion was also overexaggerated; although Saigō was not completely against the idea of leading an armed insurrection in the hopes

⁴⁰ Itagaki Taisuke was one of the samurai who sided with Saigō in maintaining the importance of the samurai in the mid-1870s. He formed the first national political association, *Aikokusha* (“Patriotic Party”, est. 1875) and is seen by some to be the pioneer in the people’s rights movement of the 1880’s.

⁴¹ Saigō had wanted a delegation to be sent with him included, so if negotiations turned sour his demise would justify a military response from Japan. Yates, “Saigō Takamori,” 464.

⁴² He suffered from obesity that was caused by filariasis, from heart ailments, and from complex gastro-intestinal problems. *Ibid.*, 467.

of enlightening the government about the plight of the samurai, he had wanted to lead the army into Tokyo as a show of force only, given his hesitancy to resort to violence and how he was impeded by his physical ailments.

So despite how most historians portray Saigō as a fearless warrior who achieved legendary status through his blind devotion to the samurai and to the Emperor, there does exist information which supports the idea that he was a typical samurai who attained such status more through overexaggeration of stories than through actions. Additionally, because of his desire to see a more socially unified Japan, he seemed to not hesitate to support the dismantling of the *han* system, nor did he fight fiercely against the deconstruction of the samurai class, opting instead to retire rather than openly struggle against the government. This behavior suggests that he preferred enlightenment and education over physical intimidation, especially given the rapport he developed with the poorer communities. Not only is there the duality of the great warrior *Dai Saigō* and the more humanitarian Saigō Takamori, but there is also duality with his stance as a hero to the samurai and a representative to the poorer communities. The actions he undertook throughout his life reveal that he continually struggled between fighting to preserve the ideals of the samurai (as exemplified by the *Seikanron* debates, establishing the various *shigakkō* schools, and the Satsuma Rebellion) while also realizing the need for the deconstruction of class distinction (as evidenced with his support of the *shizoku* transformation, the government's reclamation of *han* land, and the type of teachings he presented in the *Dai Saigō Ikun*). It is this dichotic behavior which leads me to conclude that while he was heavily supportive of the samurai cause (even giving his life for its preservation), Saigō believed that all Japanese were important and were part of Heaven's

design; hence, he was more reactive in his actions than proactive, often acting only when he was forced to. This dispels the image of the grand warrior *Dai Saigō* and substantiates that Saigō Takamori was more passive than aggressive in his behavior.

Yet the *Dai Saigō* image is what was being used most in the work produced in the 1920s and 1930s, when the majority of authors glorified his dedication to the samurai as a sign of true patriotism.⁴³ When analyzing the *Dai Saigō Ikun*, the dichotomy that exists between the legendary *Dai Saigō* and the mortal Saigō Takamori must be taken into consideration, as the aspect the reader more closely identifies with affects how the reader would perceive the true intentions behind *Dai Saigō Ikun*. Those who revered *Dai Saigō* would view his position as justification for his rebellious behavior, while others might have understood that this position instead personified caution and advice to anyone seeking self-improvement. As the book was written during the highly-nationalistic period of the 1920s by an extreme nationalist, it would seem that it was intended to capitalize on the *Dai Saigō* aspect, and that Tōyama Mitsuru chose to praise this one aspect of Saigō in order to promulgate his own goals.

⁴³ Examples include: *Kyogan Nanshū* (*The Great Vision of Nanshū*, 1927) by Tōya Ichiyō and *Dai Saigō Shisen: Gojūnen Kinen* (*The Poems of the Great Saigō: A 50-Year Period*, 1927). NOTE: Since these books were never translated into English, I have provided translations for the titles.

CHAPTER 3

TŌYAMA MITSURU AND MILITANT IMPERIALISM IN TAISHŌ JAPAN

Tōyama Mitsuru was an enigmatic person whose image was wrapped in even more contradiction than Saigō's was. Having grown up during the fall of the Tokugawa and rise of the Meiji, he was of samurai descent and was indoctrinated with the same type of teaching that Saigō himself had received. Like Saigō, Tōyama developed a deep sense of reverence for the Emperor and for the promotion of Japanese greatness. However, most of the actions he took throughout his life were indicative less of encouraging enlightenment than they were of advancing militarism. Tōyama's reverence for the Emperor and contempt for Western influence bordered on zealotry, and he was a person who did not hesitate to exercise violence to get his messages across. Tōyama's attitude would garner him great popularity and prestige among various political and social circles, as evidenced by the dozens of books published about him, both during his lifetime and after, which extolled his virtues and emphasized his status as a heroic patriot.⁴⁴ Much like Saigō, Tōyama was gifted with persuasive rhetorical abilities and used this to his advantage by establishing various nationalist organizations dedicated to serving the nation and the Emperor. Tōyama and these groups would develop a symbiotic relationship with the rise of militarism in the early twentieth century, as their popularity depended on the maintenance of rightist propaganda, which in itself was dependent on the general feeling of the nation. It was fortunate for them that a number of international events had occurred, from the turn of the twentieth century to throughout the Taishō

⁴⁴ Examples of these books include: *Kyojin Tōyama Mitsuru Ō (The Venerable Great Man Tōyama Mitsuru)*, 1925) by Fujimoto Naori and *Mitsuru Tōyama Kämpft für Grossasien (Tōyama Mitsuru and the Fight for Greater Asia)*, 1941) by Kimase Seizō. NOTE: Since these books were never translated into English, I have provided translations for the titles.

period, which helped to bolster feelings of nationalist pride and allowed Tōyama and his protégés to increase their influence dramatically.

However, much like there was a distinction between Saigō the legend and Saigō the man, there is an abundance of evidence which suggests that despite being portrayed as the ideal nationalist and servant of the state, Tōyama was perhaps more inclined to further his own goals and was not as humanitarian as some portrayed him to be. Although Saigō and Tōyama were both of samurai descent and both sought to see Japan develop into a militarily strong and respected nation, the similarities between the two end there. Their lives radically differed in terms of purpose and direction. Whereas Saigō was devoted to serving his lord and was drawn into varying conflicts due to his personal beliefs of honor and fealty, Tōyama would serve no one and showed no moral remorse for any of his actions, legal or illegal. Saigō's moral ambivalence gave him the "unfortunate habit of trapping himself between mutually exclusive commitments."⁴⁵ Tōyama, on the other hand, was not hampered by any moral restrictions, and so acted without conscience in order to improve Japan's international image. As Saigō had promoted self-improvement and education as the grounds through which unification and modernization could be achieved, Tōyama strove to unify the people under a banner of militarism by displaying the effectiveness of violence as a tool of persuasion.

Tōyama's Upbringing and Introduction to Political Influence

Tōyama Mitsuru was born in April 1855 in Fukuoka (in northern Kyushu), the third (out of four) sons to the Chikuzen Kuroda's retainer, Tsutsui Kamesaku and Tōyama Isoko. When he was nineteen, he officially changed his name from Tsutsui

⁴⁵ Yates, *Saigō Takamori*, 54.

Mitsuru to Tōyama Mitsuru.⁴⁶ He was born with the name Otsujiro, but his name would change first to Hachiro and then to Mitsuru, and in his later years he would also become known as Ritsu-un.⁴⁷ Though a son of a samurai, he grew up poor and attended institutions based on the *gōjū kyōiku* system, although it is not known if he attended any *Zōshikan*-based institution. He received a regular education typical for a child his age, but whether he completed *gōjū kyōiku* is unknown. The only piece of information that he publicly shared regarding his childhood was that he gained his interest in Confucianism through one of his female teachers, who was described as being “an Amazon who wore men’s clothes; she carried two medieval swords and attacked anyone who addressed her as a woman.”⁴⁸ Unfortunately, there is little else written about Tōyama’s childhood, and he himself was not open to discussing his personal life. Facts such as how his siblings fared, what fate befell his family, or how apt a pupil he was remain unknown. What will become apparent throughout this thesis is that much of the information regarding Tōyama originated from rumors, without much factual data to back it up.⁴⁹ This was frustrating to Japanese historians like Hugh Byas, who struggled “between the conviction that Tōyama is a great hero and a feeling that if the truth were faced the idol would be seen as no hero but a medieval-minded freebooter.”⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Tōyama taking his mother’s name is most likely due to the fact that the Tōyama line had no male heirs, and so was given the opportunity to switch names in order to ensure that the Tōyama line would not end.

⁴⁷ Akin to Saigō being known as Nanshū, Tōyama would eventually acquire the moniker Ritsu-un, which roughly translates as “standing on clouds.”

⁴⁸ Irving Wallace, “Watch That Dragon!” in *The American Legion Magazine*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (January 1941), 15.

⁴⁹ The greatest written source of Tōyama’s biographical information can be found in the collection entitled *Genyōsha Shashi* (Tokyo: Kindai Shiryō Shuppankai, 1977). However, the authenticity of this material is questionable considering that the editors of the collection were the members of the right-wing militant group the *Genyōsha*, who viewed Tōyama as a hero. The group’s origin and importance will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

⁵⁰ Byas, *Government by Assassination*, 174.

While he experienced a relatively normal childhood, Tōyama would begin to skirt the lines between legality and criminality by his early twenties, when he was already under police surveillance for attending samurai-dissent meetings and for organizing strikebreaking gangs known as *soshi*. At the age of 22, Tōyama was arrested for participating in a riot by the group *Kyoshisha* (“Purpose Rectifying Society”) who supported the dissatisfied samurai who were opposed to the Meiji government (*fuhei shizoku*; “Association of Dissatisfied Samurai”). It was a small riot, and would prove to be the only time in his life that Tōyama was arrested.⁵¹ However, the year that Tōyama spent in prison was the year that Saigō led the last of the samurai in the Satsuma Rebellion, and upon learning of the fall of the samurai Tōyama was so saddened that he vowed to follow Saigō’s beliefs and to promulgate his ideas of Emperor-reverence and of self-enlightenment. It was his constant empathizing of Saigō’s plights that helped Tōyama to build his power base; it was referenced to such a degree that many people began to believe that Tōyama was a close disciple of Saigō’s, a belief that Tōyama himself never sought to dispel.

Since there is little to no information regarding how serious Tōyama was in practicing the ideals of the samurai before his imprisonment, nor were there any documented meetings between him and Saigō, it brings to question Tōyama’s true motives behind claiming to be an apostle of Saigō. Although Tōyama’s participation in the samurai-dissent riots signified empathy towards the samurai cause, it was this type of exuberance and narrow-mindedness that Saigō had sought to temper in the younger samurai, as he felt that such aggression proved counterproductive to their cause. This

⁵¹ Tōyama was arrested because word had gotten around that he had planned to murder Ōkubo Toshimichi, who was one of the samurai who openly opposed invasion of Korea and had helped command the troops that put down Saigō’s rebellion. Tōyama, *Tōyama Mitsuru Genshiroku*, 318.

behavior is reflective of a student of one of Saigō's *shigakkō* schools; however, as Tōyama was already a young adult when these schools were established and that his town of Fukuoka was some distance north of Kagoshima, it is unlikely that he attended one. Additionally, since Tōyama did not engage in any official government service as a youth and that he had attracted the attention of the authorities at an early age, this suggests that Tōyama preferred action to discussion, a trait that became more characteristic as he got older.

After his yearlong imprisonment, Tōyama would begin to accrue connections and, in 1879, he engaged in a campaign for democracy under Itagaki Taisuke. In 1880, Tōyama, along with some contemporaries, established *Koyosha* (“Facing the Sun Organization”) and founded a movement to petition for establishing a National Diet.⁵² Tōyama even helped Itagaki with the establishment of the *Jiyūtō*, which was Japan's first liberal party and it was through this group that he helped to spark the first liberal movement in Japan known as the *Jiyū Minken Undō* (“The Freedom and People's Rights Movement”). It was a nineteenth-century political and social movement that pursued the formation of an elected legislature, the institution of civil rights, and the reduction of centralized taxation.⁵³ During this introductory period of politics, Tōyama established ties with Kōno Hironaka (1849-1923) and Sugita Teiichi (1851-1929), both of whom later would become prominent party politicians. In 1888, he found time to marry a woman named Mine, who was 15 to his 34. There is almost no information regarding her background or how much he cared for her, although it is assumed that he had little

⁵² "Tōyama Mitsuru" in vol. 10 of *Kokushi Daijiten*, Dai 1-han. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1997), pp. 226.

⁵³ For a detailed analysis of the history behind the *Jiyū Minken Undō* and the impact it had on Meiji Japan, see Jackson H. Bailey, “Prince Saionji and the Popular Right Movement” in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1. (Nov., 1961), pp. 49-63.

interests in relationships; he never mentions her in any story or interview. In the early 1890s, Tōyama eventually began to speak at public gatherings, where he demanded that the government stop handing out concessions to foreign countries, stop having an international inferiority complex, and fight China for Korea before Russia did. With the conscription of the Meiji Constitution and the foundations of the Imperial Diet's establishment both coinciding with the official pardon of Saigō in 1889, Tōyama's expansionist stance began to garner some influence, especially after Japan's victory over China in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95).

Tōyama's Legacy: the *Genyōsha* and *Kokuryūkai*

What helped Tōyama create and maintain his influence was his participation in the formation one of the nation's most powerful nationalist groups, the *Genyōsha* ("Dark Ocean Society").⁵⁴ With political activism increasing, Tōyama took his *Koyosha* and, with his friends Hiraoka Kōtaro (1851-1906), Shindō Kiheita (1851-1925), and Hakota Rokusuke (1850-1888), re-named it *Genyōsha* in 1881. Drawing from the local, disgruntled samurai in Fukuoka, this group pledged themselves to uphold the honor, dignity, and pride of both the nation and of the Emperor himself. The group's principle would slowly shift from democratic rights of the people to sovereign rights of the state through the implementation of concepts such as *kokkenron* ("nation's rights") and *Ajaron* ("Asianism"). Through *Ajaron*, the *Genyōsha* argued that all of East Asia needed to unite in order to purge itself of Western influence, and that the nation which should shepherd this alliance should be Japan due to its state of modernity in comparison to other Asian nations (*kokkenron*). The group also believed in *tennō shugi* ("Emperor

⁵⁴ Its name implied expansionism, referring to the narrow passage of water separating Japan from Korea known as the *Genkainada* strait.

Reverence”), as the group believed that the Emperor would naturally advocate their actions:

Their real concern was with promoting overseas expansion and not necessarily with seeing that the Emperor was ruling as well as reigning, since what they advocated was in Japan’s best interest the Emperor could not fail to concur.⁵⁵

The *Genyōsha* members would increase in number and become secreted in various positions throughout Japan, working as bodyguards for government officials, as strong-arm persuaders for local political bosses, and in skilled trades (i.e., plumbers, carpenters, masons).⁵⁶ The group would also accumulate enormous funds through racketeering, stock speculation, gambling and prostitution, and so the *Genyōsha* continually grew through the 1890s and into the twentieth century, until it became a paramilitary group. The group also received funds through Tōyama himself, who gained staunch support from the owners and managers of the large coal mines recently discovered in northern Kyushu, and through his friend Hiraoka, who held great personal wealth and who was also was the publisher of *Fukuryo Shinpo* (*Town of Fukuryo Newspaper*, est. 1887). The establishment of the *Genyōsha* is yet another example of how Saigō and Tōyama differed; Saigō continually championed the rights of the people, whereas Tōyama began to perceive Japan’s international image as being of primary importance. He would neglect those in the poorer communities, as evidenced by his decision to change the group’s focus from “people’s rights” (*minken*) to “nation’s rights” (*kokken*).

In preparation for military expansionism, Tōyama began to train many of the *Genyōsha* in the arts of espionage and translating, as he planned to use them as spies in

⁵⁵ Sabey, “The Genyōsha,” 73.

⁵⁶ Dubro Kaplan, *Yakuza: Japan’s Criminal Underworld* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 22.

Manchuria. In Shanghai and Hankow, his men established the *Rakuzendo* (“Hall of Pleasurable Delights”; est. 1888), a store that ostensibly imported pharmaceuticals and beauty products and exported exotic perfumes; in reality, this company supported prostitution, drugs, and gambling in exchange for information from the various Chinese gangs and thugs; the information was then handed over to the Japanese Imperial Army.⁵⁷ The *Genyōsha* also established the *Nisshin Bōeki Kenkyūjō* (“Sino-Japanese Trade Research Center”; est. 1890) in Shanghai; it was a school dedicated to instructing students on espionage and business management, whose graduates were employed in various fields throughout China. In Korea, an offshoot of the *Genyōsha* called the *Tenyūkyō* (“Society of Heavenly Salvation for the Oppressed”) was formed roughly in 1893. Its goal was to supply funding and weaponry to the Korean radical political group the *Tong-bak*, which was anti-Chinese and anti-Western, in an attempt to drive foreigners out of Korea. The *Tenyūkyō* did not realize that this xenophobic group would also attempt to drive out the Japanese. However, war ensued between Japan and China over the fact that there was dissidence by rebels and both nations sent troops to quell the uprisings. How large a part the *Tenyūkyō* played remains unknown, but, with the onset of the First Sino-Japanese War, there had been some unsubstantiated rumors that the *Tenyūkyō* was partially responsible.⁵⁸

The reason why Tōyama and his groups were able to gain influence was partially the general anti-Western feelings that arose throughout Japan. The Japanese had finally

⁵⁷ Herman E. Norman, “The Genyōsha: A Study in the Origin of Japanese Imperialism,” in *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 17 No. 3 (Sept. 1944), 264.

⁵⁸ For a detailed description of the relationship between the *Tong-bak* and the *Tenyūkyō* see Sabey, “The Genyōsha,” Chapter 4: “A Fire in Korea” and F.A. McKenzie, *Korea’s Fight for Freedom* (New York: AMS Press, 1970).

achieved one of the long-term goals of the Meiji Restoration, removing the shadow the Unequal Treaties cast upon them:

The Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty of 1894 abolished the segregated, enclave-like British settlements within Japanese cities and provided for the abolition of extraterritoriality in five years. By 1897 the other treaty powers, impressed with Japan's new military prowess, had entered into similar agreements that also recognized Japan's tariff autonomy and provided for the complete equalization of all relations by 1911.⁵⁹

Yet the general feeling of pride, bolstered by victory over China, would soon be crushed as France, Russia, and Germany stepped in to remind the Japanese of the limits of their nascent power. In the Triple Intervention (1895), Russia had requested that Japan return the Liáodōng Peninsula to China, through which Russia hoped to expand its empire into East Asia. With Russia being backed by France and Germany, and with no support from either America or Britain, Japan had to give the land back, bringing a sense of shame to the Japanese. Even the most ardent of Western supporters, such as Tokutomi Sohō (1863-1957) and Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901), felt slighted by this turn of events, and, during the early 1900s and 1910s, patriotism began to increase greatly.⁶⁰ Consequently, the *Genyōsha* gained immense popularity for their verbal assaults on politicians like Inoue Kaoru (1836-1915), who proposed that “Japan concentrate on the economic aspects of the treaties in an attempt to win custom rights, while sidestepping the extraterritoriality

⁵⁹ McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, 299.

⁶⁰ Tokutomi Sohō was a journalist and author who felt that Japan's only chance to successfully modernize was “to reject the Japanese past entirely and pursue wholeheartedly both the material and spiritual aspects of Western civilization.” Fukuzawa Yukichi was an author who wrote the popular book *Gakamon no Susume (An Encouragement of Learning)* between 1872 and 1876, and praised Western ways while criticizing Japan's obsolete customs. Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 243, 250-51.

rights and trying to win the trust of the powers by promising to appoint foreign judges to Japanese ports.”⁶¹

The creation of the *Genyōsha* brings about some speculation regarding the portrayal of Tōyama. There is no doubt that he played some type of role in both the *Jiyūtō* and the *Jiyū Minken Undō*, but unquestionably he used them as stepping stones to enter the political and international arenas. Further cementing this idea is that, despite having helped establish the *Jiyūtō*, the *Genyōsha* would be tied to the assassination attempt on Itagaki Taisuke years later.⁶² It does not seem plausible that Tōyama Mitsuru, a man who founded such a violent organization, would truly be interested in fighting for human rights.

As the power of the *Genyōsha* increased, their statements became more audacious, and they sought to make their actions more public. Perhaps the most famous of these incidents occurred with Foreign Minister Ōkuma Shigenobu, who was considered one of Japan’s greatest statesmen.⁶³ Because Ōkuma was unable to fix the Unequal Treaties and for his acceptance of a loan from Britain in the mid-1880s to build railroads, an attempt was made on his life in 1901 when a fanatic (who had links to the *Genyōsha*) threw a bomb into a carriage that was transporting Ōkuma; although surviving the attack, he lost his right leg. There were stories that Tōyama himself took a more proactive stance in pushing for militarism, with one entailing how he intimidated Itō

⁶¹ Inoue Kaoru was a Japanese statesman who was influential in the reform of the land tax system in 1876. As foreign minister (1885-87), his failure to negotiate a revision of the Unequal Treaties and his favoring Westernization forced him to resign. Sabey, “The Genyōsha,” 99.

⁶² Itagaki was stabbed at a political rally in 1904, but managed to survive; the unknown assailant managed to flee and avoided capture. Despite the lack of evidence many people attribute this attack to the *Genyōsha*, Norman, “The Genyōsha,” 252.

⁶³ Ōkuma Shigenobu’s initial contribution to the Meiji government was to oversee the reorganization of Japan’s fiscal system. Ōkuma was also notoriously known for being a close friend to Saigō Takamori who sided against him in the *Seikanron* debates and Satsuma Rebellion, earning him Tōyama’s enmity.

Hirobumi (1841-1909) and Masayoshi Matsukata (1835-1924), two incredibly prolific politicians who achieved high status as Prime Ministers, into supporting the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05).⁶⁴ There were also rumors that the *Genyōsha* helped sparked animosity towards Russia by assassinating the queen of Korea in 1895, who turned to the Russian tsar for political support when, after the First Sino-Japanese War, the concessions won from China were returned in the Triple Intervention.⁶⁵

While the beginning of the twentieth century was busy for Tōyama, he began withdrawing from the public eye when the Taishō period was established. He was politically active throughout the Russo-Japanese War, helping to found the patriotic group the *Kokuryūkai* (“Black Dragon Society”, est. 1901). This was merely a reorganization of the *Tenyūkyō* group to take a stricter anti-Russian stance by counteracting Russian movements in Korea and Manchuria.⁶⁶ Its goals were to avoid any repetition of the Triple Intervention and maintain any concessions that might be gained in a peace treaty following Japanese victory over Russia. Additionally, the *Kokuryūkai* opened up a language school to teach members Russian and Chinese. The school was located on “purchased plots of land in southern Korea that served as headquarters for *Kokuryūkai* operations and as munitions bases both before and during the anticipated

⁶⁴ Prince Itō Hirobumi assumed chief responsibility for writing the Meiji Constitution. When the topic of how to handle Russian involvement in Korea arose in 1903, he favored appeasement and suggested to the Emperor that Japan should strike a deal with Russia. Masayoshi Matsukata was purported to have financial relations with the *Genyōsha*, although there is no physical evidence that supports this connection

⁶⁵ Although Japanese minister to Korea, Miura Gorō (1847-1926), was held responsible for ordering the assassination, the Japanese courts acquitted him (due to a lack of evidence) and further investigations into the matter were dropped. Norman, “The Genyōsha,” 276.

⁶⁶ Its name is derived from the Amur River in China (which is read as *Kokuryū-kō* in Japanese), signifying that its goal was to drive Russia out of all of Asia that was south of the Amur River. The other co-founder was Uchida Ryōhei (1877-1937), who would become the most prominent leader of the group.

war.”⁶⁷ During the Russo-Japanese War and annexation of Korea in 1910, the Imperial Japanese Army supposedly made use of the *Kokuryūkai* network for espionage, sabotage and assassination, and the *Kokuryūkai* was also well-funded thanks to various illegal activities and support from various individuals:

Such powerful firms as the Okuragumi and Yasuda, and leaders of finance and industry as the army favorite Fusanosuke Kuhara (1869-1965) and Jotarō Yamamoto (Dates unknown) [president of the South Manchurian Railway], have generously financed some of the more ambitious schemes of the *Kokuryūkai*.⁶⁸

The group was also heavily involved with assisting Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) in attempting an overthrow of the Chinese government alongside his Kuomintang army in the early 1910s. However, Sun would lose contact with Tōyama over the next few years, resulting in the loss of support from both the *Genyōsha* and the *Kokuryūkai*.⁶⁹ Both groups would retain their popularity and would continue their operations until the end of World War II, when they were officially disbanded after Allied forces occupied Japan.

Reading of the accomplishments of the *Genyōsha*, the *Kokuryūkai*, and the *Tenyūkyō*, one would think that they represented the pinnacle of imperial militarism in early twentieth-century Japan, given how much of an impact their presence made in Korea and China. However, despite how all of the various information that has been pieced together depicts these groups as being extremely formidable and highly organized tactical units with vast resources, they were not as influential or as powerful as many

⁶⁷ Sabey, “The Genyōsha,” 185.

⁶⁸ The Okuragumi firm was a large construction and engineering firm which began in 1873, and Yasuda was a large banking company that started in 1876. Fusanosuke Kuhara was a mining industrialist and imperial supporter in the 1930’s. Norman, “The Genyōsha,” 270.

⁶⁹ Sun Yat-sen was a Chinese revolutionary who was instrumental in the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty in 1911 and helped to found the Kuomintang Party in 1912, which is Asia’s oldest political party. Sun would ally himself with Yuan Shikai (1859-1916) in 1912, whom Tōyama saw as an enemy for publicly denouncing the *Tong-bak* in Korea; this strained the friendship of Tōyama and Sun. Sabey, “The Genyōsha,” 287.

have claimed them to be. Through his extensive research on both the *Genyōsha* and the *Kokuryūkai*, John Wayne Sabey has concluded that the support of Sun Yat-sen, the agitation of the *Tong-bak*, and the espionage schools established in Korea and Manchuria were all done on a quiet scale and were generally funded not with the support of the Japanese government but rather through Uchida's personal wealth and Tōyama's connections to the coal and steel mines. The written records which detailed the intimidation of political figures Itagaki Taisuke, Itō Hirobumi and Masayoshi Matsukata were all found within the personal logs of the *Genyōsha* and the *Kokuryūkai*; in actuality these politicians had similar samurai upbringings as Tōyama and were not likely to have acquiesced to his demands through simple verbal intimidation.⁷⁰ Regarding the size of these groups, often they would bestow membership upon individuals who financially supported them or performed acts that were found compatible with the groups' own. When members behaved in a manner detrimental to the groups' images, they would deny culpability and cut ties. The groups never numbered in the thousands as many had thought, as such a size would prove to be too unmanageable to control. In fact, it was only due to a handful of individuals that either group was able to have any kind of political/social impact:

Without the contributions of Tōyama Mitsuru, Hiraoka Kōtaro, Shindō Kiheita, Hirota Kōki (1878-1948), and Nakano Seigō (1886-1943), the *Genyōsha's* impact on the Japanese political scene would have been considerably lessened. And without Uchida Ryōhei there can be little question that the *Kokuryūkai* would have suffered much the same fate.⁷¹

⁷⁰ The daily logs for the *Genyōsha* can be found in Genyōsha Shashi Hensankai, ed., *Genyōsha Shashi* (Tokyo: Kindai Shiryō Shuppankai, 1977) and the *Kokuryūkai* logs can be found in Kokuryūkai Honbu, ed., *Kokuryūkai Chōsen Tōchi Mondai* (Tokyo: Takamura Kin'ichi, 1920).

⁷¹ Hirota Kōki was a member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was a former Prime Minister (1936-37). Nakano Seigō, who would popularize fascism and totalitarianism in the 1930s and 1940s, had stated that Saigō represented the perfect model that all Japanese should follow. Sabey, "The Genyōsha," 327.

What was also apparent was that, despite the groups' links to the government via members who possessed political clout (such as Nakano and Hiraoka), neither the *Genyōsha* nor the *Kokuryūkai* ever attained enough power to wholly influence Japanese diplomatic policymaking. The true power throughout the 1910s and 1920s remained with the *Kenseikai* (“Constitutional Government Party”, est. 1916) and the *Rikken-Seiyūkai* (“Association of Friends of Constitutional Government party”, est. 1900). With so little factual data to back up many of the claims made by members of the *Genyōsha* and the *Kokuryūkai*, it can be determined their importance in history was highly exaggerated.

The Rise of Anti-Western Sentiment in the Taishō Period

There were a number of events that occurred in late-Meiji and early-Taishō that helped increase anti-Western sentiment in Japan and garner further support for militarist expansionism into East Asia. In 1905, California passed anti-Japanese legislation, and, in the following year, the school board in San Francisco ordered Japanese and other Asian children to attend segregated schools. Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910 would be unofficially recognized by Western nations and would paint Japan as a bully; the fallout of the Twenty-One Demands in 1915 would only add to their poor international publicity.⁷² Although Japan did participate in World War I on the Allied side it received little gratitude from the West, as they realized that Japan's main goal was to attack German-controlled areas in East Asia in order to then occupy them afterwards. As a

⁷² The Twenty-One Demands were a set of demands that Japan gave to China in 1915, which were designed to give Japan a great deal of land and authority in China. However, the United States and Britain saw this as conflicting with the Open Door Policy and pressured Japan to lessen the demands to thirteen, which resulted in Japan gaining little.

result, Japan was “able to enlarge its empire through the acquisition both of Germany’s island possessions in the Pacific and of the former German interests in North China.”⁷³

With relations between the West and Japan strained from the Triple Intervention and reactions to Japanese interaction with East Asia being poor, it is not surprising that in the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, Western countries rejected the Japanese request to have a racial equality clause included in the League of Nations Covenant. The tenuousness would grow with the 1921-22 Washington Naval treaties that forced onto Japan an unfavorable battleship ratio of 5:5:3 for the United States, Britain, and Japan respectively. This not only forestalled an imminent arms race but also provided the basis for a Japanese security policy of “armament reduction and cooperation with the Western powers.”⁷⁴ Japan was being slighted through these treaties, but what further aggravated the insult was when, in 1924, the United States passed the questionable US Immigration Exclusion Law, which favored providing large quotas to northern “Nordic” Europeans, while:

Immigration from Asia was prohibited entirely by a clause that would not admit ‘any alien ineligible to citizenship,’ a status which applied pointedly to the Japanese as the Chinese had been excluded since 1882. The new law vitiated the so-called ‘Gentleman’s Agreement’ of 1908, a set of diplomatic negotiations under which the Japanese government agreed to refrain from issuing passports to laborers bound for the continental US.⁷⁵

This angered many Japanese, who saw it as a “‘gratuitous affront’ that amounted to a declaration of war between the yellow and white races,” and anti-American groups like

⁷³ Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 274.

⁷⁴ James B. Crowley, *Japan’s Quest for Autonomy – National Security and Foreign Policy 1930-1938* (New Jersey: Princeton, 1966), 30.

⁷⁵ Nancy Stalker, “Suicide, Boycotts and Embracing Tagore: The Japanese Popular Response to the 1924 US Immigration Exclusion Law,” in *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Sept. 2006), 154.

Taibei Kokumin Taikai (“Anti-American Citizens Convention,” est. 1924) quickly arose.⁷⁶

Domestic issues also challenged the political and societal stability of Japan. Although the nation prospered economically by supplying munitions to the Allies during WWI and spreading its markets into East Asia, an enormous rift developed between the poorer communities and the upper classes.⁷⁷ This period saw the larger financial companies merge with each other, forming even larger conglomerations called *zaibatsu* (“financial cliques”); they profited the most during the Taishō period, while the farming class was barely able to sustain itself:

Zaibatsu exploitation and worsening labor conditions had brought on large-scale and militant industrial strikes in the cities, while in the countryside, where social conditions were little better than they had been before the Meiji Restoration, absentee landlordism had reached nearly the 50 percent level.⁷⁸

This was the result of the rapid modernization process that the Meiji oligarchy followed and its focus on industrialization rather than on stabilizing the agrarian sector:

Japan’s intensive industrialization did not occur evenly; industrialization produced a ‘dual economy,’ a schism between small-scale production in traditional (agricultural, handicrafts, and consumer) sectors of the economy and large-scale, capital intensive industries based on heavy concentrations of financial capital encouraged by the state.⁷⁹

The massive Kantō earthquake that rocked all of Tokyo in 1923 only added to the economic turmoil, killing hundreds of thousands and severely impacting national morale.

⁷⁶ Both Uchida Ryōhei and Tōyama Mitsuru claimed membership in this group. Stalker, “Suicide, Boycotts and Embracing Tagore,” 154.

⁷⁷ The economic boom was so successful that Japan’s real GNP jumped by forty percent between 1914 and 1918. Yet a number of factors had impacted the economy during these years, resulting in annual growth rates swinging from incredibly profitable to disastrously detrimental.

⁷⁸ Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 275.

⁷⁹ Germaine A. Hoston, “Marxism and National Socialism in Taishō Japan: The Thought of Takabatake Motoyuki,” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (Nov. 1984), 50.

As a result of anti-Western sentiment, economic instability, and a lack of strong representation from the Taishō Emperor, militarism would arise in the form of *kokka shakai shugi* (“state/national socialism”).⁸⁰ This line of thinking emphasized reverence for the Emperor through the elimination of the factors which were influencing him and detrimentally impacting Japan itself; chief among these factors were the politicians who were seen as weak for their inability to promote Japan’s strong image on the international field, and the *zaibatsu* conglomerates which were seen as hoarding all of Japan’s finances for themselves. There were those who used *kokka shakai shugi* to call for a traditionalist return to the ideals previously put forth during the Meiji Restoration: the modernization of Japan through the strong bond forged between the Emperor and the people. Perhaps the best example of this nationalism can be found in Kita Ikki’s (1883-1937) book *Nihon Kaizō Hōan Taikō* (*An Outline Plan for the Reorganization of Japan*), published in 1923.⁸¹ The book suggested that a military coup was necessary in order to get rid of the Meiji oligarchs who abused their power and hampered decision-making policies that rightfully belonged to the Emperor and to the people:

To correct the situation, [Kita] prescribed universal manhood suffrage. A new and more representative Diet could then overrule the bureaucracy and legislate away the ‘economic *daimyō* class’ of the *zaibatsu* who thrived in collusion with it.⁸²

While Kita’s views were radical and bordered on anarchy, the messages that he promoted remained popular with many Japanese, who felt that there was a lack of representation for

⁸⁰ Known as Prince Yoshihito posthumously, the Emperor contracted meningitis three weeks after his birth, leaving him in poor health both physically and mentally for the remainder of his life, and was often shied away from the public eye due to his frailty. Takeshi Hara, “Emperor Taisho-Image vs. Reality,” in *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 48 No. 2 (2001), 56.

⁸¹ Kita Ikki was an author and philosopher whose book would gain popularity among the military circles, especially in the 1930’s. He was also seen as the leading theorist and philosopher of the right-wing movement in pre-World War II Japan, and was executed in 1936 for treason.

⁸² George M. Wilson, “Kita Ikki’s Theory of Revolution,” in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 26 No. 1 (Nov. 1966), 95.

the people. The promotion of militarism through literary works would continue to grow throughout the 1910s and 1920s, as evidenced by various pro-imperialist writers such as Saiga Hiroyoshi.

The Enigmatic Saiga Hiroyoshi

What is troubling about Saiga is the fact that he appears to have had led a somewhat uneventful life. There is an extremely limited amount of information written about him (in stark contrast to the vast quantities of tales and stories that are available regarding Tōyama and his notorious past). Saiga was born well into the Meiji period, and was entranced by concepts of nationalism and expansionism at an early age. Coming from a somewhat influential family (his father, a former samurai, was at first a police officer and then retired as the mayor of his hometown of Miyano in the Yamaguchi prefecture), Saiga was raised with a proper education. He quickly gained an affinity for writing: he was writing for a local newspaper in high school when he was discovered by the journalist Fukumoto Nichinan (1857-1921).⁸³ After completing his education, Saiga gained a job at *Kyūshū Nippō Shinbun* (*Kyushu Daily Newspaper*) in 1906, where Fukumoto had been the publisher for many years.⁸⁴

Saiga continued to work for the newspaper but would also gain a small amount of fame through being one of the main publishers at the magazine *Nihon Oyobi Nihonjin*, which originally began as a newspaper simply *Nihon* (*Japan*). The magazine was founded by Miyake Setsurei (1860-1945) and Sugiura Jūgō (1855-1924) in 1888. It was

⁸³ Fukumoto Nichinan was an accomplished author and newspaper publisher who worked for *Nihon Oyobi Nihonjin* and published various other materials.

⁸⁴ “Saiga finished his education at the age of thirteen; this means that his success as a writer later in his life was based on his own talent and the effort of self-educating.” Ishitaki Toyomi, “*Dai Saigō Zenden* no Chosha; Saiga Hiroyoshi ni tsuite,” in *Kenshidayori*, Vol. 1, No. 113 (Sept. 2001), 2.

an outlet used by the *Seikyōsha* (“Society for Political Education”), a group that “attacked Westernization and called for ‘preservation of the national essence’ (*kokusui hozon*).”⁸⁵ After several transformations, *Nihon Oyobi Nihonjin* became successful when it was turned into *Japan and the Japanese* in 1907, where it would remain in publication until 1944.⁸⁶ It was during his tenure at both establishments that Saiga began to emulate Fukumoto’s ideals. Saiga would eventually become known as “Little Nichinan.” Fukumoto’s honesty and devotion to his work captivated Saiga, who had stated that he was in awe of Fukumoto since the first day they met. At the end of their first meeting, Saiga recalled stating: “I kneeled down to him, and changed not only my poetry style but also the way of my will by learning from him.”⁸⁷ Like Fukumoto, Saiga believed in *Ajiaron*, and through this belief both Saiga and Fukumoto developed an exceptionally close relationship, as Saiga exalted Fukumoto and respected him like a father. When Fukumoto left *Kyūshū Nippō Shinbun* in 1910 due to problems with management, Saiga summarily quit as well.

However, this is where the detailed aspects of Saiga’s life end, as there is little else written about him. Through *Nihon Oyobi Nihonjin* he joined the *Seikyōsha*, which may explain how and why he gained an interest in Saigō Takamori and wrote many books dedicated to him.⁸⁸ Saiga would continue to write books after *Dai Saigō Iku*,

⁸⁵ Founded in 1888, the members felt that “diversity among peoples and nations was fundamental to progress in the world, and any attempt to reject national customs and indiscriminately adopt the ways of others could be harmful.” Additionally, they published Saiga’s *Dai Saigō Iku* in 1926. Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 251.

⁸⁶ Kathleen M. Staggs, “‘Defend the Nation and Love the Truth’: Inoue Enryō and the Revival of Meiji Buddhism,” in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Autumn, 1983), 259.

⁸⁷ Ishitaki Toyomi, “*Dai Saigō Zenden*,” 2.

⁸⁸ Examples include *Dai Jinkaku no Ikan: Saigō Nanshū Ō* (*The Grand Vision of a Great Character: The Venerable Saigō Nanshū*, 1920) and *Dai Saigō to sono Jidai* (*The Great Saigō and Our Times*, 1923). NOTE: Since these books were never translated into English, I have provided translations for the titles.

with a multi-volume collection dedicated to Saigō and other publications focusing on nationalism. He also adopted the penname “Rokuya” (literally “the field at the foot of the mountain”) under suggestion from Fukumoto.⁸⁹ However, there is little other information pertaining to his social life, how involved he was with politics, or how radical he was in thought or action. It seems that after his involvement with *Nihon Oyobi Nihonjin*, Saiga eventually approached Tōyama regarding Saigō and his *Ikun*, as it would seem natural that given the affinity both possessed towards Saigō, their publishing a book dedicated to maintaining his ideals would seem inevitable.⁹⁰

Death of Tōyama

Tōyama remained popular throughout his life, as when he finally passed away in 1944, his eulogy was broadcast over the radio stations; it read:

A most respectful leader among Japanese patriots, Mitsuru Tōyama not only fostered many followers among whom a number were noted statesmen but he also took under his protective wing the nationalists of Greater East Asia.⁹¹

Throughout his eighty-nine year lifespan, Tōyama proved to be a powerful force for the right-wing cause due to the capable way he employed his powers of rhetoric which gained him personal power as a nationalist figurehead. Although not highly educated nor born into an affluent family, Tōyama was able to gain notoriety using only his oratory skills and an unquenchable desire to see Japan become the most dominant military powerhouse in the world. Such zeal was merely amplified as imperialism grew

⁸⁹ The collection is entitled *Dai Saigō Zenden (The Complete Great Saigō, 1937-1940)*. Examples of his later publications include *Tenka no Jinbutsu (The Personage of Heaven, 1930)* and *Kinnō Shishi Sōsho (A Collection of the Imperialist Patriot, 1943)*. NOTE: Since these books were never translated into English, I have provided translations for the titles.

⁹⁰ Saiga mentions that Tōyama actually “cleared his schedule for two days to sit with me and talk of Saigō.” Tōyama, *Dai Saigō Ikun*, 157.

⁹¹ Irving Wallace, “Honorable Assassin,” in *The American Legion Magazine*, Vol. 3, No. 15 (June 1945), 47.

considerably in Japan after World War I. As a result, Tōyama garnered respect from the younger militants who came to power in the 1930s, and he continued to promote expansionism into East Asia despite his advanced age.⁹²

The fact is, despite the support he gave to various imperialist and patriotic societies, Tōyama did not make any real changes to the Meiji or Taishō governments themselves. In examining his life one can see how it is riddled with acts of brutality and single-mindedness, and the fact that he often quarreled with authority rather than comply with it. While his *Genyōsha* and *Kokuryūkai* seemed to have had a large impact on promoting militarism, the lack of discernible evidence tying them to many of their claims suggests that they were not as influential or important as many have claimed them to be. Never possessing a definable occupation, being legally connected to assassination attempts and utilizing prostitution and gambling as a means of funding taints whatever sagacious image Tōyama may have tried to establish. It paints him as a ruthless criminal who lacks the type of elegance expected of a samurai descendant and supposed disciple of Saigō Takamori. Despite the autonomy and prestige accumulated throughout his lifetime, Tōyama should not be praised for his purported patriotism but rather maligned for his inability to understand the true meaning behind the teachings of Saigō to whom he continually deferred. This will become even more evident through a thorough analysis of the true meaning of Saigō's key points and Tōyama's critiques, which will help dispel the image Tōyama crafted for himself.

⁹² “During the Manchurian crisis in 1931, the *Manshū Mondai Kaiketsu Dōmei* (“Society for the Ultimate Solution of the Manchurian Question) was sponsored by Baron Kyōshirō Inoue [Dates Unknown] and Mitsuru Tōyama, and labored for the independence of Manchuria from China.” Kenneth Colegrove, “The New Order in East Asia,” in *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Nov., 1941), p. 12.

CHAPTER 4

AN ANALYSIS OF THE KEY POINTS OF *DAI SAIGŌ IKUN*

As previously mentioned, the *Dai Saigō Ikun* was not the first release of the book. In 1896, after Mitsuya's *Nanshū Ō Ikun*, another version of the piece was published under the title of *Saigō Nanshū Sensei Ikun (The Teacher Saigō Nanshū's Dying Instructions)*, which was written by Katabuchi Taku (1859-1907). However, Saigō's points would not be reprinted until 1916, when they were published under the title, "Nanshū Zenshū" ("The Collected Works of Nanshū"), which was written by Yamaji Aizan (1864-1919).⁹³ He did not print Saigō's points in the format of a book but rather over a series of articles in the magazine *Nihon Oyobi Nihonjin*. In that very same year, the book *Nanshū Ō Ikun Yojinyaku Magiri Yokomeyaku Daitai* would be published by the Kagoshima-based publishing company Chinsho Hanpukai Daihyō Ogata Eikichi.⁹⁴ After that, there would be another gap in publication of the points and, between 1916 and 1926, there were no other materials produced that contained Saigō's points.

In the summer and fall of 1925, Saiga copied the *Ikun* information from Yamaji Aizan's publication; Saiga sat down with Tōyama between December 8th and the 11th and presented all fifty-five of Saigō's points to Tōyama who, in turn, responded with his own set of critiques.⁹⁵ Never having read the points before, Tōyama was amazed at the level of Saigō's genius, and, upon finishing reading, simply said: "This is truly the heart of Saigō."⁹⁶ After re-writing and editing the piece, Saiga published the book on April 15,

⁹³ Yamaji Aizan was a famed author and reputed philosopher of Neo-Confucianism.

⁹⁴ The title roughly translates as *The Great Nanshū's Dying Instructions: A Look at His Monumental Struggles and Campaigns*.

⁹⁵ Saiga himself stated that on both of the days "from 9 am to 4 pm Tōyama did not take any other visitors than myself, and I could listen to him talk very carefully and quietly." Tōyama, *Dai Saigō Ikun*, 157-158.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

1926, and *Dai Saigō Ikun* received some popularity, receiving recognition from various political and social groups; it was also re-printed several times over the following year, further illustrating how successful it was.⁹⁷ The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the translation and analysis of the ten most essential points in *Dai Saigō Ikun*; these were chosen either due to the valuable lessons set forth by Saigō (which revealed the sagacity of his thoughts), or because of the unique critique supplied by Tōyama that best reflected his antagonism. The points will be listed in the order they were found in the *Dai Saigō Ikun* originally published in 1926, and will be followed first by Tōyama's critiques and then by an analysis of what can be surmised from either individual's writings.⁹⁸

Saigō Takamori Point #1

Point: Those who rule in the government need to follow the path of heaven.⁹⁹

Consequently, a wise person who obeys these edicts can be entrusted with a position [in the government], and this decision should be left up to the will of heaven.¹⁰⁰ So, in order to be considered a true wise person, one should not hold onto a position too tightly.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ These groups will be discussed further in my Conclusion. The book sold out and was re-released on June 15, 1926, then again on June 20th, June 22nd, and finally June 25th. It is not known how many books were initially released or were released on each subsequent date, but its numerous reprints suggest it was popular. Tōyama, *Dai Saigō Ikun*, 165.

⁹⁸ It is important to note that in every preceding and subsequent version of this book, Saigō's points have always stayed in the same order and have remained consistent in content.

⁹⁹ Throughout his *Ikun*, Saigō always begins his individual observations/tutorials with the kanji *hito* or *ichi*, which signifies a solitary unit ("one", "a", "singular"). Throughout these translations it will be translated as "[A] Point". He also uses the word *byōdō*, which began to be used in 1883 and was used generally as a term for "cabinet" or "ministry;" it is the word he uses throughout his points to describe the government in general.

¹⁰⁰ When Saigō refers to 'wise person', he is referencing those people who try to attain self-betterment through educating themselves and being altruistic; he seems to favor the purity of the person rather than the actual intellectual capabilities they possess. NOTE: I have included some words or phrases in the translations that are marked with parentheses [], which signify that they were not in the original text but I included them to help the flow of the translation.

¹⁰¹ Saigō infers that someone of true virtue would not hesitate to give up their employment for whatever reasons, indicative of true selflessness; he also hints at the idea that employment should be filled on qualities of merit and aptitude rather than social standing or family connections.

Given how virtuous our nation is, to dole out these important positions simply as rewards for obedience is highly erroneous. Should the government appoint a wise person, if he is truly virtuous, then he should love and praise this opportunity. To simply bestow upon the individual this sense of honor is the opposite of his attaining it through steadfast dedication and merit.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #1

Master Ritsu-un speaks: The fact that Nanshū has an *Ikun* is something that I have often heard about, but this is the first time I have actually looked at it.¹⁰² Upon reading this, I feel as though the elder's personality is alive right before me.¹⁰³ Even though what are written here are simply just a few of Saigō's everyday words they are truly remarkable.¹⁰⁴ With all due respect to the Meiji Emperor who continues to rule from above, if the *Ikun* had been vigorously followed [by all] Japan would have been a more incredible place today; since the politicians of late do not care to learn from this man, there have been a great deal of misfortunes with their work. To adhere completely to even one of these points would require a great deal of discipline and effort. With the realization that all of this teaching stemmed solely from Saigō's character, one cannot help but to be in awe of his greatness. Through careful reading and appreciation of the elder's fine work, we will improve our purity for the sake of our Emperor and country. "So in order to be considered a true wise person, one should not hold onto their position too tightly" is what Saigō said, and it is a fundamental concept. Because people are

¹⁰² Every response to Saigō's points begins with Saiga stating that this is where Tōyama's commentary starts; note the usage of Tōyama's penname 'Ritsu-un'.

¹⁰³ The term *okina* refers to an elderly man, yet its tone implies great deal respect. Hence, throughout these translations, whenever *okina* appears it will be translated as "elder" but will imply "venerable elder man".

¹⁰⁴ As typical for many elderly people in his time, Tōyama frequently ends his sentences with *ja* instead of *da* or *desu*. It is best translated as a simple intonation, much like the English "eh".

directed by their emotions and thoughts, they cannot exert control over other matters or concerns. Look here, at the recent political controversies that we cannot bare; if blame is placed on these wise men, then it is because they consistently refute the responsibilities of the position that have been bequeathed upon them.

“Should the government appoint a wise person, and if he is truly virtuous, then he should love and praise this opportunity,” is what Nanshū proclaimed, and from this passage one can sense his deep awareness.¹⁰⁵ Regarding this, it reminds me of something specific I recall which Saigō aptly said once: “Although prosperity has been increased, Ōkuma Shigenobu should not be in charge of National Education. Also, Inoue Kaoru should never be entrusted with authority over National Finances. This is how it should be.”¹⁰⁶

However, in looking at Ōkuma’s life in general, he seemed to be more accomplished as an educator than as a politician; on the other hand, Inoue took it upon himself to be the head of Meiji’s National Finances, as the people themselves had already wanted him to do. Here Nanshū, upon looking at humanity, has an insight into the varying personalities of society. If Nanshū looks upon Ōkuma and surmises his intentions, he can see that Ōkuma does not have purity in his being. Matters such as public morality and self-morality need not be entrusted to educators and those devoid of sincerity, which Nanshū had [already] presumed.

¹⁰⁵ When quoting Saigō, Tōyama will often use the phrase *to iu te iru*, which indicates a sense of honor towards the person being quoted.

¹⁰⁶ Again honorable terminology is used, and will be seen whenever Saigō and/or Tōyama speak to someone of authority as a sign of respect or sarcasm, depending on the situation.

Once Nanshū said to Inoue: “Inoue, how is your position as head of Mitsubishi?”¹⁰⁷ Inoue knows how to stockpile his own money, but does not know how to do so for the public or private sectors. This type of person, who can amass even the slightest riches for the Imperial family, should not be entrusted with the heavy burden of the National Finances, which I believe was what Nanshū’s intonation was.

To the ‘self-appointed’ Minister of Finances Inoue, Nanshū has said that he should not handle the country’s finances, and it has also been said that the great, proud teacher Ōkuma should not be entrusted with the National Education; yet it seems Nanshū’s insight had long since revealed this popular opinion.

Point/Critique #1 Commentary

Saigō starts off his multi-tiered commentary with a pretty strong warning against giving un-wise (unworthy) people authority that they are undeserving of, while suggesting that those who are overlooked simply for their societal standing should be reconsidered. Saigō’s emotions and thoughts are clearly visible with this opening critique; he places notions of morality, piety, and education above self-gain and fame. Saigō clearly believed in the notion of “meritocracy,” a form of governing in which job placement and recognition is based on an individual’s merit, regardless of social standing. Historical figures who practiced or believed in meritocracy included Genghis Khan (1162-1227), Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) and, not surprisingly, Confucius (551-479 BCE).¹⁰⁸ Throughout his points, Saigō repeatedly focused on the idea of a “path”

¹⁰⁷ Mitsubishi is the company that is popular today for its automotive industry; it originally was called Mitsui but would become one of the larger *zaibatsu* in Tōyama’s time and would take the name Mitsubishi. Inoue “was sometimes known as the Mitsui Clerk because he served as the *zaibatsu*’s paymaster to other politicians and as the conduit for political bribes.” Louis G. Perez, *The History of Japan* (London: Greenwood Press, 1998), 131.

¹⁰⁸ For an analysis of the benefits and detriments of meritocracy see Norman Daniels, “Merit and Meritocracy,” in *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Spring, 1978), pp. 206-223.

(*michi*), which he believed represents a set of moral and ethical standards which must be followed in order to attain complete self-enlightenment and attain the necessary wisdom to fulfill duties to the country. No direct attack is made on any specified individual (as no names are ever used) in any of Saigō's points, suggesting that he either was polite enough to keep his teachings at a professional level, or he feared retribution should his words reach the government.

Tōyama starts by praising the glory that was Saigō and discusses how his teachings should be taken to heart, even going so far as to state that had the Meiji government listened to Saigō more closely Japan would have been an even greater nation (followed with an apology to the Emperor Meiji). It is interesting to note that he does not praise any Emperor other than the Meiji, hinting that Tōyama has not respected, or simply not cared about, the Taishō Emperor. Tōyama is unafraid to express his opinions, as he clearly lambastes politicians like Inoue and Ōkuma and openly blames the Japanese for their languid behavior. What will become apparent in Tōyama's critiques is that he continually faults other politicians and the general populace for their inability to make Japan grandiose while exonerating himself from any blame.

Saigō Takamori Point #8

Point: If we wish to advance toward enlightenment in a manner akin to various other Western nations, we must erect the true form of our nation by strengthening our morality as a united people; thus, in doing this we can then discover what our true strengths are. If rather we choose to forgo this and, instead, recklessly model ourselves after other nations, our country and its public morals will then decline, leaving it unable to properly heal itself.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #8

Master Ritsu-un speaks: This is completely opposite nowadays. We place other countries before ours, and because we place our identity behind them the true form of our country has regrettably become obscured. Thanks to the directionless fools who are out there [in power], our nation's true form has regrettably been lost.¹⁰⁹

Look at Japan now; aren't those damn foreigners taking our nation's treasures away from us?¹¹⁰ They hang our art as billboards in the West, drooling with desires for our treasures and not realizing that they are first and foremost ours; yet, we ourselves do not even realize they have been taken.¹¹¹

The true form is to our nation like hearts are to people.¹¹² If this idea is not completely realized, then our people will become like floating weeds, today being on this shore then tomorrow blooming on the opposite shore. It is like Hojo Tokiyori (1227-1263) who, realizing the pain he underwent in self-disciplining, reflected his difficulties with this poem:

How many times, thinking it over and over again, will I change my mind?
Such a hard thing to know, is the human heart.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Tōyama here undoubtedly refers to those in position of power who he believes to cower in the face of Western powers; he may even be hinting at the lack of authority coming from the Taishō Emperor, but it is impossible to determine whom Tōyama considers a 'fool.'

¹¹⁰ While 'damn' may seem a bit strong, the term that Tōyama uses here is *ketō*, which literally translates into "hairy foreigner;" it was a very derogative term to use for Westerners in Japan during Tōyama's time.

¹¹¹ With Japan's re-opening of its ports to the world in 1854, its art gained popularity in the West for its aesthetic and naturalistic appeal; styles such as *ukiyo-e*, woodblock printing, and *nishiki-e* were among the most popular during the early twentieth century.

¹¹² A somewhat quizzical statement, Tōyama literally states that Japan is the body of a fan with the people representing the paper that holds the fan together. It seems to infer that a nation cannot truly exist without the people putting their hearts into it.

¹¹³ Hojo Tokiyori was a regent of the Kamakura *shōgunate* in Japan, and in 1249 he set up the legal system of *Hikitsuke* ("High Court"). NOTE: I would like to personally thank Professor Stephen Forrest for his assistance in helping translate this poem.

Indeed, to steel one's heart is a difficult a thing to do in the world and, again, is more difficult when an entire nation must do so.

Point/Critique #8 Commentary

This point best portrays how similarly Saigō and Tōyama felt about the West, as both give warning about the dangers of merely copying the West indiscriminately. However, Saigō suggests that a strengthening of traditional values and morals will ensure Westernization will not adulterate Japanese culture. Western nations did not incorporate Japanese models into their own but rather created their own modern societies through the fortification of their own morals, standards, and beliefs. Tōyama's contempt for Westernization is transparent here as he believes it is due to the bureaucrats that the Japanese will leave Japan in droves, being seduced by these foreign cultures and promises of change abroad. The cultural acceptance of Japanese art abroad would signify healthy international relations, but Tōyama sees it only as historical pillaging and rebukes everyone for not seeing it themselves, suggesting how great his anti-Western feelings were.

Saigō Takamori Point #9

Point: The path of “loyalty and filial piety, humaneness and love, and personal/emotional development” comprises the foundation of political affairs; it is a timeless and universal concept, and is therefore unalterable. Because this path is the natural course of heaven and earth, then it shows that Westerners are [fundamentally] akin to us.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #9

Master Ritsu-un speaks: This is knowledge that is precise and should be treated with respect; we can only admire such simplicity. “Loyalty and filial piety, humaneness and love, and personal/emotional development”: these represent the true form of Japan! Throughout the world, what other nation possesses these traits? There is no other country than can compare to Japan. If Japan were to stand by these ideals, despite how many hundreds of millions of people there are in the world, surely there would be no one who would not be hoisting our flag and bowing before us.¹¹⁴

Regarding things like “righteousness is the natural course of heaven” and “it is a timeless and universal concept”; this shows that Saigō has boundless spirituality akin to the Holy Buddha’s.¹¹⁵ Although he could perceive the future, Saigō applied his knowledge to the present. What the Holy Buddha taught us is that, in order to create a nation with splendid morals, we all must possess temerity that Saigō demonstrated. There is surely no difference between the people of the West and the Japanese. If our wise men were to walk this path of humanity and righteousness, all of the nations of the world would acknowledge our superiority. Saigō returned to Kagoshima because he thought Japan had not yet finished modernizing; he believed he needed to refine it personally.¹¹⁶ A typhoon has begun to blow, and if you try to defend against it using only your palms, there is no way you can stand against it.¹¹⁷ Because Saigō had known of the

¹¹⁴ This is an excellent example of the militant expansionism that Tōyama fervently believed in.

¹¹⁵ Siddhartha Gautama was a spiritual teacher, the historical founder of Buddhism, and is universally recognized as the Supreme Buddha. The time of his birth and death are unclear; most modern texts date his lifetime between 563 BCE and 483 BCE. From here, he will be referred to as the Holy Buddha, given Tōyama’s reverence for his character.

¹¹⁶ Tōyama here states that he is one of those who believed that Saigō set up the *shigakkō* schools in order to train warriors in helping him fight the Meiji government.

¹¹⁷ Tōyama seems to be making the point that when faced with danger, a person or group will inevitably collapse without taking the proper precautions and preparations well in advance.

hardships that would afflict us today, he helped establish the groundwork for the Meiji government. Here is the glory that shows Saigō is Saigō.

Point/Critique #9 Commentary

This point is especially important as, despite its brevity, here Saigō expounds on what his definition of the ‘path’ is, which comprises morals such as filial piety, humaneness, and loyalty. His mentioning that these morals “are universal” clearly shows that they are fundamental to any nation’s development and states that even Western nations can attain said righteousness, if they have not already done so. This perfectly represents his beliefs as he suggests that any nation is capable of becoming strong through spiritual and moral disciplining.

However, Tōyama seems to twist Saigō’s words to fit his own view; while Saigō preaches of mankind’s ability in general to attain enlightenment, Tōyama feels that only the Japanese have the right to do so, and, if all the Japanese were to improve on an ethical level, every other nation would bow before the splendor that is Japan. Although he praises the achievements of both Saigō and the Holy Buddha, he provides little details on what characteristically defined their greatness, resulting in Tōyama’s words resembling a sermon more than a critique.

Saigō Takamori Point #10

Point: The development of human knowledge is through the advancement of patriotism, loyalty and piety. If the path, which shows how people can serve their country to their utmost, could be made clearer, all type of enterprises would indeed advance.¹¹⁸ And recently brought to our attention is the hanging of telegraph lines, the

¹¹⁸ It is uncertain here how the ‘path’ could be made clearer; it can be assumed that it would become clearer once everyone began to fully devote themselves to improving their moral candor.

laying of railroads, and the advancement of steam technology. We must come to understand that, if the question of “why have we come to need these things?” is not heeded, we will unconsciously become jealous of the opulence of foreign nations; [as a result,] we will not consider the benefits and detriments of this, and then we will soon become dependent on other nations for everything from the styling of our houses to even our toys.¹¹⁹ The winds of extravagance will grow, and if the funds are wasted then the nation’s power will wither; sensuality and frivolity will flourish, and it will result in Japan’s treasures being found in foreign lands.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #10

Master Ritsu-un speaks: This is an obvious thing, because this is exactly what has happened. Such philosophy is generally a good reflection of what is truly going on at times. Loyalty and piety must become the country’s foundation; if we were to establish this, then matters would branch out afterwards.¹²⁰ There should be no difference between Easterners and Westerners.¹²¹ The Meiji Emperor once proclaimed, “This should not be mistaken throughout the past and present, and should not deviate from within or without”; he then refers to the [idea of the] great tree, which indicates the path of morality.¹²² When we discuss the West, in trying to understand [various other] changing countries, we have regrettably forgotten who we are, and it has become just like Saigō

¹¹⁹ The over-dependence on Western products and culture troubled others besides Saigō, as one government official in 1874 stated: “At the present time an immense number of European customs are pouring in upon us; it is as though a bottle has been overturned. Clothing, food and drink, houses, laws, governments, customs, even all kinds of crafts and scholarly pursuits – there is nothing which we are not today taking from the West.” McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, 181.

¹²⁰ The term *moto* (“origin”) defines the foundations of the Meiji government here but Tōyama compares it to the roots of a large tree, with loyalty/piety being the roots with which to hold the government together.

¹²¹ Tōyama made a similar statement in Point #9 which, although possibly suggestive of a sense of universal equality, likely infers to his belief that “anything the West can do, we can do better.”

¹²² The statement refers to the idea that sticking to the path of righteousness is necessary no matter whom currently leads or when the period is, in both internal and international politics. Unfortunately, no date or reference is given to the quote, and none can be found.

said: “The wind of extravagance will grow, and if the funds are wasted then our nation’s power will wither, sensuality and frivolity will flourish.” The shadow of bankruptcy is looming considerably closer. The popular songs of Ise had celebrated both upper and lower classes of Japan, but it seems now that this liveliness has forced us well on our way towards bankruptcy.¹²³

Regarding this apathetic attitude, there is an interesting story. When someone thinks of heaven and hell, they tend to think about the peaceful, flush, and spacious road leading to heaven, and the jagged, mountainous road leading to hell; however, there are some people who believe that there are limited ways to enter heaven.¹²⁴ If it is one person per year or only one person per decade, those that actually reach the road to heaven will be extremely few in number. Consequently, there does not seem to be a real path of any kind since, unfortunately, the grass grows wildly and the trees grow thickly.¹²⁵ On the other hand, the way descending down to hell is completely inundated with ‘customers’ continually flooding in, with some playing *shamisen* and others the *taiko*, and eventually the path becomes as bustling as the hills of Asakusa!¹²⁶ In hell the grass easily crumbles when stepped on, the trees wither and break, and all sizes of rocks have become smoothed and leveled out due to the sheer amount of traffic; as a result they

¹²³ There is no particular set of songs that define those developed in Ise (known since at least the thirteenth century), but they tended to be typical folk songs that bolstered morality and were considered popular in the poorer communities. Quixotically, Tōyama insinuates that wishing upon better times through songs weakens the reality of improvement through action and is at best a futile attempt at escapism.

¹²⁴ This ‘path’ refers to the paths leading toward heaven and hell, and should not be confused with Saigō’s usage of the word ‘path’.

¹²⁵ What Tōyama surmises here is that, due to the lack of worthy people entering heaven, the path leading to it is surprisingly difficult to traverse, given how un-treaded it has become.

¹²⁶ *Shamisen* are 3-stringed instruments that resemble guitars, and *taiko* are large drums that produce deep resonations. Asakusa is located in a hilly region just outside of Tokyo, where for centuries it was popular for having many ceremonies and festivals.

form a great level highway, which becomes too cloistered to pass through. As might be expected, there is some reason to be concerned about this.

At any rate, to tread upon the path of righteousness is a difficult thing, whereas people will unintentionally walk down an evil path without even being shown the way. In the temple of Shōfukuji in Chikuzen, the head of the temple had drawn a comic that, up until a few years ago, I had had in my possession.¹²⁷ Although I had eventually given the picture as a gift to someone, it intrigued me as the picture depicts a scene of an Ise pilgrimage, where a road is shown to have forked into two paths.¹²⁸ A man, on his way to the Ise pilgrimage, holds his straw hat in his arm and weeps; above him, there is an inscription written which reads: “The old road is direct but obstructed. The new road is steep yet traversable. Because of this I weep.” How deeply symbolic this inscription is!

Our ancestors built the path of righteousness with their blood and tears, yet it has recently become obstructed with the recent flood of operas and dancing. Naturally, what do you expect will result from this? If speaking about our country, this [embrace of Western culture] will leave it bankrupt, as our corpses will hang from the gallows by the roads, or be drowned, or will suffer life-long shame, as these sins will haunt us for the remainder of our days.

Point/Critique #10 Commentary

Previously Saigō stated the lack of difference between Westerners and the Japanese, but his hesitancy to fully embrace Western technology here suggests a certain

¹²⁷ Shōfukuji Temple is located on the southern island of Kyushu and is the first Zen temple to have been built in Japan (in the 1180's); as such, it is historically known as a famous place to pray for guidance.

¹²⁸ The Ise Shrine is the collective name for an assemblage of important Shintō shrines located in Ise, and the Inner Shrine (which was constructed in the third century CE) supposedly contains the spirit of Amaterasu. It is for these reasons that Ise has traditionally been a popular religious destination for most Shintō events.

disdain towards the West; his preference for strengthening the military over incorporating new technologies is best exemplified in his own words:

If in our envy of the greatness of foreign nations we rush ahead without regard for the limitations of our own strength, we will end by exhausting ourselves without accomplishing anything. We must immediately dismiss the matter of constructing steam railways and concentrate on increasing our military power.¹²⁹

He clearly views newer technologies as bait to lure Japanese into accepting more Western inventions, and warns of the Japanese getting too caught up in the glamour of Western culture, which will inexorably cause Japan's downfall as a nation. Saigō's fears may have been well founded but the sudden caution he displays in this point diverts from his previous neutrality where he describes how closely related the West and Japan are.

Tōyama agrees with pursuing caution in rampant embracement of a foreign culture, claiming that Japan will become bankrupt were it to become over-dependent on Western commerce. However, he then suddenly shifts his focus from Westernization to theology. His belief that Heaven is attainable only to those who rigorously devoted themselves to a life of moral piety is reflective of the Buddhist and Confucian values he supposedly stood by. Tōyama supports his beliefs even further by commending the pilgrim who, faced with no easy path to his pilgrimage, wept with joy at the prospect of strengthening his spirit through physical hardship. He concludes by once again stating how Japan will come to an end by relying on the West for support of any kind, and provides gruesome descriptions of what the future will hold should Japan completely succumb to Westernization.

¹²⁹ McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, 214.

Saigō Takamori Point #11

Point: Civilization is that which can be described as putting the path into practice in all areas, and it does not refer to the magnificence of houses and garments, or to the fleeting beauty of superficial features. When listening to people assess the West in general, it becomes hard to distinguish what is civilized and what is barbaric, and even trying to do so makes the head spin. If a nation claims to be *truly* civilized, then in dealing with less developed nations it should employ benevolence as its foundation and, through this, provide guidance for other less-developed nations. However, [if this civilized nation] chooses not to do this, but rather relies on brutality, atrocity and putting its own personal gains first, then this in itself becomes the definition of barbarism.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #11

Master Ritsu-un speaks: What should we make of Britain, America and their ilk? They act only selfishly towards undeveloped nations and always with reserve; they do not even offer a smattering of anything useful, like education. Does the recent anti-Japanese/pro-Western sentiment flowing through our country have any defense for such countries that “put personal gains first, which then in itself becomes the definition of barbarism?”

Ever since the Russo-Japanese War it has been this way, but even before then the Westerners had such a devious attitude. When it comes to British Ambassador Parkes (1828-1885) arriving in Japan, he certainly seemed to have looked down upon the Japanese as mere playthings.¹³⁰ Pitted against this type of indignity, our dandy

¹³⁰ Sir Harry Smith Parkes was a 19th century British diplomat who was appointed foreign minister to Japan in 1865, and advised both Satsuma and Chōshū to destabilize the government in an attempt to gain possible future trade relations for the British. Perez, *The History of Japan*, 90.

politicians seemingly wither and desiccate, unfortunately.¹³¹ They cringingly lower their heads in shame, and it is due to this hesitancy that the concept of worshipping the West cannot be expunged from Japan.

At the time of the outburst of the People's Rights Movement, I, together with Hiraoka Kōtaro, Shindō Kiheita, and Hakota Rokusuke, in a corner of Chikuzen, established the *Genyōsha*; its spirit was akin to Saigō's, whose spirit in times before matched our own. In those days, the charter rules we established appeared as the following:

One, we shall all look up to and support the Imperial House. Two, we shall honor the nation. Three, we shall preserve the rights of the people. Because these articles above are the basis for the preservation of happiness for every individual, these articles must be firmly upheld and disseminated until the end of time: they must *never* be changed or replaced. If our descendants in later years disobey these articles, then they will not be considered to be truly Japanese.

While these laws were established at the inception of the *Genyōsha*, they need no revising even in these modern times.

Point/Critique #11 Commentary

Saigō again emphasizes the need to modernize, with morality as a foundation, and then wonders about the civility of the West, questioning if it is as civilized as some think or if it is as barbaric as he believes. With this point, he is likely referencing the events of the First Opium War (1839-42) and possibly even the Second Opium War (1856-60), although his exile at the time would have prohibited him from being completely updated on the events of the second war. These wars displayed how aggressive Western imperialism had become in Asia, and also showed how powerful Western nations had

¹³¹ The term *haikara* literally translates as “dandy” but infers a sense of softness or fastidiousness.

become in comparison to Asian nations.¹³² Despite the obvious condemnation he displays towards such aggressiveness, Saigō is being quite hypocritical, considering his own desires to see a Japanese-controlled Korea and an increase in Japanese military presence in East Asia.

Tōyama focuses his anti-Western sentiment on Britain and the United States, noting how intrusive they have become to the Asian continent. This does seem justified given how the Versailles Peace Treaty and the Washington Naval Treaty did not give proper recognition to Japan, as well as the failure of the Japanese to be recognized as being racially equal to the West (although it is odd that Russia is not also slandered against, considering Tōyama's contempt for communism). Additionally, he could refer to the poor international image that the United States bore after the Philippine-American War (1899-1902), which showed the United States forcibly oppressing the Philippine desire for independence. However, before pressing the point further, he changes topic to reiterate the pledges that all *Genyōsha* have sworn to abide by, revealing that the needs of the people are given tertiary concern to the needs of the Emperor and of the nation. These rules would help justify how disregard for human life, through various assassinations and corruption, was of less importance to the *Genyōsha* than ensuring the safety of Japan itself. This critique would have proven to be more effective had Tōyama stayed on the topic of foreign imperialism, especially if he included more examples of

¹³² The First Opium War was fought as Britain tried to force China to import British opium, with the British claiming victory and ownership over Hong Kong. The Second Opium War was a continuation of the first, as Britain sought to further expand their trade privileges, and claimed another victory with the aid of France. These wars culminated with the signing of The Treaty of Tianjin in 1858, which effectively forced China to expand its trade relations with Britain and France, and opened trade relations with the United States and Russia.

Western imperialism; this would have justified Japan's own imperialist drives into Korea and Manchuria that occurred during the turn of the twentieth century.

Saigō Takamori Point #12

Point: Western criminal law focuses primarily on disciplinary punishment, which admonishes through severity as it works towards guiding people toward virtue. Yet, one also hears of the methods in dealing with imprisoned criminals in the West: they are treated leniently, as depending on the circumstances they are given a plethora of books that are meant to serve as correctional teachings. It is not even unusual that they are allowed meetings with family and friends! This is due to the fact that a holy man established the code of conduct, showing piety and benevolence to those devoid of compassion.¹³³ Not wanting to sin as well, the idea is to give mercy onto these criminals, unless the crime is too severe [to warrant leniency]. In reality, whether or not this is still practiced in the West today is unknown, as it is not written down in any books. Yet if it is, I feel that this is a truly civilized behavior.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #12

Master Ritsu-un speaks: To accept a good point is admirable, and to be impressed by it is to have tremendous heart. Crime destroys fathers, sons and grandsons, and also destroys the nine nearest generations of relatives; this sort of thing is not compassionate behavior.¹³⁴ When encumbered with hardship after hardship being piled upon one another it becomes impossible for a person to plan a life, which will result in the inability

¹³³ Here Saigō obviously references Christianity and how the idea of employing forgiveness, understanding and contrition towards criminals was what the Western penal system was based on.

¹³⁴ It is a somewhat puzzling statement, as it is difficult to discern what 'nearest' actually is; what can be surmised is that it refers to how the taint of criminality will stain a family's name for many generations.

to attain a future. There truly is nothing as scary as the lack of cultivation and education in humanity.

After the passing of the Holy Buddha, an innumerable amount of ‘wise men’ came about. However, only the Holy Buddha is the Holy Buddha; before him there was no Holy Buddha, and after him there was no Holy Buddha. If we were to add up all of the achievements of the mobs of ordinary people, they could still not attain the level of righteousness that the Holy Buddha alone did. In other words, his singular character cannot be matched by any of the countless other people, giving meaning to the idea that one person can indeed be worth many.

For example, let us say that ordinary people are like snow: if they continually fall down and accumulate, one might think that they could form a mountain. However, if it were to get warm, before you know it the snow would eventually melt. When the spring wind blows and the green plants begin to bud, it is at this time that all traces of the snow disappear. Since the dawn of humanity, I do not know how many countless people have fallen down and accumulated like the snow, and I especially do not know how many having disappeared; however, those that *have* remained throughout the years are, as expected, of superior character. That is why everyone must be made aware of the true meaning of the saying: “The great impact of the few [individuals].”

Point/Critique #12 Commentary

Saigō compliments the idea of the Western penal system punishing through admonition companied with a focus on emphasizing moral improvement, as well as hearing stories depicting its leniency. It is unclear in his words if Saigō commends the West for utilizing this type of system or condemns them for being too by doling out such

leniency. Given the information presented in his previous points, Saigō would have praised the idea of employing morality and forgiveness in handing out punishment to criminals; however, since extraterritoriality had been present in Japan with the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce (1858), Saigō may be showing a great deal of sarcasm towards the Western punitive system with this point. Additionally, in the Tokugawa/early-Meiji periods, the Japanese legal system was considerably harsher, as it was not uncommon for criminals to face execution in the forms of burning, crucifixion, or even beheading.¹³⁵ However, since Saigō has always leaned towards improving morality through education rather than brutality, it is more likely that he approves of the Western judicial system.

Tōyama offers little new information with his critique, besides further demonstrating his hypocrisy by denouncing criminals for their lack of morality while neglecting his own immoral past, although falsely justifying them as for the benefit of the Emperor would seemingly negate his culpability. His arrogance is further compounded when he constantly refers to the incomparability of the Holy Buddha and how normal people cannot comprehend such profound genius due to their ineptitude. What further detracts from the usefulness of his argument is that Tōyama only briefly discusses the topic of judiciary punishment, which comprises the entirety of Saigō's point. It is unclear why he decides to transition from a brief discussion on the hazards of illegal activities to praising the Holy Buddha, although Tōyama probably believes himself to be innocent of any wrongdoings and, as such, does not need to belabor the obvious. This point provides

¹³⁵ During this period even family members would face punishment for their relative's crimes; businesses could also be taken away from families for this reason (known as *kesshō*).

an excellent opportunity of seeing how erratic and ineffective Tōyama was in actually making a point.

Saigō Takamori Point #16

Point: If we end up losing concepts of honor and integrity, it will be impossible to maintain national stability, and this is also true for the Western nations. At times, when those high in power look down upon society and concern themselves with only monetary gain, in the process forgetting righteousness, the lower classes eventually come to emulate this behavior. The result is that everyone becomes obsessed with money, and as their avarice grows daily they quickly lose commitment to honor and integrity. What also begins to happen is that fathers, brothers and sons start to quarrel over monetary concerns, and in doing so come to see each other as enemies; with everyone growing suspicious of everyone else, how is it possible to maintain our nation? The Tokugawa clan diminished the spirits of the samurai warriors in order to guard their land; yet if we now cannot muster our spirits more than the warriors of the Tokugawa could, we cannot hope to keep pace with all of the other nations.¹³⁶ For example, in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), the French troops numbered at least three hundred thousand and had enough provisions for three months, yet they were the ones who eventually surrendered. The reason they lost was because they relied too much on calculations and stratagems and not enough on the will to win.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Saigō here refers to the policy known as *sakoku* (“national isolation”), which was a series of edicts issued between 1633 and 1636 and lasted until Perry’s arrival. The rule forbade Japanese to leave Japan and forbade foreigners entering into Japan. As a result, the samurai class became stifled with inactivity due to no international expeditions and a lack of civil warring.

¹³⁷ Also known as the Franco-German War, it was a conflict between France and Prussia that would signal the rise of German military power and imperialism.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #16

Master Ritsu-un speaks: “The reason they lost was because they relied too much on calculations and stratagems” is accurate criticism. Humanity is indeed comprised of honor and integrity, which represent the essence of being human. However, because this humanity is slowly vanishing away, it has now become that fathers, sons and brothers all fight among themselves for wealth.

This is the way that Japan is now. When the father dies, the wicked elder brother further seduces the already wicked younger brother, and they begin gambling and wasting money on *geisha*, and in no time at all they waste the wealth of their inheritance. The hardships of the past are being forgotten, as people are becoming focused on getting rich quickly. Because of this intensity in which people try to rapidly accumulate wealth, this will result in our houses having “House for Sale” signs placed on them that will be written in Chinese.¹³⁸ It is not that people are bad at managing their accounts; it is just that they do not take these matters too seriously.

Arao Sei (1858-96) was loafing around Saigō’s place one day.¹³⁹ Arao told Saigō that his house was so dilapidated and old that when it rains it leaks into the rooms, the kitchen and even the *genkan*!¹⁴⁰ It was a truly shoddy house, and no one would have thought that this was the home of Saigō Takamori, one of the great elder statesmen of the Meiji Restoration. On another day, Saigō’s wife had approached him and asked, “How

¹³⁸ This is a confusing statement, as these fears seem unsound given the chaotic state China was reduced to after the Sino-Japanese War.

¹³⁹ Arao Sei was a *Genyōsha* member who advocated peaceful, cooperative trade relations with China and was eulogized by Tōyama, who stated that: “He was the type of man who only appeared once every five hundred years.” Paul Scott, *Japan-China: Arao Sei and the Paradox of Cooperation* (Osaka: Kansai University of Foreign Studies, 1998), 7.

¹⁴⁰ A *genkan* is a traditional Japanese entryway area for a house or apartment, and is something of a combination of a porch and a greeting room.

about you at least fix the roof?” To this Saigō gruffly retorted, “It seems as though you still do not understand who I truly am!”

At this time, Saigō had been awarded 2000 *koku* for life, and had a monthly salary of about 500 yen, but yet it did not bother him to have such a house.¹⁴¹ He was reputable for handing his money out to the poor, always eating cold rice, wearing worn-out sandals and coats and, despite his rank, continuing to work from dawn to dusk, as he understood that conditioning the body as well as the spirit was essential for attaining righteousness. It has also been said that Saigō’s younger brother Tsugumichi (1843-1902), knowing that Saigō really did not take care of himself, one day secretly constructed a new house on top of his old residency for both Saigō and his wife.¹⁴² However, when news of this reached Saigō’s ear, he severely scolded Tsugumichi for his stupidity.

Point/Critique #16 Commentary

Saigō focuses heavily on consumerism and the idea that it will not only drive families and friends apart but will also destroy the stability of Japan. He again hints at the inept bureaucrats who focus too much on economical matters while neglecting others, assumingly military and agricultural matters from Saigō’s standpoint. He attempts to rally his audience by requesting they do not become lethargic like the Tokugawa samurai were, and he states how powerful a weapon a fighting spirit can be, as exemplified by the Prussian victory despite their inferior numbers (although in reality the victory was also

¹⁴¹ A *koku* “is a measure of volume equal to approximately five bushels; theoretically enough rice to feed one person for one year.” One *koku* equals roughly 278 liters. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, A26

¹⁴² Saigō Tsugumichi was Takamori’s younger brother who had studied abroad for 5 years (1869-74) and had gained appreciation for the necessity to allow Westernization into Japan, so therefore he was not a part of the Satsuma Rebellion and had continued to serve the government after Saigō’s demise.

due to the French suffering from poor mobilization, and the Prussians possessing superior firepower).

Tōyama's critique is erratic at best, although it does display a sense of paranoia on his part. Given how he laments over the poor relationships that are built between sons, fathers and brothers due to greed, it can be hypothesized that his own familial ties were strained; it is unknown why Tōyama assumes that with a father's passing, his sons, who are already amoral, squander their inheritance, but this type of thinking may give some insight as to why he never had any children. However, rather than delve further into the matter, Tōyama quickly switches topic to Saigō's frugality by presenting some rather amusing tales which, unfortunately, cannot be historically authenticated, though tales of how Saigō continued to live a simple life despite his wealth were abundant, as well as those which describe Tōyama favoring a similar lifestyle:

He took robes from his body and gave them to the poor to sell; he was also trusting, as when he enacted business where money was exchanged, he never counted what was given to him, trusting the gentleman to have paid him in full. He sojourned in the mountains (barefoot) living on herbs, giving himself mental training and becoming fearless of death and indifferent to comfort.¹⁴³

However, being able to not only support himself but to also provide adequate shelter for his varied revolutionary friends, while never actually possessing a legitimate job, suggests that Tōyama was never short on funds. His relationship with the wealthy Hiraoka Kōtaro and the support he received from his organizations certainly ensured that Tōyama maintained a comfortable lifestyle well into his old age.

¹⁴³ Byas, *Government by Assassination*, 180-181.

Saigō Takamori Point #17

Point: Without the desire to attain integrity or to pledge the entirety of ourselves to the continued needs of our country, it means that we will never achieve successful diplomacy with other nations. Even though Western nations seek to harmonize with Japan, we simply cower before their magnitude and lean chiefly towards whatever they desire; in submitting to these countries we invite scorn and contempt upon ourselves. As a result, this hampers international relations, and will eventually lead to Japan being unable to prosper.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #17

Master Ritsu-un speaks: At the time of the Washington Naval Conference that was held a few years back, Japan was being represented by Katō Tomosaburō (1861-1923). Oh, how I wish I could tell this to him now: “A country that walks the path of righteousness possesses an unbeatable spirit.”¹⁴⁴ If we Japanese did have such spirit, we would not have been so slighted with the [Washington Naval] Treaty results, which is a pitiful thing. Isn't it true that America and Britain's intentions were obvious to all? Japan is Japan; therefore, there is no need for us to follow America and Britain blindly, asking for their authorization to make our own decisions.

Look at the outcome of the conference: Japan is being made [to look] foolish by America and Britain, and we are being controlled by what they order us to do. If Katō Tomosaburō had chosen for Japan to favor righteousness [by rejecting the Treaty terms],

¹⁴⁴ Katō Tomosaburō was an admiral in the Russo-Japanese War and eventually would become Prime Minister in 1922. While in power he withdrew Japanese forces from Shantung in China and from Siberia, a move that seemed regressive and unpopular to many right-wing supporters. No bibliographical information can be found regarding this quote; personal statement from Tōyama.

even if it meant going to war and falling in battle for our nation, at least we would not have appeared so disgraceful.

In order to become truly righteous we must not ignore the pleas of the weak, and we need to resist the temptation to oppress other nations through force of strength. In order for a strong nation like ours to do legitimate business with weaker countries, we must show mercy and understand their cultures; after all, isn't that the reason why nations interact? If a strong nation's goal is only to conquer another nation in order to extort and plunder it, this will only bring suffering to its people; therefore, there is no need to do this to *any* nation.

And it makes no difference if the country being looted is filled with criminals and vagabonds; to steal another nation's resources is not an acceptable behavior. Each nation should attempt to understand the will of the heaven: its citizens should walk the path of true humanity and display splendor and not shame, which is an idea that Saigō had long ago suggested. It is regrettable that after ten years of struggle such a great man was lost to us.¹⁴⁵ Even speaking now of such sad times is truly heart-rending for me.

Point/Critique #17 Commentary

One of the most straightforward of Saigō's points, he again cements the need for Japan to establish its own national identity and to not create one based on other cultures. While he does not defend Western intrusion into Japan, he does imply that their intentions might have been honorable and that they may have sought to gain a better understanding of Japanese culture. His assault on the government's acquiescence to Western demands clearly references the Treaty of Kanagawa and his disappointment at

¹⁴⁵ The ten years that Tōyama refers to is the decade in-between the onset of the Meiji Restoration and the end of the Satsuma Rebellion.

the craven fashion in which this was handled. Saigō's ambition to establish a strong international image for Japan is evident in this point.

Tōyama's response to this point is quite dichotic. While the anger he displays towards the Washington Naval Treaty is a logical reaction shared by many Japanese, the abrupt shift to discussing his personal beliefs in humanitarianism and world peace belies a sense of seriousness. Katō's inability to better represent Japan during the conference was a sentiment that was echoed by many Japanese, especially considering that the insult of the racial-equality clause being rejected in the Paris Peace conference was still a sore topic. And Tōyama's stating that the Japanese would have preferred to die for their rights rather than assenting to Western demands was quite a rousing and patriotic statement. However, instead of following up this rousing segment, he abruptly shifts to the topic of the horrors of diplomatic brutality, which then ruins the flow of the critique. Only the most ardent of Tōyama followers would believe that he believed in cooperating peacefully with other nations and accepting foreign cultures, especially considering the roles that both the *Genyōsha* and the *Kokuryūkai* played. This half of the critique is hypocritical and extremely illaudable; his belief that no nation should conquer another for it will bring suffering to the people contradicts what he said in Critique #9, where he stated that if Japan were only stronger than "surely there would be no one who would not be hoisting our flag and bowing before us."

Saigō Takamori Point #18

Point: Even when being faced with humiliation or possibly dying for your nation, to act with righteousness and to give it your all is the fundamental duty of everyone in the government. Unfortunately, every day politicians argue over wealth, grains, produce, and

profit. If one were to hear how heatedly they argue over these matters, this passion might be seen as heroism; however, if confronted with matters where blood will be spilled, these politicians instead prefer to congregate and scheme as to how best to postpone the solution, as they fear even the slightest hint of war.¹⁴⁶ If the government ever decided to ditch its basic concepts of morality, then our oligarchy would degenerate into an organization rooted in commercialism; this would not appear at all to be a true bureaucracy.

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #18

Master Ritsu-un speaks: Politicians busy themselves [too much] with acquiring profits, and if they continue to show no interest in devoting the entirety of themselves for the needs of their country, then this indeed cannot be called a government or anything even akin to one. Saigō's criticism of "an organization rooted in commercialism" is quite just. Only through being selfless, and devoting itself toward the public good, is it possible for a country to have a government. In the words of Su Dongpo (1037-1101):

The plain silk is not painted; my intent is leisurely! After it is adorned, the vermilion and blue colors come dripping forward. There is not a single thing or place that is not completely hidden; there are flowers, the moon and buildings.¹⁴⁷

To be a blank state, like in this manner, is the best way to gain everything. Sakamoto Ryoma (1836-67), upon having first met Nanshū and then subsequently asked about the encounter, had this to say about him:

¹⁴⁶ This point most likely references the Japanese response to Perry's intrusion; however, he could also be implying the government's lack of interest in militarily advancing into East Asia. Given how Saigō ultimately desired to see a Japanese-controlled Korea, the latter seems to be the more logical assumption.

¹⁴⁷ Su Dongpo (also known as Su Shi) was a famous poet whose poems were critically acclaimed, and the Dongpo Academy in Huizhou was built in his honor in 1098. NOTE: I would like to personally thank Professor Alvin Cohen for his assistance in helping translate this Chinese poem.

“Saigō was the kind of person who was like a great, gigantic bell. If he were struck hard, he would resonate greatly; were he struck slightly, he would resonate quietly. The regret is that my wooden hammer was too small.”¹⁴⁸ This was the splendor that was Saigō.

Katsu Kaishū (1823-99) was a shrewd member of the *bakufu* who, before the Meiji Restoration, took a pleasure trip to Kyushu.¹⁴⁹ He first went to see Yokoi Shōnan (1809-69) of Kumamoto, who was famous at the time and had a reputation for saying that: “Yokoi Heishirō was a realist;” he repeated this again for Katsu when they met and was applauded by Katsu for this.¹⁵⁰ Yet despite often speaking eloquently, Yokoi Shōnan spoke ceaselessly and often criticized those who were opinionated of the spirit of the times. In fact, Yokoi Shōnan was so boisterous that Katsu could not get a word in edgewise, and because of this Katsu began to admire him. Yet from there Katsu went to see Saigō Nanshū, who was completely opposite to Yokoi. Saigō never said a word except “Ah, I see...” as Katsu did all of the talking while Saigō just sat and listened. As expected, Katsu realized that Saigō and Yokoi were on a completely different level.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Sakamoto Ryoma was a samurai who, in 1864, helped forge an alliance between the Satsuma and Chōshū clans in order to overthrow the Tokugawa *bakufu*.

¹⁴⁹ Katsu Kaishū was a samurai who, due to his early learning of the Dutch language and Western military technologies, was a translator, as well as a key negotiator for the Tokugawa *bakufu* during its relinquishment of power.

¹⁵⁰ Yokoi Shōnan was a samurai who was imprisoned suggesting that (after Perry’s intrusion) Japan completely open its ports to foreign trade in order to modernize. He was imprisoned for his statements, released after the fall of the Tokugawa, and would become involved with Christianity afterwards. He would also become known as Yokoi Heishirō, and Tōyama here suggests he was somewhat egotistical in praising his pseudonym.

¹⁵¹ The implication here is that Katsu’s admiration for Saigō was greater than the respect he had for Yokoi Shōnan.

“To preach to someone, and have someone preach to you; therein lies a thousand *ri* in difference” was what Katsu had told people after meeting Saigō.¹⁵² This large difference also correlates to the disparity found between heavenly and human matters.

Point/Critique #18 Commentary

This point discusses both men’s contempt for politicians in general, as they see how bureaucracy can quickly turn into a pretense when financial matters are concerned. Saigō even goes so far as to call politicians cowardly due to how quickly they capitulated to Perry’s demands. Tōyama concurs with Saigō’s condemning the government and then backs up Saigō’s character with a story regaling his philanthropy. Tōyama’s reference to Katsu’s encounter with Saigō is an interesting story and adds further to Saigō’s magnanimity, but he unfortunately did not include any background information regarding this meeting. However, this critique is one of Tōyama’s most effective as he is able to convey his opinions to his readers without berating them or sounding too overbearing. The inclusion of the poet Su Dongpo strengthens Tōyama’s sagacious image as he comes to the same conclusion that any open-minded individual is capable of attaining enlightenment, which was a concept that Saigō himself put much faith in.

Saigō Takamori Point #46

Point: If there remains apprehension in mistaking what heroism is, we should always follow the words of the people of old:

By deceiving an opponent in any way he can, and to use any strategy possible [in order to win], is what men of intellect do. Instead of employing deception by showing the enemy your righteousness, and by not scheming but rather using honorable tactics: this defines a hero. A scholar cannot do this.¹⁵³

¹⁵² A *ri* is equivalent to about 2.5 miles.

¹⁵³ This quote does not have any historical information; it is assumed that it is a personal quote from Saigō.

Surprisingly, these old words still retain their splendor. Why does acting heroically, in general, seem like such a strange concept? Should we not study such heroism and learn from it?

Tōyama Mitsuru Critique #46

Master Ritsu-un speaks: This idea of heroism is not difficult to grasp, yet can be difficult to practice. “Using trickery any way he can does a hero deceive people,” and “heroes are fond of the flesh;” if people *only* learn from these kinds of slogans, what kind of heroes can actually be produced?¹⁵⁴ When looking at heroes like [Toyotomi] Hideyoshi (1536-1598) of the Sengoku Period (1478-1605), it seemed as though he was only concerned with deceiving people and chasing after women.¹⁵⁵ However, if Hideyoshi limited himself to doing only these things, he could not have managed one castle much less an entire nation. Using trickery and sly tactics liberally is what wise men do, whereas a hero faces action armed with righteousness and standing alongside his troops. If one were to think strategically, they would have this kind of thinking: “Great heroes concern themselves with great achievements instead of smaller issues;” however, we should not think that heroes only concern themselves with grand designs. In the old days heroes were also seen as wise men because they were able to maintain order within their local surroundings.¹⁵⁶

Ōshio Heihachirō (1793-1837) once said: “People look towards the distance for answers they seek when it is typically found right in front of their faces; they tend to

¹⁵⁴ These quotes do not have any historical information; it is assumed that they are personal quotes from Tōyama.

¹⁵⁵ Toyotomi Hideyoshi was one of the three great unifiers of Japan, being able to unify all of Japan during his rule from 1582-1597. He was renowned as a great military commander who attempted to invade Korea twice during his reign. Hideyoshi was rebellious as a youth and ran away from home in search of adventures.

¹⁵⁶ The literal translation states “these men kept their surroundings clean by always having a broom in hand.”

complicate simple matters. People should respect parents as parents and rulers as rulers, and through this will the realm attain peace.”¹⁵⁷ This is, more than anything, an exceptional lesson: respect parents as parents and rulers as rulers, and the realm will indeed attain peace. “Surprisingly, this is not a strange concept” is what Nanshū said regarding this matter. Going down the short path will eventually lead to the larger road; in being opposite to this and rather neglecting to keep a moderate pace, not even a single step can be taken.¹⁵⁸ A rash, hot-blooded youth is someone eager to leap ahead 100 *ken* at a time; however, doing so will usually result in injuries and not even one step, much less 100 *ken*, can be traversed.¹⁵⁹

This is very similar to how we should regard our nation’s diplomacy. Since our adjacent neighbor China has been forgotten and our focus has gone towards a different direction, Japan has now become something of a mistake.¹⁶⁰ If matters close to us can be accomplished, then so too can matters far away from us; while every path is defined as being near or far, human ambition has no boundaries. If we believed in this, then instead of us traveling internationally to see others, *they* would come to *us* with their heads bowed down, which is the true secret of success to diplomacy.

I believe that China and her surrounding neighbors practice a diplomacy that focuses on “Allying with distant countries, antagonizing adjacent ones,” which is a major

¹⁵⁷ Ōshio Heihachirō was a former city commissioner who, due to famines, led a mob into Osaka that raided offices and set fire to parts of the city. When the raid was halted, he committed suicide and many in Osaka “were left to mourn the loss of more than three thousand of their homes and approximately fifty-thousand *koku* of rice.” McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, 123.

¹⁵⁸ Tōyama believes that in trying to accrue too much too quickly it will lead to ruin.

¹⁵⁹ A *ken* is roughly equivalent to 6 feet. This is another example that displays Tōyama’s contempt for the youth who are too impulsive to make political and social changes.

¹⁶⁰ This is most likely a reference to the Japan’s poor representation in international matters and his calling Japan a “mistake” (*machigai*) reflects his sentiment that pursuing expansionism into East Asia has become a secondary matter to placating relations with the Western nations.

problem.¹⁶¹ These countries should modify it to “Allying with adjacent countries, antagonizing distant ones,” and should go even further to “Allying with both adjacent and distant nations;” without this line of thinking, any nation is bound to fail.

One day Rai Sanyō (1781-1832) and Kamei Nanmei (1743-1814) were walking together in Chikuzen where they paid a visit to Hakozaki Hachiman Shrine.¹⁶² While there they came across an imperial scroll, which read ‘Down with our enemies!’ Regarding this Sanyō said: “It does not make sense. This should read ‘The enemy should yield.’”

Upon hearing this Kamei yelled at Sanyō, saying: “You are a fool filled with false knowledge!”¹⁶³ The meaning behind ‘Down with our enemies’ is the idea that the enemy will submit to us because the entire world will come to realize the glory of the Imperial household. If you read it as ‘The enemy should yield,’ then it means that the enemy would be forced into submitting to us, which unfortunately destroys the reason of why Japan is so deserving of its heavenly status.” After Kamei said that Sanyō, as expected, offered no retort.

Point/Critique #46 Commentary

Saigō offers advice for determining how best heroism should be measured, lamenting at how such a simple concept could be so poorly understood. This point perfectly encapsulates Saigō’s belief in Wang Yang-ming thought: he would prefer action

¹⁶¹ China was colonized by Britain and was forced to cooperate with it, which does not seem to suggest an alliance; however, it did align itself with the Allied forces in World War I as a defensive maneuver to Japan’s encroachment of Chinese territory during that time.

¹⁶² Rai Sanyō was a “grassroots” scholar (*sōmō no sōshi*) who wrote the highly acclaimed *Unofficial History of Japan (Nihon Gaishi)* in 1827. Kamei Nanmei was a Confucian scholar who ran his own Confucian school, known as the Fukuoka Kamei Academy (*Kamei juku*), which specialized in Zhu Xi thought. Hachiman was the Shintō god of war, and this particular shrine is located in the town of Hakozaki (in Fukuoka).

¹⁶³ Kamei here displays anger as he uses the term *kisama* when he addresses Sanyō, which indicates displeasure towards the addressee.

to speculation in doing what he feels is necessary. This is another point which reveals the warrior side of Saigō, and shows how concerned he was with doing what he felt was right; however, it is this dynamic line of thinking that has led Saigō to sometimes act impetuously, resulting in poor consequences. The simplicity of this point is a good representation of Saigō's personality, as he has often acted simply and direct throughout his life.

The style of Tōyama's critique is very similar to the one he provided for Point #17 in that his words prove to have both a beneficial and detrimental impact on his image. Like Saigō, Tōyama also believes there can be a combination of being wise and being heroic; he references Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who was gifted in matters of both warfare and administration. Although Ōshio Heihachirō's riot proved to be a disaster, Tōyama refers to him as a means to show his approval of Wang Yang-ming, as Ōshio was a famed philosopher of Wang Yang-ming. Tōyama even displays some Taoist thought by including a variation on Lao-tzu's (604-531 BCE) quote: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." The first half of his critique is excellently written as it not only displays regret at the seemingly lost concept of heroism but also advises that pursuing caution is necessary in accomplishing any task. Had Tōyama stuck to such simple and innocuous observations, his civility might have been his most memorable trait.

However, the remainder of the critique displays yet again his aggressive expansionist thoughts, which, like Critique #9, clearly contradict the statement made in Critique #17 where he condemns nations who pursue colonization for personal gain. It is illogical how he then suggests that the best form of diplomacy is "Allying with both

adjacent and distant nations,” especially when Tōyama believes that Japan should subjugate Korea and China in order to repel the Western presence in Asia. His tale involving Rai Sanyō and Kamei Nanmei’s discussion even offers justification for pursuing expansionism, as rather than having it sound like military conquest, Kamei’s version suggests that other nations will eventually, of their own volition, come to realize Japan’s divinity and will naturally allow Japan to assert itself as leader of the world’s nations. Critiques such as these prove to be extremely useful in deciphering Tōyama’s true personality as, although garnering him tremendous support in the heavily laden rightist Taishō era, they dispel any placatory images he may have built up and only prove that he cared for nothing except expanding Japan’s presence in Asia.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Clearly, from analyzing Tōyama Mitsuru's critiques of Saigō Takamori's various points, Tōyama can be seen as an individual who was obsessed with promoting Japanese expansionism into East Asia. His history is marked with many examples of brutality and aggression coupled with a complete disregard for anyone who was an impediment to his plans. Tōyama was hardly as sagacious or as astute as many nationalists have portrayed him to be. His critiques simply throw accolades upon Saigō without providing any real insight of their own, and their inability to produce any real factual information further questions their accuracy.¹⁶⁴ Yet these critiques are craftily composed as Tōyama never assumes an air of superiority (at least not outright), constantly stating that everyone was capable of becoming a better person simply by following Saigō's teachings and bowing to such augustness.¹⁶⁵

However, the *Dai Saigō Ikun* became popular with many nationalist and militarist groups because they all approved of Tōyama's vicious pro-Japanese stance. There were hundreds of smaller organizations that arose during the Taishō period, but examples of the larger ones would be: *Nihon Kokusui Kai* ("Japanese Patriotic Society," est. 1919), *Tenketo Kai* ("Heaven Spade Party," est. early 1920's), *Ketsumeidan* ("Blood Fraternity," est. early 1920's), *Futabakai* ("Double Leaf Society," est. 1922), *Sekka Boshidan* ("Anti-Red League," est. 1922), and the *Kokuhonsha* ("State Basis Society," est. 1924). The book would have garnered interest from any person who believed in *Ajaron* or *kokka*

¹⁶⁴ It is especially discerning to learn that Tōyama never studied Saigō's *Ikun* previous to meeting Saiga, further disproving the illusion that Tōyama was a disciple of Saigō's.

¹⁶⁵ A good example of this is when Tōyama states to Saiga that: "My worthless stories are not worth taking notes on. The *Ikun* of the venerable Nanshū is the type of renowned teaching that should be passed down eternally." Tōyama, *Dai Saigō Ikun*, 158-159.

shugi, especially with such prominent figures as Prince Konoe Fumimaro (1891-1945) and Nakano Seigō.¹⁶⁶ Despite the lack of reprints of *Dai Saigō Ikun* in the years leading up to World War II, it would undoubtedly have remained popular given its anti-Western feeling and predilection towards militarism.

While it is easy to understand Tōyama's stance through analyzing his critiques, there is too little information provided by Saiga Hiroyoshi to accurately determine how militaristic he truly was. The few pages Saiga himself contributes focus on comparing the similarities he found between the mindset of Saigō and Tōyama, which he condenses into five topics that are essential to understanding the *Dai Saigō Ikun*. These points revolve around the ideas of: the majority of great accomplishments being performed by the few wise individuals, the spirit and mind controlling the desires of the body, humanity achieving its full potential (which will bring about heavenly peace), utilizing sincerity and unselfishness to lead humanity into unlocking this potential, and that using malice against others can hamper unity among the people.¹⁶⁷ Unable to see Tōyama as anything but a hero, and given his involvement with the *Seikyōsha* (an anti-Western group) and reverence for Saigō's warrior image, it stands to reason that Saiga heavily favored expansionism (as well as the dissemination of Japanese uniqueness) into Asia.

The purpose of the *Dai Saigō Ikun* was not so much to educate the readers about the true meaning behind Saigō Takamori's words as it was to use his teachings as a stepping stone to encourage the expansionist nationalism that Tōyama Mitsuru had fervently believed in. An analysis of both his background and the points given in the *Dai*

¹⁶⁶ In 1918 Konoe Fumimaro wrote an essay titled *Reject the Anglo-American-Centered Peace*, which castigated those who favored establishing peaceful relations with countries like Britain and the United States.

¹⁶⁷ Tōyama, *Dai Saigō Ikun*, 160-161.

Saigō Ikun reveals that Saigō Takamori was not the fearless warrior who chose to sacrifice himself to show the people that traditions must never be forgotten. Rather, he was a simple soldier whose personal beliefs often came into conflict with what was expected of him, forcing him into various binding situations. The image of *Dai Saigō* is the result of an overemphasis placed on the samurai values of honor and integrity which Saigō had upheld, and it is an image which fails to acknowledge his shortcomings. Tōyama has often been compared to Saigō due to their similar patriotic and traditionalist views, but, whereas Saigō built his reputation through perseverance and servitude, Tōyama relied on propaganda and violence to achieve his goals.

Much like the differences in the conversation between Rai Sanyō and Kamei Nanmei, there is no denying that Saigō would have favored seeing other nations peacefully acquiesce to Japanese expansionism, whereas Tōyama favored Japan colonizing them no matter the cost. It is this discrepancy that reveals how distorted their images had become through hyperbole and fabrication; *Dai Saigō* was a normal samurai whose life is more reflective of dutiful subservience than stalwart rebellion, and Ritsu-un was simply a thug, bereft of sagacity, who was limited to using violence as a way of preaching his beliefs. Saigō should have been lauded for the beliefs he lived for rather than the cause he died for, and Tōyama deserves no critical acclaim, as he was indeed “no hero but a medieval-minded freebooter,” as previously suggested by Hugh Byas.

APPENDIX

WORKS CONTAINING SAIGŌ TAKAMORI'S *IKUN* AND A LIST OF SAIGA HIROYOSHI'S PUBLISHED BOOKS

A List of Publications that Contain Saigō Takamori's *Ikun*

- 1891 – Mitsuya Fujitarō. *Nanshū Ō Ikun*. Yamagata-ken: Mitsuya Fujitarō.
1896 – Katabuchi Taku. *Saigō Nanshū Sensei Ikun*. Tokyo: Kengakkai.
1916 – Saigō Takamori. *Nanshū Ō Ikun Yojinyaku Magiri Yokomeyaku Daitai*. 1891, Reprint. Kagoshima-shi: Chinsho Hanpukai Daihyō Ogata Eikichi.
1916 – Yamaji Aizan. “Nanshū Zenshū,” *Nihon Oyobi Nihonjin*.
1926 – Tōyama Mitsuru, Saiga Hiroyoshi. *Dai Saigō Ikun*. Tokyo: Seikyōsha.
1938 – Hanada Nakanosuke. *Shina ni Atauru sho: Tsuketari, Saigō Nanshū, Yoshida Shōin Ikun*. Tokyo: Daiichi Shuppansha.
1939 – Yamada Jun. *Saigō Nanshū Ikun: Tsuketari Shushō Genshiroku Oyobi Iibun*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
1965 – Kuroki Yachiyo. *Dai Saigō no Ikun to Seishin*. Kagoshima: Nanshū-Ō Ikun Kankōkai.
1974 – Hayashi Fusao. *Dai Saigō Ikun*. 1926, Reprint. Tokyo: Shin Jinbutsu Ōraisha.
1990 – Tōyama Mitsuru, Saigō Takamori, Saiga Hiroyoshi. *Saigō Nanshū Ikun Kōwa*. 1926, Reprint. Tokyo: Shigensha Hatsumaimoto Perikansha.
1996 – Watanabe Shōichi. “*Nanshū Ō Ikun*” *o Yomu: Wa ga Saigō Takamori ron*. Tokyo: Chichi Shuppansha.
2006 – Tōyama Mitsuru, Saiga Hiroyoshi. *Tōyama Mitsuru Genshiroku*. 1926, Reprint. Tokyo: Shoshi Shinsui.

A List of Saiga Hiroyoshi's Published Books

- 1920 – *Dai Jinkaku no Ikan: Saigō Nanshū Ō*. Tokyo: Shizendō.
1923 – *Dai Saigō to sono Jidai*. Tokyo: Seikyōsha.
1923 – *Ōe Tenya Denki*. Tokyo: Ōe Futoshi.
1926 – Tōyama Mitsuru, Saiga Hiroyoshi. *Dai Saigō Ikun*. Tokyo: Seikyōsha.
1935 – *Meiji Ishin no Seishin to Jinbutsu*. Tokyo: Kinkei Gakuin.
1937 – *Fū-un to Jinbutsu*. Tokyo: Seikyōsha.
1940 – Tanaka Minoru, Nakano Torū, Saiga Hiroyoshi. *Tōyama Ō Keisei Hyakuwa*. Tokyo: Kōkoku Seinen Kyōiku Kyōkai.
1942 – *Biruma ni Okeru Indojin*. Tokyo: Biruma Kenkyūkai.
1943 – *Yoshida Shōinshū*. Tokyo: Kōbunsha.
1943 – *Kinnō Shishi Sōsho*. Tokyo: Kōbunsha.
1990 – Tōyama Mitsuru, Saigō Takamori, Saiga Hiroyoshi. *Saigō Nanshū Ikun Kōwa*. 1926, Reprint. Tokyo: Shigensha Hatsumaimoto Perikansha.
2006 – Tōyama Mitsuru, Saiga Hiroyoshi. *Tōyama Mitsuru Genshiroku*. 1926, Reprint. Tokyo: Shoshi Shinsui.

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