Takechi Zuizan and the Tosa Loyalist Party

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TAKECHI ZUIZAN[1] was born in 1829, the eldest son of a *gōshi* in Nagaoka district in Tosa. By 1856, when he was 27, he had become known as a leading master of fencing (*ḳenjutsu*) in Tosa. He then travelled to Edo, where he met and cooperated with fellow spirits from Mito, Chōshū, and Satsuma. He returned home the undisputed leader of Tosa loyalists. For a brief period in 1862 and 1863 he controlled, as much as any one controlled, the turbulent extremists in Kyoto and Edo. But at the point of his greatest success he overplayed his hand. His lord, Yamauchi Yōdō, proved to be unsympathetic to Takechi's goals, and on the national scene the excesses of the Chōshū loyalists swung the balance temporarily in the direction of moderation. Takechi was restricted in his movements, imprisoned for his complicity in political assassination and his clear guilt in a presumptuous forgery, and he was finally ordered to commit hara-kiri in the summer of 1865. His career provides a useful close-up for the study of the loyalist movement in Tosa.

The pattern of events in Tosa during the closing decades of Tokugawa rule showed many points of similarity to that seen in Chōshū. There was the same indignation over foreign insults, the same expectation of war, and a comparable astonishment at the revelation of Bakufu indecision and weakness. Tosa policy makers were subject to pressure from conservative groups which wanted no change and to urging from extremists who wanted immediate preparation for an antiforeign war. The *han* leaders preferred a course of moderation and prudence that would allow time for military and economic reforms, and at the same time they hoped that the troublesome issue of relations between Bakufu and court could be solved by a new arrangement between the two which would make possible greater national unity. Their program captured the allegiance of neither conservatives nor extremists, who joined hands to remove the outstanding statesman Yoshida Tōyō from the scene. There followed an era of extremist ascendancy on the national scene in which Tosa and Chōshū men worked very closely to secure expulsion of the foreigners and greater power for the court.

But there the similarities ended. The *han* administration checked and crushed the extremists in 1864 and 1865, and thereafter Tosa policy makers were never threatened from below. They resumed their earlier course of moderation, which now led to proposals for conciliar representation and ultimately to the Tokugawa resignation.

Even before 1864, however, there were basic differences to be observed between the course of loyalism and antiforeignism in Tosa and in Chōshū. The ruling houses of the two areas stood in a very different relationship to the house of Tokugawa, as the Yamauchi of Tosa bore it gratitude for good treatment while the Mōri of Chōshū

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[1] Takechi Hampeita; Zuizan was his *gō*.

had a long-standing grudge to settle.[2] Furthermore, Tosa politics, unlike those of Chōshū, were dominated by one of the few able daimyo of late Tokugawa days. Yamauchi Yōdō was able, by the force of his personality and intelligence, to be an actor instead of a follower of the drama of the times. But more important and more striking than these differences is the evidence of a clear-cut interest group which first championed the loyalist and antiforeign issues, with the result that those issues became associated with less favored strata in the class hierarchy. In Tosa loyalism was not simply a broad movement but, for some years, a party based upon clearly defined support, and it failed to win upper-rank backing until this initial stigma had been removed.

Takechi's Loyalist Party was drawn from two groups: *gōshi,* "country samurai," and *shōya,* village heads. They were groups with a distinctive tradition and outlook, whose relationship to their feudal superiors was unlike that of their counterparts in other parts of Japan. Their low place within the status divisions of the Tosa ruling class meant that the political leaders of Tosa would tend to shun a position associated with such groups. On the other hand, the commanding role the *gōshi* and *shōya* played in local and village life equipped them with the leadership and self-confidence they displayed in late Tokugawa days.

In traditional schematizations of the Tosa ruling class *gōshi* were ranked at the top of the five groups collectively known as *kashi,* "lower samurai," and below the five (at times, six or more) ranks honored as *jōshi,* "upper samurai." More recent analytical studies describe them as "quasi knights," or *junshikaku,* and still members of the "upper class" as opposed to the petty retainers, or *keikaku.*[3] Sumptuary and ceremonial ordinances made a sharp distinction between *gōshi* and their superiors, but the *gōshi* were given ceremonial, tournament, and audience privileges which also set them off from their inferiors.[4] Most important of all, however, was the fact that the *gōshi,* unlike their inferiors, had fiefs, and that, unlike their superiors, who lived in the castle town, they resided in and administered them.

The *gōshi* category was instituted in 1613 as a device to utilize and pacify some of the Chōsogabe retainers who found themselves masterless after Sekigahara when Tosa was transferred to Yamauchi Kazutoyo. These Chōsogabe retainers were, in time, outnumbered by newcomers to the rank, but they contributed the tradition of antiquity and respectability which distinguished *gōshi* into late Tokugawa times.

[2] The fifteenth Yamauchi daimyo, Yōdō (Toyoshige) expressed this succinctly in an argument with Saigō Takamori of Satsuma in 1867; "We are after all in a very different position from you, since we bear the Tokugawa a moral obligation." Quoted in Osatake Takeshi, *Meiji ishin* (Tokyo, 1947), III, 773. I am indebted to Mr. Michio Hirao, formerly archivist of the Yamauchi family, for the preferred readings of this and several other Tosa names used here, as well as for much counsel.

[3] For the most recent analysis, Irimajiri Yoshinaga, *Tokugawa bakuhansei kaitai katei no kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1957), p. 305. Pp. 207–344 treat Tosa developments, and represent a synthesis and, in part, republication of Professor Irimajiri's numerous shorter publications on Tosa society.

[4] The *gōshi* system is described by Irimajiri (See n. 3); Ozeki Toyokichi, "Kōchi han no gōshi ni tsuite," *Tosa shidan,* No. 48 (Kōchi, 1934), pp. 117–154; Matsuyoshi Sadao, *Shinden no kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1936), pp. 233–311. Basic documents for the development of the class are contained in the recent volume of the Kinsei sonraku kenkyū kai, *Kinsei sonraku jichi shiryōshū:* Vol. II, *Tosa no kuni chihō shiryō* (Tokyo, 1956), pp. 383–431. In English there is a short appendix in E. H. Norman, *Soldier and Peasant in Japan: The Origins of Conscription* (New York, 1943), pp. 58–65, based largely on Matsuyoshi; and R. B. Grinnan, "Feudal Land Tenure in Tosa," *TASJ,* XX, 2 (Tokyo, 1893), 228–247, based on conversations with a Tosa *karō* (Shibata Kamichirō) and *gōshi* (Hosokawa Gishō.)

Gōshi ranks grew in number as Tosa administrators tried to provide incentives for land reclamation. This policy was established by the great administrator Nonaka Kenzan, who set the pattern for subsequent administration of the fief, in 1644.[5] In Nonaka's day it was necessary to establish descent from Chōsogabe retainers, but subsequent ordinances governing entrance into the rank placed much more emphasis on reclamation and on character than on family. Any qualified applicant who had been instrumental in the reclamation of an area of new fields (*shinden*) producing a minimum of 30 *koku* of rice was a potential *gōshi*. By 1763, indeed, the early regulations governing qualifications had been so far eased as to provide that even applicants whose ancestors had engaged in trade would be considered.[6] A number of prominent *gōshi* of late Tokugawa times, among them Sakamoto Ryōma, descended from families which had entered the rank in this manner.

It was therefore inevitable that merchant capital became involved in the acquisition of *gōshi* rank. Reclaimed lands were often in several parcels located in widely separated places, so that it required capital to develop them. The *gōshi* who did this sometimes resided in Kōchi like absentee landlords and even continued their previous enterprise. And, since there were limits to the potentiality for land reclamation in Tosa, moneyed merchants had even greater opportunities for entering the rank through purchase of the land and rank of existing *gōshi*. Indebtedness and commercialization resulted in the transfer of *gōshi* patents already issued, and *han* legislation, although it tried to forbid merchants from buying their way into the rank, freely permitted other groups to do so. A recent survey comes to the conclusion that of the 742 *gōshi* in the 1860's, 212 had entered the rank since 1830, for the most part by purchase.[7]

As is to be expected, many writers conclude that the outlook of the *gōshi* as a group changed with the social origins of newcomers to the rank and that they tended to become in some sense "pro-merchant" or "modern."[8] But the evidence does not seem to support this. Such statistical evidence as is available suggests that more recruits came from *shōya* and wealthy farmer than from merchant families. And, while there is evidence that the *gōshi* old guard resented the newcomers at times, identical interests and identical schooling were as likely to make the newcomers zealots for their status, if only to compensate for their late entry. Moreover, the ma-

[5] Nonaka Kenzan (1615–63) was a scholar and administrator who devised intellectual, economic, and political policies which established Tosa as one of the great fiefs. Extensive reclamation and riparian works extended cultivation, while *han* monopolies tapped other products to augment official income. Neo-Confucian scholarship was introduced, and scholars like Yamazaki Anzai and the Tani line of Confucianists were encouraged. Shortly before his death Nonaka was the victim of bureaucratic rivalry and demoted and banished on charges of oppressing the people. There are many biographies. For an account of Nonaka's career and fall, Ozeki Toyokichi, "Kambun no kaitai ni tsuite," *Tosa Shidan*, No. 24 (Kōchi, 1928), pp. 24–40.

[6] Irimajiri, p. 281, and "Tosa han 'chōnin gōshi' no kaisei ni kansuru ichi shiryō," *Shakai kagaku tōkyū*, I (Tokyo: Waseda University, 1956), p. 102.

[7] Ikeda Yoshimasa, "Tempō kaikaku ron no saikentō: Tosa han o chūshin ni shite," *Nihonshi kenkyū*, No. 31 (Kyoto, 1957), pp. 1–15.

[8] For recent statements of this view, Ikeda, *loc. cit.*, and also "Hansei kaikaku to Meiji ishin: Kōchi han," *Shakai keizaishi gaku*, Vol. 212, No. 5, 6, pp. 561–582, and "Tosa han ni okeru Ansei kaikaku to sono hantai ha," *Rekishigaku kenkyū*, No. 205 (Tokyo, 1957), pp. 18–29. For figures of one year which show fifteen *chōnin* among fifty-five entrants, Irimajiri, 286. Social origin, of course, need not determine outlook, although where relatives continued in trade it could be expected to condition it.

jority of the *gōshi* continued to live in their fiefs; they were, in a sense, among the few remnants of "pure" feudalism in a society whose elite had adopted an urban, absentee life.

The *gōshi* were self-conscious and proud, and a series of incidents illustrated their sensitivity to slights from upper-class samurai. The most famous of these came in 1797, when an upper samurai murdered a *gōshi* who had insulted him. When the *han* administration showed no sign of punishing the murderer there was muttering among the *gōshi;* before very long delegations of protest came pouring into Kōchi. The *han* administration was forced to increase its punitive measures against the upper samurai involved in order to avoid an intra-class war. The *gōshi* of the area continued restive until 1801, when the murderer was deprived of his rank and banished.[9] Takechi Zuizan himself, the descendant of an old family of Chōsogabe retainers, lived near the scene of this incident, and the *gōshi esprit* it reflected was an important factor in the organization of his Loyalist Party.

The other group that provided so many members for the Tosa Loyalist Party were the *shōya,* or village heads. Formally they were not members of the ruling class at all, but in any realistic diagram of the social structure they would be placed with or near the *gōshi. Shōya* were appointed by the district commissioner (*kōri bugyō*) from among the leading families in the village. Actually, most of them were members of families whose heads had served the office for many generations, and many traced their eminence to pre-Tokugawa times when the distinction between samurai and farmer was still a hazy one. *Shōya* ran their villages, and they also represented them in dealing with higher authority. They developed a strong sense of responsibility. For most of the leading Loyalist *shōya,* men like Yoshimura Toratarō and Nakaoka Shintarō, there can be provided petitions and protests to the central authorities against new and excessive taxes and monopolies.[10] These were no ordinary commoners, and they certainly do not deserve the overtones of the term "peasant."

In late Tokugawa times there were striking instances of *shōya* dissatisfaction in Tosa. In 1837 the *shōya* of four villages close to Kōchi joined to protest against town officials who had tried to take higher and more honorable seats at a temple festival. "There is," they petitioned, "a distinction of superior and inferior within income. That gained from rice fields is superior, while income gained in silver or copper is inferior." Town officials, who worked with impure merchants, could not compare with *shōya* whose associations were with virtuous farmers. *Shōya* performed the most important administrative tasks of their society,[11] and to try to compare them with town officials was "like comparing sky and ground."

The *shōya* also felt their status threatened by bureaucratic changes of the late

[9] Hirao Michio, *Nagaoka son shi* (Kōchi, 1955), pp. 88–92.

[10] For Nakaoka, the biography by Hirao Michio, *Rikuentai shimatsu ki* (Tokyo, 1942), p. 9; for Yoshimura, Hirao Michio, *Yoshimura Toratarō* (Tokyo, 1941), pp. 14–17. A convenient summary of monographic studies of *shōya* powers in other parts of Japan can be found in Kodama Kōda, *Kinsei nōmin seikatsu shi* (Tokyo, 1957), pp. 94–130.

[11] "It is our great task to be entrusted with care of the rice fields, dry fields, mountains, rivers, and ocean. We encourage farming and fishing, we see to the payment of the yearly tax and the performance of public works, and, if it becomes necessary, even the conscription of workers for military preparations. In addition we are responsible for the management of numerous other matters. In the final analysis, ours is the office which is entrusted with carrying out all the really important affairs of the realm . . ." Quoted in Hirao Michio, *Tosa nōmin ikki shikō* (Kōchi, 1953), p. 126.

Tokugawa years. Instead of upper retainers, petty samurai were being sent to deal with them, and they were forced to show these low-ranking emissaries the courtesy that had traditionally been reserved for the great. As a result, their office was being cheapened, and their authority weakened. In 1841 a group of *shōya* formed a *Shōya* League (*Shōya Dōmei*) which petitioned for a return to earlier practices. They desired exclusive authority over all in their administrative areas; they wanted the privilege of family names and swords for their sons, the right of using force in interrogations, and the dignity of being addressed as "esquire" (*dono*) in official correspondence. In private and secret documents the *shōya* went much farther. They argued that their office could be traced back to the mythological age, and that they, as "head of the people," were more important than the samurai, "the feet of the nobility." "Within the four seas under heaven," they wrote, "there is only one who is supreme . . . That supreme being, in all reverence, is the Emperor. The shogun is his deputy, the daimyo are his commanders who head the administration, while the *shōya* are his officers to whom is entrusted responsibility for the land and the people." Thus they and their lord owed their status to the Emperor; but the samurai were a product of more recent times.[12] There is no record of any official response to these protests, but they go far to account for the enthusiasm with which the *shōya* entered national politics shortly after.

The *gōshi* and *shōya* both resided in and represented the countryside as opposed to the higher ranks which lived in Kōchi, and they had much in common. Since the *gōshi* were not under *shōya* jurisdiction in the countryside, and since they reported separately to higher authority, they were also frequently competitors for influence in local affairs. The *shōya* petitions indicate a resentment of *gōshi*. Nevertheless, it is probable that their complaints against their superiors outweighed their local rivalry. Their sons were similarly educated, usually in the same schools, and the make-up of the Loyalist Party testified to their common outlook. Moreover, as has been pointed out, *shōya* sons provided the largest number of recruits to the *gōshi* class.

None of the proposals or protests that have been mentioned can be described as "forward looking" or "progressive." They appealed to a nobler past, and in this they reflected the ideological trends in Tosa. It was a tradition that promoted reverence to the ancient throne and prepared the ground for antiforeignism. The *shōya* protests give evidence of a considerable background in historical and literary training. It was a training received in the private schools (*shijuku*) scattered throughout Tosa, where virtually all the *shōya* and *gōshi* sons were educated. The prevalent teaching in these schools was that of Chu Hsi Neo-Confucianism, and it had been transmitted through the line of Confucianists which stemmed from Tani Shinzan (1663-1718). But Tani, a student of Yamazaki Anzai, had absorbed much of his teacher's emphasis on Shintō, and in one of his works, *Hoken taiki uchikiki,* he set forth his belief that Japanese studies ought to be the basis of all intellectual activity, with Chinese wisdom being added after the national learning had been mastered.[13] There were also teachers who allowed no Chinese learning to pollute their writings, and it is of particular interest

[12] The full document can be found in Hirao, *Tosa nōmin ikki shikō,* pp. 128–140, and it will be included in a forthcoming volume of readings on Tosa social and economic history which is in preparation.

[13] Shinzan was the *gō* of Tani Shigetō (1663–1718). For a discussion of his thought, Itoga Kunijirō, *Kainan Shushigaku hattatsu no kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1935), pp. 123–139. For a brief mention of his relation to the loyalist movement, Tokutomi Iichirō, *Tosa no kinnō* (1929), pp. 10–11.

to find an uncle of Takechi's a specialist and teacher of the Shintō revival. Kamochi Masazumi (1791-1858) was full of reverence for his Emperor and of scorn for China, and he greeted the arrival of Perry with an ode to the *kamikaze*. Kamochi's researches in the *Man'yōshū* and other early texts, and his vigorous nationalism, undoubtedly had their effect on Takechi and other future loyalists who were his students.[14]

Takechi and his men thus had some loyalist indoctrination in their youth, and those who, like Takechi, went to Edo received more there. But Takechi was not in any sense an intellectual. Indeed, in his day Tosa was not an area of intense intellectual activity. The senior councillors are said to have been unable to read the official translation of Commodore Perry's letter when it was circulated to the *han* for comment.[15] Sasaki Takayuki reports that, because a Tempō era official named Mabuchi Kahei was dismissed for being a fervent follower of *shingaku,* the merchant creed, any samurai who displayed undue interest in things intellectual thereafter was likely to be reproached by his fellows for secret *shingaku* leanings.[16] There may have been more intellectual activity in lower ranks than in the higher, but there is no way of establishing it. Certainly most of the loyalists show no great literary ability in their correspondence. And when the Chōshū *shishi* ("men of high purpose," the name the loyalists used for themselves) showed Takechi poems of their teacher Yoshida Shōin, they had to go on to explain them to him because the language was a little over his head.[17]

Takechi Zuizan was the eldest son of a *gōshi* whose status and origin placed him in the middle group of those with his rank. The family claimed descent from a Chōsogabe retainer. It had attained *gōshi* rank early in Tokugawa times, and its lands, scattered in four villages, were rated as yielding 51 *koku,* 1 *to,* 8 *shō,* 7 *gō* annually.[18] These scattered fields must necessarily have been worked by others, so that there was no problem about Takechi's decision to reside in Kōchi after he became a fencer. Nor was there lacking the income which was required for his education, which included, as has been noted, some work with his loyalist uncle.

But Takechi's real love was fencing, *kenjutsu.* He studied this from the age of twelve. He was an imposing physical specimen, over six feet tall,[19] and he quickly established his leadership and charysma among his friends. He received training in several of the Kōchi fencing schools, and in 1854 he opened his own academy in Kōchi. Here he trained over 120 men, almost all of them future loyalist activists. After the coming of Perry the *han* administration sought to spur military studies, and Takechi was assigned to several district magistracies to train young men in fencing.

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[14] Matsuzawa Takurō, *Man'yō to Kamochi Masazumi no shōgai* (Tokyo, 1943), p. 254; and Ogata Hiroyasu, *Kamochi Masazumi* (Tokyo, 1944), reprint a good deal of Kamochi's writings as well as describing his life and influence.

[15] This, at least, is the version given by a source which is very hostile to the "upper samurai"; Zuizan kai, ed., *Ishin Tosa kinnō shi* (Tokyo, 1912), p. 32.

[16] Sasaki Takayuki, *Kinnō hisshi: Sasaki Rō Kō sekijitsu dan* (Tokyo, 1915), p. 28. For *shingaku,* see Robert Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion* (Glencoe, Ill., 1957), pp. 133f. For Mabuchi Kahei, Hirao Michio, "Tempō 'Okoze gumi' shimatsu," *Tosa shidan,* No. 36 (Kōchi, 1931), pp. 23–33.

[17] Hirao Michio, *Takechi Zuizan to Tosa Kinnōtō* (Tokyo, 1943), p. 34.

[18] Hirao, *Takechi Zuizan,* p. 4.

[19] His followers often referred to him as Bokuryū Sensei, "The India Ink Dragon" because his appearance—great height, pale and intense face, a frame tempered and disciplined in fencing practice—suggested that of a dragon in monochrome paintings.

In 1856 he was assigned to do further study in Edo at the Momonoi school of fencing there. With him went five of his students.

In the 1850's the Edo fencing academies were full of young samurai who saw in the foreign danger a new reason to take their task seriously. They moved in an environment conducive to indignation and agitation; a sense of common purpose grew rapidly among them, and the conspiracies of the 1860's grew out of friendships formed in the 1850's. Low-ranking samurai like Takechi outnumbered "upper" samurai in the schools, and they were also more free from official restraints. They were assigned to train with and learn from their contemporaries from other areas, and they stayed to talk and conspire with them.

Takechi fitted into this society perfectly. A recognized master of his art in Tosa, he received special privileges of residence away from the Edo *han* residence, and he soon became the adjutant of the fencing master. His counterparts from Chōshū, Satsuma, and Mito came to respect him as a *jimbutsu,*[20] and he established a clear ascendancy over young fencers from Tosa like Sakamoto Ryōma. Significantly, Takechi also became known as *Tennōzuki,* "Emperor lover."

In 1857 Takechi returned to Tosa. His followers now drew up a formal request to his former fencing instructor urging him to nominate Takechi for a special *han* award. They cited his successes in Edo and his personal and moral excellence, and as a result Takechi was awarded an additional life income of two rations.[21]

From now on Takechi was in touch with colleagues from other areas. But it was still early in his career. When a party of Mito men tried to come to Kōchi for consultation on joint action after Ii Naosuke had taken power in 1858, they were unable to penetrate the border station. Takechi sent Sakamoto Ryōma with a friend to the border to talk with them, and the visitors noted with dismay how little developed political consciousness was in Tosa. "The two Tosa men," one noted in his diary, "don't know a thing about their *han's* affairs; Sakamoto doesn't even know the names of any of the ministers."[22]

This ignorance and indifference came to a quick end as Ii Naosuke's purge extended to Yamauchi Yōdō, who was forced to retire and then restricted to his Shinagawa residence. Takechi and his men now began to follow and to criticize the cautious policy of Yoshida Tōyō and the *han* administration.[23] Then, after news of

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[20] For one such estimate, that of Kabayama San'en of Satsuma: "at the first meeting I could see he was a courageous character." Shiseki kyōkai series, *Takechi Zuizan kankei monjo,* Hayakawa Junzaburō, ed. (Tokyo, 1916), I, 53.

[21] *Takechi monjo,* I, 26–30. Hirao, *Takechi Zuizan,* pp. 15–19. This "two rations" (*Ninin fuchi*) is described by Tanaka Kōken as follows: "This two rations meant five *gō* of unpolished rice a day per person, or in other words one *shō,* two *gō,* five *shaku* per day." *Seizan yoei: Tanaka Kōken Haku shoden* (Tokyo, 1924), p. 49. Tanaka's family tried to stay alive on this, but for Takechi it was of course extra income.

[22] Iwasaki Hideshige, ed., *Sakamoto Ryōma kankei monjo* (Tokyo: Nihon shiseki kyōkai, 1926), I, 56.

[23] The *han* policy was, for a time, extremely cautious because of fear of further punishment for Yōdō and his family. The administration was led by Yoshida Tōyō (Motokichi), one of the outstanding statesmen of late Tokugawa Japan. Yoshida was a vigorous reformer and modernizer who antagonized the upper and privileged groups by his attempts to limit their income and power; he also advocated a thoroughgoing attempt at trade and expansion to "uninhabited islands" in order to strengthen the *han* treasury. Fukushima Nariyuki, *Yoshida Tōyō* (Tokyo, 1927), one of several biographies; and Ōtsuka Takematsu, ed. *Yoshida Tōyō iko* (Tokyo: Shiseki kyōkai, 1929).

the murder of Ii Naosuke by Mito samurai reached Tosa in the spring of 1860, they began to see the possibility for action of their own.

Meanwhile Takechi's stature as a fencer continued to grow, making it easier for him to travel and intrigue. In 1959 Takechi was appointed general inspector for *kenjutsu* for all Tosa men of *gōshi, shirafuda* rank and above, and in the summer of 1860 he was authorized to travel in central and southern Japan to observe fencing techniques. After his return, in the spring of 1861 he travelled once more to Edo. It is probable that he went as a fencing master, but while there he worked with complete freedom and in virtual disregard of *han* installations.

Takechi now became an intimate of the core group of Restoration *shishi*. Kusaka Genzui and Kido Kōin told him of the teachings of Yoshida Shōin, while Kabayama San'en of Satsuma told him of plans there. The Mito men who had failed to penetrate the Tosa guard stations brought him up to date on affairs in their area. The pattern of loyalist plans began to emerge.

It was at this time that Takechi drew up the pledge that became the program for the Tosa Loyalist Party (*Tosa Kinnō Tō*). It lamented the humiliation of the divine country by the barbarians. "As a group," it read, "we are determined, by forming this brotherhood, to reactivate the Japanese spirit [*Yamato damashi*]; we will let no personal interests stand in the way, and together we will give our all for the rebirth of the nation. We swear by our deities that if the Imperial Flag is raised we will go through fire and water to ease the Emperor's mind, to carry out the will of our former lord, and to expel the foreign evil from our country." Two years later a copy of this pledge was presented to the "former lord," Yamauchi Yōdō. It was signed—in blood—by 192 men, virtually all of *gōshi* and *shōya* stock, from all parts of Tosa. All but one or two of the 83 Tosa loyalists who met their death between 1861 and 1868 were there.[24]

The loyalist program Takechi and his friends worked out was not without its contradictions. Antiforeignism was a basic element, as was respect for the Emperor. The coming of the barbarians had distressed the Emperor, and action was required to right the situation. Action would require preparation, and preparation would require correction of the "wavering and indolence caused by long years of peace." One way of overcoming this, as later memorials made clear, was to select men for their ability instead of for their rank. And since the needs of the day were military, there is little doubt that the *gōshi* and *shōya* expected to profit from an impartial search for talent. Yet their stand was not yet fully anti-Tokugawa (although there were "evil forces" in Edo), and not at all consciously antifeudal. They thought—mistakenly—that their "retired lord" had been punished for advocating an antiforeign war, and as a result they saw no contradiction between their feudal loyalty and their Imperial reverence. Only evil or stupid officials stood in their way.

Takechi and his Loyalist Party thus seized the loyalist and antiforeign issues for their own. There were of course individuals of higher rank who agreed with many of their points. Sasaki Takayuki and Tani Kanjō, whose education had been very similar to Takechi's, saw much merit in the loyalist position. Others, like Itagaki (then: Inui) Taisuke, would gladly have joined a crusade to drive out the foreigners. These men were not prepared to risk their status by joining a secret party, however, and

[24] *Takechi monjo*, I, 36–53.

they could never approve of direct action by their social inferiors. Sasaki Takayuki, who had also been a student of Kamochi Masazumi, explained: "We tended to agree with Takechi for the most part, but since our relationship to our lord was quite different from his we could not approve entirely. And while his arguments seemed entirely peaceable and reasonable, the dangerous thing was that the men around him were almost all very low-ranking bravos."[25] As a result Takechi got no help from Sasaki or Tani, and Itagaki was to organize a group of upper samurai to guard against violence by Takechi's partisans.

After the Loyalist Party was formed, Takechi and his friends from Chōshū and Satsuma agreed that instead of resorting to direct action immediately they would return to their homes to win over their *han* administrations to the idea of cooperative action in favor of an antiforeign, loyalist program. There should be less deference to the wishes of the now vacillating Bakufu, and more attention paid to the opinions of antiforeign court nobles like Sanjō Sanetomi. But this program proved difficult to carry out. Takechi found his feudal superiors in Tosa scornful of the agreements he had made and unimpressed by his assurances that Satsuma and Chōshū were due to change their policies. Yoshida Tōyō was particularly unenthusiastic about the idea of working with the court nobles, and felt that those "long sleeves," as he called them, had no political sense and no political or military resources.

Takechi's *gōshi* and *shōya* followers, however, were much more impressed by the glamor of the Kyoto nobles. One after another they started slipping past the border guards at night, finding shelter with their friends or enlisting as *kuge-zamurai* in the small establishments supported by the Kyoto nobles. Yoshimura Toratarō, Sakamoto Ryōma, Tanaka Kōken, Hijikata Hisamoto, and others entered upon the *rōnin* life.[26] Takechi finally became convinced that he would lose all chance of controlling his group if he delayed any longer, and in May 1862, he gave the signal for his men to assassinate Yoshida Tōyō. Yoshida was hated by the top conservatives whose jobs and incomes seemed threatened by his reforms, and as a result the new conservative regime made little effort to locate or punish the assassins.

A few of Takechi's friends received minor but useful posts in the inspector (*metsuke*) bureaus under the new regime. The conservative leaders were less wary and less intelligent than Yoshida Tōyō had been, and they proved easier for Takechi to handle. It was his goal to persuade his lord to join the Satsuma and Chōshū forces in Kyoto. Takechi was still without an official post, but he was able to manipulate allies

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[25] *Sasaki Rō Kō sekijitsu dan*, p. 145.

[26] *Ishin Tosa kinnō shi*, pp. 105f. It was of course somewhat easier for low-ranking personnel, with less of a stake in their society, to flee, and yet even they were abandoning their families and jeopardizing their futures. Their letters home were full of efforts to explain such action, as when Sakamoto Ryōma wrote the parents of a friend, Ike Kurata, who had just fled: "The daimyo . . . do not understand the idea of returning the Emperor to a position of power, and yet it is the thing that needs most to be done. What, then, are men of low rank to do to ease his Majesty's mind? You know that one should hold the Imperial Court more dear than one's country, and more dear than one's parents. The idea that in times like these it is a violation of your proper duty to put your relatives second, your *han* second, to leave your mother, wife, and children—this is certainly a notion that comes from our stupid officials" . . . from an unpublished letter in the Seizan (Tanaka) Bunko, Sakawa, Kōchi Prefecture. And there were other attractions of leaving, as shown in a letter Sakamoto wrote his sister in 1865: "In a place like home," he wrote, "you can't have any ambition. You waste your time loafing around, and pass the time like an idiot." *Sakamoto monjo*, I, 136.

at court to secure Kyoto pressure on the young daimyo Toyonori (age 16) to stop in Kyoto on his way to Edo. Toyonori's procession left Kōchi on July 22, 1862. At the last minute it was swollen by the addition of large numbers of *gōshi* who appeared in Kōchi and clamored for permission to accompany their young lord.[27] The procession was stopped near Osaka by an outbreak of the measles, and it finally entered Kyoto on September 18.

Takechi now came into his own. He could resume his close relationships with friends from Chōshū (which had forsaken the moderation of Nagai Uta), and he could work with court nobles. Kyoto belonged more and more to the *kuge-zamurai* and *rōnin* who thronged its streets. Their old friends now reappeared as influential persons in the trains of the daimyo of the southwest. And they were dazzled by the vigor, the eminence, and glamor of the court nobles. Takechi and his Tosa friends worked chiefly through Sanjō Sanetomi, who was related to their lord. Sanjō was 25, and his friend Anegakoji Kintomo was 23.

As the *shishi* grew in power and confidence, Bakufu prestige and police power in Kyoto waned. A wave of violence began shortly before the Tosa entry. With new recruits from Tosa, it grew in intensity. Enemies, real and fancied, and officials with a real or supposed connection with Ii Naosuke or with Yoshida Tōyō were struck down. The fencing academies had contributed little toward driving out the barbarians, but they proved ideal schools for political assassination. The term *tenchū* (heavenly punishment) began to appear on placards and sheets and walls, and for those who ignored threats the sight of heads of the swordsmen's victims, exposed on the principal intersections of Kyoto with placards explaining their crimes, served as somber warnings. Takechi's bravos contributed more than their share to the insecurity of the capital.[28] In the boldest strike a party of twenty-four Tosa, Chōshū, and Satsuma men overtook and ambushed a city commissioner and his party who were returning to Edo. Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the conservative mediocrities who had led the Tosa procession to Kyoto lost ground to Takechi and his partisans. Koyagi Gohei, their leader, returned to Kōchi in despair.

Shortly after Takechi's arrival in Kyoto, he composed a memorial which he passed on to friends in the court and to which he affixed his young lord's name. This was one of the boldest calls for restoration of power to the throne that had yet been made. Takechi proposed three basic steps. First, that the entire Kinai plain be brought under direct rule of the court, and that the area be garrisoned with troops under the control of court nobles. Osaka merchants could be ordered to pay for whatever expenses were involved. He argued that an imperial army was required because no daimyo could be expected to give top priority to defending court land. Second, the *sankin kōtai* system should be revised sharply, with daimyo to come only once in three or perhaps five years. Third, the court should resume responsibility for all political decisions. In fact, he concluded, "all political orders should come from the court, and the daimyo should come to Kyoto instead of Edo for *sankin kōtai* duty." If the court were to order seven

[27] For the details of the trip, Ishin shiryō hensan jimmukyoku, *Ishin shi* (Tokyo, 1943), III, 230f; for the *gōshi*, Hayakawa Junzaburō, ed., *Kambu tsūki* (Tokyo, 1913), I, 421. A few months later *gōshi* and *Shōya* initiative was shown again when a party of fifty, among them Nakaoka Shintarō, insisted on being allowed to go to Edo to protect their former lord, Yōdō. Hirao, *Rikuentai shimatsu ki*, pp. 18–30.

[28] For documentation based on Takechi's fragmentary diary showing how his residence served as planning center for a series of such murders, Hirao, *Takechi Zuizan*, pp. 136–142.

or eight large *han* to mobilize immediately, Takechi suggested, the Bakufu would take a respectful attitude toward these plans.[29]

Takechi's star reached its zenith with the dispatching of an embassy to Edo. An earlier mission, led by Ōhara Shigenori and escorted by Shimazu Hisamitsu, had summoned the shogun to make changes and come to Kyoto. It was now decided to follow this with a second mission to order him to drive out the foreigners. The mission left Kyoto December 3, 1862, and reached Edo fifteen days later. Chief ambassadors were Sanjō Sanetomi and Anegakoji Kintomo, and the escort was provided by the young Tosa lord Toyonori who traveled with five hundred of his men. No member of the mission was better pleased than Takechi Zuizan himself. He had come to Kyoto in his lord's train as a low-ranking samurai. Now he was a member of the mission which his lord was escorting to Edo, serving in the retinue of the court noble Anegakoji. Instead of his old name he bore the honorary title Yanagawa Samon, Lord of Chikugo. He had exchanged the long blade with which he had become famous for the dainty sword of a court noble, and instead of striding along in the dust he now rode in a palanquin. It is not difficult to see what a satisfactory outlet activities of this sort must have been for a man who, a year earlier, had not been able to get a hearing from his *han* officials. Takechi's letters to his wife reflect his emotions: "When we arrive in Edo, I'll get to enter the castle, and I am to see the Shogun. We will also offer gifts. And the Lord Shogun will give us gifts of clothing. Truly, it is astonishing." And, of the men assigned to him: "I'm followed everywhere I go by these fellows; it's really just like a *kyōgen*."[30] When the mission returned to Kyoto at the end of January Takechi was promoted a grade, to *rusuigumi*. He was now an upper samurai. But it was also his last success.

Takechi's fall was a product of many causes, among them his failure to realize the true feelings of his former lord, Yōdō. Far from being in danger in Edo, Yōdō was being consulted by the Bakufu reform administration and working with it to promote, under the slogan *kōbu gattai*, a reconciliation between court and camp. Takechi, however, mistakenly thought that Yōdō would lend his prestige to an anti-foreign and loyalist movement in cooperation with the Kyoto extremist nobles. Therefore, anxious to have a mature and able figure represent Tosa in the Kyoto councils, he arranged to have the court recall Yōdō to Kyoto.

Yōdō handled the *shishi* with great care. He was, in the words of a British observer, "a far-seeing man of the highest intelligence . . . obviously gifted with that magnetic attraction which is so rare even amongst the greatest men . . ." In addition, his fame as a drinker and bon vivant helped to establish his repute with his extremist retainers.[31] He wined the *shishi*, praised them, and then saw to it that they were kept in check.[32] When he left Edo for Kyoto he issued instructions to all his samurai to

[29] Text in *Takechi monjo*, I, 109f. For Takechi's activities in connection with this, *Ishin Tosa kinnō shi*, pp. 168f. The suggestion for a change in attendance at Edo was, however, already in the process of implementation at the suggestion of Matsudaira Shungaku.

[30] *Takechi monjo*, I, 138. *Ishin Tosa kinnō shi*, pp. 189f.

[31] *Memories by Lord Redesdale* (A. B. Mitford), (N. Y., n.d.), II, 438–439. There are good biographies by Hirao Michio, *Yōdō Kō kiden* (Tokyo, 1943), p. 447; and Sakazaki Bū, *Geikai Suikō* (Tokyo, 1902), p. 419. Geikai Suikō, "Drunken lord of the whale seas," was the way Yōdō styled himself.

[32] Characteristic of his method was the way Yōdō responded to Takechi when he was shown the signed pledge of the Loyalist Party. Instead of discussing it, he first said, "Hampeita, do you like *sake*? Let me pour you some." And then, after a bit, "Your intentions are fine, but it's not good to form a party. Let's burn the pledge." Hirao, *Yōdō Kō*, pp. 126–127.

warn them against unnecessary contacts with men from other fiefs, and he forbade criticism of *han* officials. Furthermore, he authorized Itagaki Taisuke to form a group of upper samurai to counter the threats of the low-ranking swordsmen. But he did not reveal his full intentions for some time, and while he prepared his steps Takechi presented him with memorial after memorial urging him to appoint people of ability rather than rank, and urging him to prepare Tosa for early action. Yōdō responded by sending two of Takechi's top assistants to Tosa to take up posts in the *han* government. They went gladly, expecting posts of importance, and before going they obtained a "rescript" from a court noble endorsing the kind of reforms they planned to make. But the Kōchi administration was ready for them, and nothing came of their plans. In May, Takechi himself was appointed director of the Tosa residence in Kyoto. His new duties made further visits and intrigues with his friends almost impossible. So the loyalists had lost their freedom of action. Blustering and entreaty gained them nothing.

In July 1863, Yōdō returned to Tosa, taking Takechi with him. Once there he began an investigation of the murder of Yoshida Tōyō, who had been his personal favorite. The loyalist era was waning. After Satsuma and Aizu troops drove Chōshū out of the Kyoto palace stations on September 30, Yōdō, convinced that extremism had finally run its course, arrested Takechi and his lieutenants. There followed a long and drawn-out investigation of Takechi's earlier activities. Several of his top assistants were condemned to suicide, but it was harder to implicate Takechi personally in the violence of the past year.[33]

During all of this the Tosa Loyalist Party did not stop its efforts. Yoshimura Toratarō lost his life in one of the risings that followed the expulsion of Chōshū from Kyoto. Hijikata and Tanaka entered service with the refugee court nobles, while others, like Sakamoto Ryōma and Nakaoka Shintarō, became major actors in the politics of the closing years of Tokugawa rule. Still, the core of the movement—Takechi, Mazaki Sōrō, Hirai Shūjirō, Hirose Kenta, and others—were lost to Yōdō's counter purge.

There was talk of a revolt in Tosa to free Takechi from prison, but the *gōshi* and *shōya* loyalists feared that a rising might shorten Takechi's life at the hands of his jailers. After several appeals failed, a group of twenty-three *gōshi* and *shōya* in eastern Tosa decided to organize a demonstration in the summer of 1864. They drew up a manifesto setting forth their grievances, and moved out in military order. They expected no real violence, and planned to retreat by sea or across the border into Awa if it proved necessary. But instead *han* units attacked them, the pass station refused to allow them passage into Awa, and those who were not killed in action were executed shortly afterward.[34]

The investigation of Takechi dragged on into the summer of 1865. He kept in close touch with his family and friends from prision, and read a great deal. The *han* administration was unable to get a confession from him, and yet it felt that so long as he lived it would be unable to restore order and unity. One of the principal figures in the *han* administration was Gotō Shōjirō, a disciple of Yoshida Tōyō who had been with him at the time he was murdered. Gotō, with Yōdō's approval, decided to put an end to the problem. Takechi was ordered to commit *seppuku* for having taken ad-

[33] *Ishin Tosa kinnō shi*, pp. 247–315.

[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 560–572, 644–651. The "Noneyama Incident."

vantage of the political situation to form a party, for agitating people's minds, for instigating plans among court nobles, for presenting plans disrespectfully to his former lord, for losing sight of his proper place, despising higher authority, disrupting order, and using disrespectful language.[35]

The Tosa Loyalist Party thus has to be considered a failure. Its strength was broken, nearly half its original number killed, its leaders executed or put to flight. Those members who, like Sakamoto Ryōma or Nakaoka Shintarō, survived, achieved importance by outgrowing the type of violence and antiforeignism that Takechi represented. Why did the loyalists fail?

One reason lies in the fact that the *han* leadership, constantly reminded of its obligation to the Tokugawa shogun, would never support a movement of forthright opposition to the Bakufu. It is striking to see how frequently Takechi was reminded by Yoshida Tōyō, by Yōdō himself, and by others, that the Yamauchi relationship to the Tokugawa was very different from that of the Mōri and Shimazu. The Yamauchi had been rewarded, the others punished, after Sekigahara.

A second element relates to the nature of the Tosa samurai ranks. The ranks at the top owed everything to the Yamauchi and the Tokugawa, while those further down owed a good deal less. Any movement led by, or made up of *gōshi* and *shōya* could never have upper-rank support. Tanaka Kōken later described the Tosa restoration movement as a struggle between ranks, and Sasaki's memoirs seem to bear him out. The accounts written by the loyalists are never-ending complaints against upper-class stupidity and arrogance.

But it will not do to credit the lower class loyalists with antifeudal thoughts. They wanted to re-arrange the feudal system a bit, but they never questioned it. They mentioned the commerical economy—and the *han*'s manipulation of it—only to deplore it, and their ideas for exploitation of merchants were if anything rather more crude than those of their superiors.[36]

A few years later, when the logic of the times showed that a change in Tokugawa status was inevitable and essential to national unity, and when it could be proved that unless Tosa joined in such a change the *han* would lose out permanently, its policy changed. But it did so slowly and reluctantly. With Takechi's firebrands out of the way, Sasaki, Itagaki, and Gotō could accept and even sponsor Sakamoto's ideas of a shogunal resignation, while Yōdō would accept it as an ingenious way to save the house of Tokugawa.

It is doubtful that Takechi, had he lived, would have had much enthusiasm for

[35] Full details of the interrogations, many of them in Takechi's own words, in *Tosa kinnō*, pp. 514–814, and in *Takechi monjo*, II; sentence in *monjo*, II, 258–259, July 3, 1865. Years later Kido Kōin, Takechi's old friend, asked Yōdō over *sake*: "Takechi was a man whose like we are not likely to see again; why did you have him executed?" Yōdō answered that Takechi was a rascal who had assassinated his minister Yoshida Tōyō, who had been reforming the government according to Yōdō's wishes, and that if he had let him live the realm would have disintegrated. Ōmachi Keigetsu, *Hakushaku Gotō Shōjirō* (Tokyo, 1914), pp. 141–142. Sasaki's memoirs bear out the argument that it was difficult to restore order in Tosa as long as Takechi remained alive as a focus for the loyalists. *Sasaki Rō Kō*, p. 308.

[36] Thus Kamioka Tanji suggested to Takechi that Osaka merchants, if they resisted pressure for forced loans, could be intimidated by having *shishi* commit hara-kiri on the spot, and predicted that no merchant could resist more than three suicides. *Ishin Tosa kinnō shi*, pp. 294–296. Other loyalists, however, responded with more rational schemes as the prospect of power brought new responsibilities, and Mazaki Sōrō and Hirai Shūjirō advocated the purchase of foreign ships and the export of more *han* products to Osaka—ideas they had objected to in earlier days. *Ibid.*, pp. 166, 259

these final maneuvers. He was first and foremost an ideologist and not a politician. He was impatient with compromise, intense, and intolerant. His letters to his family from prison show a rough, earthy humor, and a fiery, unquenchable conviction of being in the right. It was this supreme confidence, this preparedness to force through simple solutions to complex problems, that made the *shishi* so effective in creating the initial disorder of the early 1860's, and which doomed them to education or failure thereafter. Like his lieutenants who resolved to show by the beauty of their *seppuku* that a *gōshi* was as good a samurai as his superiors, Takechi accepted most of the values of his society. Loyalty to his lord and fief made him refuse to flee when his Chōshū friends warned him of danger. He had a poor opinion of the new military units that were to include commoners,[37] and he apparently remained convinced that fencers could deal with foreigners. As with the extremists of the Shōwa years, Takechi and his followers affected their times more by the creation of unrest than by the establishment of new patterns. Indeed, it could be said that many of his victims, and certainly Yoshida Tōyō, were closer to modern Japan than was this martyred loyalist.

[37] *Takechi monjo,* I, 370. The failure of Takechi's party to rally commoner support is contrasted to the policy of the Chōshū loyalists by Haraguchi Kiyoshi, "Bakumatsu seisō no ikkōsatsu: Tosa han o chūshin to shite," *Rekishigaku kenkyū,* No. 142 (Tokyo, 1949), p. 41, who finds the Tosa loyalists more land-based and less "modern" than their Chōshū counterparts.