As we have seen in the previous chapter, Yamaji Aizan regarded Japan's annexation of Korea as a form of alliance. Consequently, he did not show much sympathy with regard to Korean nationalists, who attempted to become independent from Japan; instead he wanted to cooperate with Korea and China in order to cope with the difficult international situation. For this reason, he emphasized the importance of removing prejudice against foreigners for the promotion of better international understanding and the improvement of Japan's relations with neighbouring countries.1 In this chapter, I discuss Yamaji's broad-minded view of international relations between Japan and the world, which has been neglected in previous studies of Yamaji Aizan. First, I argue that Yamaji attempted to explode the myth of Japanese uniqueness that was propagated by state-centred nationalists. Second, he insisted that international education would become indispensable for those who lived and worked in the new age of internationalization and that the traditional Japanese spirit of bushidō (the code of the samurai) should be abandoned.

CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

State-centred nationalists like Inoue Tetsujirō and Takayama Chogyū, who founded the magazine *Japanism* (*Nihonshugi*) in 1897, held an exclusive view of races. Inoue Tetsujirō was preoccupied with the concept of ‘race’ from the very beginning of his academic career. In his book *Mixed Residence* (*Naichi zakkyo ron*, 1889), Inoue hoped that the ‘inferior’ Japanese would avoid close contact with ‘superior’ Westerners until they became able to compete on equal terms. Believing that the outside world was a threat to Japan's safety, he emphasized the importance of racial distinction to the survival of the Japanese.2 In his essay 'Japanism' (*Nihonshugi* 1897), Takayama Chogyū, who was a student of Inoue Tetsujirō at the Imperial University, also asserted that there were no ‘universal friendly
feelings’ in the world and that each nation had its own national morals. He also argued that the people would become fully aware of their nationality only after they understood their national character, emphasizing that the national character could be grasped only thorough historical and comparative investigation.

Because of his belief in a common humanity, Yamaji’s view of the Japanese people was fundamentally different from that of intellectuals like Inoue Tetsujirō and Takayama Chogū, who advocated Japanism and asserted that the unique characteristic of the Japanese should be restored. As we saw in Chapter 3, Yamaji Aizard’s view of the world was based on his belief that people in all ages and countries shared a common humanity. In 1892, he wrote the essay ‘The Present is like the Past, and that One is like this One’. As the title of this essay indicates, in the early part of his professional career, he expressed his idea that ‘human nature is the same in all ages and countries’.

In his essay addressed to Saionji Kinmochi (1849–1940), the Minister for Education, published in 1898, one year after the publication of the first issue of Japanism (Nihonshugi), edited by Inoue Tetsujirō and Takayama Chogyū, Yamaji argued that state-centred education created people who did not have genuine patriotism and went on to say:

Educational circles are too arrogant to listen to criticisms levelled at them. They adhere to a biased view to the extent that they cannot consider a problem from the standpoint of a third party. A group of leaders in educational circles became like the Pope. They firmly believe that their own ‘dogma’ is the golden rule.

Yamaji wanted Saionji Kinmochi, Minister for Education, to reform state-centred education. Yamaji wrote:

They [educators] still do not understand the history of Japanese civilization, although they often talk about Japan’s national polity. They cannot define a model Japanese, although they often talk about Japanism. Their so-called kokusuishugi (principle of preserving the national essence) and Japanism are only airy-fairy.

Thus, Yamaji strongly opposed educators like Inoue Tetsujirō who ‘misunderstood’ the history of Japanese civilization and believed that the ‘unique’ Japanese character was the spirit of loyalty and patriotism. In Yamaji’s view, Japanism was wrong because it only emphasized differences in character between nations and did not pay attention to their similarities.

Inoue Tetsujirō and Takayama Chogyū, who attempted to make the Japanese people be aware of their nationality, did not show any interest in promoting international understanding. In opposition to