A Small Fishing Village Away from the World
—Limit of Ethnography of YANAGITA Kunio—

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YANAGITA Kunio who originated the folklore in Japan a is ndstill in an important position wrote an ethnography. It was written in 1947 when Japan was in the utter confusion after the defeat of the World war II. The subject of this ethnography is a village called Kita-koura, a remote place of an inland sea in Sado Island, Niigata Prefecture, where even now, approx. 30 households live on Isonogi (an inshore fishery; to catch ear shells, turban shells, seaweed, octopuses, etc. using a small boat), small-scaled paddy farming and dry field farming.

This ethnography is very unique because it was written based on the fieldnote of his student, KURATA Ichiro, who conducted the survey in 1937; YANAGITA did not make any survey himself. This paper tries to elucidate why it was possible. It is deeply linked with the issue of methodology by which YANAGITA Kunio had established the field of science called the folklore in Japan. In this paper, attempts are being made to elucidate what was the ethnography for YANAGITA Kunio, by comparing the ethnography written by YANAGITA Kunio and the fieldnote written by KURATA Ichiro in details.

As a result, a conclusion is obtained that the ethnography written by YANAGITA Kunio is a kind of thesis on the Japanese culture using Kita-koura in the Sado Island as a means of metaphor, and is akin to his other literary works. A schema, that only if the survey results are available, a person who has an extensive knowledge concerning the folklore like YANAGITA Kunio can write an ethnography simply because he belongs to the same culture, is different from the concept of the author toward the ethnography. The author believes that an ethnography should reflect the outlook on the world of the surveyer, represented in the form of communications of discord, hostility and friendship between the history and culture of a group of people at the subject region and those of the surveyer. In other words, while YANAGITA Kunio pursued the ethnog.
raphies using the comparison as the premise, the author takes the position that ethnographies should be written not assuming the comparison.