Archaeology and Folklore

—Preparatory Study for Cooperative Work—

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Archaeology and folklore have shown themselves to be methods of historical studies. Therefore, the fact of their existence has always been considered in their relationship with so-called philological history, which has been positioned at the center of historical studies. Therefore, it has been insisted, as a principle, that all philological history, archaeology and folklore are of equal importance as methods of historical studies, and that their relationship with philological history should be discussed. But the mutual relationship between archaeology and folklore has not always been discussed clearly. Archaeology and folklore give the impression of being in a close relationship, but the details of the relationship are not always clear. This paper aims at establishing a cooperative work relationship between archaeology and folklore. It also aims to rearrange the conventional opinions on the relationship between these two fields of study, and to present the related problems.

YANAGITA Kunio had great expectations for the relationship between folklore and archaeology. As its premise, however, he strictly pointed out the problems of archaeology. He argued that, after having pointed out weak or defective points of archaeology, it was the folklore that developed a new study by compensating for these points. Therefore, the arguments of YANAGITA stepped into the field of archaeology, and his opinion should be noted when compared with the superficial evenness stated by folklorists coming after him. Many folklorists have only insisted on the equal existence of archaeology and folklore, but no efforts have been made to form a concrete cooperative relationship. In this respect, it can be said that folklorists, except YANAGITA, were indifferent to archaeology. On the other hand, archaeologists insisted, from an early stage, that folklore or folklore materials would be useful for archaeological study. Not a few proposals were made for cooperative work with folklorists, or the utilization of folklore materials supported by concrete research. However, these proposals meant that archaeology referred to the folklore and folklore materials, and these were measures to enrich the content of archaeology. In this respect,
a really cooperative work of the above two studies is required to create a third method different from both of the above two studies, instead of a relationship referring to each other, even if they presuppose each other.