The Relationship between Kunio Yanagita’s Perspective of *Yamahito* and Archaeology

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Kunio Yanagita was collecting archaeological artifacts around 1907. At the same time, he argued that some people were living in mountainous area who were descended from original inhabitant in Japan. This Yanagita’s perspective of *Yamahito* was closely related with his collecting of archaeological artifacts.

Around 1917, most physical anthropologists assumed that all the Japanese had originated from the Jōmon lineage. Following this standard argument, Yanagita almost lost confidence in his perspective of *Yamahito* and started to severely criticize archaeology.

His criticism of archaeology was for the following three reasons: the limits of available research materials; its ignorance of life history; and its excessive focus on ancient and prehistoric times. For the same reasons, he suggested improvements in history education and textbooks after the Second World War.

In conclusion, archaeology was a mirror to reflect his thoughts; by criticizing it, he established folklore studies and developed a methodology to show how Japanese should understand their nation.

Key words: Kunio Yanagita, perspective of *Yamahito*, physical anthropology, criticism of archaeology, folklore methodology