

A Consideration of the Influence of George Laurence Gomme's Works upon Yanagita Kunio

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Abstract

ジョージ・ローレンス・ゴムは柳田国男が民俗学を構築する際に研究し、影響を受けたとされる海外の研究者たちの一人である。過去様々の日本民俗学者及び二人のアメリカ民俗学者 (R. M. Dorson と R. A. Morse) がジョージ・ローレンス・ゴムの柳田国男への影響に関して論議してきた。しかし柳田国男自身の海外の学者に対する言及の不明瞭さに加えて、柳田国男の残した文献が散逸によって資料として不完全なものとなっており、この件に関する論議は進んでいないのが現状である。

その原因は柳田国男の残した資料からゴムの影響を考察しようとするこれまでの研究者たちの姿勢にあり、その資料の不完全さによってこの件に関する研究の困難さは各論者の明言するところである。

この論文では、視点をゴムに置いて、ジョージ・ローレンス・ゴムの目指した民俗学と柳田国男の民俗学がいかに相似しているか、あるいはいかに相違しているかを論じている。つまり直接の資料的な裏付けではなく、二人の民俗学の基本的な構造を考察の対象に据え、「柳田民俗学」に対して「ゴムの民俗学」の構造的な投影という作業を通して、ジョージ・ローレンス・ゴム民俗学の柳田国男への影響を仮説として提示している。

尚この論文は基本的には「日本民俗学」217号からの再録となっている。但し「日本民俗学」に掲載の論文は和文であり内容を日本人読者向けに調整してある。一方、当論文は対象を基本的に英語文化圏読者に向けて内容を再調整している。このように二重に変奏させてだぶらせたもう一つの理由は直接引用した原資料が多く、さらにその原資料は和文と英文から成り、その比率がほぼ半々になっており、また原資料が入手困難なことを鑑み、和文・英文の各論文によりクロスレファランスができる機会を設けた次第である。これにより原文の照合が相互に可能である。またこの論題に関する新しい資料 (英文・和文) 発掘の基礎となることを目指している。

I. Introduction : About George Laurence Gomme and Yanagita Kunio

This paper examines the relation between an English folklorist, George Laurence Gomme (1853–1916), and a Japanese folklorist, Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962). Before going on to introduce the relation between them as described by other people, I will briefly depict the works of Gomme and Yanagita.

Gomme was a member of what Richard M. Dorson called “the great team of Folklorists.” Gomme served as secretary, director, and from 1890 through 1894, president of the Folk-Lore Society in England. Gomme was the most persistent and determined person who attempted to make folklore scientific among “the great team of Folklorists.” He was extremely active with editorial and bibliographical projects, and the exhorter, organizer and promoter of folklore research. Gomme found his savages in Britain, and looked for the primitive past on his own island. By the analysis of survivals and the use of the comparative method, Gomme showed how to reconstruct the historical sequence of the ethnic periods. Gomme in fact illuminated the prehistory of savage Britain (Dorson 1968: 220–229).

The name of Yanagita Kunio does not seem to be well known to Westerners, though Richard M. Dorson (1963), who studied in Japan, introduced the Japanese folklore movement to the West. More recently Ronald A. Morse wrote a good introductory Japanese folklore text in English. Although I cannot agree with Morse, he says that the story of the Japanese folklore movement is the story of one man, Yanagita Kunio (Morse 1990: xvi). Yanagita was a poet, bureaucrat, journalist, and folklorist. In fact Yanagita was, and is, often called the founder of Japanese folklore. In the preface of Morse’s book, Alan Dundes gives us some ideas about Yanagita in Japan:

...Yanagita, the acknowledged father of Japanese folklore studies, has similarly staggering statistics, his collected works coming to some thirty-six volumes, averaging 500 pages each, in all. (ibid: ix)

What is relatively unusual about Yanagita Kunio is his remarkable stature in Japanese intellectual life. Most folklorists, it must be admitted, toil in the vineyards alone with little or no national recognition. In contrast, Yanagita Kunio was acclaimed in his own lifetime and after his death, he became almost a cult figure, symbolizing the admirable elements of Japanese nationalism and celebrating his endless search for the roots of Japanese culture. The fact that his collected works of 36 volumes sold 60,000 sets up to 1973 bears witness to his popularity. (ibid: x)

It is difficult to describe Yanagita’s works in a word. However, I think Morse neatly accomplishes this task:

If there is a unifying theme to Yanagita’s work, it is the search for the elements of tradition that explain Japan’s distinctive national character. He did not focus on any one person, village or region; his unit of analysis was Japan. (ibid: xvi)

It is important to note that the two figures never met each other. Furthermore, it was a one-way acquaintance; Yanagita read Gomme's works in Japan. Though Yanagita's first folkloric book *Nochinokarino-kotobano-ki* was published in 1909, and before Gomme's death (1916) Yanagita had published four more books, I suppose that Gomme, in Britain, never heard the name of Yanagita nor imagined that there existed folklorists in the Far East.

II. The Relation between Gomme and Yanagita as Described by Folklorists both in the United States and in Japan.

Several folklorists have indicated the existence of a relation between Gomme and Yanagita. Probably the first American folklorist who indicated this fact was Richard M. Dorson:

In the writing and teaching of a late-nineteenth-century scholar like Bin Ueda the terminology for the field was not yet standardized. Through his knowledge of English literature, Ueda came to know the work of the Victorian folklorists in England. In 1911 he taught an introductory course on 'minzoku densetsu' (folklore traditions) in the upper girls' school of the Kyoto district, relying on Gomme's *Handbook of Folklore* (1890) with its strong ethnological emphasis. Eventually 'minkan densho' came to stand for the content and 'minzokugaku' for the method of folklore. Before these terms came into general use, the interest in folk traditions centered around *Kyodo Kenkyu*, the title of a lively journal founded in 1913 by Yanagita and Toshio Takagi, a student of Japanese mythology and traditional narrative. *Kyodo Kenkyu* can be translated in German as *Heimatsforschung* and in English as *Local Life Studies*. This journal continued until 1917, and was revived from 1931 to 1934. (Dorson 1963: 23, emphasis added)

In another place Dorson mentioned this relation as follows:

Japanese folklore theory has indeed been influenced by English rather than continental methods of investigation. But there the analogies end. (Dorson 1973: 115)

When Dorson was in Japan (1956–57) to study Japanese folklore, he stayed in the *Minzokugaku Kenkyusho* (the Japanese Folklore Institute) founded by Yanagita. I suppose that not only because Dorson had known of the relation between English folklore and Japanese folklore but also because as his native language was English, he would have been starved for English, his eyes naturally went to English texts, skipping tens of thousands of other books. He left a note concerning Gomme in Yanagita's own library:

There was one section of books in English, and I was interested to note the strong representation of the English folklorists, in particular George Laurence Gomme. His *Folklore as an Historical Science* (1908) clearly had exerted great influence on Yanagita, who had guided Japanese folklore studied toward problems of historical reconstruction rather than comparative distribution. (ibid: 117, emphasis added)

At the same time Morse confess the difficulty of tracing the relation between Gomme and Yanagita, a difficulty revealed by Morse's own fieldwork:

An examination of Yanagita's personal library revealed that between Tono monogatari (1910) and termination of his service in the government, a period roughly equivalent to the Taisho Period (1912–1925), Yanagita read and purchased a number of foreign books. When Yanagita wrote he consciously avoided the use of notes and any references to foreign theories. He resisted the translation of foreign works into Japanese, and his disciples summarized but did not translate, important foreign works into Japanese. These facts make it difficult to trace the impact foreign source materials had on the Yanagita school of folklore. (ibid: 140–141)

Morse's note concerning this matter gives us an important concrete detail:

This information is based upon my personal examination of the foreign language books now housed in the Yanagita Library of Seijo University. Two factors have hindered careful research into the impact foreign ideas had upon Yanagita's work. One factor is Yanagita's own failure to footnote or acknowledge his indebtedness to foreign writers. The second factor relates to Yanagita's personal library. After Yanagita's death friends and relatives took a number of books from the Yanagita Library before it was housed at Seijo University. This makes careful research on marginalia and reading interests nearly impossible. Also Seijo University has not kept the library open to the general public. Manuscripts, unpublished essays, and important essays not included in the Teihon volumes have been accessible only to a limited few. (ibid: 152–153)

Therefore, it is certain that there is a clear relation between Gomme and Yanagita. However, as a result of Yanagita's policy when he studied and wrote folklore, it is almost impossible to trace back from Yanagita's writings to Gomme's.

Let us see what Japanese folklorists say about this matter. According to my readings, Japanese folklorists are not eager to investigate the relation between Gomme and Yanagita. Though they are not ignorant of this, their remarks concerning this matter neglect to study it. When Takakuwa Morishi refers to this matter, his statement is simple:

...As it is said that Yanagita was fond of reading this Gomme's book (*Folklore as an Historical Science*), after enough consideration of Gomme's theory, too, his (Yanagita's) methodology seems to have been established. (Takakuwa 1978: 15, emphasis and parentheses added)

There is also a convenient bibliography of Yanagita Kunio and Yanagita Kunio's studies in which there is a biographical sketch:

1913 (Taisho 2nd) 39 years old.

In January, Yanagita made a speech of a special community in the meeting of the study of economics of Gakushi-kai. In March, cooperating with Takagi Toshio, he started a journal, Kyodo

Kenkyu. And he often read Frazer and Gomme. (Goto ed. 1982: 7)

The last one is Oto Tokihiko's. As Morse refers to him, he is an important member of the Yanagita school. Though it was published in 1990, this was an oral transcription of Oto's speech whose topic was "Mr. Yanagita Kunio and Comparative Folklore" in 1971. In this speech, Oto refers to the relation between Gomme and Yanagita:

Then, in the meantime, as I look at the various traces which my teacher (Yanagita) studied, as I mentioned before, there remained so many books of anthropology and ethnology as his library. And he very often read them. Some books did he read twice or three times. There are books which have the date when he read. Some books did he read three times. For example, there is *Folklore as an historical science* by Gomme. I am sure Yanagita had read it three times. (Oto 1990: 202, emphasis and parentheses added)

These above-mentioned statements definitely indicate the relation between Gomme and Yanagita. But at the same time these statements might distort Yanagita's readings. That is, these statements give an impression that Yanagita focused upon reading only one book by Gomme... *Folklore as an Historical Science*. Although my own readings are limited, Yanagita himself sometimes refers to Gomme in his writings, which indicates that Yanagita probably also read other materials by Gomme:

It was in 1878 that Mr. Gomme published the study of village community. It reported only a strange and little news which said that when a little temple in some village was newly constructed, the villagers poured blood of a fowl on the paving stone of the entrance. It was not until then that the White people discovered the existence of custom of sacrifice, which had been believed that those customs only existed among the awful savages, in the White countries. (Yanagita 1970 [1928]: 253, emphasis added)

Gomme's 'The Village Community' was published in 1890. Gomme said in it that "the subject has occupied my attention for *the past twelve years or so* and I have studied it side by side with other subjects which of late years in increasing force I have conceived to be in intimate relationship with it" (Gomme 1890: 1, emphasis added). I think this agreement in terms of the published year between Gomme's statement and Yanagita's, which I emphasized, indicates Yanagita read rather various kinds of material of Gomme.

It is clear that there is no serious study of the relationship between Yanagita and Gomme, to date. Morse has begun the study but he seems to have stopped studying his project because of the difficulty of getting the related material. Moreover, although his book was published in 1990, it was based on his doctoral dissertation of 1974. However, I think it might be possible to study this relationship from the side of Gomme. That is, by means of reading Gomme, we might be able to get a certain basic scheme in terms of folklore, then we can examine how Yanagita either applied or discarded it for the purpose of establishing the Yanagita Folklore school in Japan. Therefore, we would see a sort of transformation from Gomme's Folklore to Yanagita's Folklore. This transformation could be recognized by

consideration of Yanagita's development of folklore. Of course Gomme was not the only influence upon Yanagita's thought. It would be better to note that my argument is only a possibility concerning what Yanagita might have been influenced from a British folklorist, G. L. Gomme.

III. Yanagita Kunio's Choice

My hypothesis is that Yanagita in a sense schematically chose from Gomme's thoughts on folklore. Therefore, although Yanagita must have read Gomme more often, and more deeply than I, I still have a chance to come close to his schematic interpretation of Gomme.

III-1. Recognition of the Importance of Folklore

Yanagita had already published three folkloric books and various articles when he supposedly started to read Gomme in 1913 (Goto 1982), so Yanagita himself must have recognized already the importance of folklore. When Yanagita read Gomme, he would have reconfirmed the importance of folklore and been encouraged by Gomme's statements, such as the following:

There has grown up of late years a subject of inquiry — first antiquarian merely, and now scientific — into the peasant and local elements in modern culture, and this subject has not inaptly been termed 'folklore.' (Gomme 1892: 1)

After this statement, Gomme gives a definition of folklore:

The essential characteristic of folklore is that it consists of beliefs, customs, and traditions which are far behind civilization in their intrinsic value to man, though they exist under the cover of a civilised nationality. This estimate of the position of folklore with reference to civilization suggests that its constituent elements are survivals of a condition of human thought more backward, and therefore more ancient, than that in which they are discovered. (ibid: 2)

In those days, when Yanagita read Gomme, more than 70 percent of the Japanese population lived in villages and less than 30 percent of the population were in cities. For Yanagita, folklore was not the study of survivals but the study of contemporary society. People's attention was focused on confronting Western civilization, which was a rather new phenomenon, whereas the village community was rather common as a living place among people in Japan. Therefore, Yanagita's recognition of the importance of folklore was an amazing feat and in a sense eccentric, and shows his remarkable insight. When folklore was as air in Japan, but reduced to survivals in England, Yanagita called Japan "the treasure islands of folklore" (Yanagita 1970 [1935]: 278–280). Gomme's books must have appeared to Yanagita as if they were books of prediction. Yanagita not only overcome the gap between Japan and England but also started to utilize what Gomme had discussed.

III-2. Criticism of History

Gomme often criticizes the lack of folkloric perspective in the study of history, but he recognizes the importance of the study of history to folklore. Gomme's attitude toward history is a kind of critical cooperation:

All that the peasantry practise, believe, and relate on the strength of immemorial custom sanctioned by unbroken succession from one generation to another, has a value of peculiar significance so soon as it is perceived that the genealogy of each custom, belief, or legend in all cases goes back for its commencing point to some fact in the history of the people which has escaped the notice of the historian. (Gomme 1892: 5-6)

In this paragraph, Gomme insists on the importance of the history of the people — folklore, which is neglected by the historian. This perspective, folklore as history, Yanagita learned. In another place Gomme criticizes history from the point of view of the incompleteness of history in nature:

Contemporary writers make themselves the judges of what is important to record; documents preserved in public or private archives relate only to such events as need or command the written record or instrument, or to those which have interested some of the actors and their families. Hence in both departments of history, the historical narrative and the original record, it will be found on careful examination that much is needed to make the picture of life complete. It is the detail of every-day thought and action that is missing — all that is so well known, the obvious as it passed before every chronicler, the ceremony, the faith, and the action which do not apparently affect the movements of civilisation, but which make up the personal, religious and political life of the people. It is always well to bear in mind that the historical records preserved from the past must necessarily be incomplete. An accident preserves one, and an accident destroys another. An incident strikes one historian, and is of no interest to another. And it may well be that the lost document, the unrecorded incident, is of far more value to later ages than what has been preserved.... (ibid: 2-3)

This long statement persuades us to recognize the importance of folklore as history. Then, Gomme proposes cooperation with the historical sciences:

Folklore has neither had a long period for its study nor a completely satisfactory record of scientific work. It is, therefore, essential that folklore should establish its right to a place among the historical sciences. At present that right is not admitted. (ibid: 4)

Yanagita's criticism of history in Japan appeared in 1935 — *Kokushi To Minzokugaku* (National History and Folklore). In fact this book announced the initiation of "Japanese Folklore" accompanied by criticism of the orthodox study of history, because in this year Yanagita founded Minzoku-densho-no-kai (the Association for Oral Tradition), started to publish "Minkandensho" (Journal of Oral

Tradition), and named the field *Nihon-Minzokugaku* (Japanese Folklore). His organization of folklore researchers became nationwide. In other words Japanese Folklore departed from and critiqued the established discipline, History.

When Yanagita read Gomme's criticism of history, it was supposedly 1913. But more than twenty years passed, before Yanagita officially published the book in which he criticized the doctrine of records and documents in the study of history. He insisted that the subject of history should be "Jomin" (common people or folks), which meant the discovery of the existence of new material for history. I quote Miyata who assesses Yanagita as follows:

Unlike the orthodox study of history, which has always relied exclusively on documentary evidence and archaeological remains, Yanagita uses as his sources 'the marks left on contemporary culture by the ways of life of our forebears.' Thus he has begun to till an important field of national activity which orthodox history has hitherto overlooked. From the historian's point of view, he has opened up a completely new realm. As a result, large, important and so far neglected areas of the nation's cultural history have been brought to light; this is Yanagita's supreme contribution. Nevertheless, the role of the history he deals in remains to fill in the gaps in the picture presented by orthodox history, and not to draw the picture itself. (Miyata 1962: 487)

Clearly, Gomme's ideas inspired Yanagita. But when Yanagita read Gomme, probably again and again, the study of Japanese folklore was just beginning. Yanagita needed time to establish Japanese folklore (actually Yanagita's folklore) as a firm discipline. Gomme's ideas would have remained as a seed in Yanagita's mind, grown, and finally appeared in this important book for Japanese folklore.

But I cannot help being surprised at Yanagita's book because he published it in the midst of militarism in Japan. Yanagita criticized orthodox history, which was closely related to the emperor system, militarism, and Shintoism (the Japanese national religion in those days). Moreover, Yanagita did not show any tendency to cooperate with history, in contrast to Gomme.

III-3. The Early History of Man

Gomme aimed to study the early history of man, a goal which was very explicit in his writings. In this overall scheme Gomme subsumed two things: one was an evolutionary or a universal scheme, and the other was a national scheme. In fact this scheme is really plastic. This duality gives a flexibility to Gomme's folklore, which seems to reflect England at that time. That is, the similar schemes seem to reflect each other in the same framework. This is one of the main points in his writings, so that it is easy to find examples:

..., man in progressing or retrograding from one stage of culture to another has ever tenaciously held to his old beliefs and to the practice of his old customs. Whatever causes may have produced a change of belief and a change in custom, the change in the first place mainly consists of a modification of the original form, and in the second place is rarely accepted in its entirety by a whole people. (Gomme 1887: 1-2)

Right after this passage, Gomme continues as follows:

Under these altered circumstances, memories of the older life would be preserved and related to the rising generations of children; to be again related to future generations. (ibid: 2)

Then, Gomme concludes:

..., it has been observed that within the circle of almost all human society, whether savage tribes or civilized countries, there exist old beliefs, old customs, old memories, which are relics of an uncovered past. These very important facts introduce us to the study of what has conveniently been termed Folk-lore. (ibid: 2)

These paragraphs convey the general idea of "the early history of man." And the following paragraph makes the idea of "the early history of man" much clearer and suggests the important connection with the thought of Yanagita:

These external conditions (the natural objects, mountains, rivers, trees, etc.) of man's early life, considered in conjunction with his habit in the early stages of mental culture of thinking of all things as personal and endowed with human qualities, enable us to arrive at some of the conditions which might have brought about *the earliest recognizable forms* of religious belief, viz. nature worship, a worship which is examined and dealt with by folklorists as the cause of a large mass of ancient superstitions. (ibid: 9, emphasis and parentheses added)

This paragraph, especially the phrase *the early recognizable forms*, might have had a strong impact on Yanagita, which I will discuss later. Let me first introduce Gomme's evolutionary scheme. After Gomme showed several examples, he continued:

These are specimens of a large class of superstitious beliefs connected with the great natural objects. How significant they are, and how deeply they penetrate into the past history of our race, and only be shown by comparing them with the savage belief in nature spirits and the religion resulting therefrom. (ibid: 11)

This paragraph suggests the comparative method to us, but the basis of the comparative method is evolutionism. It is also the universal aspect of Gomme's "the early history of man." In contrast with this aspect, Gomme is at the same time very nationalistic. Under the scheme of "the early history of man," Gomme attempts to prove a continuation between non-Aryan and Aryans in England, not physically but rather mentally, using concrete examples, such as the existence of the Village Community (Gomme 1890) or the conflict between Paganism and Christianity (Gomme 1892). His point is the mental continuity of the early history of man from the past to the present, not the racial continuity. Then, in fact British nationalism is satisfied. Gomme's nationalism appeared in paragraphs like these:

The plain fact is, that just as in mythology, according to the overwhelming proofs of Jacob Grimm, so in institutions there is very little room for Roman elements on English soil; and the more so when it seems certain that we must find room for an institution of the more primitive elements of earlier and ruder races. (Gomme 1890: 43)

Survivals at a point of arrestment further back in the development of culture than the Aryan stage must have already existed under the pressure of Aryan culture. They must have been produced by a stoppage antecedent to Christianity, and must be identified, therefore, with the arrival of the Aryan race into a country occupied by non-Aryans. (Gomme 1892: 14)

The main statement by Gomme concerning his nationalism is the following paragraph:

I do not mean to suggest that in all places where items of non-Aryan culture have survived people of non-Aryan race have survived. Old races disappear while old customs last — carried on by successors, but not necessarily by descendants. The genealogy of folklore carries us back to the race of people from whom it derives its parentage, but it does not necessarily carry back the genealogy of modern peasantry to the same race. (ibid: 19–20)

We have looked at Gomme's evolutionary and nationalistic character in terms of his scheme — *the early history of man* so far. At this point, let us turn to Yanagita's thought. Yanagita does not seem to have applied Gomme's scheme directly. Transformation from a British framework to a Japanese one must have been necessary, to which Yanagita gave priority when he absorbed Gomme's thought.

According to Tsuboi Hirohumi, Yanagita Kunio took as a hypothesis that Japan is a single race state. That is, the Japanese nation consists of the Japanese race. Yanagita acknowledged the hypothesis that plural races participated in the formation of the Japanese and Japanese culture, but on the other hand, the core of that formation was the rice growing race. The Japanese ancestors were a rice-growing race, and based on Japanese culture then, Japanese culture developed unitarily into a single culture. Therefore, the Japanese and Japanese culture are fundamentally homogeneous. As a result, Yanagita especially made rice-growing farmers' cultural lives his analytical objects.¹⁾

The difference between Yanagita and Gomme is clear. Yanagita took as a premise that the Japanese and Japanese culture have been unitary and homogeneous in Japan. Gomme took the opposite view, that there must have existed different peoples and cultures in the past in England. However, both Yanagita and Gomme tried to study "the early history of man." Hence, though Yanagita must have absorbed many ideas from Gomme, Yanagita discarded one of Gomme's dual structures in "the early history of man," that is, an evolutionary scheme. Although many Japanese folklorists have mentioned a similar thing, I quote Morse, who documents Yanagita's scheme:

At the lecture meeting held in the Japan Youth Hall, Yanagita stressed that folklore was something one studied within the boundaries of his own country; in "all countries folklore is national." (Morse 1990: 107)

Dorson also grasps well the character of Yanagita's folklore:

Through observation of extant harvest festivals, agricultural rituals, household magic, burial and marriage customs, and narratives of degenerated deities, Yanagita and his disciples endeavored to peel off the later historical accretions of imported Buddhism and official Shintoism to arrive at *the earliest core of cosmological beliefs*. (Dorson 1972: 13, emphasis added)

Dorson's statement matches with Tsuboi's depiction concerning Yanagita's hypothesis, which in fact suggests a certain similarity to Gomme's dual scheme of "the early history of man."

III-4. Comparative Method

Gomme definitely owes Edward Burnet Tylor (1832–1917) concerning the comparative method. According to Dorson, the comparative method actually relies on two kinds of evolutionary systems; one is *savage* → *barbarism* → *civilization*, the other is *animism (magic)* → *religion* → *science*. Moreover, these systems are bridged by the doctrine of survivals; the fragments of an ancient, lower culture, and the culture of primitive man. The practical purpose is how to account for the origin of similar customs, arts, and legends found among widely distributed people, and the irrational beliefs and practices of the European peasantry and even those of the civilized citizens. Tylor also uses another analogical scheme of evolutionism; the similarity of the relation between childhood (or child) and adulthood, to the relation between savagery and civilization. Then, the comparative method is used to reconstruct the early history of man by means of comparison between the traditions of primitive people and those of civilized people, which is in fact empirical science (Dorson 1968: 187–201).

Gomme describes this method in various places and in different expressions, for example:

From what has been advanced it may be conceded that the definition of the Science of Folk-lore, as the Society will in the future study it, may be taken to be as follows, "the comparison and identification of the survivals of archaic beliefs, customs, and traditions in modern ages." (Gomme 1887: 5)

In another place Gomme more concretely describes his project:

In this interesting group of survivals of the village community in Britain only some few analogies to the Indian village community have been pointed out, without entering into closer comparison or giving further examples. I think this course may be justified on the ground that constant reiteration of the many points of parallelism which present themselves would be wearisome and needless. (Gomme 1890: 230)

Gomme's insistence on the comparative method appears in almost every chapter and in every writing, with different examples:

The analogies which exist between savage custom and European folklore suggested the first stage of the argument for the existence of ethnic elements in folklore. What is this folklore, which can be traced to nothing, outside of folklore, in the habitual beliefs and customs of civilised countries, and which is parallel only to the habitual beliefs and customs of savages? A key to the answer was supplied when it was pointed out that there is an equation which consists, on the side, of Indian religious rites, in which Aryan and non-Aryan races take their respective parts, and on the other side, of custom in survival among European peasantry. (Gomme 1892: 109)

As a result, since the comparative method is evolutionary and universal, British folklore had strong ties with anthropology. In fact Gomme studied various examples applying Tylor's comparative method. However, Gomme was not only an ordinary follower of Tylor. As Dorson says, "Of all the great team, Gomme was the most persistent and determined champion of the scientific credentials of folklore" (Dorson 1968: 222–223). Gomme actually elaborated the comparative method of Tylor's. It was certain that Gomme aimed at a science of folklore, and his most developed scheme of the comparative method was described in *Folklore as an historical science*. In Chapter II, "Material And Method," (pages 166–168) the explanation and scheme of the comparative method is especially important because this part is almost completely copied to *Minzokugaku-jiten* (Dictionary of Folklore), which was compiled under the supervision of Yanagita Kunio in 1951. The copied item is the "comparative method."²⁾ It is convenient to quote that part here because I will discuss Yanagita's application later.

Generally, it may be stated that the points of likeness determine and classify all the examples of one custom or belief; the points of unlikeness indicate the line of decay inherent in survivals.

This partial equation and partial divergence between different examples of the same custom or belief allows a very important point to be made in the study of survivals. We can estimate the value of the elements which equate in any number of examples, and the value of the elements which diverge; and by noting how these values differ in the various examples we shall discover the extent of the overlapping of example with example, which is of the utmost importance. A given custom consists, say, of six elements, which by their constancy among all the examples and by their special characteristics may be considered as primary elements, in the form in which the custom has survived. Let us call these primary elements by algebraical signs, a, b, c, d, e, f. A second example of the same custom has four of these elements, a, b, c, d, and two divergences, which may be considered as secondary elements, and which we will call by the signs g, h. A further example has none of the primary elements, but only divergences g, h, i, l, m. Then the statement of the case is reduced to the following: —

$$\begin{aligned}
 1 &= a, b, c, d, e, f. \\
 2 &= \quad a, b, c, d, + g, h. \\
 3 &= \quad \quad a, b, + g, h, i, k. \\
 4 &= \quad \quad \quad + g, h, i, l, m.
 \end{aligned}$$

The first conclusion to be drawn from this is that the overlapping of the several examples (No. 1 overlapping No. 2 at a, b, c, d, No. 2 overlapping No. 3 at a, b, + g, h, No. 3 overlapping No. 4 at + g, h, i) shows all these several examples to be but variations of one original custom, example

No. 4, through possessing none of the elements of example No. 1, being the same custom as example No. 1. Secondly, the divergences g to m mark the line of decay which this particular custom has undergone since it ceased to belong to the dominant culture of the people, and dropped back into the position of a survival from a former culture preserved only by a fragment of the people. (Gomme 1908: 166–168)

Gomme's scheme of the comparative method must have influenced Yanagita because he used the above-mentioned explanation in *Minzokugaku-jiten* (1951). Yanagita called it the comparative method or 'Jushutsu-rishoho.' Yanagita's unusualness is that he in fact put the comparative method into practice, not as a faithful follower of Gomme but as a nationwide organizer, which actually meant the establishment of Yanagita folklore. In other words, Yanagita established his original system of investigation in the 1930s. As his target was the core of Japanese thought or cultural continuity, the unit of analysis was naturally Japan, that is, he did not focus upon any one person, village, or region. Therefore, the object was called, "Jomin" (common people), the area was Japan, i.e., each regional village, and the material was oral tradition (in fact Yanagita criticized the doctrine of written documents of history, and he did not study material culture). In 1935 Yanagita succeeded in establishing a nationwide organization called the Minkan-densho-no-kai (the association for oral tradition). At least two collectors lived in each region (the number would have been more than one hundred people). Each collector of folk material was connected with the journal, *Minkan-densho* (oral tradition), and corresponded with Yanagita. Yanagita sent his own questionnaire to each collector (or investigator), and each investigator was required to report according to Yanagita's questionnaire without any interpretation. In other words Yanagita established a division of labor between research and survey, which aimed to establish a science of folklore. This nationwide organization brought him enormous basic material from all parts of the country. Yanagita, at the center (Tokyo), applied the comparative method and studied the Folk-lore, which was collected by the many investigators in their respective regions. Therefore the study itself was almost completely done by Yanagita (Fukuda 1979). Yamaguchi Masao made cynical remarks about this, "Yanagita has no pupil" (Yamaguchi 1962).

It is clear that Yanagita attempted to get both nationwide and homogeneous data not from written material but from oral material among "Jomin." Yanagita also established the other system of investigation, which was called the investigation of the village community. Yanagita made a notebook which consisted of one hundred questionnaires, and his pupils took it with them, went into each village community, stayed and investigated there for about twenty days. The first nationwide investigation with standardized questionnaires was 1934. These investigators were also required not to add any interpretation — not only when they were investigating but also when they reported the results of their investigations to Yanagita. The first report on the village community, *Sansonseikatsu-No-Kenkyu* (1938) (the study of the life of the village community), was based on data collected from sixty-six places in the whole nation and consisted of sixty-five items. As each item listed each village community's examples across the whole nation, a reader can see the nationwide commonality and regional differences (Fukuda 1978: 26–40).

It is obvious that Yanagita also aimed at a science of folklore as well as Gomme. The following statement of Gomme's suggests how Yanagita was influenced by Gomme's thought:

It is essential that each single item should be treated definitely and separately from all other items, and further, that the exact wording of the original note upon each separate item should be kept intact. There must be no juggling with the record, no emendations such as students of early literary work are so fond of attempting. Whatever the record, it must be accepted. The original account of every custom and belief is a corpus, not to be tampered with except for the purpose of scientific analysis, and then after that purpose has been effected all the parts must be put together again, and the original restored to its form. (Gomme 1908: 165)

I want to add one more thing about Yanagita's research area, which was Japan, or more concretely the village communities all over Japan. Gomme also studied the village community, but his purpose was to prove the existence of non-Aryan institutions against the Aryan institutions. In other words, Gomme's main aim was the discovery of difference and/or heterogeneity in Aryan society in England being compared with other countries' examples. The discovery of non-Aryan in England should have made a promise of proof of the early history of man — nationalism. Yanagita also studied the village community in Japan, but he did not attempt to find the heterogeneity as something like Gomme because of his hypothesis that the Japanese and Japanese culture were fundamentally homogeneous. Yanagita made an effort to discover and/or collect the early history of man, that is, the core of Japanese — nationalism. These differences between Gomme and Yanagita indicate not that the premises were different but rather that the countries' social frameworks were different. This curious difference shows that academic study is not independent but is influenced by the social condition.

IV. Conclusion

Let us first listen to Dorson:

Japanese folklorists, working in physical and intellectual isolation, did read the British folklorists and were much influenced by Gomme. The contemporary school of Japanese folklore, inspired by Kunio Yanagita, based its extensive research activities on the hypothesis of historical reconstructionism, and sought to recapitulate the ancient Japanese animistic religion. (Dorson 1972: 13)

This statement concisely depicts Yanagita Folklore and suggests its close relation with Gomme.³⁾In fact many folklorists have indicated Gomme's influence upon Yanagita, but they have never attempted a concrete investigation of the relation between Gomme and Yanagita. Though I am indebted to many Japanese folklorists and two Americans, Dorson and Morse, in this paper I think I have shown the influence of George Laurence Gomme's works upon Yanagita Kunio. This paper is not complete, but it presents Gomme and Yanagita's strong connection, though the connection is only from Yanagita's side. In the flow of world folkloric thought, the world map will indicate a connection between British Folklore and Japanese Folklore (Yanagita Folklore). However, it is important to note that Yanagita Folklore is not merely a copy of British Folklore, even Gomme's. What was essentially discarded from Gomme's scheme of folklore was the evolutionary and universal character of the comparative method.

Yanagita totally eliminated both Gomme's universality and the nature of anthropology. Yanagita developed a Japanized practical comparative method, which was in fact fruitful in Japan.

NOTES

- 1) Tsuboi Hirohumi's book *Imo To Nihonjin* (Potato and Japanese) is revolutionary in Japanese folklore. It consists of his edited seven articles from 1963 to 1979. He in fact proves that there exist two kinds of heterogeneous traditions in Japan as if Gomme proved the existence of both Aryans and non-Aryans in England. That is, symbolically, one is people whose staple is rice, and the other is people whose staple is potato. Later, Tsuboi became the president of Japanese Folklore Society.
- 2) This is not my discovery but several Japanese folklorists have discussed this matter, such as Wakamori (1953), Seki (1958), Inoguchi (1970), Fukuda (1972), Takakuwa (1978), and so on.
- 3) Dorson definitely made a mistake in this paragraph. That is to say that Dorson mistakes Yanagita Folklore for Japanese Folklore. I do not deny that Yanagita Folklore was the most influential and largest in Japan. But this does not mean Yanagita Folklore overcame other different groups of Folklore. Simply speaking, Japanese Folklore is not Yanagita Folklore and vice versa.

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