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Brief Remarks on Paradigm Shifts in Japanese Anthropology during the 20th Century

Josef Kreiner

Bonn-Tokyo

1. Early Beginnings of Ethnological Theory

Anthropological thinking has a long history in Japan and had already reached a rather high level during the Edo period. For these “roots”, I refer to the very compact and up to now the best review in a Western language by the founder of folklore studies in modern Japan, Yanagita Kunio (YANAGIDA (sic!) 1944). In the following, I will restrict myself, however, to the developments starting from the beginning of the modernization of Japan since the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Under the term “anthropology” I summarize here ethnology (cultural and/or social anthropology) and folklore studies (both referred to in Japanese as *minzokugaku*, but written with different characters), but will also include parts of neighboring sciences, such as sociology, linguistics, archaeology and prehistory, and physical anthropology, as far as they pertain to the central questions dealt with by the former.

The first of these different approaches to the study of the Japanese people, language, and culture, which aroused common interest in early Meiji Japan, was archaeology. In Tokyo, several study groups and circles began collecting and classifying the

surface findings of stone implements and ceramics. Names like that of Ninagawa Noritake or Heinrich (Henry) von Siebold should be mentioned here. In the Kansai Region, the English metallurgist William Gowland, a foreign employee at the Imperial Mint in Osaka, began as early as 1872 with excavations of tumuli and even Imperial tombs. Gowland dug at more than 400 sites all over the country, but this very promising beginning had no direct impact in Japan. For Gowland, see his quite late publication (GOWLAND 1897), and for his results and collection at the British Museum, see the summary by Princess Akiko of Mikasa (AKIKO OF MIKASA 2015).

For archaeology as well as for ethnology, the decisive year was 1877. In autumn of that year, Edward Sylvester Morse, newly appointed professor of zoological studies at the Imperial University of Tokyo, began with excavations at the shell-mound of Ōmori in the Southern outskirts of Tokyo. At the same time, Henry von Siebold, second son of the famous researcher on things Japanese, Philipp Franz von Siebold, in diplomatic services of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and amateur archaeologist, carried out excavations at the same site. Both rivals arrived at the same conclusion. The stone implements and primitive looking potsherds (today classified as Angyō type, Late Jōmon Period, ca. 3,000BC), pit dwellings and broken human bones they had excavated just could not belong to the ancestors of the Japanese people but must be attributed to some people who had settled in the island chain before the Japanese people had arrived. Who these people were, however, was heatedly disputed between them. Morse saw in them a cultural layer even older than the Ainu, who had come in only later and again had been dislodged by the Japanese “race”.

Siebold, on the contrary, saw in the Ainu the first population of the Japanese Islands. To support their respective hypotheses, both opponents undertook field research in Hokkaidō among the Ainu during the following year and published their final

results in 1879. These years, 1877 to 1879, are today commonly regarded as the beginning of Japanese archaeology and ethnology. Siebold included in his *Notes on Japanese Archaeology* (SIEBOLD 1879a) not only the results of his Ōmori-excavation but also his explorations in Kantō and Kansai over several years. In his analysis, he distinguished three different layers of culture, an old one (by him identified as Ainu) and characterized by stone implements and coarse, low-fired ceramics, followed by a culture using thin, hard-fired and wheel-made ceramics and bronze tools. The last, newest one with iron tools and tumuli he connects to a people originating at the Korean Peninsula. Today, we would speak of the Jōmon, Yayoi, and Kofun cultures. Despite this very convincing hypothesis, and despite publishing the very first textbook of archaeology in the same year (SIEBOLD 1879b), using for the first time the modern nomenclature *kōkogaku*, his work left no lasting impression. Morse, on the other hand, had his paper in Japanese language published on top of the first volume of the memoirs of the Department of Science at the Imperial University. His statement regarding the problem of whether the Ainu or a pre-Ainu population-culture had once settled in Japan determined the anthropological thinking over the subsequent 30 to 40 years.

Among the students of Morse were the leading figures in anthropological studies around the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. Tsuboi Shōgorō, born into a family of scholars of Western learning and medicine (“Holland studies” *Rangaku*) was one of those inspired by Morse’s lectures in his youth. When Tsuboi entered the Imperial University, Morse had already left Japan, but Tsuboi’s decision to take up the study of zoology remained firm. Together with some friends, he in 1884 established the Anthropological Society *Jinruigakkai* (today the Anthropological Society of Japan), twelve years before the Society of Archaeology and the Society of Linguistics came into being. After returning from a three year scholarship to Paris and

London, Tsuboi in 1892 was appointed to the chair of the newly established Institute of Anthropology at the Imperial University. He had the best connections with the leading intellectual circles, especially Mitsubishi, was acknowledged by Western colleagues, and made anthropology a fashionable science in Meiji Japan.

Especial attention was aroused by Tsuboi's hypothesis that the pre-Ainu people=culture that Morse had postulated had left traces in the Ainu oral traditions of a small, pygmy-like race that could take rain-shelter under big coltsfoot-leaves. He used the Ainu named of these fairy tale gnomes, Koroppokur, to describe the –in his opinion– first people to settle in Japan. This idea lingered on in the Japanese public opinion for almost a hundred years. It is basically, like all the other hypotheses since Siebold and Morse, what today is called a “replacement-theory” *okikae-setsu*, i.e. the assumption that one people=culture had replaced another, earlier or older one, without any interaction, assimilation, acculturation, borrowing of cultural elements etc. between these two people=cultures. And it says in the end nothing about the origins and substance (*Wesen*) of Japanese culture, or where it had come from and when.

Tsuboi's great vision of a succession of Koropokkur –Ainu– Japanese peoples=cultures was disproved quite early, when Tsuboi dispatched his assistant Torii Ryūzō in 1899 to conduct field research in the Kuril Islands in order to discover remnants of the Koropokkur. This, of course, could not be verified by Torii's famous monograph on the –at that time already rapidly disappearing– Kuril Ainu (Torii 1903 and 1919).

Torii, coming from a wealthy family in Tokushima, Shikoku, was interested from his early youth in folk traditions. Without being enrolled in a university course, he managed to obtain advice from Tsuboi Shōgorō, but despite being appointed to a professorship at the Imperial University and later Kokugakuin University for short years only, he during his lifetime was a stranger if not to say an outcast within the academic world. Conducting extensive

field research in various regions of East Asia –strikingly enough mostly in times, the Japanese expansion began to take interest in these regions (Taiwan, Liaotung Peninsula, Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia)– Torii combined archaeological findings with analysis of mythology, ancient history, classical literature as well as folk traditions, and pointed out concurrences with the Japanese culture. He had a great wealth of material accumulated, but was methodologically weak. This might be the reason why he was not taking part or involved in the developments during the formation years of Japanese ethnology and folklore studies in the 1930s, and tended to be forgotten in the years after the War. Nevertheless, the impact that Torii's seminars had on the young Oka Masao, whose hypothesis of the Japanese culture being a mixture of several different culture complexes or layers, to no small extent was influenced by Torii's thinking.

2. The Folklore Studies Paradigm at the Beginning of the 20th Century

Yanagita Kunio (1875-1962), lawyer and high-ranking civil servant at the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce worked at the Japanese mission to the League of Nations in Geneva from 1921 to 1923. This coincides with the time at which he wrote his summary of the findings from a journey along the east coast of Kyūshū and through the Ryūkyū chain of islands in 1920/21, which he published in 1925 under the title *Kainan shoki* [Brief Account from the South of the Sea] (Yanagita 1925).

The thread running through the whole work is the importance of the Ryūkyū islands as the “path” taken by Japanese culture from the South, South China, via the Kuroshio current from island to island (“stepping stones” is the term he uses) to Kyūshū and then on to Central Japan. Japanese culture is understood here to mean wet rice-growing culture. Yanagita thus appeared to depart completely from the thesis he had previously argued – in 1908

during his first Kyūshū trip, above all in Shiiba (in the north of the Miyazaki prefecture), he had encountered the tradition of non-sedentary populations engaged in slash-and-burn farming and hunting (*yama no tami*[*people of the mountains, or woods*]), which he saw as the original, actual inhabitants of Japan and publicised this in works as well known as *Nochi kari-kotoba no ki* [Late Records of Hunting Tales] (Yanagita 1909) or *Tōno monogatari* [The Legends of Tōno] (Yanagita 1910; in English in 1975). The very year after, in 1926, Yanagita then published what was perhaps the most important work on the subject of mountain dwellers, *Yama no jinsei* [Life in the Mountains] (Yanagita 1926), in which he pooled his impressions as chairman of the Board of Pardons and Paroles of the Ministry of Justice in gripping fashion. In 1934, the first major project was still for joint research headed by Yanagita on the mountain villages of Japan (Yanagita 1937). It was not until this project failed to lead to the findings he expected and even the most remote mountain villages also transpired to be nothing more than farming villages which were extremely difficult to access (Sasaki Kōmei later talks of “the chronicle of disappointment”) that Yanagita ended his work in this field. But even in his autobiographical retrospective *Kokyō shichijū-nen* [70 Years of My *Heimat*] (Yanagita 1959) he still stood by the thesis that there were at least two major cultures to be observed in Japan: slash-and-burn agriculture and hunting among mountain dwellers since the Jōmon period and wet-field rice cultivation since the Yayoi period (around 300 BC to 300 AD). The defining criteria, however, to be able to talk of Japanese culture, he postulated, was in fact wet rice cultivation, which he attributed to the rule of the Tennō-clan and its traditions.

In Tōkyō in 1925, Yanagita surrounded himself with a group of like-minded scholars, who debated folklore issues in discussion groups called *Danwa-kai* (the name *Mokuyō-kai* [Thursday group] only became customary as of January 1934). The lectures and discussions were edited and published in the

journal *Minzoku* [Ethnos]. The contents reflects very clearly what was certainly the broad range of interests addressed by Yanagita and the participants, who included the most important representatives of Japanese folklore studies:

- Orikuchi Shinobu (1887-1953): religious studies scholar, classicist, linguist; later holder of the first chair of folklore studies at Kokugakuin University and finally Keiō University;
- Nakayama Tarō (1876-1947), journalist, uses extensive material from primary and secondary sources in a methodologically rather questionable and primitive evolutionary way; alienated after dispute with Orikuchi;
- Iha Fuyū (1876-1947): linguist born in Okinawa, collector and researcher of the *Omorozōshi* [sacred songs from the 16th and 17th century] and the cultural history of Ryūkyū;
- Kindaiichi Kyōsuke (1882-1971): leading Ainu researcher, linguist, collector and researcher of the *Yukara* sagas of the Ainu people;
- Hayakawa Kōtarō (1889-1956): initially painter and student of Yanagita's younger brother Eikyū, then made a name for himself through his field studies in Central Japan, from which the classical study *Hana matsuri* [The flower festival *Hana-matsuri*] (Hayakawa 1930) arose;
- Aruga Kizaemon (1917-1979): from a family of large-scale landowners in Shinshū (Nagano), he first of all produced smaller works on the social organisation of villages and later developed the area of research of rural sociology in the 1940s (see below);
- Nikolaij Nevskij (1892-1937): Russian linguist, language teacher in Ōsaka, from where he regularly made the trip to Tōkyō to the discussion groups, interested in the Ryūkyū myths and shamanism in Tōhoku, returned to what was then Leningrad in 1927.

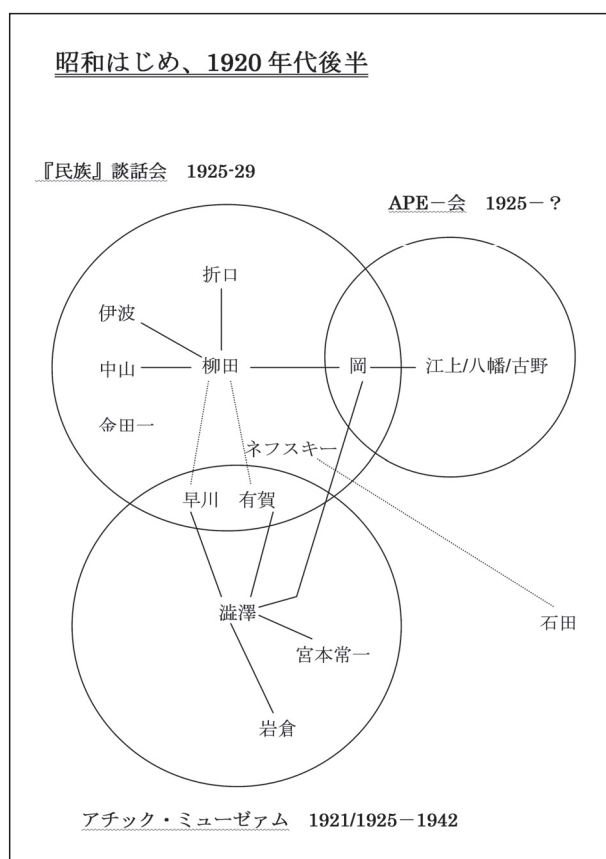


Fig. 1: Meeting of Ethnology and Folklore Studies in Discussion Groups in the 1920ies.

Yanagita, who at this time was working as lead writer for the *Asahi Shinbun*, was supported in the field of folklore studies by his assistant Okamura Chiaki. In early 1924, Okamura brought the young sociologist Oka Masao (1898-1982), who had gone to the same Fukashi middle school in Matsumoto, to Yanagita. Oka was hired as an “auxiliary”, lived later as a student (*shosei*) at Yanagita’s home and acted as the *de facto* editor of the magazine *Minzoku*, which was put in print by the publishing house of his older brother Oka Shigeo. The funds for publishing the magazine were provided by the banker and folklorist Shibusawa Keizō

(1896-1963, grandson of the entrepreneur Shibusawa Eiichi).
(Fig. 01)

Shibusawa himself had already gathered a group of like-minded individuals around himself back in 1921, who started to set up a small folklore museum in the attic of a neighbouring building at the seat of the Shibusawa family, the “Attic Museum”. This group became more active after Shibusawa’s return from London in 1925, conducted field studies together and started a prolific publishing career (*Attic Museum ihō* as of 1934, *Attic Museum nōto* from 1937 onwards). Aruga and Hayakawa initially worked in this group, too, later moving increasingly closer to Yanagita. Aruga, who during one of the excursions to the prefecture of Iwate encountered an extended family system of organisation in the village of Ishigami (cf Aruga 1939), made this the subject of a multi-year intensive field research project, from which his foundational work on the social structure of the Japanese village was to emerge in 1943 (see below).

The third anthropological discussion group that has to be cited is the APE-kai [APE group], whose name derives from the acronym for Anthropology, Prehistory and Ethnology. This group was a forum enabling young scholars with wide-ranging interests within the discipline of anthropology to meet, who as self-designated “apes” sought to strike a contrast with the dignified representatives of their disciplines. No further details are known about this group. The group included *inter alia* the ethnologists Oka Masao and Furuno Kiyoto (1899-1987), the archaeologist Egami Namio (1906-2002), the prehistorian Yawata Ichirō (1902-1987) and the anthropologist Suda Akiyoshi (1900-1990), who all came to play an extremely significant role in the further development of their disciplines.

In 1929 there was an altercation in Yanagita’s study group. Orikuchi, who, encouraged by Yanagita, had undertaken two Okinawa trips in 1921 and 1923, presented his impressions following these travels of a dual world view (*tokoyo* = the Other

Side, the Other World across the sea) and of a visit by higher beings from the Other Side to the world of humans at certain times of the year and the representation of this visit by masked and costumed young males. He found this worldview in classical literature, too, for instance in the *Man'yōshū* of the 8th century. In his opinion it formed the basis of Japanese theatre (*dengaku*, *sarugaku*, *nō*, *kyōgen*). Yanagita was working on similar subjects – the visit or invoking of the field/rice deity at the beginning of the year, field labour and thanks or sending the deity away to the mountains in the autumn (*ta-no-kami* = *yama-no-kami*) as fundamental religious ideas in rice cultivation. For whatever reason, Yanagita prevented the publication of Orikuchi's manuscript, however. As the minutes-taker, Oka had read the manuscript though and loved it. He extended the field of observation, incorporated economic and social trends, above all, though, included non-Japanese manifestations as well through his comparison with the bachelor and secret societies of Melanesia (cf the works of Heinrich Schurtz). In actual fact, he thus deprived both Yanagita and Orikuchi of the basis for their contextualisation of this phenomenon in the rice growing culture of Japan. Oka himself and his Viennese friend and associate Alexander Slawik were later to pursue this line of enquiry, for instance in comparative papers on Central European phenomena such as "Kultische Geheimbünde der Japaner und Germanen" [Secret cultic societies of the Japanese and Germanic Peoples] (Slawik 1936), "Ōsutoria no fuyu-haru no koro" [Austria at the Transition between Winter/Spring] (Oka 1959) and from there on to Mircea Eliades *Le mythe de l'éternel retour* (1949) or generally with phenomena in the East-Asian sphere in beyond Japan ("Zum Problem des 'Sakralen Besuchers' in Japan" [On the Problem of the "Sacred Visitor" in Japan], Slawik 1959).

After Oka's article "Ijin sono ta" [About Strangers and Other Topics] had been published in *Minzoku* (3, 6, 1928), he felt it was scientifically dishonest to continue to withhold Orikuchi's

paper *Tokoyo oyobi marebito* [The Other World and the Sacred Guests] and published this, without first securing Yanagita's consent, again in *Minzoku* (4, 3, 1929). The discussion group was disbanded as a result, the magazine closed down. Orikuchi founded a folklore society with friends with its own publication *Minzokugaku* [Folklore], which was released from 1929 to 1934. Oka "fled" Yanagita's home and had decided to give up science and scholarship altogether. Shibusawa stopped him, giving him a scholarship so that he could study ethnology from scratch abroad. Oka, who the summer after graduating from university in Yotsuya had bought the work *Völker und Kulturen* [Peoples and Cultures] by Wilhelm Schmidt and Wilhelm Koppers (1924) (most likely in the Enderle book shop) and was fascinated by it, chose Vienna as his place of study.

His teachers were P. Wilhelm Schmidt, whom he highly venerated as a person his whole life, without sharing his methodological hypotheses (Kulturkreislehre) [doctrine of cultural circles], P. Wilhelm Koppers, Josef Weninger (anthropology), Oswald Menghin (ancient history) and, above all, the lecturer Robert (von) Heine-Geldern, whose work "Urheimat und früheste Wanderungen der Austronesier" [Original Homeland and Earliest Migrations of the Austronesians] (Heine-Geldern 1932) in my opinion influenced Oka's way of working to the greatest extent. In 1933, Oka acquired his doctoral degree with a dissertation on *Kulturschichten in Alt-Japan* [Cultural Stratification in Early Japan], which he extended to include two further volumes by 1935 (Oka 2012). In addition to this, his contact with other students such as Clyde Kluckhohn, Edwin Loeb (both USA), Gaston van Bulck (Belgium), Bernhard Vroocklage (Netherlands), Helmut Petrie (Germany), Milovan Gavazzi (Yugoslavia) and Walter Hirschberg (Austria), but also his acquaintance with researchers such as Kaj Birket-Smith (1906-2004, Copenhagen), Nils Erland Nordenskjöld (1877-1932, Stockholm), Leo Frobenius (1873-1938, Frankfurt) and many others he sought to meet in Europe

was also important for the development of ethnology in Japan. In the spring of 1935, Oka returned to Japan.

3. Beginning of Ethnology and new Paradigms in Folklore Studies: the 1930s

In 1928, the Imperial University of Taihoku (Taipei) was founded, at which an Anthropological Institute was established under Utsushigawa (also: Utsurigawa) Nenzō (staff: Miyamoto Enjin and Kanaseki Takeo, later *inter alia* Kokubu Naoichi, Kano Tadao, Mabuchi Tōichi), which resumed the ethnological research that had been interrupted for a considerable length of time into the native mountain tribes of Austronesian origin. Much later study groups were established in this context on the ethnological study of the Japanese South Seas mandated territory on the one hand and the Chinese population of Taiwan on the other. The latter, in which above all Nakamura Akira (Tetsu) was very actively involved, published the magazine *Minzoku Taiwan* [Folklore studies of Taiwan] from 1941 to 1945 and was even able to win over Yanagita Kunio to the idea of a perspective of folklore studies encompassing the whole of East Asia.

The journal *Chōsen minzoku* [Korean Folklore Studies] had already been released in Keichō (Seoul) back in 1933. At the Imperial University there, individuals such as Akiba Takashi (1888-1954, student of Durkheim, Malinowski and others) and the young Izumi Seiichi (1915-1970), who worked at the University of Tōkyō after the war, taught and researched. The folklorist Ōmachi Tokuzō started working at the Kenkoku Daigaku [National Foundation University] of the newly created state structure of Manchukuo in Hsingking (Chángchūn) and founded the Japanese-language magazine *Manshū Minzoku Gakkai kaihō* [Magazine of the Society of the Study of Manchurian Customs].

In this atmosphere of new beginnings and renewal, in 1930 the Oka Shoin publishing house of Oka Shigeo was planning

a multi-volume survey (*kōza*) of the ethnological working method. The preparations had already been largely completed when Yanagita put an end to the undertaking by exercising his veto (details in Oka, Sh. 1974). The foundation of a Society of Ethnology, *Minzoku Gakkai*, by Shibusawa after this in 1934 was something of an act of liberation against the perpetual grip of folklore studies and in particular the grip of Yanagita. The sinologist Shiratori Kurakichi was elected its first president; in the summer of 1934, Oka Masao was already selected as the representative to the first International Congress of the Union des Sciences Anthropologiques et Ethnologiques (USAE) in London from his base in Vienna. The mouthpiece of the new society became the magazine *Minzokugaku kenkyū* (Japanese Journal of Ethnology); the annual meetings were hosted in cooperation with the Anthropological Society on the insistence of Shibusawa, who repeatedly called for and supported an interdisciplinary orientation, as the “Rengō Taikai” (Joint Meeting of the Anthropological Society of Nippon (Japan) and the Japanese Society of Ethnology) from 1936 to 1994. (Fig. 02)

Important impetus was also expected from Wilhelm Schmidt’s visit to Japan. Oka was no doubt behind this invitation issued by the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai [Society for International Cultural Relations]. Schmidt, who had travelled to Peking for lectures at the Catholic Fu Jên University was welcomed there by Oka, who accompanied him to Tōkyō via Korea. The main event was a lecture by Schmidt on 22 June 1935 on “Neue Wege zur Erforschung der ethnologischen Stellung Japans” [New avenues of research into the ethnological status of Japan], which made only scarce reference to Oka’s Vienna dissertation and its contents.

In conversations between Schmidt and Baron Mitsui Takaharu (1900-1983), Oka set in motion plans for the establishment of an Institute of Japanese Studies with an ethnological orientation at the University of Vienna, which he hoped to head and at which he aimed to complete the final editing of his extensive

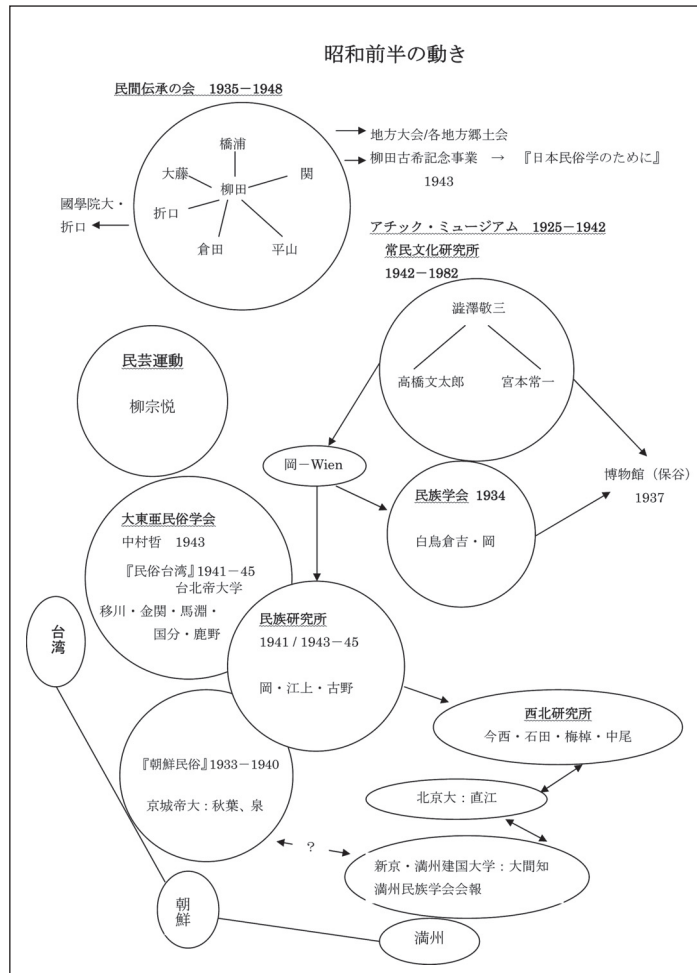


Fig. 2: Separation and Differentiation of Ethnology and Folklore Studies in the 1930ies.

dissertation. At the same time, the idea was to realign Japanology, which in Europe was traditionally seen as a strict philology. Under Oka and Slawik as his assistant, the *Japan Institut* at the University of Vienna, which was not founded until 1938 after many difficulties, put this concept into practice in its teaching, too – the dissertation by Thusnelda Wang (= Nelly Naumann) under Koppers' supervision on *Das Pferd in Sage und Brauchtum*

Japans [The Horse in Japanese Myths and Customs] (Wang 1946) is the best example of this, although the author was not able to listen directly to Oka herself. Oka was unable to continue to develop his “*Kulturschichten in Alt-Japan*” however, as all his interlocutors had disappeared from the university or from the German Reich – Schmidt with the Anthropos Institute to Fribourg in Switzerland, Koppers to India, Fürer-Haimendorf to London (SOAS) and Heine-Geldern to the US (Museum of Natural History, New York). Oka took a sabbatical semester in November 1940 and returned to Japan.

In connection with the movements inside the discipline of ethnology it is important to also address the efforts starting in around 1937 to found a Museum of Ethnology. The expansion of the Japanese field of interest beyond the actual colonies make these efforts understandable – it is also during this period that the museums in Toyohara/Sachalin (1917/1937), Taihoku (Taipei, 1920/1926) and Ryojun (Port Arthur) were also founded or expanded. Shibusawa and Takahashi Buntarō, a landowner from the Saitama prefecture and amateur ethnologist assumed a leading role here. In 1937, on a piece of land in Hōya donated by Takahashi to the Society of Ethnology a small museum was founded, to which Shibusawa entrusted his collection. Larger plans failed at the time, though. That notwithstanding, this collection was to form the core of the present National Museum of Ethnology in Ōsaka that would finally come into being in the 1970s.

In the field of folklore studies, Yanagita had intervened in 1934 with his thesis on *Minkan denshō-ron* [Theory of Popular Tradition]. It contains the important statement that the ultimate goal of the development of folklore studies geared towards one people or its culture alone, is comparative ethnology. In conjunction with the only briefly aforementioned developments in Taiwan, Korea and Manchuria, to my mind this indicates a clear change of thinking on the part of Yanagita, whose endeavours

towards East-Asian folklore studies should by no means be dismissed as merely lip service, as Kawamura Minato did, for instance (1996).

In July 1935, a series of folklore studies lectures was held over several days in Tōkyō at an event entitled “*Minzokugaku kōshūkai*” on the occasion of Yanagita’s 60th birthday (*kanreki*). It provided the opportunity to pool all the forces active in this area; even the divide that had emerged in the earlier discussion group was bridged. Orikuchi gave up his folklore studies association and a joint *Minkan Denshō no Kai* [Folklore Society] was founded with branch institutions in all regions including the colonies. The mouthpiece was the magazine *Minkan denshō*, which then endeavoured to publish the latest developments in the field of folklore studies in Europe through recapitulatory discussions (cf. Ishii 2012).

Amongst the listeners was Ishida Eiichirō, who had just been released from prison after serving a sentence spanning several years for the dissemination of “dangerous ideology”. Ishida had already heard of Yanagita’s work whilst studying at the University of Kyōto through Nikolaj Nevskij. The long period in prison had given him the opportunity to study *inter alia* the works of Morgan, Mommsen and Frazer’s *Golden Bough* (1890) –all in the original language– and to get to grips with the mythology of the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi*. Now he was seeking to make contact with the academic community, but was constantly under surveillance by the secret police. In this situation, when for him “in the wilderness of Japan [...] there was no air left to breath” (Ishida), Oka took him under his wing. First, he arranged a marriage with Yanagita’s great niece; second, he recommended he study in Vienna (1937-1939), where Ishida was apparently greatly impressed by the prehistorian Franz Hančar (*Das Pferd in prähistorischer und früher historischer Zeit*, 1956) [The Horse in Pre- and Early History] (cf. Ishida’s *Kappa komabiki-kō*, 1948; *The Kappa Legend*, 1950). After the war broke out in Europe,

Ishida returned to Japan and participated in the fieldwork of the Academy of Sciences on Sakhalin.

4. Folklore Studies and Ethnology during the War and early Post-war Period

The closer Japan became to a decision on war and peace in around 1940, the clearer the need for comprehensive information on the society, culture and history of the peoples in Japan's surroundings became to the political, military and economic decision-makers. Oka is likely to have been the one who best understood the significance of this moment in history for the further development of ethnology in Japan. He himself later wrote that after arriving in Japan he had learnt of the plans to found a National Institute of the (Study of) Peoples "Minzoku Kenkyūjo" at the Ministry of Education and Culture (Monbushō) and begun to act ("*hashiri-mawatta*"). And he was successful along with others. In August 1941, the Kono cabinet adopted a decision to establish this institution. The collapse of the government and the ensuing events in the run-up to the Pacific War were to delay the preparations, however, and it was not until January 1943 that the institute began operating.

By 1942, however, Oka was already travelling around Manchukuo and above all occupied South-East Asia with a mandate from the High Command of the Imperial Army. Oka assumed the position of managing director (*sōmu buchō*) in the organisation of the National Institute of Ethnology. Egami, Furuno and Yawata *inter alia* were heads of department, all former members of the APE group (see above). The Society of Ethnology became a Minzokugaku Kyōkai and was registered as a support organisation. In Zhang jia kou = Kagar (Inner Mongolia) a *de facto* branch institute (nominally of the Japan-Mongolia Friendship Society and as such part of the Foreign Ministry) was set up under the name of Seihoku Kenkyūjo

[North-West Research Institute]. The director was Imanishi Kinji, a geographer and cultural studies scholar from the University of Kyōto (1941 major field research in Micronesia, esp. Ponape); Ishida was appointed vice-director (putting him outside the reach of the secret police). Staff members were, *inter alia*, Umesao Tadao and Nakao Sasuke, both ecology specialists from the University of Kyōto and of immense importance for the development of ethnological theory in the latter half of the century.

The details of the work of both institutions, their scientific undertakings and their forays astray, entangled in the military planning, have yet to be extensively researched. The comprehensive material stored in the Museum of Ethnology in Ōsaka has only been analysed closely by Nakao Katsumi (1997).

Folklore studies and Yanagita did not make much of an appearance –compared to the role of German folklore in the Third Reich– during the war. Yanagita himself had already foreseen the defeat to come and the radical social and cultural transformation to be expected following this and the cultural influence of America early on. It is my opinion that Yanagita had consequently already devised the three volume series, which was published in 1946/47, entitled *Shin kokugaku-dan* [New conversations about *kokugaku* (= national learning)] during the final year of the war. This is eminently clear in the case of the important work published in 1946 but already penned in April and May 1945 [!] on the Japanese family system *Senzo no hanashi* (Yanagita 1946; in English in 1970 as *About our Ancestors*).

Another work was to become of crucial importance, however, for the later development of the anthropological disciplines in Japan but also for the Western interpretations of Japan, that of *Nihon kazoku seido to kosaku seido* [The Japanese Family and Tenancy System] by Aruga Kizaemon (1943). Aruga builds here on his aforementioned field research in Iwate. Methodologically,

he combines earlier Yanagita approaches, above all his theory on the historical emergence of farming villages (cf. *Nihon nōmin-shi* [History of the Farmers], Yanagita 1931) with those of Yamada Moritarō, a member of the Marxist Kōza group, on the structure of agricultural reproductive forces (*Nihon shihon shugi bunseki* [Analysis of Japanese Capitalism], Yamada 1934). Building on this, Aruga defines the village as a concentration of *ie* families, which form different groups with different functions. Depending on the nature of these *ie* groupings, he distinguishes between two types of Japanese farming villages: the first with clear stratification of the different *ie*, which are incorporated into a cross-generational stem-branch-family group (*dōzoku*), and the second, in which the individual *ie* of the village are all on the same level (*kumiai*). The first, it was claimed, could be found in the Tōhoku region and could be seen as a closed group in economic (landowner-tenant), ideological-religious (ancestry, hereditary office of the Shintō priest) and social (patron-client) terms.

This theory was adopted by Fukutake Tadashi and expanded on, *inter alia* in his work entitled *Nihon nōson no shakai-teki seikaku* [The Social Characteristics of the Japanese Farming Village] (Fukutake 1949). Fukutake in turn made use of the approaches of Yanagita (1930) –old cultural heritage is found in regions away from the cultural centre, so in North-East Honshū and South Kyūshū, here above all for reasons related to dialect and language– and of Yamada (advanced type of capital reproduction in the centre, whilst this lags behind in the Tōhoku region). From this he deduces a historical development leading from the underdeveloped *dōzoku ketsugō* type of village in the North-East of Japan all the way to the *kōgumi ketsugō* type of West Japan, although only the former is clearly defined.

This line is later continued by the law sociologist Isoda Isamu, who sees the hereditary social status of the individual as defined by the position of the *ie* he belongs to. Isoda, too,

then distinguishes between two types of village, a first in which language, title, marriage circle, seating arrangements at gatherings, influence, etc. of the individual are defined by the class he belongs to, and a second where all this does not apply (negative definition). Kawashima Takeyoshi, *inter alia*, adopted a similar line of argumentation in his *Ideorogī toshite no kazoku seido* [The Family System as Ideology] (Kawashima 1957), in which he draws a distinction between villages with a high degree of cohesion or diffusion in their societies.¹

An epigone of this line of research is Nakane Chie, whose publications –which were hugely successful and influential in the West– such as *Tate shakai no ningen kankei* [Interpersonal Relationships in a Vertically Structured Society] (Nakane 1966; in English in 1970 as *Japanese Society*) may be generally known in Japan –in a series with journalistic attempts at a *nihonjinron*– but were unable to impact the scientific community. It was not down to chance that even though she was involved in the organisation of the Japanese Society of Ethnology, Nakane was not involved in the further academic development of this discipline.

The discourse described above also formed a, if not *the* key research focus of the young US sociologists and anthropologists working at the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division, Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) of the GHQ – let me name by way of example just John Pelzel (Harvard), John Bennett (Ohio) and Iwao Ishino, who were later joined by Herbert Passim (Harvard), initially stationed in Hakata. Among the some fifty assistants and staff members of the section there were also many Japanese folklorists and ethnologists who had lost their positions in the colonies and occupied territories or at the National Institute of Ethnology at the end of the war: Seki Keigo, Sakurada Katsunori, Ōtō Tokihiko, Takeuchi Toshimi,

¹ One difference is striking with Kawashima, however – the second type in which social life is not organised on the basis of the *ie* group, is fishing villages according to him.

Kitano Seiichi, Mabuchi Tōichi, but above all Ishida Eiichirō. It appears to have been first and foremost Kitano who introduced the theory he developed (by way of contrast to Yanagita) of the *oyabun-kobun* [patron-client] system as the basis of the social organisation of Japanese farming villages into the debate at the CIE. Kitano and the sociologists Tobata Seiichi and Suzuki Eitarō are cited as the lead scientists in the field study conducted in summer 1947 and autumn 1948 in twelve farming villages, which Arthur F. Raper (US Department of Agriculture) was in charge of and which he and others published under the title *The Japanese Village in Transition* (Raper *et al.* 1950). A thread leads from here to the studies by the Okayama project at Michigan University (1950-1955) under Richard Beardsley, John Hall and Robert Ward (students were, *inter alia*, Edward Norbeck, John B. Cornell, Robert Smith and Joseph Kitagawa) in the small village of Nii'ike, which was not published until 1959 as *Village Japan* (Beardsley, Hall and Ward 1959), above all, though, to the study *Paternalism in the Japanese Economy* (Bennett and Ishino 1963). (Fig. 03)

5. Paradigms of the 1950s

The overall development of the anthropological disciplines in the second half of the 20th century is dominated by the questions surrounding the emergence of the Japanese people and its culture. All the other research approaches develop out of this set of questions or are connected to it to varying degrees of closeness. The organisational foundations for folklore studies were the Minzokugaku Kenkyūjo [Institute of Folklore Studies] founded by Yanagita 1947 at his private home in the Tōkyō district of Seijō, which also became the seat of the newly founded *Nihon Minzoku Gakkai* (*Japanese Folklore Society*) in 1949. For ethnology, the *Nihon Minzokugaku Kyōkai* (*Japanese Society of Ethnology*), which continued to exist as an association based

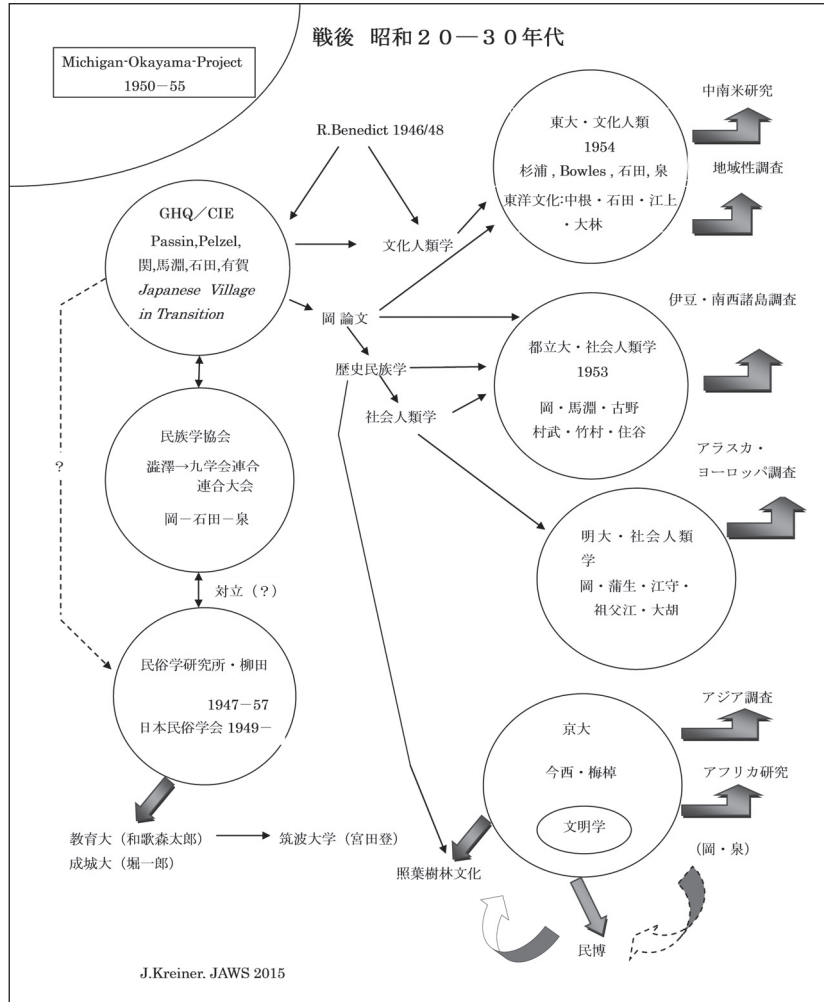


Fig. 3: Developments in the Post-War Period

in Hōya (small museum with the objects from the Shibusawa collection also located there; see above), and the publication *Minzokugaku kenkyū* (*Japanese Journal of Ethnology*) provided the anchor point. The president and editor was Ishida Eiichirō. Oka Masao feared possible charges and a “purge” due to his work at the National Institute of Ethnology, which had been

officially disbanded in the autumn of 1945, and had withdrawn to Nagano. Shibusawa, purged from his positions in the political and economical world, remained in the sphere of ethnology and folklore studies and continued to be a prominent advocate above all of interdisciplinary research. The joint annual conferences of the Japanese Society of Ethnology with the Society of (physical) Anthropology were continued and in 1947, *Kyūgakkai Rengō*, an umbrella association of at first six then later nine anthropological disciplines, was founded, which included folklore studies, ethnology, sociology, linguistics, psychology, anthropology, geography, ethnomusicology and religious studies, and which on the one hand conducted joint field research and on the other addressed issues relating to specific topics (including fire, rice, rationality, gender, urbanisation) in multi-year cycles.

Both folklore studies and ethnology were not initially university disciplines. In the early 1950s, it was first of all ethnology that was able to gain a footing at the University of Tōkyō (Institute of Cultural Anthropology) and the Tōkyō Metropolitan University (Institute of Social Anthropology), and finally in 1960 at Meiji University (also Social Anthropology); followed somewhat later by folklore studies at the Tōkyō Kyōiku University in connection with the Institute for Japanese Historical Research under Wakamori Tarō.

The CIE section under Colonel Donald Nugent triggered the paradigm shift. The major role played by Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946) in US occupation policy is undisputed. It is also clear that the young sociologists and anthropologists from the US tried to promote the theoretical approach of *cultural anthropology*. This led, for instance, to Benedict's work being translated into Japanese as early as in 1948 under the title *Kiku to katana*; Ishida published responses to it by Yanagita Kunio and Watsuji Tetsurō in *Minzokugaku kenkyū*. In 1952, Ishida and Izumi were currently at Harvard University and other American institutes. Gordon Bowles and

above all John Pelzel, for their part, were involved in establishing the Institute of Cultural Anthropology at the University of Tōkyō and held what in some cases were guest professorships lasting several years. Research funds came in abundance from the US.

GHQ and CIE did, however, keep a look out for other research approaches in addition to this. Allegedly, and highly probably, it was Ishida who drew Colonel Nugent's attention to Oka's Vienna dissertation "Kulturschichten in Alt-Japan". How and in which way the six volumes of this dissertation were brought from Vienna to Tōkyō is a moot point. Oka was handed them in January 1947 by Nugent and told to translate them. Oka did not, but he did make this dissertation the basis of a three-day symposium in May 1948, which –with Ishida chairing the discussion– Oka's fellow scholars from the APE study group and from the National Institute of Ethnology, Egami Namio and Yawata Ichirō attended. The results were published in *Minzokugaku kenkyū* (cf Oka, Yawata and Egami 1949) and met with great interest. The key thesis is that Japanese culture is not uniform but composed of several complexes (strata), which penetrated Japan at different times from different regions of the (northern) East Asian continent and South-East Asia and which as strata can be assigned to prehistoric find contexts. Oka himself revised these theses several times in the years that followed –the number and sequence of the postulated cultural strata vary– and discussed them in anthologies (see, for instance Oka *et al.* 1958). Below Oka's strata as in 1956:

1. The first and oldest stratum: planter culture with tuber cultivation (taro, yams) and hunting, matrilineal society, secret societies, middle Jōmon period, widespread in South-East Asia and Oceania;
2. Culture with dry rice cultivation and hunting, matrilineal, end of the Jōmon period, Austro-Asiatic linguistic family;
3. Dry-field cultivation culture with hunting and animal

husbandry, patrilineal *χara* clan organisation, early Yayoi period, widespread in North-East China and Korea;

4. Culture with wet-field rice cultivation and fishing, male-oriented, the establishment of age classes, Yayoi period, southern origin, Austronesian linguistic family;
5. Culture of a ruling people, patriarchal *uji* clan organisation, Altaic language family, formation of the state.

Linguistics was the first neighbouring discipline to address this paradigm. In 1957 *Nihongo no kigen* [The Origins of the Japanese Language] by Ōno Susumu was published. The assumption that Japanese is a blend of southern, Austronesian and northern, Altaic languages (language elements) is hotly debated to this very day.

Archaeology has largely rejected the question of Japan being conquered by horse-riding nomads around the middle or in the second half of the Kofun period extracted by Egami Namio (1967) from Oka's system context (strata 5) and the foundation of the ancient Japanese state with Tennō rule based on this. The doyen of Japanese archaeology, Mori Kōichi, has pointed out, however, that the criticism levelled at Egami is methodologically dubious. The conceptual connection between Egami's theory and the emergence of high-culture postulated in particular for the Near East² as a result of the layering of an earlier farming population and horse-riding nomads may never have been clearly expatiated, but did certainly appeal to Japanese sensitivities: this would mean that Japan had become a fully fledged high-culture of its own even before the strong Chinese cultural influence starting in middle of the 1st millennium. All that was lacking was a system for writing! On the other hand, the assumption that the rule of the Tennō was of North-East Asian, indeed Korean origin touched on other taboo areas. For Ishida Eiichirō, though, who

² This is one of Egami's fields of work, who was involved in excavations in Iraq.

increasingly turned to American Studies from 1954 onwards, from the Mexicanist standpoint, the assumption of such a layering or horse-mounted nomad migration is completely superfluous for the formation of the state and High Culture (*Hochkultur*).

Egami's approach of course challenged the discipline of historical scholarship in particular. Given the very broad rejection, it is notable that a leading ancient historian and founding director of the Rekihaku [National Museum of Japanese History] in Sakura adopted large sections of Egami's findings (Inoue 1960). A symposium in 1964 of the exact same title also built on this and was attended by Ishida, the historian Inoue, Egami and the prehistorian Kobayashi Yukio.

In historically focused ethnology, Oka found a successor in Ōbayashi Taryō (1929-2001), who was working unrelentingly first and foremost in the area of Japanese mythology research and who was awarded his doctoral title in 1959 in Vienna under the supervision of Heine-Geldern (for instance, his *Nihon shinwa no kigen* [The Origin of Japanese Mythology], Ōbayashi 1973). Individual approaches from Oka's system of theories have also been used by Sasaki Kōmei and Tsuboi Yōbun (Hirofumi). In 1971, Sasaki presented his classic *Inasaku izen* [Before Rice Cultivation] (republished as recently as in 2011), in which he presents cultural connections between a slash-and-burn farming culture (buckwheat, millet, boar hunting) in the south-west of Japan and cultures in Yunnan, Bhutan and Nepal (stratum 2 for Oka). Tsuboi on the other hand in his farther-reaching *Imo to nihonjin* [The Japanese and the Tubers] (1979) investigates a cultural complex of tuber cultivation (stratum 1 for Oka).

At the beginning of the 1960s, the ethnologists of the *Jinbun Kagaku Kenkyūjo* (Institute for Research in Humanities) of the University of Kyōto, which was newly founded in 1959, met in discussion sessions (which later also became known as the "Umesao Salon") and developed out of Oka's approach what in the 1970s and 1980s was to become the dominant "theory of the

culture of broad-leaved forests” (*Shōyō jurin bunka-ron*). This refers to a complex of different cultural elements, including, *inter alia*, dry rice, tea, fermented fish filet *sushi* and spring festivals with free choice of partner/nuptials, connecting South-West Japan with South China and an “East-Asian (Fertile) Crescent” from Yunnan via the Shan region all the way to the southern slopes of the Himalayas (stratum 1 or 2 for Oka). This group included the ethno-botanist Nakao Sasuke and the ethnologists Umesao Tadao (1920-2010), Sasaki Kōmei, Ishige Naomichi – each one of them students of Imanishi Kinji (1902-1992) and, in the case of Nakao and Umesao, in tandem with Imanishi, involved both in the Ponape expedition as well as active at the North-West Institute in Inner Mongolia during the final years of the war. From this group at the National Museum of Ethnology came also an important impetus for ethnological research in food-culture (*shokuji-bunka*), especially in the years after the inauguration of a research center by the reknown foodmaker *Ajinomoto* in 1982. To name just two leading researchers in this field, I name here Ishige Naomichi, third director general at the Museum, and Kumakura Isao.

Criticism of this paradigm of a complex Japanese culture emanating from different sources, came, as already mentioned from Ishida Eiichirō and from the leading physical anthropologist Suzuki Hisashi, who in his work *Nihonjin no hone* [Bones of the Japanese] (Suzuki 1963) showed that change in the food supply in the space of just a few generations led to a more or less radical change in skeletal structure, with the result that physical anthropology could not corroborate the assumption of “mass migration”. Yanagita Kunio voiced the heaviest criticism in emotional terms, lastly in his *Kokyō shichichū-nen* [Seventy Years of My *Heimat*] (Yanagita 1959), which at the same time constitutes his academic autobiography. For him there were two cultures on the Japanese islands, that of the “forest people” (*yama no tami*; slash-and-burn farming and hunting) and that

of the wet-field rice farmers. This has been duly noted only very rarely, as I already pointed out at the beginning. It is only the second culture that he calls “Japanese”. This thesis of his applied to his whole work and endeavour after 1945.³

In this context, the Ryūkyū chain of islands gained ever more in significance for Yanagita (cf the aforementioned on his theory of the route taken by rice growing culture to reach Japan), this all the more so because he viewed the political and administrative separation of the Okinawa islands from the Japanese motherland at the time as highly dangerous for culture and science (cf Yanagita 1947). On top of this there was the loss of his closest associate, Iha Fuyū, who died that year. From Yanagita’s perspective it felt like nothing less than a stroke of fate that Mabuchi Tōichi, who had been educated at the Taihoku Imperial University (Taipei), conducted research in Makassar during the war and then worked at the CIE was not included in the planned Ainu research in 1949 by the *Minzokugaku Kyōkai* and from that point on to the end of his life remained a sworn enemy of Ishida, Oka and the whole of Japanese ethnologists. Mabuchi therefore presented himself to Yanagita, who urged him to conduct Okinawa research. Mabuchi subsequently heavily influenced the author (Kreiner) himself, Cornelius Ouwehand and indeed European Okinawa research as a whole through Erika Kaneko (student of Heine-Geldern). Yanagita himself tried to defend his theory in a series of lectures from 1950 onwards at the Society for Ethnology, the *Okinawa Bunka Kyōkai* [Society for Okinawan Culture] and the cited study groups on rice-growing etc. He provided a summary of his scattered published lectures in his last work *Kaijō no michi* [The Way over the Sea] (Yanagita 1961) shortly before his death in 1962. Ishida coined the fitting phrase in the title of his obituary: “Unfinished but enduring”.

³ Cf, for instance his participation in the important study groups *Ni’iname Kenkyūkai* [study group on the (rice harvest festival) ni’iname] from 1951 onwards and *Inasakushi Kenkyūkai* [study group on rice-growing] from 1952 onwards.

It was Ishida, in particular, who through his work in the field of comparative ethnology, such as the aforementioned *Kappa komabiki-kō* [*The Kappa Legend. A Comparative Ethnological Study on the Japanese Water-spirit Kappa and its Habit of Trying to Lure Horses into the Water*] (Ishida 1948) and *Momotarō no haha* [*The Mother of Momotarō*] (Ishida 1956), in which he traces a circle from the corn god of Yucatan through Japan all the way to the mother deities of the Mediterranean, had tried to break open the narrow perspective of Japanese folklore studies – and as a result came heavily under fire in 1948, not from Yanagita himself it has to be said, but from his followers, for instance in the magazine *Minkan denshō*. After Ishida had attacked the “narrowness of Japanese folklore studies” in his extensive reply to this, Yanagita began to disband his group and felt his life’s work was threatened if not to say even destroyed. In 1957, in several steps, Yanagita closed the Institute of Folklore Studies. Wakamori Tarō tried to collect what was left at the Tōkyō Kyōiku Daigaku (Tokyo University of Education); Yanagita’s library went to the Seijō University. And yet, Yanagita’s influence on subsequent scholars like Tsuboi continued to be great; this holds true in particular for Okinawan research (Itō Mikiharu, Cornelius Ouwehand, the author himself).

Oka had the outcomes of his powerful 1948 symposium (see above) published in book form and in summary form in two brief articles until 1958, albeit with differing conclusions in each case. In my view, this clearly demonstrates that as of roughly 1950 he stopped working on this set of issues. In 1953 he took over the Chair of Sociology [!] at the Tōkyō Metropolitan University –and along with it the young scholar Sumiya Kazuhiko who had been appointed as an assistant to Tōbata there shortly before– and gave the institute *nolens volens* the name “Institute of Social Anthropology”. He immediately began to plan village research, above all in the Tōkai region (west coast of the Izu peninsular, village of Ihama; 1953) and on the Izu Islands (1957), supported by

his “team” Sumiya, Sofue Takao and Gamō Masao, joined later also by Muratake Seiichi, Ayabe Tsuneo and Takemura Takuji among others (cf Gamō, Tsuboi and Muratake 1975). The aim was to develop a positive description of social organisation at village level in an area that was not marked by strong stem-branch-family groups. Here, Oka’s work ties in with that of the rural sociologists from Aruga to Fukutake, Isoda all the way to Kawashima. Two outcomes are worthy of note – the development of an age class system (ascribed age-grades) related, though not identical to the young men’s organisations (*wakamonogumi*) in folklore studies) and the highlighting of the role of “special housing”, such as menstruation, birth and retirement huts or bachelor and girls’ houses, which in each case causes a weakening of the family group. This so defined type of Japanese village was able to be compared and contrasted to the *dōzoku ketsugō* type of the North-East of Japan, but not be explained as a historical evolution – this is where the paradigm of the complex origin of Japanese culture comes into play. Gamō in particular subsequently increasingly examined questions of the organisation of kinship (1960) and attempted to describe social organisation at village level from this standpoint. From 1955 to 1957 he participated in the second joint research project by the *Kyūgakkai Rengō* on the Amami Ōshima islands in northern Ryūkyū, and in tandem with the folklorist Seki Keigo discovered and described a bilateral *kindred* (*harōji*) as formative in the society there. With the publication of this research (*Kyūgakkai Rengō Amami Ōshima Kyōdō Chōsa Iinkai* 1959; Ōmachi *et al.* 1959), if not already before, the scientific interest in the paradigm of a patriarchal-patrilineally structured Japanese society was weakened if not extinguished at all.

Starting in 1960, the Institute of Cultural Anthropology of the University of Tōkyō conducted a multi-year research project entitled *Nihon bunka no chiikisei* [The Regionality of Japanese Culture] on Gamō’s line of enquiry into the types of kinship organisation, in particular as to the regional spread

of the two types seen to be in opposition to each other of the unilinear = patrilineal and cross-generationally structured *maki* type (corresponding to the *dōzoku ketsugō* village type of Aruga and Fukutake) and the bilateral *harōji* in South-West Japan which encompassed just five generations (seen from the ego's point of view two generations before and after). It is unclear to what extent the Harvard Yenching Institute as provider of funding and John Pelzel, but possibly also Bennett and Iwao, played a role in this following the CIE research. Only a partial and very delayed analysis was provided by Nagashima and Tomoeda (1984). For the frustration many of the participating young scholars had experienced due to lacking guidance from above, see Nagashima (2012).

Ainu research, which was increasingly coming into play following the end of the war, was moving in completely different territory. For ethnology, the Ainu were the last remaining research subject after the loss of the colonies and the occupied territories and in light of the lengthy shortage of foreign currency, which hindered overseas research. The Society of Ethnology had already planned a large-scale joint research project in 1949, which was then conducted in 1950/51 with the Ainu in Saru-Valley (Hidaka region). Taking part in the research were Oka, Ishida, Izumi, Suzuki Jirō as a sociologist and Segawa Kiyoko from folklore studies alongside physical anthropologists and religious studies scholars from Hokkaidō itself. At the heart of the research was village organisation, family structures and kinship organisation.⁴ Another project, too – the excavation in Onkoromanai at Cape Soya in 1959 and 1961 by Izumi, Sono and others from the University of Tōkyō – can be placed in the larger context of the paradigm of the research on Japanese

⁴ Oka's report on this research at the 4th International Congress of the USAE in Vienna in 1952 "lured" Alexander Slawik into the field of Ainu research and seems to have triggered Slawik's professorial dissertation (*Habilitation*), which he already submitted in 1953 *Ainu Property Marks*, not published until 1992 in Berlin (Slawik 1992).

and/or Ainu ethnogenesis. Oka, who was appointed to Meiji University in 1960, picked up where the final sentences of his Vienna Dissertation left off, but above all where his research on the Kuril Islands from 1937 left off, and organised in that same year of 1960 the first Japanese expedition to the inland Eskimos at the Anaktuvuk Pass in Alaska.

There are two important paradigms still to be addressed which appeared for the first time towards the end of the the 20th century. Harada Binmei (Toshiaki) with his work on the Japanese concept of God and the paradigm of Umesao Tadao of what would later become his famous *bunmeigaku* [Civilisation Research], first presented in 1957 in a brief essay.

The religious studies scholar Harada was appointed professor at the University of Kumamoto in 1956 and there began to publish a magazine dedicated to collecting materials on cult organisation and folk religion, above all on the concept of God at village level, called *Shakai to denshō* [Society and Tradition]. Specifically, Harada analysed the history and organisation of the *miyaza* religious groups in the Kansai area. According to him, in contrast to Yanagita's assumption and that of the group surrounding Aruga and Fukutake, historically old forms are not to be found in peripheral areas but in the cultural and historical centre around Nara, Kyōto, Shiga or Wakasa. All (heads of) families of the village take part in the *miyaza* cult group with equal status and take turns providing the village priest or hosting the village festival – Harada thus offered another possible definition for the South-West Japanese village type compared to that put forward by Gamō and others with the aid of the age classes or generation classes system or indeed of the bilateral kinship at roughly the same time. Harada went even further and implied that the “closed” village type *dōzoku ketsugō*, for instance, in the Tōhoku region could possibly constitute a more recent development and deformation of the original, actually democratically organised village society.

In terms of the conception of the village deity at the heart of the *miyaza* cult and customs, Harada vehemently rejected the theories of Orikuchi Shinobu, Yanagita Kunio, but also Oka Masao of a visit to the village by deities (*marebito*) at “holy times” from an Other World. Harada’s village deity is permanently present in the village (at the central village-shrine *miya*); it has no image (*shintai* for instance), no gender, name or specific function. This practically “monotheistic” concept of God (for the respective village) was presented convincingly by Harada in numerous monographs later down the line (a good example being *Mura no saishi* [Village Rituals], Harada 1975) and after his appointment as professor to Tōkai University (Tōkyō) he also organised study groups on this set of issues from 1965 onwards with Furuno, Kitano, Sumiya, Muratake and others. And yet, this to my mind extremely important approach made very few waves in Japan in spite of a small number of leading publications (cf for instance Sumiya Kazuhiko: *Nihon no ishiki* [The Japanese Consciousness], 1982, or Josef Kreiner: *Die Kultorganisation des japanischen Dorfes*, 1969 [The Cult Organisation of the Japanese Village]).

The opposite holds true for the paradigm put forward by Umesao Tadao, which in Japan attracted great interest above and beyond the smaller specialist circles themselves, though not abroad. Umesao’s Essay *Bunmei no seitaishi-kan josetsu* [Preliminary Thoughts on an Ecological View of History] (Umesao 1957) pools his impressions of the Hindu Kush/Karakorum expedition by the University of Kyōto and a journey cutting right across the Indian subcontinent. But there is no doubt that Umesao’s papers on Mongolian livestock nomads in Inner Mongolia during his work at the North-West Institute in Zhangjia kou also contributed to developing his thesis. According to this, the Eurasian continent can be divided up into several zones – around an arid centre are the old great empires in the West and East (China, India, the Ottoman Empire, Russia), and on the fringes (Japan, Western Europe) in the moderate zones

developments occur independently of one another but running parallel to each other which finally end in modernisation. This model thus turns against several theorems:

- against that of Arnold Toynbee, who defined Japan as a “branch” of Chinese civilisation;
- against Egami and Oka, whose historical complexes and strata inside Japanese culture play no role in what is really the important question of the reasons for Japan’s successful modernisation;
- against the “Japanese model” of modernisation and the possibility of its transposition onto other countries and cultures in the Third World that was the subject of much debate at the Hakone conferences between the US representatives of “Japanese Studies” and Japanese sociologists, economic historians and philosophers;
- but also against the latent conviction in Japan (which many Europeans also subscribe to), that the success of Japan in its modernisation is first and foremost, if not exclusively, to be attributed to the influence and assistance of the West.

It is not surprising that Umesao’s Essay was ranked among the “Top Ten” of the most influential essays and publications of the 20th century in the year 2000. Umesao and his theory are widely known in the Japanese public, but in Japanese ethnology this paradigm failed to have any deep impact, however, although for 15 years Umesao organised international symposia as founding director of the National Museum of Ethnology in Ōsaka (in tandem with Harumi Befu (Stanford) and the author), at which the topic was examined and discussed from ever different and changing perspectives (see Befu, Nakamaki and Kreiner 2013).

6. Summary

From this brief overview of the development of the anthropological disciplines in Japan, it is possible to identify several important basic features: first of all it can be noted that the research throughout this period of time was dominated by the questions relating to Japanese ethnogenesis and the emergence of the Japanese culture. This holds true for folklore studies and ethnology alike, which as such not only come very close to one another in their theoretical approach and their methodology but which are also virtually identical in terms of their central matter of enquiry (or the findings they aspired to secure). As such, it is not surprising that there was a far more intense exchange of ideas between the two disciplines than in, say, Central Europe. On repeated occasions approaches arose which blended both disciplines. Yanagita attempted this on the part of folklore studies⁵ in his study group from 1926 to 1929 and still had this goal in his sights in the 1930s. In the early 1950s, on the other hand, from the ethnology camp Ishida called for folklore studies to be absorbed by ethnology, which Yanagita opposed.

What has been repeatedly described as the defining dichotomy of the paradigms of “monogenetic, unilinear development of a homogenous Japanese culture and society” (wet-field rice cultivation, importance of a group-orientated society, *ie* families, vertically structured society etc.) of folklore studies in contrast with the idea of a complex inherently non-uniform Japanese culture emerging from various sources presented by ethnology cannot be upheld today in this form, however. To the very end, Yanagita held that at least two cultures could be proven in Japan, but concentrated his interest on that of rice cultivation, which the ethnologist Ishida also described as a supra-historical inalterable core of Japanese culture.

⁵ Cf the name of the magazine *Minzoku* [Ethnos] and the sympathies of Kindaiichi towards Ainu research, Iha towards Ryūkyū or Oka towards ethnology.

For ethnology, the war period provided the opportunity not just to expand its research over the entire area of East, North-East and South-East Asia, but also meant that for a short period the topic of Japanese ethnogenesis –*inter alia* for political reasons– faded into the background. In addition to historical ethnology, the approaches of *social anthropology* and Dutch colonial ethnology were adopted. Oka's move towards *shakai jinruigaku* (*social anthropology*) at the Tōkyō Metropolitan University and afterwards at the Meiji University was no doubt already set in motion during his work at the National Institute of Ethnology. This meant that in the 1950s, the paradigm of rural sociology (Aruga and successors) was linked to that of historical ethnology. Nakane for her part brought with her the approach of *social anthropology* from London, connecting the theories of *cultural anthropology*, in particular the *culture and personality* approach of Ruth Benedict. With her view of a homogenous Japanese society to which a mono-causal explanation principle can be applied she is therefore aligned with Yanagita and Ishida.

Okinawan research is constantly used as a heuristic means to gain insight into Japanese culture or its origin and development. Ryūkyū and its culture *in and of themselves*, however, were not taken note of for a long time in spite of an according warning and criticism by Ishida in 1950 (in the foreword to the Okinawa special edition of the journal *Minzokugaku kenkyū* 15, 2). Ainu research stands uncoupled from Japan-related research –folklore studies consistently completely ignores issues relating to the Ainu culture– yet it is dominated by the same subjects of enquiry (family, organisation of kinship, the village on the one hand, ethnogenesis on the other).

Time and space do not allow me to dwell here on the problems of research in Japanese shamanism, which suddenly found interest at the time of economic growth around 1970, as was also the case with Daoism, formerly strictly denied by

Yanagita and Japanese folklore studies. The change of the name of the Society of Ethnology into “Society of Cultural Anthropology” (*Bunkajinruigakkai*), and the heated discussions accompanying this process, need also deeper considerations. A definitive description of the history of paradigms in the anthropological disciplines in Japan will not be possible until further-reaching analyses have been conducted.

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