

Describing the Region : A Brief Review of the Description of Regional History and Culture

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Regarding how to investigate and describe the area where people actually lived and various events that have occurred there, even if the same area is targeted, the understanding and description based on it differ from person to person. Therefore, there is always the question of which of the various understandings and descriptions is more relevant. In this paper, I will try to examine Kunio Yanagita's "Kitakoura Minzokushi" (Yanagida 1954) and Ajio Fukuta's "Kitakoura no Minzoku" (Fukuda ed. 2001), which are two different works on the same area in Folk Culture Study, and "Azashi" (geographical magazine), which is popular in Okinawa. Then, through those examinations, I will try to sort out some problems. Fukuda and other Folk culture researchers in recent years have generally given low ratings to Yanagita's "Kitakoura Minzokushi". The reason is that the work is not based on one's own field survey, but based on another person's field note, and that the content is selected and used while using another person's field note, and so on. However, given Yanagita's intention to write the book and Yanagita's basic perspective of always trying to capture the region in a historical context, it is no longer necessary to take "Kitakoura Minzokushi" only negatively. In addition to a comparative study of Yanagida's "Kitakoura Minzokushi" and Fukuta's "Kitakoura no Minzoku", by comparing and examining the practice of the movement to publish "Azashi" in Okinawa, which the residents try to study and write about the history and culture of the area where they live, it is hoped that some insights will be gained towards the realization of a better understanding and description of a region.

Key words: Kunio Yanagida, Okinawa, regional description, regional studies, Sado island