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War and Ethnology/Folklore in Colonial Korea : The Case of AKIBA Takashi

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War and Ethnology/Folklore in Colonial Korea: The Case of AKIBA Takashi

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Introduction

Until the twentieth century, colonialism was a global trend and many anthropologists either actively or passively contributed to it. At the same time, many anthropologists were raised under its influence. What is called 'colonial anthropology' developed in close dealing with colonies from the beginning, as a genre of studies that amateurs, administrators and scholars conducted for the sake of colonial administration. Quite a few academic anthropologists had transformed their life courses from other, mostly practical professions. This was particularly the case in the U.S.A. In that phase of anthropology's history, many anthropologists were ambivalent towards colonial administration and academism. On some occasions, they advocated the ideals of enlightenment, humanism and development, but their discipline eventually came to be called 'the child of imperialism, daughter to this era of violence.' The area of studies called 'colonial anthropology' underwent a redefinition after World War II into a new, academic anthropology, becoming the rich, diverse field of studies we know today (van Bremen and SHIMIZU 1999: 1-10).

In this paper, I will primarily address AKIBA Takashi (秋葉隆), a renowned ethnologist in colonial Korea. I will examine how he positioned himself between colonialism and academism and particularly his thought and conduct in relation to colonialism and ethnology during World War II. I do not doubt his great contribution to Korean ethnology. AKIBA is recognised as the 'starting point of anthropological studies' in Korea (IZUMI and MURATAKE 1966: 260). He is said to have launched shamanism studies when shamanism was not considered an academic topic of research in northeast Asia. He conducted fieldwork, collected empirical data and interpreted his findings in religious, folkloric and sociological perspectives (IM 1976: 9-17). He was the pioneer of shamanism studies, whose influence in Korean folklore studies can be discerned even today (ITO 1988: 219). On the other hand, his reputation has been muddled by the claim that 'as a settler folklorist and collector of folklore materials, he didn't contribute to academic studies of Korean folklore but was rather useful for formulating colonial policies or simply piloting the policies' (YANG 1981: 135-42). Another comment is that he was directly called for the purpose of military strategy and colonial placation work (NAKAO 1993: 237).

As I will mention later, he was indeed a colonialist. Nevertheless, he was not an exception in his choice as an ethnologist living in the situation of colonial Korea. He lived in an age when even many Korean intellectuals became pro-Japanese. In this paper, I will

conduct my examination from two perspectives: ethnology and the contemporary social situation. As for the former, one should take into account the influence he received from preceding colonialist works by IMAMURA Tomo (今村 頼), TORII Ryūzō (鳥居龍藏) and others. As for the latter, one should examine the influences that the wartime political situation might have exerted on AKIBA. We should consider the policies of Imperial Japan, the suzerain state, and those of the Government General of Korea, which retained some independence, and conduct macro-research into the ideology of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere.

I. AKIBA Takashi's colonialism

Having studied social anthropology and folklore in Europe, AKIBA took up a post at Seoul Imperial University during the era of *Bunka Tōchi* (文化統治, Cultural Rule). He spent most of his prime as an ethnologist, educator and settler in colonial Korea until the end of the war, which repatriated him to Japan. For more than twenty years, he built up a brilliant academic record. His activities, however, extended beyond the purely academic to include colonialist speeches and conduct during the war.

In an essay entitled 'You go to war,' which he wrote for *Chōsen* (Korea) in 1943, he related this story of a young Korean man from Cholla-Nando.

Born to a fatherless family, consisting of his mother and himself, in the remote countryside of Cholla-Nando, he went to Japan to study musical composition at the Music School in Ueno. Shortly before graduation, however, he made up his mind to enter a training school for volunteers. Upon his graduation, he was attached to a company, to place himself under his younger cousin. During his stay in Tokyo, he received news of his admission to the training school by telegram from his mother, who understood him best and had filed an application on his behalf. From this, I gather that his purity of mind was inherited chiefly from his mother. When a little drunk, he would demonstrate his talent as a singer who had studied at a music school. He used to say, in a beautiful high-spirited voice, 'I want to go the front as soon as possible.'

About a month later, as I was about to go out, H showed up. He had just dropped by after a long interval to offer a greeting from the doorway, but I insisted on inviting him in for tea. Clad in a military uniform and affecting a rigid military posture, he offered a bag of sweet roasted chestnuts, which I supposed he had bought near the station, thanking me for all I had done for him. Startled, I said to him, 'Nothing is more auspicious than a present of *kachi-guri* (chestnuts, with *kachi*- implying winning) from a brave soldier. If you should be sent to the southern front as you have been hoping, could you take an alligator skin with you for me? No. I have a better idea. Why don't I find you a good wife and give her an alligator skin handbag?' Then I had my wife serve some sake and food as a sincere, if not sufficient, token celebration. I proposed a toast, saying simply, 'Mr. H forever.' He spoke as cheerfully as ever in his pleasant and innocent way about many things – that he had swum in the icy Han River; that his new company commander, about his age and the youngest in the company, took good care of him; that his mother had sent him money to buy a military sword, but that he returned it, along with his savings, because he couldn't find one he liked. Then he proclaimed, as he used to do, 'I want to go to the front soon.' So I replied to him, 'Let me perform some magic for you.' I asked my wife to get me a national flag I had bought. I wrote a poem on the flag; 'Be the Imperial flag raised high, on the day you stand on the front islands in the South Sea,' and presented it to him. Rejoicing, he exclaimed, 'Because of your gift, I can go there! I definitely

can! Nothing gives me greater joy. I will die an honourable death,' and then he left to go home. I never saw him again, perhaps because my magic worked. He must be at the front somewhere in the expanse of Greater East Asia. I can easily imagine the round, childlike face of that young man who is to be twenty-two years old next year. His sixty-some-year-old mother must be praying for her only son's success in war from her home in the remote countryside of South Korea. Let's think of them here again. One cannot help being deeply moved by the pure patriotic sentiment of that mother and son from Chollanam, a place once known as a hotbed of disturbing thought. (AKIBA 1943: 61-3)

AKIBA seemed to be loyal to Imperial Japan at that time. Consider the following quotation from *The life of IZUMI Seiichi*:

Five out of six Korean students in AKIBA's class eligible for the volunteer program volunteered, but one of his pupils unexpectedly went into hiding. Together with the student's father, AKIBA searched everywhere and visited newspapers with a letter to the student inquiring after his whereabouts. His letter concluded by saying that he was to blame for what the student did and felt infinite responsibility for his lack of love for his students. The missing student was soon inducted as a volunteer. [...] I once heard a shocking story from LEE Duhyun (李杜鉉), a friend of Seiichi, about one of LEE's classmates who bore IZUMI a grudge because he was made to volunteer at IZUMI's recommendation. I have long wanted to meet the man, but have yet to have the chance. (FUJIMOTO 1994: 184)

Eventually, AKIBA went as far as to write:

The number of the Korean *minzoku* (民族, nation, people, ethnicity) totals 25 million, which accounts for a quarter of the 100-million people of the whole of [Imperial] Japan. Under His Majesty's behests of Universal Brotherhood (*isshi-dōjin*, 一視同仁), they as a member of the new Japanese nation, are now given the greatest honour and most important mission in the history of Korea, that of apprentice officers, to lead Greater East Asia. (AKIBA 1944: 60)

Prior to Japanese colonization, Western missionaries had begun Korean studies in the early twentieth century, but after Korea was annexed by Japan, Japanese scholars began to take the lead. AKIBA was apparently inspired not only by those academic studies that preceded him, but also by colonialism itself. He studied and cited Western literature on Korea, such as Homer B. Hulbert's 'Mudang and Pansu' (1903), but basically followed the research of the Japanese pioneers, including TORII, IMAMURA, SHIRATORI Kurakichi (白鳥庫吉) and OGURA Shinpei (小倉進平). Above all, AKIBA inherited much of TORII's investigations into shamanism. For instance, he often employed the word *miko* (巫人, 巫子 a female shaman), a term first used by TORII, in his early papers. TORII classified Korean shamanism into two types by region: the northern type being under the influence of Taoism whereas the southern type boasted a longer history and bore a resemblance to its Japanese counterpart. He also classified female shamans according to his observation of their dances. AKIBA developed this idea in his paper '*Miko* who dance and *miko* who don't' (1932).

TORII Ryūzō (1870-1953) carried out excavations and field surveys commissioned by the Government General of Korea. How TORII and AKIBA got to know each other is not known, but according to TORII's son TORII Ryūjirō (鳥居龍次郎), they must have known each other

because KATŌ Kangaku (加藤灌覚), who worked with TORII in his research in Seoul in 1932 (TORII 1976c: 337), later helped with AKIBA's work. According to Ryūjirō, KOIZUMI Akio (小泉顕夫) remembered that he took TORII Ryūzō to AKIBA's office.

TORII obtained the co-operation of officials of the Government General of Korea for his archaeological excavations and ethnological research. They included SATŌ Junkichi (佐藤醇吉) of the Government General, KO Sūngūn (高成建), a translator at the Uiju (義州) Police Station, and a military policeman, FUJII Kenkichi (藤井鏗吉). As a colonialist, TORII adamantly rejected the independence of Korea. In his 'Trip from Manchuria to North Korea' (1913), he wrote, 'The Government General of Korea started scientific research of this kind at the request of the Governor-General of Korea, now that Korea was annexed' (TORII 1976a: 621). He argued that Korea would be wrong to hope to become independent, since the Japanese and Koreans were certainly ethnologically and linguistically of the same *minzoku*. Thus, he claimed, the annexation was an entirely domestic affair.

In a piece entitled 'Japanese and Koreans share the same root,' which he contributed to the first issue of *Dōgen* in 1920, he wrote:

Some people claim that the Koreans must be separated and made independent from the Japanese for the sake of the principle of self-determination, a notion that is totally erroneous. The Japanese and Koreans are of the same *minzoku*. I cannot see any reason why one and the same *minzoku* should be separated and made independent from each other. [...] As the Japanese and Koreans are the same *minzoku*, it is completely right that they be annexed and united. That is the perfect achievement of the objective of national self-determination. The union of the Japanese and Koreans admits of no doubt in the light of international affairs. Furthermore, as this is an ethnological fact, no one in the world can offer valid arguments to counter this perfect assertion. (TORII 1976b: 538-9)

It is not known to which degree such a line of thought influenced AKIBA, but we can safely say this was part of the trend among contemporary intellectuals. The intellectual to whom AKIBA was in the closest relation was IMAMURA Tomo.

IMAMURA went to Korea in 1908 and worked for the Government General for a long time. After he retired as the chief of Ch'ungch'ŭng-Bukdo Provincial Police in 1925, he continued to contribute to the colonial administration as a commissioned worker of the Government General till the end of colonial rule. At the same time, he was a self-styled amateur folklorist. His *Korean manners and customs* (1914), hailed as a pioneering work in Korean folklore studies (MISHINA 1960: 131), inspired an interest in shamanism in AKIBA when he read it on a ferryboat connecting Shimonoseki and Pusan. The book was a compilation of published articles and unpublished manuscripts, including a paper on *meishin gyōsha* (迷信業者, specialists of superstitious beliefs and practices) that IMAMURA completed in 1909. It also contained a paper endorsing the colonization of Korea, in which he argued that Korea had developed and prospered under Japanese colonial rule. Regardless of how this pro-colonial argument influenced AKIBA, we can safely say its influence was not insignificant. AKIBA maintained a connection with IMAMURA throughout his life, and in 1940 edited a set of papers as vol. 3 of the journal *Korean folklore* in commemoration of IMAMURA's seventieth birthday.

It appears that AKIBA also had exchanges with MURAYAMA Chijun (村山智順). A graduate of the Tokyo University Department of Sociology, MURAYAMA published several excellent research reports on the condition of the Korean people by commission of the Government General of Korea. Well-versed in MURAYAMA's academic inclinations and work, AKIBA often quoted MURAYAMA's *Shamans in Korea* (1932b), for instance. In that book, MURAYAMA presented a classification of Korean shamans in terms of the initiation process. AKIBA also discussed the topic and his idea was eventually identical to MURAYAMA's. MURAYAMA's book (1932b) was published after AKIBA's paper, 'Miko who dance and miko who don't dance' (1932), was issued. But MURAYAMA had done fieldwork on that topic in 1930 and, according to what MURAYAMA wrote later, it was at that time that he obtained the idea of classification according to the moments of becoming shamans either by spirit possession or filial succession (1932a: 58). AKIBA first presented his idea on that topic in a paper entitled 'Initiation process of Korean shamans' (1931), and he further elaborated it in his paper in 1932. This process implies that, although AKIBA preceded IMAMURA in publishing his idea, he had learned from MURAYAMA's work. If this was not the case, they must have had some relations with each other in their research, since MURAYAMA (1932b: 6-7) mentioned AKIBA's investigation on Korean shamanism conducted in 1930. We can conclude, then, that AKIBA was deeply influenced by TORII, IMAMURA and MURAYAMA, not only in his academic approaches but also in his thoughts on colonialism.

II. Colonialism in wartime

With the emergence of the movement for independence in 1919, Governor-General TERAUCHI was replaced by SAITŌ Minoru (齋藤實). SAITŌ advocated a principle of 'cultural rule' that would realise a moral government for the sake of Korea. In other words, he insisted on *Nai-Sen Yūwa* (内鮮融和, Harmony between Home-Japan and Korea), under which the police force policy (武斷政治) was transformed to promote a friendly relationship between them. However, this amounted to little more than an assimilation policy that supported cultural rule with a police force. AOYANAGI Kōtarō stated,

It is not right to implant Japanese systems to Korea like word-for-word translation. We shouldn't enact any law without taking into account feelings, manners and customs, authorized precedents and economic conditions. [...]

For us to combine and bring about reconciliation between our mother country and Korea and sustain an amicable social intercourse, it is necessary for us to first research and study their national characteristics and for the authorities to be well versed in their history.

(AOYANAGI 1923: 84-6)

After all, the principle of harmony between Japan and Korea was the slogan for a policy designed to assimilate the Koreans into the Japanese (KASUYA 1992: 125-6). Along this line, such slogans as *Naisen Ittai* (内鮮一体, 'The Oneness of Home-Japan and Korea') and 'The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere' were advocated during the war, and accepted as reasonable by many intellectuals. They offered at least nominally convincing reasons, though the way they were implemented was not without problems.

In the 1930s and 1940s, and particularly during the war, AKIBA aggressively affirmed 'The Oneness of Home-Japan and Korea' and 'The Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere,' speaking and acting accordingly. He interpreted the contemporary war that Japan was fighting in the name of The Greater East Asia War as a 'holy war' and cannot on any account be considered an anti-colonialist. Rather, he insisted on 'oneness' based on Japanese and Koreans sharing the same ethnic (*minzoku-teki*) origin. Linguistically speaking, East Asia can be divided into the Ural-Altaic *minzoku*, including the Mongolese and Tungus, to the north and the Sino-Tibetan *minzoku* to the south. The Japanese are closely related to the former. The Korean and Japanese languages in particular share the same characteristics, including vowel harmony (AKIBA 1944: 4-9). He claimed that 'We Japanese and Koreans share the fate of the vessel for the liberalization of Asia and the construction of the Greater East Asia' (ibid.: 53). Though he did not have a direct relationship with the Government General of Korea, he contributed to colonial policy through his broadcasts, lectures (for the sake of Government General, rural movements, etc.) and writing. He had his own logic for doing this, which I will discuss in detail.

Common culture between Japanese and Korean societies: Union by way of the Japanese Spirit

How AKIBA perceived the Koreans is demonstrated in the following passage:

During the seven years since I came to Korea in 1927, I have had opportunities to interview many *naichi-jin* (内地人, native Japanese) residents here, and have found that some understandably have a deep understanding of and sympathy with the Koreans. However, it seems to me that most of the time they have spoken of the drawbacks of the people. I would very much like to hear about their merits – the virtue of the Koreans, what they like about the Koreans, what they applaud them for and what they respect about the Koreans – but few have given answers worthy of any special mention. I guess this is chiefly due to the present political relationship between our Home-Japan and Korea, but I have long wanted to know the real Korea *from a relatively fair attitude*. I am not trying to achieve harmony between Korea and our Home-Japan for political motives or fit Korea to Japan's convenience, but I like to look at them from the fairest point of view. (AQ IM11: 102-3; italics added)

This shows his desire to take an objective look at the field. AKIBA continues:

Shouldn't we, coming to Korea from Home-Japan, refrain from resorting to the Japanese Spirit (大和魂) in the narrow sense of the word and a narrow-minded national consciousness? In a broader frame of mind, *the Koreans are our brethren, of the same race and culture*. I believe both peoples have a shared responsibility to accurately recognize this fundamental ground and make friends with each other. (AQ IM11: 112-3; italics added)

Obviously, he is emphasizing that the Japanese and the Koreans are of the same race and share the same culture.

Knowing the cultural gap between the two to be large, however, AKIBA insisted that they should transcend this gap and be united.

In not a few instances, a culturally-inferior *minzoku* who suddenly conquered a culturally-superior *minzoku* fell into decline because they believed they were at the top of the world, but

were in fact unconsciously intoxicated with the culture of the *minzoku* under their rule. [...]

We should try, as our advisable attitude, to *train the digestive power of the Nihon Seishin* (日本精神, Japanese Spirit) so that we may digest and gather nourishment from the cultures of the world – rather than having nationalism confront globalism head-on – *and thereby overcome the confrontation of the isms*. Just as an unbalanced diet leads to the deterioration of a people's physique, narrow-minded nationalism will eventually destroy a *minzoku* itself. We must boost the digestive power of our culture. Needless to say, that kind of attitude which leaves Japan and Korea in an undigested state is totally out of the question. (AQ IM11: 114; italics added)

Thus he proposed assimilation via the Japanese Spirit.

AKIBA said he 'wanted to know the real Korea from the fairest point of view' (AQ IM11: 103) and criticized the tendency to 'resort to narrow-minded national consciousness' (ibid.: 111). He continued, 'I cannot help feeling respect for them when I think of Silla having developed a unique culture that includes elements of Chinese and Buddhist cultures. [...] As evidenced by original pottery from the Yi Dynasty, the Koreans were undoubtedly masters over our ancestors in this field, too' (ibid.: 105). Since they didn't have a feudal period like Japan, 'I believe the Koreans are the greater lovers of peace' (ibid.: 107). However, all of these complimentary statements about Koreans were made for the sake of proper balance and total impartiality, because many had spoken ill of the Korean people.

AKIBA defined a *minzoku* as 'a group of people who share the same culture and aspire after the same ideal. So, even if we are of different races, we form one single *minzoku*' (ibid.: 112). He also argues, '*The Koreans are our brethren with the same racial root and culture*' (idem; italics added). 'The amazingly peaceful sensibility of Koreans! In terms of race and language, the Japanese have more substance of the same culture and race in common with the Koreans than with the Chinese' (AKIBA 1934: 102-14). From this statement we can see that he distinguished the Koreans from the Chinese. The above lines also reveal his concept of nationalism. In his theory, a *minzoku* means a nation. Hence he believed that the Japanese and the Koreans together constitute one single *minzoku* because the two have been united. He further believed that they could form a bigger *minzoku* by including several other smaller groups. This was his wish, too. He denounced those Japanese who claimed the Japanese Spirit, a narrow-minded nationalism. He recognized the Koreans as part of the Japanese nation and desired that the Japanese should not disregard them, that the two be merged on an equal footing.

Religion and the Oneness of Home-Japan and Korea

In 1935, at the Shinkō Shinsa Iinkai (信仰審査委員會, Belief Examination Committee) of the Chūsū-in (中樞院, Central Board) of the Government General of Korea, AKIBA gave a lecture on 'The original belief of Korea' (AKIBA 1935) as a topic closely related with the policy-making for cultural development and religious issues. In the lecture, he said that the authorities should not create a new religion and bestow it on the Koreans because Korea had its own original beliefs. Defining religion as depending on whether a concept of a perpetual, absolute god exists, he spoke,

From olden times, Korea has had many types of religion. For instance, a typical folk belief

today is that of *miko* (female shamans). Superstitious as it may seem, this has certainly been the object of belief since ancient times. [...] As those religions are actually believed in Korea today, the centre of the policy should be how to nurture them. I don't think the way we should go about precipitously creating a new, idealistic religion for the sake of the general public is the point in question. It strikes me as absurd for the Government to take on the role of founder of a kind of 'new religion.'

(AKIBA 1935: 29)

AKIBA divided the history of Korean society into three eras – the era of magical power (Ancient times – Koryo Dynasty), the era of intellectual power (Yi Dynasty) and the era of financial power (current). Describing the era of magical power, he explained 'the belief in shamans and Buddhism never engaged in confrontation, but tended to compromise with each other' (AQ IM8: 230). The era of intellectual power was characterized by a patrilineal society structured around Confucianism. Modern society is characterized by capitalism based on rationalism. However, modern society consists of three social strata. The first is the group of young people who have been educated at school and have grasped modern Western civilization. The second group comprises the elderly, those who received the old Confucian philosophy and education. The third group consists of people who were poorly educated and dictated to by shamans. The third group was often targeted for abolition because it was superstitious, on which he commented,

I don't think merely destroying a superstition produces any good. We have to grant a new, proper belief as a replacement for the superstition. If those whose lives depend on faith in the female shaman are deprived of that faith, they are left without either superstition or authentic faith. Since any *minzoku* without faith simply perishes, I hope the authorities can be kind enough to lead them to authentic faith as it goes about destroying the superstition.

(AQ IM8: 268-9)

Koreans believe in *Hananim*, the heavenly god, who is 'not relative but absolutely infinite with neither start nor end. It is not altogether a narrow-minded faith limited to one *minzoku* or *kokumin* (国民, nation). It has a high potential for becoming a global religious consciousness if we lead it properly' (AKIBA 1935: 34). He analysed modern shamanism and ancient documents, and hypothetically reconstructed the Korean original belief in the absolute and universal *Hananim* or the heavenly god. He then insisted that the Korean people and their faith be respected.

Since a person must pursue his/her life while retaining his/her human personality, we cannot do without religion. [...] Modern human life shouldn't be excessively individual-, family-, nation- or state-oriented. [...] We must live the philosophy of working for the welfare of the whole of humanity the world over. Judging by this fundamental principle, I would argue, no religion has a bright future if it exaggerates a family orientation or nationalistic orientation. It is therefore necessary to focus on a global faith centred on national life.

(AKIBA 1935: 30)

He thus gave value to the primordial in Korea. In his manuscript, 'The relationship of Home-Japan and Korea in their folk customs and beliefs' (AQ MA9), he assumed that 'Japanese and Korean faiths were almost identical, originating from the same line,' and argued,

Since Korea used to be too busy seeking connections with the Continent, its original faith has had few chances to develop and remains to this day in its primordial form. In contrast, the primordial *Shinto* of Japan has been nourished from abroad by such religions as Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism, with the result that its primordial nature worship or spirit possession has become extinct, while human worship such as is directed towards ancestor-spirits, clan-guardian-gods and heroes has been making progress. These types of worship were later unified within the framework of The Emperor worship and Founder-of-the-Imperial-Family worship. The Imperial Family has developed as the whole nation's head family, and the whole nation has come to believe in the Founder of the Imperial Family as the nation's general guardian god, which has formed the spiritual core for creating the stand-alone-in-the-world national polity of Japan. (AQ MA9: 17)

In summary, the Japanese and Korean faiths are essentially of the same nature and line, but the Korean faith remains largely in its primordial form.

AKIBA argued that the ideals of the 'Oneness of Home-Japan and Korea' and *Hōkko Ichiu* (八紘一宇, All the world one family) can be reiterated if a national spirit could be created on the basis of the original, primordial conceptions of Korea and Japan.

We must endorse the national faith of Japan. Home-Japan and Korea originally started from similar religions, but Japan's later developed, while Korea's didn't. It is therefore quite natural for Koreans to strive to develop similarly. We must join and strongly endorse the national faith, which has naturally grown to form the spiritual core of Japan's national polity that is unparalleled in the world. The national faith that forms the spiritual core of Japan's national polity is the spiritual core of the national character of each person. When we have a tight grip on this national faith, our spiritual core (rice), it doesn't matter whether we believe in Buddhism (tempura) or Christianity (beefsteak). Rather, they nourish and enrich our faith. If we locate the centre of our character in our original national faith, enhance its content, enjoy dining on world thought and achieve the Oneness of Home-Japan and Korea by way of this abundant and powerful national faith, the Korean faith will be polished, expanding and deepening our national spirit. The united Home-Japan and Korea will comprise the centre of the Greater East Asia Community and provide the driving force to achieve the ideal of making all the world as one family. (AQ MA9: 19)

Though he didn't specify what the 'national faith that forms the spiritual core of the Japan's national polity' meant, I guess he was referring to state *Shinto*, which is a progressive form of primordial *Shinto*. In short, he attempted the union of the Koreans and the Japanese with the help of Japanese national faith.

Society and the Oneness of Home-Japan and Korea

In the lecture on 'Religion and society,' which was published in the journal *Sen'yū*, AKIBA (1938a, 1938b, 1938c) describes the manner in which society influences religion. Distinguishing between rural and urban social models, he claimed the religion of the former to be natural, homogeneous and mysterious. In contrast, that of the latter is artificial, heterogeneous and materialistic. Rural society, he argued, developed a religion that was confined within its own narrow sphere, but large-scale religion flourished in urban society. 'Large-scale religion does not flourish in rural society because the society itself is small. In

contrast, urban society often fosters worldwide large-scale religion, as it is linked to national and worldwide religions that transcend both family and community.' Since Korean society was rural in character, 'this is the very reason Christianity failed to take root in Korea' (AKIBA 1935c).

He then insisted that Korean society should be developed into a sound community, since it is less developed than that of Japan. In a broadcast text, 'Fluidity of contemporary society' (AQ MA12*), which was aired from 6:25 p.m. to 6:55 p.m. on February 9, 1937, he warned,

The state of Korean society has yet to demonstrate high fluidity. As its commerce and industry show a strong tendency to flourish, however, we must expect that the wave of fluidity of this contemporary profit-oriented society will eventually reach the Korean Peninsula.

(AQ MA12*: 13)

Pointing out the contradictions between community and profit-oriented societies, he explained,

Past society or rural society is a communal society dedicated to social solidarity, and



The cover of *Radio talks and lectures*, no. 6 (published in 1938 by Korean Broadcasting Corporation), with the table of contents including AKIBA Takashi's lecture, 'The social form during emergency.'

contemporary society or urban society is a profit-oriented society dedicated to the profit of individuals. Contemporary profit-oriented society has grown from the soil of the communal society of the past, and urban society has been nourished by rural society. Figuratively speaking, the bud of this profit-oriented society springing from the soil of community took nourishment from that soil, growing into a giant tree and blossoming into the flower of modern civilization. As a result of this, the soil of communal society has grown sterile, but profit-oriented society has taken root in the soil. The flower of civilization has become infested with insects and something must be done about this. This is what modern society is. Marxism attempts to chop down the big tree of modern society and plant new seedlings, but this is too radical since it kills the flower along with the insects. It is stupid to throw away the flower simply because of the insects. On the other hand, I believe we should try to revitalize the big tree of modern society and make civilisation bear beautiful flowers, by ridding the flowers of the insects, ploughing deeply and extensively the soil of communal society and pouring over it the crystalline water of communal spirit. This is what I believe constitutes a real social education movement. In this sense, the social education movement is designed to overcome the contradictions between an old-fashioned communal society and a modern profit-oriented society. (AQ MA12*: 2)

On the family, the basic group that comprises a communal society, he commented, 'Among family groups and social groups, the family is the least fluid, but in modern society fluidity is remarkably high, even in the family' (AQ MA12*: 5). He seemed to hope that Korea would develop, while simultaneously maintaining its traditional society and family system. Hence, he seemed to believe that there was more hope for Korea than for Japan.

In a broadcast entitled 'The social form during emergency' (1938d, AQ MA11*), which was aired from 7:40 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on June 16, 1938, AKIBA called for unity: 'What I mean by a "social form" is a state in which people unite via a certain social connection' (ibid.: 2). 'In the social form characteristic of an emergency, such unity must have a centre to which people can be integrated' (ibid.: 11-2). As examples of united societies, he listed Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Chinese society resisting Japan under the leadership of CHIANG Kai-shek (蒋介石).

This principle gives true focus to a society. Some present examples of well-focused social forms include Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, which have clear-cut social centres in Hitler and Mussolini, and are well-defined and to the point. But if the focus is adjusted to an absurd point, disaster results, as in China, which, under the leadership of CHIANG Kai-shek, mobilizes resistance against Japan. It is not necessary to point out that thoroughgoing preparation, intelligent judgement and a lot of effort are required to adjust the focus. Fortunately, only Japan in the world has a great constant centre around which all the people can wholeheartedly gather. In this sense, I can say that, unchanged from ancient times till today, Japanese society is a well-focused society with a crystal-clear centre unparalleled among contemporary social groups. We were not born Japanese because we calculated that being Japanese is advantageous. The cord that joins the Japanese is never something thin and feeble that can be arbitrarily tied or untied like a telephone connection or a change of clothing. Rather, we are tightly bound with an unbreakable cord that has united us ceaselessly since the time of our most distant ancestors. We are united by the bond of a strong, deep affection and pride in feeling that we are Japanese in our bodies. In this sense, I believe that Japan has traditionally had the social form to meet emergencies. (1938d, AQ MA11*: 13-4, 16)

Thus he draws attention to patriotic sentiments. In those days, this type of ideological framework was quite common, and a similar trend was observed among his contemporary Koreans.

AKIBA stressed that the Japanese and Korean cultures shared the same root by pointing out the similarities between them. His idea was exactly identical or quite parallel with the basic policy of the contemporary colonial powers. Unlike the societies under Western colonies, which differed markedly from those of their suzerain states, Japan and Korea had been in such a close historical relationship that they shared many similarities. It was quite natural for him to emphasise the similarities. As Japanese and Koreans are racially and culturally close to each other, he must have had high aspirations for the unification of the two *minzoku* and the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. Academically he supported the theory that Japanese and Koreans shared the same ancestry, and politically he advocated the union of the two *minzoku*. Looking back from our current perspective, we have no choice but to repudiate an attitude like his toward Korea. This concept is considered dangerous from our point of view in the present. AKIBA's attitudes towards Korea, however, changed as time passed. In the beginning, he as an anthropologist looked on Korea primarily as a subject of his research. But his awareness of being a member of the Japanese *minzoku* who ruled Korea gradually grew. This process may appear to be a transition from scholar to ruler and militarist. However, it may be more probable that he had both the awareness of a scholar and that of a ruler from the beginning. In 'On the research of Korean folklore,' which he published soon after assuming his post at Seoul Imperial University in 1928, he wrote, 'I earnestly hope that our brethren in various parts of Korea will conduct research in this field' (AKIBA 1928). This may have been just a courtesy. But I suspect that his words suggested that Japanese, as the ruling *minzoku*, should know about Koreans, the ruled. His consciousness could be at the same time that of an anthropologist and that of a settler. From his perspective, Korea and the Koreans were the colonised as well as the source of information. This line of thought can be seen in many colonial anthropologists from developed countries.

III. Colonial ethnology in post-war Korean folklore studies

During the war, highly patriotic Korean nationalists turned 'pro-Japanese.' The leading historian CH'OE Nam-sŏn (崔南善) and the writer YI Kwangsoo (李光洙) were originally nationalists, but in the 1940s they praised the Greater East Asia War as a 'holy war' and justified the annexation of Korea by Japan. What was the cause of this so-called 'defection' among this group of scholars? External pressure does not explain it. More convincing is the notion that as Japanese sympathizers YI Nnghwa (李能和) and CH'OE Nam-sŏn were attracted to the charm and rationality of the anti-West stance and the Asianism which the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere represented, in the same way that AKIBA was. They did not simply approve of Japanese colonialism.

In 1927, CH'OE Nam-sŏn and YI Nnghwa contributed separate papers to *Keimei*, no. 19. In his paper entitled 'A document of shamanism,' CH'OE referred to works by TORII, including many quotations from *Primitive religion of peoples around Japan* (1924a) and *Our*

ancient culture: An anthropological study (1925). YI's 'A study of Korean female shamans' receives high evaluations for compiling many documentary records. AKIBA showed constant respect for and frequently quoted from the work of YI, whom he knew personally, but he had no connection with CH'OE, either as a researcher or personally. The two Koreans were members of an organization responsible for formulating policies and conducting research for the Government General of Korea, and became pro-Japanese during the war.

In the context of post-war Korean folklore studies, opinions split on how to evaluate the Korean folklore studies during the colonial period. The three most representative opinions are:

1. Colonialism and scholarship are inseparable and thus the scientific achievements from that era cannot be accepted;
2. We should do serious soul-searching about what happened in order to inherit the scientific achievements; and
3. The two be clearly distinguished, and we can inherit only the scientific achievements.

The first thing to consider is what to do with the studies by the Japanese. IMAMURA's *Korean manners and customs*, published in 1914, could have been the first milestone in Korean folklore, but is not regarded as such simply because it was written by a Japanese. Some think that such studies were conducted as part of colonialist discussions and are therefore of no use. In other words, they believe that colonial thought contaminated scientific research as well and repudiate any output. Others, however, insist that the scholarship should be distinguished from the spirit of the times, as one's view of life and social activity is not directly connected to one's research findings, and the scientific achievements should be acknowledged. AKIBA's research is now accepted, as demonstrated by the fact that some of his works have been translated and published in Korea: *Field study of Korean shamanism*, translated by CH'OE Kilsŭng, 1987; *A study of Korean shamanism* co-authored with AKAMATSU Chijō, 1991; and *Descriptions of Korean folklore*, translated by SHIM Woosŭng 1993.

LEE Duhyun, on the other hand, has a negative view of the merit of AKIBA's work. He wrote,

The Japanese conducted a variety of research on Korean folklore in order to collect and compile reference materials for the ruling policy of the Government General of Korea. Research projects were organized with the support of the Government General of Korea, and were principally commissioned to Seoul Imperial University, the Central Board of the Government-General of Korea and the Chōsen-shi Henshū Iinkai (朝鮮史編修會, Korean History Compilation Committee). [...] The resulting publications are not without historic value; they report folk materials collected in the 1920s and 1930s on clothing, diet and housing, and manners and customs, but when we refer to them, we should be careful about the distorted points of view they contain. (LEE 1977: 30)

IN Kwŏnhwan (印權煥) also pointed out that the Japanese Imperial Government and Japanese scholars took an increasing interest in research from the 1930s. But their research and analyses were not for the positive purpose of obtaining a correct understanding of, preserving

and fostering Korean folklore. Their starting point was a purely political purpose of collecting materials for colonial rule. Moreover, they were far from scientific in their method. Information was collected indirectly through written reports, the submission of which was forced by administrative authorities. Worse, the reports were often arbitrarily altered to their own advantage. Those methodological deficiencies altogether deprived the final reports of the vivid, accurate reality of folklore. Thus IN denied the scientific value of research by Japanese scholars, even as a source of data, specifying the problems stemming from political purpose, forcible mobilisation by the administration, indirect collection of data, arbitrary alteration of reports, lack of reality in the final description and unscientific methods (IN 1978: 64). PARK Kyeonghong (朴桂弘), too, repudiated the research on Korean folklore by the Japanese for 'being imperialist folklore studies by a foreign people' (PARK, K. 1983: 35).

Nevertheless, the research that Japanese scholars conducted in the colony was given importance as pioneering scholarship. IWASAKI Tsugio (岩崎継生) held IMAMURA in high regard, saying,

Together with *A study of Korean society* which was compiled by the Military Police Headquarters in Korea in 1912, *Korean manners and customs* that IMAMURA published in 1914 is worth reading again as an introduction to folklore on the Korean Peninsula.

(IWASAKI 1933: 114)

MISHINA Shōei (三品彰英), too, highly evaluated IMAMURA's achievements, hailing his *Korean manners and customs* as the representative work at the dawn of Korean folklore studies (MISHINA 1960: 131).

PARK Hyūnsoo (朴賢洙), on the other hand, claimed,

Imperialist states conducted research projects to support colonial rule, and mobilized many scholars. In the Western superpowers, many scientific disciplines including contemporary anthropology have similar historical backgrounds. In the case of Japan, the creation of Oriental studies would not be conceivable without its close correlation with the invasion of the Continent.

(PARK, H. 1980: 131-47)

PARK meant that the colonial policy comprised research projects, and this holds true for Oriental studies in Japan. At the same time, he states that the materials provide data from the era and should be used as such (ibid.). I also commented on the data issued by the Central Board of the Government General of Korea and argued that those administrative data were compiled chiefly in the service of colonial policy. They are significant in that it was the first attempt of a large-scale survey of Korean folklore conducted by the administrative authority. Whatever their original purpose, we should re-compile them as a source of important data, by examining them in a contemporary perspective (CH'OE, K. 1994: Preface).

SON Chint'ae (孫晉泰) and SONG Sūkha (宋錫夏) are said to have had frequent exchanges with Japanese scholars and maintained a good relationship with them (YIM Sūkchae, personal communication, September 16, 1996). Soon after the end of World War II, AKIBA is said to have placed his manuscripts in SONG's custody. SONG then entrusted them to the chief

teacher of Posŭng Vocational School (普成專門學校). After having been put in the custody of a library, the manuscripts were lost in the Korean War, but were found recently in Paris, France. In 'Folktales of Korea,' YIM Sŭkchae (also known by the pen name of MA Kirim 真木琳) wrote,

For the last several years, I have collected folk tales as they are narrated today among people in the Korean Peninsula. At the unexpected recommendation of my beloved teacher Professor AKIBA, I have been given an opportunity to publish some of them serially in this magazine.

(YIM 1938: 89)

AKIBA often quoted YIM in his papers. As a student of AKIBA's, YIM attended his lectures and was invited by AKIBA to join a research of mask dramas in Yangju. YIM started studying mask dramas in the district soon after World War II. His research was later developed by LEE. This evidences that research findings by Japanese scholars have been passed on to post-war Korean folklore studies, though they are not explicitly treated as pioneering works.

Conclusion

Regardless of whether we take a negative or a positive posture and whether it is for better or worse, post-war Korean folklore studies have no choice but to inherit pre-war research works. They are a hard historical fact, even if conceptually we regard the colonial period as a blank. Works by AKIBA Takashi, in particular, have been inherited to no small degree, but a thorough study of the man has yet to be carried out. In this paper, I have examined how he responded to the colonialism that he was faced with during wartime. It is a clear fact that he engaged in colonialist conduct and language during the period, but that was the general trend among those living through those times. He was not an exception.

He was not altogether in line with the trend of the times. Scientifically, he was influenced by the scholars who preceded him. Moreover, he himself recognised from the ethnological point of view that Japanese and Koreans are highly identical. He endorsed the view that the two peoples shared the same cultural and ethnic roots, which led him to embrace colonialism. Meanwhile, his consciousness of being on the ruling side might have led him to find it logical to endorse the notions of the 'Oneness of Home-Japan and Korea' and the 'Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere,' which were advocated with particular emphasis during the war. In particular, the idea of the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere connoted an anti-Western Asianism that must have sounded sensible to him. This was not unique to AKIBA. The same can be said about CH'OE Nam-sŏn, a representative Korean folklorist.

How to inherit the achievements of folklore studies from the pre-war period has posed an important issue for post-war Korean folklore scholarship. It is impossible not to inherit anything, as there were only a few Korean folklorists before the war and some of their pre-war research was conducted jointly with their Japanese counterparts. If we give them our proper recognition and inherit their works, then the origin of Korean folklore studies should be traced back to them. It is an issue of the identity of Korean folklore studies, not an

ideological question of anti-Japanese sentiment or nationalism.

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Abbreviation:

AQ Alexandre Guillemoz collection of AKIBA Takashi's manuscripts and articles.

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