Towards a Typology of Traditional Japanese Fishermen
—— A Preparatory Study on the Folklore of Fishermen——

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This paper is a preparatory survey of traditional Japanese fishermen, in order to accomplish a systematization of the theme in the future. Four groups were selected based on criteria centering on traditional fishing implements and fishing methods i.e. net fishing, rod fishing, fishing based on diving and spear fishing. The four groups are compared at a point just before the 1930’s, which is assumed to be a period when they underwent a drastic change due to technical improvements in fishing implements and a marked development of the techniques of transport and preservation. The criteria for comparison in this preparatory study were six items that were thought to have been preserved traditionally in these groups: a) fishing implements, fishing methods, b) fishing grounds, c) form of fishing, d) content of fishing and its characteristics, e) dependancy on agriculture and seasons for fishing, f) the interrelation between their psychological world and the sea. The results are presented in the attached table.

In future, working from this comparison as a premise, a comparison of legends, on ritual beliefs, social organization, and systems of perception of the environment will be attempted.