Field Works for Shinobu Orkuchi
—Attempts to Connect “Classical Literature” with “Classical Literature in Modern Life”—

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This thesis describes field work by Shinobu Orkuchi, who, together with Kunio Yanagita, led the folkloric studies at their embryonic stage in Japan.

Shinobu Orkuchi, 1887–1953, was a renowned writer, a scholar of classical literature as well as a folklorist. Unlike Kunio Yanagita who concentrated on folkloric studies and did not publish many literary works of his own, Orkuchi remained as a writer, a scholar of classical literature as well as a folklorist with his concern equally divided among the three roles. This thesis tries to make clear the relationship between Orkuchi’s position with multiple roles and his field work. Orkuchi tried to make his observation of the modern folkloric practices in the context of “classical logic” extracted from his knowledge of “classical literature” and perceive “classicality” of the people. For example, in his observation of Oni performance in the folkloric performing arts called “Hana-matsuri” in Toyone-mura or Toh-ei-cho, Kita-shidarah-gun, Aichi prefecture, he perceived it to have originated in the performance by “Yamabito” for blessing the arrival of spring. Orkuchi came to this conclusion through his studies of “classical literature”, without the knowledge of which it is impossible for anyone to conclude that the Oni performance originates in Yamabito blessing performance. The field work of this sort made by Orkuchi in relation with studies of classical literature signifies reconfirmation of “classical literature” through “folkloric practices”. Therefore, Orkuchi’s field observation can be considered as on having a characteristic of looking at “folkloric practices” in the light of “classical literature”. Being based on this kind of field observation by Orkuchi, it is easy to understand why Orkuchi define “folkloric practices” as “classical literature in modern life”. Field works meant for Orkuchi works of connecting “classical literature” with “classical literature in modern life”.