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An Essay toward Folklore Aesthetics in Japan

Masahiro HAMASHITA

This paper offers an outline sketch of the possibility of folklore aesthetics as the original discipline of Japanese aesthetics. To Japanese culture, the canon or model has been provided historically from abroad, in older time from China and in modern time from the West. Against Chinese literary aesthetics chiefly based on Confucianism, the original and endogenous Japanese culture can be found in the field of folklore, as YANAGITA Kunio did research. Treating in particular ORIGUCHI Shinobu, my intention is to appreciate him on the ground that both his methodology and topics as well as his attitude to things western, his mentality with the highest pride in Japanese nationality and art, etc. suggest that there must be emerged the endogenous Japanese aesthetics from within “the new national learning” of folklore.