

The Formation Process of Otogizôshi Texts



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● Research Outline

Otogizôshi is a general term for short stories that were popular from the Muromachi period to the Edo period. There are works reminiscent of court literature and works that incorporate folklore that had been told in folk, and the characteristics and contents of these stories are diverse. The stories are formed in deep relation with performing arts such as Yôkyoku and Kôwakamai. Also, the content of the story may differ depending on the augmentation and reorganization of the copier. Books of different versions in one work are called book variations, and the characteristics of the story can also be captured through comparison among them.

(1) About the formation of the text

Mainly through comparison of book variations and annotation of the text, I am particularly organizing Otogizôshi works with different contents especially among the variations. Differences between books may include the result of interpretation of the story by the copier, and in one work, some books have a strong Buddhist color, and others eliminate such religious content to focus on the psychological description. The text is created by the copier in the process of enjoying the story, such as adding words and sentences. Based on the above differences, I am analyzing how a text of Otogizôshi is formed.

(2) Relationship with Chorography

The narratives incorporated into the story are not limited to those from other works and lyrics from performing arts. The content may also be found in local folklore. Yokobue (Flute) which I have been analyzing is a story that can be seen in The Tale of the Heike, but in the sacred place of Mt. Koya, there is a different narrative. Since the Yokobue narrative told in the chorography of Mt. Koya can be seen in one of the Yokobue books, it can be seen that the Yokobue narrative was developed from the association of the narrative and chorography. Based on such case, I also pursue the relationship between narratives and regional folklore in classical literature.