Subject of Study Common to the History and Folklore

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In this joint research, the subject assigned to me might have been as follows; to clarify the distinction between the folklore and history and contribute to the establishment of the folklore as the independent science. If such requirement is included in my assignment, I cannot cope with it. In my opinion, the nature and domain of the study of history are by no means obvious. What it is required now is not to draw a line between the domains of each science, but to given attention to the domain of the history of human culture that is liable to be overlooked due to the classification of domains of sciences.

In Japan where FOLK is translated into JOUMIN and PEOPLE into JINMIN or KOKUMIN, the folklore using the former word overlooked the political aspects at the level of the everyday life, and the study of history using the latter word had a defect to consider the political activities separately from the everyday life. There is no doubt that those who acquire the political power depend largely on the knowledge of written language, and the culture of JOUMIN in Japan had already highly indebted to the culture of written language. The process of their acquiring “literal knowledge” was the transformation process of the folklore and the transformation of political process. It was the most conspicuous when they accepted the urban culture. In the ancient times, not only the Buddha of a foreign country but also the dissension and compromise between the god decorated gloriously by the culture of the political power and the local god played the similar roles. And, especially, in the Edo period, the medical knowledge of the political power inherited the role played by the god to some extent. In this aspect, too, JOUMIN or JINMIN accumulated the medical information themselves. Under such circumstance, it can be expected that the study of history and folklore share the same subject.