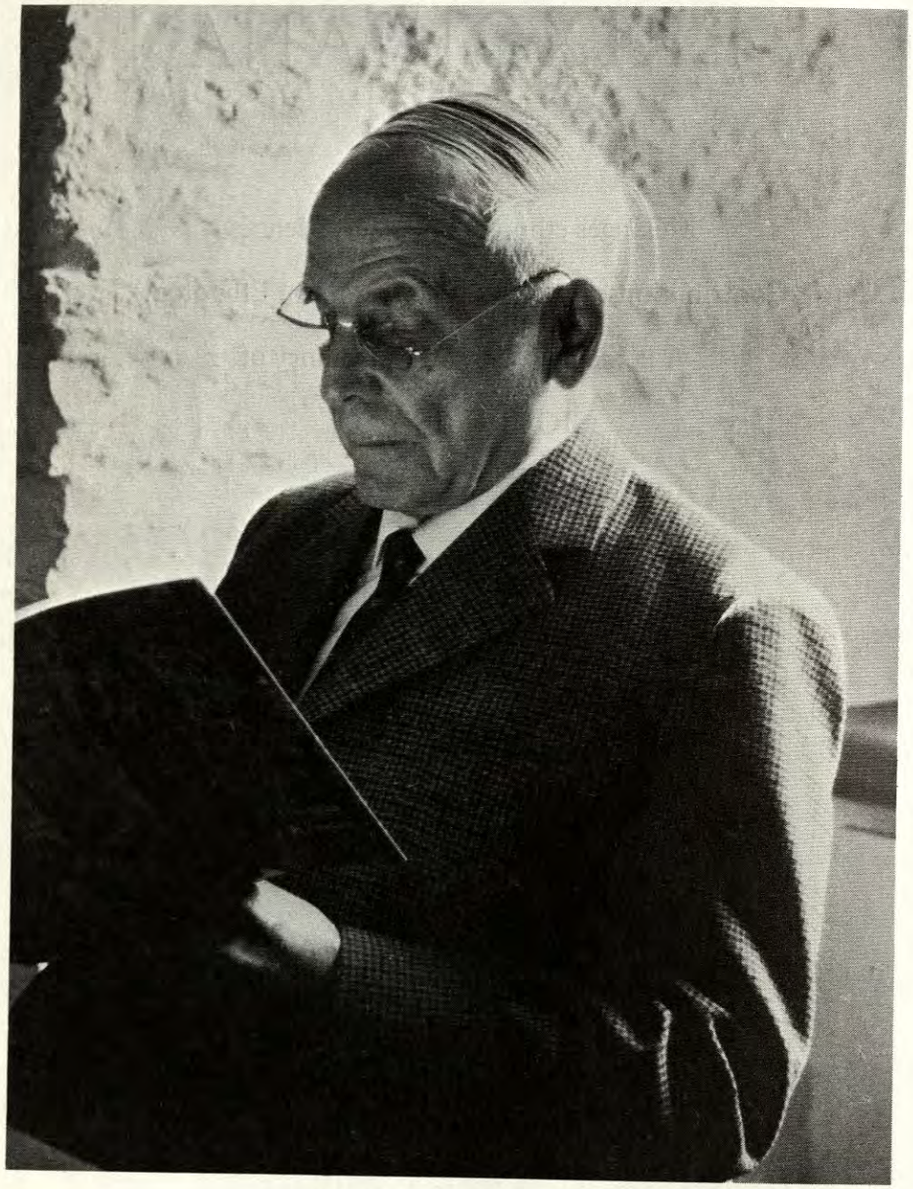

Sigurd Erixon, 1888–1968

CHARLES H. LANGE

European Ethnology and American Anthropology

IN OFFERING THESE OBSERVATIONS on European Ethnology[1] and American Anthropology as a portion of a festschrift for Professor Sigurd Erixon, it would seem quite appropriate to begin with various comments by Professor Erixon, himself, in his paper, "European Ethnology in our Time", the lead-article in the first number of this new journal[2].

As Erixon properly noted, discussion of any such topic must include consideration of its context, which includes not only various associated contemporary manifestations but an examination of antecedent developments as well. It is relevant here to recall Smith's reminder that "The study of culture is itself a culture. Anthropology itself is a learned and patterned way of life of a group of people. ... Anthropology also has a history[3]". The trends and currents of the past are indeed fundamental to a better understanding of the variations and discrepancies characterizing the types of activities and interpretations now found in ethnological research on Europe.

One of the most formidable barriers to facilitating effective communication in the pursuit of a comprehensive mastery of European ethnology on a broad topical front may well be encountered in the very thorny problems of terminology. Quite conceivably, trouble would be experienced at the very outset in terms of the precise designation of the academic discipline or sub-discipline within which a specific researcher works. There appears to be virtually no inclination to reconcile the gross differences in these traditional designations of the major fields as followed in the European countries and in the United States, as the paper by Erixon[4] described. Precedents and traditions enduring throughout a considerable span of time have created an imposing maze of ambiguities and contradictions, with a number of lacunae still obviously, and often embarrassingly, present.

It is indeed tempting to ponder the rewards of such an initial task as the establishment of a uniform terminology under the auspices of this journal. However, reality forces the recognition of the high probability of reactions from academic concerns and traditions outside ethnology which would undoubtedly mean strong resistance to, or at least the ignoring of, such overtures; similarly discouraging reactions could be expected from within ethnology, itself. Consequently, it appears far more practical to strive now for more effective communication and more fruitful

1. With the constantly expanding volume of scientific literature, the announcement of a new journal evokes rather mixed emotions. On the one hand, the prospect of adding to an already overwhelming body of data is resented, often with an accompanying advocacy of greater attention to quality; in contrast, however, is the real satisfaction over a tangible manifestation of interest in and growth of yet another facet of knowledge. As data accumulate and sub-areas of specialization emerge, there is often justification for new journals which provide improved opportunities for communication among potential colleagues. While numerous scholars, probably many more than is commonly believed, have been interested in European ethnology, their efforts have tended to be diffused, with communication among them suffering accordingly. The prospects for more significant collaboration through the pages of *Ethnologia Europaea* are indeed exciting; for a facet of research much too neglected thus far, this journal could well mean the marshaling of vigorous research activities resulting in valuable insights and perspectives in the study of human behavior, cultural variation, and cultural change.

2. Sigurd Erixon, European Ethnology in our Time. *Ethnologia Europaea*, vol. 1 (1967), pp. 3-11.

3. Alfred G. Smith, The Dionysian Innovation. *American Anthropologist*, vol. 66 (1964), p. 251.

4. Erixon, op. cit.

collaboration among the interested scholars through means other than a standardized terminology.

What is studied and how it is studied would seem to be much more rewarding concerns than does the precise academic banner under which a study is conducted. In this regard, it would appear highly beneficial if the study of European ethnology approximated, in conceptualization and in methodology, certain characteristics and qualities found in present-day American anthropology. A number of these characteristics and qualities were noted by Erixon; a useful beginning might well be made in transferring the broadly inclusive approach that Erixon recognized in general ethnology to European ethnology — the only significant difference being the spatial limitations of the latter. Similarly, general, or, henceforth in this discussion, European ethnology could be further equated with the comprehensive approach of general anthropology, or, in essence, American anthropology.

Conceived in this manner, European ethnology should ideally embrace, with no warranted protest, the various specialties relevant to the study of culture, or human behavior. This coverage should be applied to all of Europe and also to peripheral areas, where consideration of these is necessary to complete the perspective or to appraise accurately particular phases of culture history, throughout the gamut of written records and perhaps earlier. The relevant data would obviously become more plentiful and richer in detail as the present time is approached.

Leaving various specialties to individuals so inclined, the total effort of all those scholars working under the heading of European ethnology could benefit greatly from the tremendous range of variation in European cultural patterns (a feature, to be sure, duplicated or paralleled in several other areas of the world) and the rich depth of documentary data (virtually unmatched elsewhere in the world). The data from these combined gamuts of space and time give firm promise of sampling instances which will contribute significantly to the fund of knowledge on the nature of culture and on cultural processes.

This richness, in the not too distant future, will provide the type of basis which Kluckhohn ascribed some years ago to the American Southwest[5]. Consequently, as in the case of the Southwest, European ethnology would be in such a position that scholars could deal with problems of process, which Kluckhohn described as "genuinely scientific questions". This situation would be a far more valuable achievement than would be the mere amassing of additional, haphazard descriptive data, important as these undoubtedly are. Both in variety of manifestations and in chronological depth of written records, Europe, as an area, far exceeds the American Southwest (or, indeed, most of the world's cultural areas). With some encouragement, hopefully supplied by the creation and continuation of this journal, there is good reason to expect that the number of interested scholars in various phases of research could easily approach, or even surpass, the appreciable number of scholars concerned with the American Southwest. As data accumulate, the need for greater insights for better understanding and the need for increasingly refined methods and controls will con-

5. Clyde Kluckhohn, Southwestern Studies of Culture and Personality. *American Anthropologist*, vol. 56 (1954), p. 693.

stitute stimulating challenges to many researchers. As in the American Southwest, or in other frequently studied areas, there is no foreseeable exhaustion of legitimate and rewarding research projects or problems. A relatively unexploited frontier of cultural research, internal in nature, awaits the concerted effort of sophisticated, imaginative, and vigorous scholars in a situation rather reminiscent of that which precipitated the founding several years ago of the American Society for Ethnohistory.

Acculturation studies have tended to concentrate upon the contacts between the advanced technological societies of Europe and America and the so-called underdeveloped areas of the world. There are ample opportunities to do equally valid and significant studies in the ethnohistorical phases of European ethnology. Similarly, numerous instances are available to provide valuable data for further insights in such topics as the innovative process; the role of artisans and other specialists in a culture; the nature and function of leadership, either in terms of hereditary royalty or nobility or in terms of those who have attained positions of prominence or influence despite their origins in the masses of common people. Opportunities to study the closely associated topics of enculturation, social stratification, and social mobility are unlimited.

Data on the influences and ramifications of population genetics as well as other aspects of demographic studies are present in many contexts throughout the area and, in more restricted fashion, in time.

Diaries, journals, and a wealth of less personal documentation, such as public records of both church and municipality, all give promise of a richness and depth in detail that is simply impossible to find in the non-literate, or only recently literate, world. Added to the more conventional forms of culture-personality investigations, these sources again amount to a great wealth of information for the researchers to probe and analyze.

The European area further provides a variety of excellent opportunities to investigate, through more than two millenia, the ongoing interaction between a Great Tradition (or several) and innumerable Little Traditions, as these have been conceived by Redfield[6] and others.

Language and culture studies, in terms of the more conventionally recognized major languages and the far more numerous dialects, afford a variety of instances for further testing and refining such topics as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis[7], glottochronology[8], componential analysis[9], and other concerns of the linguists.

Studies of human groups, i.e., communities[10], of various systems of cultural

6. Robert Redfield, *Peasant Society and Culture*. Chicago, 1956. (Especially, pp. 67-104).

7. Edward Sapir, *Language*. New York, 1921; John B. Carroll (editor), *Language, Thought, and Reality; Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. New York and Cambridge (Mass.), 1956.

8. S. H. Gudschinsky, The ABC's of Lexicostatistics (Glottochronology), in: Dell Hymes (editor), *Language in Culture and Society*. New York, Evanston (Ill), and London, 1964, pp. 612-623.

9. For example, see various papers by J. C. Gardin, Roy G. D'Andrade, Anthony F. C. Wallace, Ward H. Goodenough, and D. M. Schneider in Formal Semantic Analysis. *American Anthropologist*, vol. 67 (1965), No. 5, part 2.

10. Robert Redfield, *The Little Community*. Chicago, 1955.

values[11], of cultural themes[12], and virtually all other current concerns of anthropologists studying facets of culture can be easily and advantageously accomodated within the confines of European ethnology, as conceived in this discussion.

In concluding this brief paper, mention should be made of one additional feature, inherent in European ethnological studies, which makes this field attractive. While it is hoped that interested scholars would be attracted from all parts of the world, it seems reasonable to expect that Europeans, themselves, would occupy a prominent, if not dominant, role in these researches. In the past decade, or more, there has been increasing complaint that rather severely limited research funds have prevented European scholars from traveling to their areas of primary concern. Although such activity should not be completely abandoned, the development of increasing interest in either one's own country, or at least in adjacent or nearby countries, would serve as both a more economical and yet sufficiently satisfying alternative.

Just as American anthropologists, primarily under the banner of social anthropology, have seen fit to become involved in the study of segments of American culture other than the various Indian tribes, it would seem plausible for European ethnologists to become interested in their own culture — to date, essentially forfeited to folklorists, historians, human geographers, political scientists, and others. There is certainly room for all, and the broadly inclusive approach which European ethnologists now seem prepared to make holds promise of exciting new data and fresh perspectives in amplifying our knowledge and understanding of human behavior.

11. Florence Rockwood Kluckhohn and Fred L. Strodtbeck, *Variations in Value Orientations.* New York, 1961.

12. Morris E. Opler, Themes as Dynamic Forces in Culture. *The American Journal of Sociology* (Chicago), vol. 51 (1945), pp. 198-206.

SIEGFRIED LEHMANN

Walfischfängerkommandeur Peter Lohrens und Albrecht Dürer's „Underweysung"

Aufriss und Symbolik der Eichenholzschachtel von 1687

Unter den Schätzen des Städtischen Museums in Flensburg befindet sich eine große, runde Schachtel. Ihr Eichenholzdeckel ist reich geschmückt und meergrün gestrichen, heute schimmert die graubraune Holzmaserung hindurch; ihre Fischbeinseiten haben die eigenartige, fahle Altersfarbe und sind rundum mit Namensemblem, Blumen, Tieren und Rankenwerk versehen. An den handbreit überlappenden Enden ist das Fischbein verschnürt und mit Messingknöpfen an der Bodenplatte befestigt. In den Zwickeln im Mittelteil der Eichenholzplatte bezeichnen das AÑO 1687 das Entstehungsjahr und das P L den Verfertiger der Schachtel, auf dem Fischbein Peter Lohrens genannt (Abb. 1 und 3). Kostbarkeiten wie diese Schachtel beglücken schon bei der ersten Begegnung, und ihre Schönheit reizt unwiderstehlich dazu, dem Rätsel ihrer Wirkung auf den Grund zu gehen — auch wenn Carl J. Burckhardt[1] in seinen "Begegnungen" mahnt, der müsse ein Kassandaraschicksal gewärtigen, wer nach Beweisen stöbere, er liefe Gefahr, die Kraftlinien des Zaubers zu unterbrechen.

1. *AUFRISS DES EICHENHOLZDECKELS*

Die Schachtel hat im Katalog des Städtischen Museums in Flensburg die Nummer 1109/1884. Der Durchmesser des Eichenholzdeckels beträgt 41,6 cm und die Höhe der Schachtel 10,7 cm. Das vorherrschende Muster ist die Raute mit einer Seitenlänge von fast genau 10 Zoll[2]. Über der Rautenseite als Maßeinheit ist der Großkreis mit Hilfe der bekannten Zirkelkonstruktionen errichtet. Der Kreisbogen seinerseits umschließt die rechteckige Raute und deren stark betonte Kreuzlinie (Abb. 2). Mit der Durchkreuzten Raute kommt deutlich eine Achterteilung des Kreises zum Vorschein, die durch die acht Schlingen von großer Regelmäßigkeit unterstützt wird. Die Ansatzpunkte dafür liegen auf den Rautenseiten, jeweils in den Mitten der Rosettenhalbkreise. Die nach aussen gekehrten, kleinen Halbbögen werden durch nach innen gekehrte, große Bögen untereinander zu einem echten Knotenzug verbunden. Dabei zeigt sich ein bemerkenswerter Tatbestand: Die über den Rautenecken stehenden Bögen sind im Zirkelschlag flacher als jene Bögen, die über die Seiten der Rauten geschlagen werden; deren Zirkeleinstiche liegen aber nicht dort, wo sich Rautenseite und senkrecht dazu stehende Kreuzungslinie schneiden. Die sehr deutlich verschiedenen Einsatzpunkte für die Innenbögen des Knotens bleiben vorerst ungeklärt.

An dieser kritischen Stelle begann ein langes Probieren mit Zirkel und Lineal. Einfaches Maßnehmen und Vergleichen der Zirkelöffnungen für diese Bögen boten keine Konstruktionshilfen. Nur eines wurde dabei offenbar, daß nämlich die acht Halbkreise ein und dieselbe Zirkelweite haben wie der Umkreis in der Deckelmitte, der den kleinen Achtstern und die zweimal zwei Ringe mit dem Tau- und dem Triangelmuster umschließt.

1. Carl J. Burckhardt, *Begegnungen.* Manesse-Bibliothek der Weltliteratur. Zürich, 1958. S. 163.

2. Zu Zoll: Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch.* Leipzig, 1954. Bd. 16, S. 33 f.