

## The Academic position of European Ethnology in Norway

IN CONFORMITY WITH THE ORGANIZATION of the subject in Norway, it is divided into two parts, each with its own name. *Folkelivsgransking (etnologi)*, Ethnology, encompasses the study of material and social culture, centred chiefly on problems that originate from Norwegian or Scandinavian folk material. From a similar point of departure the study of the spiritual heritage is named *Folkeminnevitenskap, Folklore*. The latter has a more intimate connection with philological studies, particularly Nordic philology, but also with musicological studies, than Ethnology has as defined above.

Ethnology in this sense is an independent academic subject, as is also Folklore, although Nordic philology includes as part of the literary studies folkloristic material and problems taught by the folkloristic staff at the University Institute of Folklore in Oslo. At the University of Bergen the relationship of Folklore and Nordic philology is at the present time closer than in Oslo as there is no separate institute of folklore there.

General ethnology conceived of as theory and comparative research is included in the teaching of both subjects, but general ethnology in the sense of non-European studies, particularly of primitive peoples, is traditionally named Ethnography. It is an independent academic subject, previously closely attached to geography, but recently changing into Social Anthropology organized as independent academic disciplines in Oslo and Bergen. Ethnography or Social Anthropology is regarded as being part of Social Studies, closely allied with sociology, whereas Ethnology and Folklore are organized with the historical-philosophical disciplines as humaniora. This is due to the cultural-historical selection of problems and material of these studies as contrasted to the more rigid sociological approach of Ethnography, and to some extent also the concentration on the European tradition by Ethnology and Folklore.

European ethnology is then organized as a separate institute with one regular chair (professor) at the University of Oslo. Professor Hilmar Stigum, who retired at the end of 1967, has held a personal chair. Folklore likewise is organized in a separate institute at the University of Oslo with one regular chair (professor). In addition an associate professorship exists at the University of Bergen, organized within the Institute of Nordic philology. The institutes are parts of the humanistic faculties of the universities.

These faculties confer the following degrees: cand. mag. and cand. philol., or mag. art., beside the doctorate. On the basis of *examen artium* (usually taken at the age of 18-19 after 3 years of schooling in the gymnasium) introductory examinations are passed by university students in philosophy and latin after about 1 year's study. A combined study of 3 disciplines will then lead to one of the degrees mentioned above. The degrees cand. mag. and cand. philol. are chiefly intended to cover the need for teachers in the general school system of elementary and higher levels in the country, whereas the mag. art. degree is less limited and orientated towards a freer combination of fields of study.

The cand. mag. degree comprises a one-year study in one discipline and two one-and-a-half year studies in two other disciplines. An example would be German philology with English philology and history, all of which are taught in the higher school system. From this basis a candidate may proceed by choosing one of these fields for another one-and-a-half to two years's study on a higher level, resulting in a dissertation and the degree cand. philol. which will admit him to teaching posts in the higher school system (Gymnasium).

Ethnology and Folklore in Norway are taught by the above mentioned institutes in courses of a one-year study and a one-and-a-half year study, in such a manner that these examinations can be included in the subjects selected for the combinations required for teaching positions in the general school system. To some extent, particularly in Folklore, such examinations are therefore passed by future teachers, although these subjects are not taught as separate disciplines in the higher or lower general school system. A future teacher will therefore hardly choose more than one such subject, of which also archaeology or art history should be mentioned as examples.

Those who intend to specialize in Ethnology or Folklore, as in other subjects not taught in the general school system like archaeology etc., will have to pass an examination and have a dissertation accepted in order to obtain the *magister artium* degree in their main field

of study. Besides they will have to pass two minor examinations of accepted "supporting" fields, of an extent comparable to two of the subjects entering into the cand. mag. degree. An example would be a one-year study of archaeology, a one- or one-and-a-half year study of history, and then specializing for three to four years in ethnology or folklore. The possibilities for combinations are varied, with ethnology as a major combined with minors ranging from folklore to Celtic philology, sociology, etc.

Ethnology and folklore will accordingly to a considerable extent be studied for a one-year or one-and-a-half-year examination by candidates not only for teachers' examinations on lower and higher levels, but also by candidates for the magister artium degree in other fields as "supporting" subjects to their main subject, e.g. art history. About 2/3 of the students at the Institute of Ethnology, out of a total number of about 50, fall into this category, the rest studying at present on higher levels for the magister artium in ethnology. The situation at the Institute of Folklore shows also about 50 students altogether, of whom 2-3 are studying at the higher level for the magister artium degree.

The doctorate in the Norwegian system is not included as a teaching responsibility of the University's regular teaching staff. It is conferred on the candidate who, after having obtained the regular examination degrees as stated above, independently and after research work over a considerable number of years has produced an original printed contribution to his field of such significance that he can be given the right on his own responsibility to teach his subject on a university level, a competence which on the average will be reached at the age of 30-40.

From what has been sketched out above, it will be apparent that the lower examinations to some extent will open up avenues into the Norwegian general school system, where such additional qualifications of teachers can be used in general teaching of Norwegian history, language and geography from the elementary level of the nine-year school and on into the gymnasium. Some developments along these lines can be expected in the years to come.

As a minor subject "supporting" the major subject chosen by magister artium candidates in other academic fields, ethnology and folklore are evolving into growing importance, not only in archaeology and art history, but also in other humanistic and social science fields. A broader basis for academic understanding of contributions made by European ethnology may thereby be gained.

The subject ethnology proper as professional qualification is limited to candidates with the magister artium degree. In Norway these candidates will turn to the museums of folk culture as their chief working possibilities, including to some extent other culture-historical museums and archives, e.g. maritime museums, craft museums and also antiquarian work. The content of the academic studies and the technical training aims at qualifying candidates for such work. Future developments in these respects are hard to estimate, but such prospects are certainly motivating students to choose ethnology as their major subject. Students majoring in folklore have less opportunities of this kind, but it is expected that persons with a mag. art. degree in either ethnology or folklore will also find opportunities in mass media institutions, although such possibilities will not be the regular ones. Finally, the development of university institutions will offer opportunities for a selected few in both fields, primarily with research and teaching obligations.

Present staff of university institutes:

*University of Oslo:*

Institute of Ethnology: Knut Kolsrud (full professor), Hilmar Stigum (honorary professor emeritus), Anne-Berit Borchgrevink (assistant), Anne-Louise Christensen (assistant), Kari Helmer Hansen (assistant), plus office and technical personnel.

Institute of Folklore: Svale Solheim (full professor), Olav Bø (chief curator), Mortan Nolsøe (curator), Inger Christiansen (assistant), Brynjulf Alver (university lecturer), plus office personnel.

*University of Bergen:*

Associated with Nordic Institute: Kjell Bondevik (associate professor of folklore) (serving at present as minister of church and education), Reimund Kvideland (university lecturer in folklore).

The teaching at the universities is the responsibility of the full professors, the associate professors as responsible not only for teaching, but also for such institute activities as listed personnel with obligations of field work, archive work and research organized by the professors as responsible not only for teaching but also for such institute activities as listed above. Some teaching in university courses is carried out by the institute personnel. In addition, the Institute of Ethnology at the University of Oslo is being assisted in its teaching in their special field by persons holding curator positions at the Norwegian Folk Museum.

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