

The Academic Position of European Ethnology in North America

IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES, European ethnology, to the best of my knowledge, nowhere is taught (or even thought of) as an independent discipline. In exceptional and extremely rare instances only is an effort made to study the *material* culture of European folk cultures. Certain aspects of *culture spirituelle*, to use the French for which an English term is lacking, frequently are studied by American folklorists, often in the context of Germanic, Romance, or other language studies. *Social* culture of European peasants, in recent years, has become a field of considerable interest to American anthropologists.

So far as I know, there is not one university or college in Canada and the United States where there would be an independent department of European Ethnology, or where there would be at least a chair or an institute within some other department. Where European folk literature and the social organization of European peasant cultures are taught, in many instances these subjects come under the department of anthropology. (A list of institutions, as far as I have been able to find out about them, will be given at the end of this survey.)

While at some institutions (e.g. at the University of California at Berkeley, the University of California at Los Angeles, Indiana University, and the University of Pennsylvania) it is possible to graduate in *Folklore* or in *Folklore and Folk Life Studies*, I know of no institution where European ethnology presently is a separate field acceptable for the B.A., the M.A. or the Ph.D. These degrees would be awarded in anthropology, in sociology, in history, or in English.

On the other hand, the study of *American Folk Culture* (which may be considered an outgrowth, or even a part of, European Folk Culture) finally has come to be acknowledged as an academic discipline. "The New York Historical Association and New York State University College at Oneonta offer two graduate programs leading to a master of arts degree" with emphasis on material culture. "The History Museum Training Program is designed to train personnel for positions in museums and historical societies, while the American Folk Culture Program combines the techniques of social, cultural, and literary historians, anthropologists, and folklorists."¹ This most promising development is due mainly to the successful efforts of Dr. Louis C. Jones, director of the Cooperstown Museum and of the Cooperstown graduate programs.

In addition, some other items reflect a growing interest in European ethnology and the related field of the material aspects of American folk culture:

a. At the 1965 annual meeting of the American Folklore Society a session was devoted to *Material Folk Traditions in the United States*.² Of the papers read, Norbert F. Riedl's *Folklore and the Study of Material Aspects of Folk Culture*³ is particularly pertinent for European ethnologists. Although the other papers primarily dealt with American ethnology, they definitely are of interest also for the student of the ethnology of Europe. The session met under the chairmanship of Bruce R. Buckley, New York State Historical Association, Cooperstown. Besides Riedl's paper, the following were read:

Warren E. Roberts (Indiana University): *The Lean-to House in Southern Indiana*

Henry Glassie (Philadelphia): *The Southern Mountain Cabin Types*

William I. Schreiber (The College of Wooster): *The Pennsylvania Dutch Bank Barn in Ohio*

Austin E. Fife (Utah State University): *Western Rural Mail Boxes*

Furthermore, two papers read at another session of the same annual meeting of the American Folklore Society should also be mentioned:⁴

Linda Dégh (Indiana University): *Approaches to Folklore Research Among Immigrant Groups*⁵

Allen Walker Read (Columbia University): *Graffiti as a Field of Folklore*

b. In January 1967, a conference on *Central and North European Peasant Cultures* took place in Chicago, under the auspices of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. The conference was organized by John J. Honigsmann of the University of North Carolina. The objectives of the conference were "(1) to take stock of what has been

1. *American Historical Association Newsletter* (Washington, D.C.), vol. 6 (1967), p. 23.

2. *Journal of American Folklore*, Supplement 1966, p. 25.

3. *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 79 (1966), pp. 557-563.

4. *Journal of American Folklore*, Supplement, vol. 79 (1966), p. 26.

5. *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 79 (1966), pp. 551-556.

accomplished in Central European community studies, noting both substantive and theoretical contributions; (2) to delineate... patterns of behavior and structure in Central European rural communities; (3) to examine relationship between patterns of behavior and to trace behavior patterns to their ecological, historical, psychological, or other foundations; and (4) to orient future research in the area."⁶ The countries with which the conference was concerned were Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. The topics were: "Ecological relationships, including *Agrarethnographie*. Archaeological perspectives. Historical development, persistence, and change. Kinship and other factors in social structure. Trade and other economic relationships. Rural-urban relationships. Impingement of national institutions on rural communities. Transition from peasant to farmer. Secular and sacred symbols. Rituals and ceremonies. Ethnomedicine. Ethnoscience. World views of peasants, including ethos. Culture and personality."⁶

c. According to the Preliminary Program of the 1967 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association⁷ the following papers, of particular interest to Europeanists, are scheduled to be read at the symposium on *East European Anthropology* under the chairmanship of Bela C. Maday (National Institute of Mental Health):

Irwin T. Sanders (Council for Education in World Affairs): *Ethnology in Bulgaria and Greece*

Paul Leser (Hartford Seminary Foundation): *Ethnology in Czechoslovakia and Germany*

Linda Dégh (Indiana University): *Ethnology in Hungary*

Danguole Variakojis (California State College, Long Beach): *Folk Culture Studies in Lithuanian S.S.R.*

Sula M. Benet (City University of New York, Hunter College): *Ethnology in Poland*

Joel M. Halpern (University of Massachusetts) and Eugene A. Hammel (University of California, Berkeley): *Ethnology in Yugoslavia*

Furthermore, in other sessions of the 1967 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, the following papers will be offered:

Ethel Nurge (McMaster University): *Population Composition in a German Village*

Eric R. Wolf (University of Michigan): *Peasant Traditionalism and Modern Revolutions, with case studies drawn from Russia (and non-European areas)*⁸

Philip K. Bock (University of New Mexico): *Some Generative Rules for English Kinship Terminology*

Pertti J. Pelto (University of Minnesota): *The Snowmobile Revolution* (dealing with Finnish Lapland)⁹

Richard K. Beardsley (University of Michigan): *Peasant Societies: Unused Testing Grounds for Modernization Theory*

d. For many years Margaret Arnott (University of Pennsylvania), the leading American authority on Greek ethnology, has promoted the recognition of European ethnology in the United States by reading papers at annual meetings of learned societies;

American Folklore Society, 1958: *Greek Easter Breads*

American Folklore Society, 1959: *The Anastenaria: A Study of a Thracian Firewalking Group*

Oriental Society, 1960: *The Anastenaria: A Study of a Thracian Firewalking Group*. (Additional material)

Regional Folklore Society, Bloomington, Indiana, 1960: *Easter Fires in Greece*

The Society for the History of Technology, 1961: *The Candles for the Dead*

American Folklore Society, 1962: *Breads and Customs for the Twelve Days of Christmas in Greece*

6. Letter of October 21, 1966, from Dr. Lita Osmundsen, Director of Research, Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, to Paul Leser.

7. American Anthropological Association, Preliminary Program, 66th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Nov. 30-Dec. 3, 1967.

8. Abstracts, American Anthropological Association, 66th Annual Meeting, Nov. 30-Dec. 3, 1967, p. 89.

9. Ibid., p. 66.

American Folk Dance Group, 1963: *Sketches of England*

Scholars having graduated in European ethnology might find openings in university or college departments of anthropology, or folklore, or history. A graduate in European ethnology who had also studied American culture of the 17th to the early 19th Century would possess a basis for employment in institutions such as the Farmers' Museum at Coopers-town, N.Y.; Old Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts; The Mercer Museum at Doylestown, Pa.; or the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

The following information is based mainly on the Guide to Graduate Departments of Anthropology for the year 1967-1968 published by the American Anthropological Associations:

Southern Illinois University offers a Special Program in the Ethnology of Europe, especially Western and Central Europe.

Instructors on the graduate level familiar with "Europe" (field of interest is given as listed in the "Guide"):

University of Alabama: David de Jarnette, Assoc. Prof., Ethnology of Europe; Margaret Z. Searcy, Lecturer, Europe. *Boston University:* Daniel McCall, (full) Prof., Mediterranean. *California State College at Long Beach:* Danguole Variakojis, Assoc. Prof., Lithuania. *University of California at Berkeley:* May N. Diaz, Assoc. Prof., European Peasants; Alan Dundes, Assoc. Prof., Folklore; George M. Foster, (full) Prof., Spanish and Spanish-American Culture and Peasant Societies; Nelson H. H. Graburn, Asst. Prof., Western Civilization; John Gumperz, (full) Prof., Social Anthropology, Europe; Eugene A. Hammel, (full) Prof., Yugoslavia. *University of California at Los Angeles:* Marija Gimbutas, (full) Prof., Baltic and Slavic Folklore. *University of California at Santa Barbara:* Henry P. Lundsgaarde, Asst. Prof., Europe. *Catholic University of America:* Michael Kenny, (full) Prof., Circum-Mediterranean. *City University of New York:* Lawrence Krader, (full) Prof., City College, Slavic cultures; Sula Benet, Assoc. Prof., Hunter College, Europe; Ernestine Friedl, (full) Prof., Queens College, peasant society, modern Greece, Europe; Edward C. Hansen, Asst. Prof., Queens College, Mediterranean; Sydel Silverman, Asst. Prof., Queens College, peasant society, Italy. *Columbia University:* Conrad M. Arensberg, (full) Prof., Europe; Morton Klass, Assoc. Prof., Europe. *University of Illinois:* Demetri B. Shimkin, (full) Prof., culture history, Russia. *Indiana University:* Linda Dégh, Assoc. Prof., Ethnology of Europe, especially Central and East Europe; John Messenger, (full) Prof., Aran Islands. *University of Kansas:* Robert J. Smith, Asst. Prof., anthropological folklore, Spain. *University of Massachusetts:* Joel M. Halpern, Assoc. Prof., Eastern Europe. *McMaster University:* Ethel Nurge, Assoc. Prof., Germany. *University of Michigan:* Robert K. Burns, Asst. Prof., European peasantry; Eric R. Wolf, (full) Prof., Europe. *University of Missouri:* Ralph H. Rowlett, Asst. Prof., European ethnohistory. *Université de Montréal:* Asen Balikci, Assoc. Prof., Mediterranean; Jacques Gomila, Assoc. Prof., Western Europe. *University of Nevada:* William Douglass, Asst. Research Prof., Basque Studies Program, European peasant societies. *University of New Mexico:* Philip K. Bock, Assoc. Prof., peasant culture. *State University of New York at Binghamton:* Louise E. Sweet, Assoc. Prof., peasantry, Mediterranean. *State University of New York at Buffalo:* Raoul Naroll, (full) Prof., Europe. *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill:* John J. Honigsmann, (full) Prof., Tyrol. *Ohio State University:* Francis Lee Utley, (full) Prof., folklore, Europe. *University of Pennsylvania:* Margaret Arnott, Lecturer, Greece; Froelich Rainey, (full) Prof., Ethnography of circumpolar regions. *Sacramento State College:* Dorothea J. Theodoratus, Asst. Prof., Europe. *San Francisco State College:* William D. Hohenthal, (full) Prof., European ethnography. *Southern Illinois University:* Charles H. Lange, (full) Prof., ethnology of Europe; Carroll L. Riley, (full) Prof., ethnology, Mediterranean area, Ireland. *Stanford University:* Bernard J. Siegel, (full) Prof., Europe. *University of Tennessee:* Norbert F. Riedl, Assoc. Prof., Europe. *Temple University:* Eugene Cohen, Instructor, European ethnography. *University of Virginia:* William Watson, (full) Prof., social structure, Great Britain. *Wake Forest University:* E. Pendleton Banks, (full) Prof., Eastern Europe. *Washington State University:* Robert E. Ackerman, Assoc. Prof., Russia; H. Russell Bernard, Asst. Prof., peasant societies, Mediterranean. *Wayne State University:* Leonard W. Moss, (full) Prof., peasant culture, Italy; Victor A. Rapport, (full) Prof., Italy; Thomas F. Nemec, Instructor, Europe. *University of Wisconsin:* Arnold Strickton, Assoc. Prof., folk and peasant cultures, Europe.

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