

## Swedish Ethnology Today\*

### CONDITIONS OF RESEARCH

SINCE JULY 1, 1972 "ETHNOLOGY" HAS BEEN THE DESIGNATION for the university subject that was previously called "Nordic and comparative folk life research" or, more recently, simply "Folk life research". The three ethnological professorships in the country bear the additional title "especially European", which is an indication of the area of research as compared to ethnography and social anthropology. Although research in either subject will probably not be influenced by the drawing of such geographical borders, there is at present good reason for the additional title. The Swedish ethnologist is an Europeanist, not an Africanist or Americanist. He works in a society which can be studied not only in the present and in the field, but also in the past through oral and written sources and through existing objects and buildings. This does not preclude the fact that he is often forced, for methodological reasons, to work with a global perspective, e. g. in the study of folk tale motifs or myths. The content of ethnology includes the study of spiritual culture (folklore) as well as material and social culture. Sweden has adopted a special position in this connection in contrast to neighbouring countries, where research in folklore is regarded as a separate subject. The new designation is thus also the expression of a holistic view of folk culture.

Basic instruction in ethnology at the university is structured in steps, so that the student can himself decide to terminate his studies after one, two or three terms (20, 40, 60 points). After a three-year basic course of instruction leading to at least 60 points in ethnology, *training in research* can be begun; this is designed to lead to a doctorate after four years. A written report which may be prepared individually or as a member of a group is required as early as the second term's methodically directed training, while the third term is devoted to special training which includes the preparation of an essay. The written reports are primarily of a pedagogical nature, but since there is a wide choice of subject matter in as yet unstudied areas these written tests can take on the character of research contributions, which in the best cases can also be published in journals or in local publications in revised form.

Ethnology has received its due share of the increased intake of students at the universities. A considerably greater number of students have taken their examinations during the last five years than during the whole of the period that the subject previously existed in our country, a development which now appears to have reached its peak. The flow of students to the universities, which has not been subject to regulation, has posed great organizational problems for the institutions concerned. Apart from the Universities of Lund, Uppsala and Stockholm, the subject can now also be studied at a basic level at the University of Gothenburg, in addition to which elementary academic instruction is given in the form of

\* After a review on the academic position of European ethnology has been given in volume I (1967, p. 243—323), the main directions, research tendencies, and focal points of work in the different parts of Europe have to be outlined now. The two articles on Sweden, which open the series, have distinct purposes. While N.-A. Bringéus presents an all-round report, Å. Daun refers to some new approaches, especially of younger colleagues... (G. W.)



so-called extra-mural university courses in a number of places, especially in southern Sweden.

The educational sector's expansion has clearly had negative effects on the academic teacher's own research possibilities, since instruction and administration take up a disproportionately large share of his energies. On the positive side, however, the new organization of education which went into effect in the autumn term of 1969 involved a consolidation of the subject. Education is now well-planned in detail and organized homogeneously at the university. Pedagogical development work has resulted in, among other things, newly issued or planned textbooks and increased contact between institutions. Common problems in connection with education, employment, etc. are discussed at regular meetings of ethnologists at the university level.

Whether or not the new organization of education will attain its goal of a better adaptation of education to meet the labour-market's need for academically educated manpower, the stipulated time-scheme will have real consequences, not least for *doctoral dissertations*. Until now, these have been the most considerable and most thoroughly prepared research contributions within Swedish ethnology. Their preparation has at times consumed decades. The new time allowance for a dissertation is not sufficient for the collection of material aimed at the complete clarification of a subject. The new system will therefore probably imply a death-sentence on the ethnological monographs so common until today. The new conditions could provide an impulse to new thinking in connection with the preparation of doctoral dissertations. In any case there is no question of any decrease in the demands being made on the instructor. The first dissertation in ethnology prepared under the new system will be made public in May of this year in Lund.

Fears have recently been expressed that the *externally financed research commitments* which the university has accepted will direct the course of research. Such commitments are now openly acknowledged and it is clear that ethnological research activities are not carried out at the request of either private industry or research councils. In certain cases, however, investigations have been carried out in connection with the Custodian of National Monuments, with municipalities and with local cultural associations. This has undoubtedly stimulated local ethnological investigations. However, those providing these commissions have usually requested relatively "popular" compilations of material.

The institution's administration, which also includes student representatives, has been forced to assign priorities to certain areas, especially in connection with the seminar papers produced by working teams at the lower levels; it has thus to some degree been a question of *steering research towards specific tasks*. However, in principle the students have a free choice of working tasks, and the restrictions which have had to be imposed are most closely connected with the possibility of completing the tasks within a prescribed time-scheme with reference to access to material and instruction. Among the students we often find clearly articulated goals regarding meaningful, which is to say, as a rule, society-oriented subjects. At times we also find evidence of a certain tendency to uncover and stig-



matize social evils — often with the use of anachronistic normative values. In these cases the author's basic ideological view is often made apparent by the conceptual apparatus he employs. Ethnology will probably concern itself with problems of valuation to a much greater degree than previously, but for the research which does not want to relinquish the demands of objectivity — even if these can never be completely satisfied — it will be a matter of some urgency for the research worker to maintain his distance from valuation. As a scientist the ethnologist is a relativist.

THE NORDIC MUSEUM, WHICH THIS YEAR CELEBRATES ITS CENTENARY, from the beginning had for its object the service of science. It also was to gradually become a stronghold for ethnological collection and research<sup>1</sup>. Other *central and regional museums* also received the stamp of "learned institutions". The provincial museums have not been the last to benefit from the increase and development of exhibitions in recent years — which is partly connected with continuing experimental activities regarding mobile exhibitions — but the increased demand for activities which are externally oriented has undoubtedly had an effect on the research possibilities available to the museum's working ethnologists<sup>2</sup>. This is to be regretted all the more since the museum's activities are now carried out with more clearly established goals in view. Thematically oriented yearbooks have led to a mobilization of expertise directed towards common goals, and have at times resulted in specific research contributions. It is above all in Norrbotten and in Dalecarlia that local ethnological investigations have been carried out with a well thought-out set of objectives.

The pedagogical arrangement of exhibitions has made it necessary to sort the objects displayed. It is therefore important to establish research storehouses simultaneously with the exhibitions. Plans are now well-advanced for bringing together the Nordic Museum's collections, which are spread out in 22 storehouses, into a central storehouse with facilities for study. The experiments with new methods of registration and preservation of implements which have been carried out above all at the Nordic Museum and at the Dalecarlia Museum in Falun<sup>3</sup> will probably benefit research in the long run. In addition, great efforts have been made to catalogue the enormous collections in regional museums and thus make them available for research. The material in the folklore department of the Nordic Museum, which includes folk poetry, folk beliefs and folk customs, has been made more easily available for research by the systematic preparation of extracts.

One institution which has proven itself of increasing importance for research is the *Svenskt Visarkiv* (Swedish Song Archive) in Stockholm. The archive is now state-owned, and this ensures its continued existence. Its activities have been expanded to include a newly begun collection of songs and folk music.

1. Cf. Fataburen 1972.

2. Cf. M. Szabó, Föremålsstudiernas betydelse inom etnologin. In: *Rig* 1972, p. 37.

3. See: Människa-miljö i Dalarna (1970).



Outside the framework of universities, museums and archives the *Kungl. Gustav Adolfsakademien* (Royal Gustavus Adolphus Academy) for folk life research has continued to encourage ethnological research. In its series of publications the Academy has, among other things, issued a volume containing previously published work by Dag Strömbäck on the occasion of his 70th birthday<sup>4</sup>. To replace the journal "Folkliv", founded by Sigurd Erixon, the last issue of which has recently appeared, the Academy has given its support to the new publication "Ethnologia Scandinavica. A Journal for Nordic Ethnology", which was first issued in 1971. *Ethnologia Scandinavica* is an organ for all the Scandinavian countries which transmits the findings of ethnological research to an international circle of readers and reflects ethnological activities in Scandinavia. The Academy is also continuing with the publication of the journal "Arv" and "Saga och Sed".

Among the associations whose express object is to be of service to ethnological research, mention should be made of *Föreningen för svensk kulturhistoria* (Association for Swedish Cultural History). Its primary task is the publication of the quarterly journal "Rig", which is issued in cooperation with the Nordic Museum and the Institute of European Ethnology in Lund. The *Sällskapet Folkkultur* (Folk Culture Society) has been reorganized as the *Etnologiska sällskapet i Lund* (Lund Ethnological Society). This Society carries out a comprehensive distribution of ethnological textbooks and has also launched a series of publications, of which two volumes have so far been issued<sup>5</sup>. *Etnologiska Sällskapet i Stockholm* (Stockholm Ethnological Society) has been very active in recent years and arranges regular lectures, excursions, etc. In 1971 the *Samfundet för visforskning* (Society for Research in Songs) was established; this organization serves as a supporting body for the Swedish Song Archive and publishes bulletins and papers concerning folk songs and folk music. Along with these associations there are associations of students of museum and library science in university towns, which encourage interest in ethnology within their areas of activity.

Swedish ethnology is also served by other coordinating bodies. Above all, mention should be made here of the *Nordic Ethnological Congresses* which are now held every third year. In recent years such congresses were held in Jyväskylä, Finland in 1969, when education in ethnology was discussed, and in Sønderborg, Denmark in 1972, when the theme of the boundary was taken up. The principle lectures at the Sønderborg Congress will be published in *Ethnologia Scandinavica* for 1973.

While the *Nordiska rådet för antropologisk forskning* (The Nordic Council for Anthropological Research) has been forced to restrict its activities because of a reduction in funds from the Wennergren Foundation, which previously bore the cost of the Council's activities, the *Nordic Institute of Folklore* (NIF) has been reorganized and revitalized. Its activities are carried out with state support from

4. D. Strömbäck, *Folklore och filologi. Valda uppsatser* utg. av Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademien, Uppsala 1970.

5. Skånska matvanor (red. N. A. Bringéus, Lund 1971); Sigfrid Svensson tryckta skrifter under 50 år 1922—1971, Lund 1971.



the Scandinavian countries, and in 1972 the Secretariat was moved from Copenhagen to Åbo. A number of symposia have been arranged, dealing with, e. g., problems of documentation, children's folklore and the place of folklore in academic education. One expression of the activities during the past year is the volume "Leading folklorist of the North", which was issued in honour of Professor J. Hautala in 1970. The book contains a calm and concentrated presentation of known Scandinavian folklorists for the use of non-Scandinavian research workers as well as of students. A corresponding work concerning research workers within the subject's material and social sectors would be highly desirable. Two works have been published in a stencilled series entitled "NIF Publications". Another of NIF's productions is a register of folklore collections in Scandinavia. The organization's activities can now be followed by means of the NIF Newsletters.

However, the most intensive coordinating activity within the subject area is carried out within the NEFA = *Nordisk etnologisk folkloristisk arbetsgrupp* (Nordic Ethnological-Folkloristic Working Group). The journal „Nordnytt“ has become a valued publication which furthers information and education on the subject. The recently started publication "NEFA-dokumentation" (NEFA Documents), whose first number contains „Nordisk bibliografi for folkelivsforskare 1969—70" (Nordic bibliography for folk life research workers 1969—70) provides more- up-to-date information on ethnological research activities in Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries than that which can be found in „Volkskundliche Bibliographie“. A report by Jonas Frykman on present doctoral and research projects was printed in "Nordnytt" 3, 1970. For the rest, we may point to the various institutions' stencilled information sheets, which are available at no cost on application.

### COLLECTION OF MATERIAL AND SOURCE CRITICISM

IT IS COMMONLY EXPERIENCED IN CONNECTION WITH THE START of smaller as well as of larger ethnological investigations that a new collection of material is necessary. This is connected both with the fact that new research areas are delineated which were not observed during the earlier collecting activities and with the need for more ample basic material. Experience has shown that it is desirable that collection of material and research go hand in hand, but this is not always possible, partly as a result of prevailing organizational conditions. It is only in Lund that a common documentation and educational institution exists, now entitled "Etnologiska institutionen med Folklivsarkivet i Lund" (The Institute of European Ethnology). Collection in other large institutions such as the Nordic Museum's cultural-historical investigation, the Dialect and Folklore Archive in Uppsala and the Institute for Folklore in Gothenburg has been carried out practically without contact with the local ethnological research institutions. The reduced possibility of recording recollections in farm communities and the increased need to investigate industrialization's Sweden has made it important "to change the



orientation of collection and direct it towards the area where research is now practically possible and fruitful<sup>6</sup>. An overhaul of ethnological documentation work is thus of the first importance.

In principle, the collection is carried out in two ways: partly by sending out questionnaires to a network of informants (who often unfortunately are not selected so that they give a true picture from either a spatial, social or temporal point of view), and partly through specific local investigations in the form of field-work, which are usually carried out as a part of the student's training. Field-work in connection with doctoral dissertations has frequently been extended to widely separated parts of Europe, from the Faroe Island to Corsica.

At the same time, structured questionnaires are sent out to specially chosen people who represent various vocations, social groups, age-groups etc. A complete documentation of development has only been carried out regarding ecclesiastical customs. In addition, other questionnaires are devoted to contemporary conditions, or to both the present and an older time stratum.

Interviews and participant observation take place along with the collection of material through questionnaires. For example, Bo Almquist in Uppsala, as well as Bengt af Klintberg<sup>7</sup> in Stockholm, has successfully collected folklore material that is now current among children and adolescents. In Lund, experiments have been made with training in ethnological documentation, and a course in that subject (including interviews, recording, surveying, photography, etc.) will be obligatory in all universities as of the autumn term of this year.

The collection as well as the study of material during the elementary stages of ethnological training has often been carried out by teams. However, work for doctoral dissertations is still performed individually. The free choice of subject means for the present that the objects of investigation are chosen from a rather diffuse field. It is necessary above all in the development of methodology to have tasks that are more coordinated and planned for the long-term. The ethnological investigations of the town of Lund most closely resembled the nature of a project. A suggestion for a larger investigation concerning middle-class culture has recently been elaborated by Mats Rehnberg, while Brita Egardt is the leader of a project dealing with ethnological research in 20th-century society. Since the educational reforms began with basic instruction, and did not seriously affect training in research until last year, a decision will probably be made within the near future regarding the question of whether the currently free choice of subject should be supplemented by more thoroughly planned, long-range projects.

For research within a number of different areas it is of great importance that the older source material is made available in carefully prepared *editions*. Among these, mention should be made first of all an edition of Swedish ballads by Bengt R. Jonsson and a continuation of the work initiated by Sigurd Erixon on Swedish

6. J. Frykman in a stencilled memorandum 1972.

7. B. af Klintberg, Varför har elefanten röda ögon? Om absurda skämtgätor bland skolbarn. In: *Fataburen* 1971; *Biafravitsar*. In: *Tradisjon* 1972:2.



village statutes. An edition of Uppland's village statutes by Wolter Ehn is expected to appear shortly. An important source book is the recently published "Pehr Brahes hushållsbok" (Pehr Brahe's Household Book) edited by John Granlund and Gösta Holm. Among photographic reproductions of older source material we may mention Gunnar Olof Hyltén-Cavallius' "Wärend och widarne", to which a detailed index has been attached. The Society for Research in Songs has issued facsimile editions of older works on children's songs, folk dances and folk music.

Bengt af Klintberg has published a comprehensive anthology of Swedish legends with commentaries and an introduction. Anna Birgitta Rooth has published a large volume containing her own recording of Indian traditions in Alaska<sup>8</sup>. Phebe Fjellström is now working on an edition of the so-called Nensén papers, which provide, among other things, a detailed picture of early 19th-century North Swedish settler culture.

*Source criticism* has been included as a course subject from the second term onwards in the new regulations regarding the study of ethnology as a subject. It is now usual for reports at elementary levels to include a special section in which views on source criticism regarding the material employed are expressed. But special studies of various types of material have also been produced, and these were specifically devoted to source criticism. Problems of source criticism in connection with older texts received a thorough-going discussion in Bo Almqvist's work. The value of estate inventories as sources has been discussed<sup>9</sup> as well as the special source problems which are associated with ethnological pictorial material<sup>10</sup>. Ethnological investigations are nevertheless based above all on reports and tape recordings. While philological source criticism is carried out at the writing-desk, "ethnological criticism (must) . . . be practiced before and during the collection of the material", declares Anna Birgitta Rooth in a study entitled "The Complexity of Source Criticism", in which she discusses the problem more closely in connection with the collection of material in the field. These problems have also been treated in a seminar of Scandinavian students whose proceedings were published in a handbook<sup>11</sup>.

8. Per Brahe Oeconomia eller Hushållsbok för ungt adelsfolk. Utgiven med inledning, kommentar och ordförklaringar av J. Granlund och G. Holm, Lund 1971; G. O. Hyltén-Cavallius, Wärend och widarne. Ett försök i Svensk Ethnologi. Tredje upplagan med efterskrift och register utgiven av N. A. Bringéus 1—2, Lund 1972; Svenska barnvisor och barnrim samlade och ordnade av J. Nordlander. Facsimileutgåva med tillägg, inledning och register av L. Furuland, Stockholm 1971; A. A. Afzelius och O. Åhlström, Traditioner af svenska folk-danser 1—4. Facsimileutgåva med efterskrift av B. R. Jonsson, Stockholm 1972; Svenska låtar samlade av N. Andersson. Dalarna. Facsimileutgåva med efterskrift av M. Rehnberg, Stockholm 1972; B. af Klintberg, Svenska folksägner, Stockholm 1971; A. B. Rooth, The Alaska Expedition 1966. Myths, customs and beliefs among the Athabaskan Indians and the Eskimos of Northern Alaska, Lund 1971.

9. N. A. Bringéus, Bouppteckningar som etnologisk källa (stencil 1970); B. Egardt, Äkta makars fördel av oskiftat bo. En studie på temat lag — sedvana, Lund 1970.

10. N. A. Bringéus, „Naer het leven?" Etnologiskt bildmaterial i källkritisk belysning. In: *Rig* 1972.

11. A. B. Rooth, The Complexity of Source Criticism. In: *Verhandlungen des 38. Internationalen Amerikanistenkongresses*, Stuttgart-München 1968, Band 3, München 1971; Fältarbetet. Synpunkter på etnofolkloristisk fältforskning. Utg. av Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura och Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland, Helsingfors 1968.



The following presentation of Swedish ethnology during the last 5 years is not intended as a thorough-going report; I have instead selected examples from several central aspects of the subject<sup>12</sup>. In the course of this selection it has not been possible to avoid a certain degree of generalization, since there are most commonly many facets to an ethnological work.

### STUDIES OF CULTURAL VARIATIONS

ONE OF THE DETERMINING FACTORS FOR ETHNOLOGY consists of cultural variations, which have a definite structure. During the pre-industrial era, which has up to now been central in this subject, variations are most clearly observable in space, and for this reason cartography has proven to be an excellent ethnological working tool.

The textbook "Arbete och redskap" (Work and Tools) is a lucid presentation of the cultural variations in Swedish material culture before industrialization<sup>13</sup>. The book focusses on technical variations, but formal variations are also discussed. Production was often dependent on changing ecological and social conditions as well as on change in function.

Pre-industrial tools are well-suited to studies of cultural variations, since their development was a relatively slow one, and the dissemination of the various tools gives an impression of great stability. In „Die Geschichte des schwedischen Pfluges“ Ragnar Jirlow has summarized the results of his many years of study of the plough; the regional dissemination of types of plough throughout the country is one of the principle aspects of his study<sup>14</sup>. In this book we can see a holistic pattern more clearly than in Jirlow's previous publications. This is a result of a typological analysis of the different parts of the plough. Unlike the situation in Denmark, archeological material has not been available for the dating of various types of this tool, since we lack pre-historic finds of ploughing equipment. On the other hand, Jirlow as a trained linguist has made good use of terminology.

The tending of animals in pasture lands was carried out in different ways in Scandinavia and Central Europe, on the Continent by professional male herdsmen, in Scandinavia to a great degree with the help of mechanical obstacles; these are analyzed by Mátyás Szabó in his doctoral dissertation<sup>15</sup>. In this connec-

12. Concerning previous development see S. Erixon, Nyorienteringar inom folklivsforskningen. In: *Folkliv* 1948—1949; S. Svensson, Nordische Volkskunde-Forschung 1940—1949. In: *Hessische Blätter für Volkskunde* 43, 1952; J. Granlund, Der gegenwärtige Stand der schwedischen Volkskunde. In: *Schwedische Volkskunde. Festschrift für Sigfrid Svensson*, Uppsala 1961; G. Rosander, Svensk Folklivsforskning 1966—1969. In: *Svenska landsmål och svenskt folkliv* 1970; N. A. Bringéus, Folkloristisk forskning i Sverige i dag. In: *Nordnytt* 1969.

13. *Arbete och redskap. Materiell folkkultur på svensk landsbygd före industrialismen*. Utgiven av N. A. Bringéus, Lund 1971.

14. R. Jirlow, *Die Geschichte des schwedischen Pfluges*, Stockholm 1970. Cf. *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1973, p. 194 ff.

15. M. Szabó, *Herdar och husdjur. En etnologisk studie över Skandinavien och Mellaneuropas beteskultur och vallningsorganisation*, Lund 1970.



tion, mention should be made of a recently published paper by Gösta Berg, devoted to cattle-goads, whose dissemination in Scania coincides with the system of professional herdsman<sup>16</sup>.

Anyone who, like Christian Aarsrud, is interested in the origin and formal development of the wrought-iron burial cross must begin with an analysis of the variations. Aarsrud's work has proceeded as far as a total inventory of the number of objects. The same may be said of Jonas Berg's investigation of votive ship-models in churches in Sweden<sup>17</sup>.

One area in which the cultural variations still are fully reliable is that of food culture, to which special attention has been devoted at the ethnological institute in Lund. This work has involved both the study of individual dishes and of the various methods of preserving or preparing one and the same food substance, e. g. herring, which is now the object of a doctoral dissertation by Göran Norsander. The variations can in this case be assigned to several concurrent factors. The factors of location (above all coastal—inland) play an important role when the author attempts to explain the cultural variations connected with the preparation of herring. The so-called mixed dishes have been the object of studies by both Norsander and myself<sup>18</sup>.

Another area which clearly shows cultural variations is that of handicrafts. During recent years in Uppsala approximately 10 seminar reports have treated the structure of handicrafts in various counties. The north Swedish handicraft's peculiar variations are the object of a doctoral dissertation now being prepared by Eva Gradin.

HOWEVER, CULTURAL VARIATIONS DO NOT OCCUR ONLY within material culture, and this is clearly demonstrated by the folklore section of the "Atlas över svensk folkkultur" (Atlas of Swedish folk culture) which is now in the final phase of being edited by Åsa Nyman. Other works on folklore also deal with cultural variations. This can be seen in a dissertation now being prepared by Inger Lövkrona on the dissemination, motifs, and combination of motifs in the Scandinavian variants of the drinking-horn legends. (R. Th. Christiansen, The Migratory Legends nr 6045.)

Studies of cultural variations must often be directed to elements in order to achieve the required precision, e. g. in questions of geographical dissemination. This implies the risk that the study of a phenomenon will become all too atomized, and that the explanation will not hold up in the long run. Anna Birgitta Rooth has reexamined Gunnar Granberg's map of the legends of the siren of the

16. G. Berg, Der Ringstock. In: *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1972.

17. Cr. Aarsrud's and J. Berg's dissertations are as yet unpublished.

18. On ethnological food research in Sweden see N. A. Bringéus, Probleme und Methoden ethnologischer Nahrungsforschung im Lichte jüngster schwedischer Untersuchungen. In: *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1971; Bringéus, Ethnologische Nahrungsforschung in Schweden. In: *Ethnologia Europaea* V 1971. On mixed dishes see N. A. Bringéus, Drickablandning och drickasupa. In: *Gastronomisk kalender* 1972.



woods, which the latter interprets against a geo-economic background. To cite one example, the elf-motif also occurs in connection with other beings and there has a different dissemination. The geo-economic dissimilarities thus are not sufficient explanation of the dissemination of the legend of the siren of the woods. As I remarked in the previous pages, it is sometimes necessary to establish a global perspective in order to interpret cultural variations, and this has been demonstrated by Rooth in a comprehensive and as yet unfinished work on Indian creation myths<sup>19</sup>.

The above examples demonstrate that studies of cultural variations are spread over a wide field from tools to myths. Although they are by no means limited in space it is nevertheless these macro-ethnological studies which I have found special reason to mention. It is probably clear that they involve extremely arduous labour. The long gestation periods of the European ethnological atlases and of the Swedish folklore atlas are evidence of this.

Comparative investigations of whole cultural complexes within smaller regions can produce results more quickly. For example, I might mention Renée Valeri's studies of food customs in southwest France, which have been carried out in the form of a comparison between three villages; the point of departure was a specific food-element, "le confit", a sort of meat-serve. In another investigation Valeri has examined food habits in relation to type of housekeeping, and has studied the variations between four population categories: a) farmers who buy a minimum of food, b) farmers who buy a large amount of food, c) villagers who produce part of their food, d) villagers who must buy all of their food. While this investigation was carried out in one and the same village, another investigation of food habits in Lund was carried out in the form of specific studies in a city, in a densely populated area and in a country parish in order to investigate the connection with the types of society<sup>20</sup>. This was also the idea behind an ethnological research programme in Dalecarlia, which recommends studies of the following types of communities: a traditional agricultural district, a forest- and thinly-populated-area, a tourist resort, a factory, sawmill or mining town, a village built around a railway station and an industrial city<sup>21</sup>.

Interest in regional variations should not mean that social variations are forgotten. It is to be hoped that Mats Hellspong's and Orvar Löfgren's new textbook "Land och Stad. Svenska samhällstyper och livsformer från medeltid till nutid" (Town and country. Swedish community-types and forms of life from the Middle Ages to the present) will be a stimulant to ethnological investigations within a broader social range than has been the case until now<sup>22</sup>.

Cultural variations often appear especially significant in connection with different sorts of boundaries. This type of problem was the dominant subject at

19. A. B. Rooth, *Lokalt och globalt II* (Lund 1939) p. 73 ff.

20. Valeri's studies of diet are unpublished, but are touched upon in her paper: Study of Traditional Food Supply in the South-West of France. In: *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1971.

21. *Människa-miljö* (see footnote 3), p. 6 f.

22. M. Hellspong and O. Löfgren, *Land och stad. Svenska samhällstyper och livsformer från medeltid till nutid*, Lund 1972.



the Sönderborg Congress of 1972. At that Congress Harald Hvarfner and Asko Vilkkuna reported on a continuing inter-disciplinary research project on boundaries in Tornedalen in cooperation with Finnish research workers<sup>23</sup>.

In a study entitled "Etnologi — en kulturvetenskap" (Ethnology — a cultural science) Åke Daun points out that to an outsider ethnology can seem to be without context, but he adds that "it is precisely the multiplicity and formal variations of cultural manifestations which motivate the ethnologist's search for knowledge. The documentation and analysis of the variation between different time-strata, between different communities and regions and between different categories of people (social classes, age-groups vocational categories etc.) includes all sorts of recurrent human behaviour and all sorts of human products"<sup>24</sup>.

### CULTURAL BEHAVIOUR

THE CULTURAL VARIATIONS MENTIONED ABOVE concern material and spiritual cultural products: tools, objects, legends, myths. But we should not forget that there are cultural variations which have more immediate connections with the people who hold the tools, produce the objects and relate the myths. (The word *cultural* carries with it a distinction over against physiological behaviour<sup>25</sup>, while the word *behaviour* indicates that it is not only a question of conscious action but also of the reproduction of patterns of action of which the individual can be unconscious.)

The ethnologist's difficulty in setting up experiments is compensated for to some extent by the possibility of indirect study through analysis of cultural artefacts. Nor does this mean that the study of cultural behaviour is limited to the present time. In addition, cultural products — and these may be garments or burial crosses — reflect behaviour. It is simply necessary to look at them from a different angle. Instead of considering clothes as garments with which we can cover or warm ourselves, we can view them as expressions of social status; burial crosses can be studied as signs and symbols instead of as the products of handicraft. Signals are not only associated with the animal's behaviour or with language, but also with things. It is precisely clothes which can illustrate what I mean here. The statement "a function of a costume is an expression of the attitudes of its wearers" was made by P. Bogatyrev and is quoted by Bo Lönnqvist at the beginning of his dissertation "Dräkt och mode i ett landsbygdssamhälle 1870—1920" (Dress and fashion in a country community 1870—1920)<sup>26</sup>. As early as 1946, Richard Weiss emphasized in „Volkskunde der Schweiz“ that it is not clothes but the way of wearing clothes, the way of dressing, which interests us as ethnologists. His meaning becomes more clear in the light of contemporary

23. H. Hvarfner — A. Vilkkuna, Frontier Research in Tornedalen. In: *The Possibilities of Charting Modern Life*, London 1970.

24. Å. Daun, Etnologi — en kulturvetenskap. In: *Rig* 1970, p. 68.

25. *Nordnytt* 1970.

26. B. Lönnqvist, *Dräkt och mode i ett landsbygdssamhälle 1870—1920*, Helsinki 1972.



signal-theory. It may be that the historical research tradition has prevented research workers in dress from studying their subjects from new aspects. Two studies by Anna-Maja Nylén are exceptions to this<sup>27</sup>. Lönnqvist's dissertation, which deals with a Swedish-speaking area in Finland, also shows that there is no reason to exclude fashion from ethnology's field of study — as Richard Weiss thought — even though he does not go further than 1920. Information on the present wearing of silk head-scarves to church has not been collected out of interest in these as garments, but in order to use them as indicators of piety on the west coast of Sweden. It is precisely headwear that has here to a great extent a communicative function. To mention another example, head-straps in Swedish museums have made it possible for Gösta Berg to map the dissemination of this method of carrying different types of burdens on the head, now completely unknown in Sweden, a method which influenced the entire form of the body and its way of moving<sup>27a</sup>. In addition, Ulla Lindström's primary sources are objects in museums and other collections in her master's dissertation entitled "Sitta stå och gå" (Sit, stand and walk) which deals with problems and the solution of problems in connection with the upbringing of small children.

There are other areas where artefacts do not help us. I am referring to our external behaviour on weekdays and Sundays, in and out of the house, with children and elderly people, with friends and strangers, beggars and outcasts, subordinates, superiors and equals. We are in need of ethnological research on behaviour directed to precisely these elementary, but also fundamental problems. They demand new material and perhaps new methods, but we cannot neglect them. For they imply, among other things, the forming of a human being from his cradle and school days, his relationship to crisis situations and to hazardous enterprises and also the forms of social intercourse and "social behaviour" to which Orvar Löfgren directs attention in his textbook. A concrete example of a continuing ethnological investigation is Birgitta Klarström's examination of pressing things upon guests at parties. But research does not necessarily have to restrict itself to such forms of behaviour. In several new studies in Lund, however, attention has been directed to this subject. Anna Birgitta Rooth has investigated "Puberty Rites among the Athabascan Indians", and Anders Gustavsson has studied the regulations which had to be observed by a new mother before being taken back into the church in a work which is specifically described as "an ethnological study of behaviour". I myself have investigated the measures which were adopted in the form of tabus, blessings and operative magic in order to prevent blood-sausage from splitting while it was boiled<sup>28</sup>.

27. A.-M. Nylén, Blåblusen och andra Blusar. In: *Fataburen* 1967; Nylén, Beklädnadsindustrin och modet. In: *Fataburen* 1968

27a. G. Berg, Kopftragen in Schweden. In: *Studia ethnographica et folkloristica in honorem Béla Gunda*, Debrecen 1971.

28. A. B. Rooth, The Complexity of the Girls's Puberty Rites among the Athabascan Indians. In: *Verhandlungen des 38. Internationalen Amerikanistenkongress*, Stuttgart—München 1968, Band 2, Stuttgart 1970; A. Gustavsson, Den nyblivna modern. En etnologisk beteendestudie. In: *Vetenskaps Societetens i Lund årsbok* 1972; N. A. Bringéus, „Ar Hälle hemma? Profylaktiska åt gärder i samband med kokning av blodkorv“. In: *Saga och sed* 1972.



AT THE MOMENT WE ARE UNDERGOING A TRANSITION in Sweden to the pronoun "Du", the familiar form of the vocative, but as far as I am aware no one has studied this new behaviour, which to a great degree reflects a transformed social structure. We also know little about studies of expression and of gesture.

The lacunae in our knowledge are partly connected with the fact that we are all too interested in the formalized behaviour which is given expression on ceremonial occasions instead of the usages that can be observed in everyday situations.

The study of non-workday behaviour, which has been taken up in an investigation by the Institute of European Ethnology in Lund, is of especial interest because we have the possibility of relating folk practices to those of the church and to the rules of middle-class society. How have "law and custom" been related to each other? Brita Egardt has touched upon these problems in a study that deals with the widow's or widower's right to certain prerogatives regarding the undivided estate. She has also considered school punishment in relation to worldly and ecclesiastical methods of correction<sup>29</sup>. Ethnology here crosses the border into the history of law and of the church, but it is significant that to the extent that research workers from other areas have studied methods of punishment they have been considered solely from a legalistic point of view, which is to say that they have been viewed from above and not from below, nor have they always been considered from a sufficiently spatial viewpoint. By varying space, time and location for an ecclesiastical proscription both honour and shame could be emphasized. The church did not neglect the opportunity of using custom in this way as a means of both sanction and correction. In his dissertation about churching customs in Sweden Anders Gustavssons once more provided examples of this<sup>30</sup>. But we find something similar even in the pure folk customs. One and the same customs, such as that of bringing in a birch-tree from the forest in connection with marriage banns, could be an expression of both respect and of desecration<sup>31</sup>. It is of some importance that to a greater degree than has so far been the case we study customs as an expression of contemporary values. The custom itself is not as important as its purpose; e. g. to mark the distance between one group and another.

However, divergent behaviour can also have its foundation in another "quality of life", in another basic valuation. Like the social anthropologist who works in underdeveloped countries, the ethnologist who works at home should pay attention to this both in the study of minorities and subcultures in the present and when he attempts to interpret forms of life in the past.

Åke Daun does not use the concept "quality of life", but there is no doubt that it is through this factor that he explains the population's resistance to a decision in 1965 to close the sawmill at Båtskärsnäs, which was the economic

29. B. Egardt, *Äkta makar* (see footnote 9); B. Egardt, *Körperliche Züchtigung und Schandstrafe in der schwedischen Volksschule des 19. Jahrhunderts*. In: *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1972.

30. A. Gustavsson, *Kyrktagningsleden i Sverige*, Lund 1972.

31. N. A. Bringéus, *Lysning*. In: *Fataburen* 1969, p. 94 ff.



basis of that community<sup>32</sup>. As a participant observer Daun has attempted to get an insight into the population's valuation of their own life forms, which were characterized by a number of common activities such as fishing, steam baths and active membership in clubs and societies. He thinks that the resistance to the decision to close the sawmill resulted from, among other things, the fact that the people were so strongly devoted to their way of life that they didn't want to give it up. It is thus, in this case, the community's strong social integration rather than the common past which results in solidarity of behaviour in a conflict-situation. The hypothesis has been tested with less culturally and socially integrated people as a control group. These had little social intercourse and were not interested in common activities.

The interest that Daun's work has attracted, even outside the discipline, does not perhaps depend only on the fact that it deals with a current social problem, but also on the fact that the author approaches the problem in a "softly" heuristic manner. He does not attempt to confirm hypotheses that have been previously formulated at the writing-desk by requesting answers to a structured questionnaire which will subsequently be handled by a computer. Studies of this type can undoubtedly be better carried out by those who are behaviourists in the true sense of the word. But there are other contexts for human behaviour which can better be approached by the methods of the ethnologist.

### CULTURAL PROCESSES

A RECENTLY PUBLISHED TEXTBOOK, "Nordisk folkkonst" (Scandinavian folk art), includes a classic paper written by Sigurd Erixon in 1934 entitled "Arv, nybildning och degeneration i svenskt bonadsmåleri" (Heritage, growth and degeneration in Swedish painted wall-hangings)<sup>33</sup>. The title shows that Erixon, who devoted so much of his studies to cultural variations, also paid attention to changes. The title of the paper in itself defines three important cultural processes. The heritage was undoubtedly considered to be the most important of these. A Swedish journal of folklore is called simply "Arv" (Heritage). Through the cultural heritage the past and the present can sometimes be united. Ethnology became a science of the past, not only among graves and the remnants of habitations sites but among living people in their own homes. The heritage was the basis of ethnology as a historical science.

The weakness was the assumption that continuity was something self-evident. Investigations were seldom devoted to determining whether it was real or apparent, if the thread of tradition broke and was retied or if it was simply a learned fiction. Criticism was late in coming but in our time it has been all the more

32. Å Daun, Upp till kamp i Båtskärsnäs. En etnologisk studie av ett samhälle inför industri-nedläggelse, Oskarshamn 1969.

33. S. Erixon, Arv, nybildning och degeneration i svenskt bonadsmåleri. In: *Nordisk folk-konst*. Utgiven av S. Svensson, Lund 1972.



violent, especially within German ethnology. Testing the concept is more important than rejecting it. One of the few Swedish ethnologists who has dared to choose an abstract problem instead of a concrete point at issue as a subject for a dissertation (Lisbeth Cardell) has selected precisely "the stability of tradition".

Tradition and heritage should in themselves be considered as one cultural process among others, such as growth and degeneration. Thus the concept once again becomes useful and meaningful. However, the study of the cultural heritage places demands on the research worker, e.g. in the form of historical and linguistic training, which the younger ethnologists usually lack. Bo Almqvist is an exception to this, and he has not hesitated to link the stories that are documented in prehistoric Icelandic sources with living Irish folk traditions. One might object that the intermediate link in the time-chain is lacking, but through contentual analyses which take account of the minutest details Almqvist has been able to dispel all doubts regarding the connection, which cannot be explained by means of a literary intermediary. I have myself attempted to show that, on the other hand, there is a printed intermediary for the folk superstitions which held sway in Swedish country districts and which correspond to the household remedies of the Renaissance, not to speak of antiquity<sup>34</sup>. Lövkrona attempts to investigate the role played by literature in the exchange and continued existence of a group of legends.

The warp of tradition has been especially strong in connection with the ceremonial occasions of the year and of a person's life. There is hardly any reason to doubt that the toast to the memory of the dead which is still drunk in western Sweden has its origin in the pre-Christian memory-toast. The Medieval toast to Our Lady and the saints was apparently only an intermediary stage. In other cases the continuity reaches back to at least the Middle Ages<sup>35</sup>. John Granlund has found that the play marriage which occurs at Whitsun in the traditional material of later times is reliably concentrated in the towns which had Medieval monasteries, and Granlund makes a good case for the fact that they have their origin in the bridal mystique which was especially fostered in the monasteries<sup>36</sup>.

Excellent possibilities can be found from the 18th century onwards for studying the *rites de passages* of human life with the help of church registers. Examples of this are G. Jeansson's and I. Kindblom's investigations in a parish in northwest Scania and Gabriel Kvillner's studies of the marriage field in Småland<sup>37</sup>. However, from a methodological point of view Harald Hvarfner's doctoral dissertation, now in preparation, is especially worthy of interest in this

34. See e.g. B. Almqvist, *Den fulaste foten. Folkligt och litterärt i en Snorrianekdöt*. In: *Scripta Islandica, Isländska sällskapet årsbok* 1966; N. A. Bringéus, *Västboprästens svartkonstböcker*. In: *Svenska Landsmål och Svenskt Folkliv* 1967.

35. The custom is being studied in a continuing investigation by A. Gustavsson.

36. J. Granlund, *Pfingstbraut und Pfingsthochzeit*. In: *Studia ethnographica et folkloristica in honorem Béla Gunda*, Debrecen 1971 (cf. *Saga och sed* 1970).

37. G. Jeansson — I. Kindblom, *Kring livets högtider i Örkellunga församling*, Lund 1969; G. Kvillner, *En studie i giftermålsfält*. In: *Fataburen* 1969.



connection. The principal artefact is the christening name in a parish in Västergötland in Hvarfner's study of "density and continuity".

THE CONCEPT OF HERITAGE AND TRADITION has sometimes led to a consideration of folk culture as static. However, as ethnologists have approached our own time and its changes, transformations have played an increasingly greater role in research. The concept of a static culture has been exchanged for the concept of a dynamic one. "Change" is a word that continually recurs in the establishment of goals for ethnological work. The team-produced work "En svensk by" (A Swedish village) bears the sub-title "Sex etnologiska studier av förändringar i Leksandsbyn Laknäs" (Six ethnological studies of changes in the Leksand village of Laknäs)<sup>38</sup>. Nanna Hermansson's master's thesis is entitled "Nólsoy. En färöisk bygd i omvandling". (Nólsoy. A Faroe Island district in the process of change). Monika Minnhagen's investigation "Bondens bostad" (The farmer's dwelling) is subtitled "form, function, change". Sven B. Ek has gone back to the earliest studies of change by Sigfrid Svensson and others, and examined them critically under the title "Die Fiktion des Wandels im 19. Jahrhundert" (Fictions concerning 19th-century cultural changes)<sup>39</sup>. Under the direction of Phebe Fjellström, a group of doctoral candidates is studying the processes of cultural change in, among other things, diet (Katarina Ek-Nilsson), trade and crafts (Ingrid Metelius, Kjell Nilsson) and within folk movements (Ingrid MacQueen, Ingrid Nilsson). Harald Hvarfner points out that many Swedish ethnologists see ethnology simply as a science dealing with cultural changes. This has contributed to the fact that there is greater optimism about the future possibilities for ethnological work, whereas it was previously common to consider field-work as being finished<sup>40</sup>.

Among cultural processes the dissemination of new things occupies such a central position that *innovation research* is often referred to as a special branch of research. Swedish innovation research has also received the attention of our foreign colleagues — for examples at the Symposium on Innovation in Münster in 1972 — but since I have recently written a presentation of this in German I will content myself here with a reference to that paper, especially since no more recent ethnological innovation studies have appeared in Sweden<sup>41</sup>.

Although he does not oppose innovation research, Hvarfner maintains that the study of constants is probably a much more central research task for ethnologists at present than is the study of changes, which we know are now flowing through

38. En svensk by. Sex etnologiska studier av förändringar i Leksandsbyn Laknäs. Redaktör: A. Daun, Falun 1971.

39. S. B. Ek, Die Fiktion des Wandels im 19. Jahrhundert, In: *Kultureller Wandel im 19. Jahrhundert*, hrsg. von G. Wiegmann, Göttingen 1973 (cf. *Rig* 1971).

40. H. Hvarfner, Review by R. Pålsson, Det möjliga samhället. Tankar om kulturpolitik. In: *Folk-Liv* 1969—1970, p. 76.

41. N. A. Bringéus, Das Studium von Innovationen. In: *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, 64. Jg. 1968.



society<sup>42</sup>. One of the explanations for the fact that changes can at times decrease, and can in fact simply come to a standstill, can be found in the concept of *cultural fixation*<sup>43</sup>. In a newly published analysis Günter Wiegelmann rightly emphasizes its connection with Swedish ethnology, which is directed to the study of processes and cultural change. It is an explanatory concept as distinct from the causally neutral concept of relic area, which belongs to "Kulturraumforschung"<sup>44</sup>. However, cultural fixation is not a process that can explain everything; the field lies open for new research.

While innovations are often disseminated with a great deal of hullabaloo, at the same time cultural artefacts and customs disappear in silence without leaving any traces. Hermann Bausinger has quite rightly called for the *study of regression* and it was also possible for me to refer, at the International Atlas Conference in Stockholm last year, to a Swedish regression study being prepared by Anders Gustavsson. It is devoted to the disappearance of the custom of "churching" and consists of a series of maps based on contemporary information from every parish in the diocese of Gothenburg, taken at regular intervals from the beginning of the century until today. Although it can be assumed that the course of the regression itself has in principle developed in a similar fashion in other parts of the country where the custom previously disappeared it is not certain that the same explanations can be used. Gustavsson has established this in his doctoral dissertation "Kyrktagningsseden i Sverige" (Churching customs in Sweden), in which he thoroughly analyzes the course of the disappearance, supplementing a nationwide cartographic account with local micro-analyses in diagram form, based on church registers. The possibility of combining macro- and micro-analysis was not made use of in studies of customs made during the 1950's and 60's, which in other respects have served as guides for Gustavsson<sup>45</sup>.

INTEREST IN STUDIES CONNECTED WITH ADAPTATION derives most closely from the natural science of ecology. C. W. von Sydow had already transferred the concept of ecology from botany, and applied it to wandering legends and folk tales. Since at that time typological problems were of primary interest, von Sydow launched the concept of "ecotype". Within modern ethnology the concept of ecology is used in so many different ways that it is not always meaningful. Daun and Löfgren are undoubtedly correct when they state that we gain in methodological precision by using a more absolute concept of ecology, "that the natural environment to which people have access contributes to the forming of their lives"<sup>46</sup>. Ecology is thus only *one* form of adaption. Examples of the use

42. H. Hvarfner, (see footnote 40), p. 76; cf. also Å. Daun — O. Löfgren, *Etnologiska metoder* (Stencil, Lund 1972).

43. S. Svensson, On the Concept of Cultural Fixation (in this volume of *Ethnologia Europaea*).

44. G. Wiegelmann, Reliktgebiet und Kulturfikxierung. Zu einigen Begriffen und Modellen der schwedischen Ethnologie und deutschen Volkskunde. In: *Festschrift Matthias Zender. Studien zu Volkskultur, Sprache und Landesgeschichte*, Bonn 1972, Vol. 1.

45. A. Gustavsson (see footnotes 28, 30).

46. Å. Daun — O. Löfgren, Den ekologiska aspekten. In: *Nordnytt* 1971:2, p. 96.



of this concept can be found in the thematic issue of "Nordnytt", 1971, containing contributions from, among others, the Swedish ethnologists Ph. Fjellström, Å. Daun and O. Löfgren.

Bengt af Klintberg describes adaptation as a phenomenon in a process of tradition. In the introduction to his collection of legends he points to the continual linguistic adaptation of legends to the external conditions of life and folk belief: "All distance in time and space has shrunk to a vaguely suggested past within the home district. The extremely changeable social environments to which the legends originally referred have been transformed into the farming community's own environment; the princesses, knights and monks who might have figured in the legends have been exchanged for farm-wives, farm-hands and parish priests"<sup>47</sup>. The concept of ecology is thus useful not only in the sense of adaptation to the surrounding natural environment, as has frequently been pointed out, but also in the sense of adaptation to the surrounding cultural conditions.

The theory of ecotype was primarily a method of explaining cultural variations in a comparative context. Modern ethnological research workers would rather study the process of adaptation itself. Phebe Fjellström has investigated the adaptation of Scandinavian emigrants in a pioneer settlement in California, and has reported her observations in a dissertation with the sub-title "A Study of the Acculturation and Assimilation of an Immigrant Group". Sven B. Ek has studied, among other things, the adaptation of Jews in "Nöden", the poor section of Lund; and shows that one of the reasons for the fact that they became well-integrated was that living conditions in that environment were similar for all the inhabitants, although this did not mean that the Jews were assimilated. It was not least their religious traditions connected with both the year's and life's ceremonial occasions that contributed to the internal cohesiveness of the Jewish population. Even in a Scandinavian emigrant community in California religious solidarity was of similar significance, although only for a time. At present, assimilation is practically complete<sup>48</sup>.

Problems of adaptation have also been in the forefront of a local ethnological project dealing with Finns, Balts and Hungarians in Olofström, as well as in field-work concerning the cultural meeting of Swedish and Finnish manpower in Överum<sup>49</sup>. However, problems of this type are not associated only with immigrants and foreign workers, but can also be studied in areas where the population has for one reason or another been forced to split up and establish itself in other localities. A great deal of Sweden now consists of depopulated districts, and a good deal of energy is being expended in the inventory of the villages that have been emptied. It is nevertheless characteristic of ethnological social research

47. B. af Klintberg, Svenska folksägnen, Stockholm 1972, p. 10 f.

48. Ph. Fjellström, Swedish-American colonization in the San Joaquin Valley in California. A study of the acculturation and assimilation of an immigrant group, Uppsala 1970; S. B. Ek, Nöden i Lund. En etnologisk stadsstudie, Lund 1971.

49. A. Hammer, Rapport från NEFA:s IV fältseminarium 1970. En redovisning av resultat och erfarenheter utifrån seminariets rubrik „Kulturmötet mellan svensk och finländsk arbetskraft i Överum“.



that it is often considered sufficient to describe living conditions in the area that people are leaving or have left. An exception to this is the investigation of Sturup led by Jonas Frykman and Gösta Arvastson; in the second stage of this investigation a study was made of how the people who had been forced to move because of the construction of a large airport have adapted themselves to their new environment.

The adaptation process also includes adaptation to one's own culture and one's own society. While this previously chiefly concerned the adaptation of children and adolescents to established norms and value-systems, today people must continually learn to adapt themselves to new conditions from the time they leave the nursery to the time they move into a home for the aged. Ethnologists have not yet approached these problems of acculturation.

### CULTURAL SYSTEMS

IN A SURVEY OF SWEDISH FOLK LIFE RESEARCH in 1961 John Granlund made a distinction, in connection with French terminology, between ethnology as the study of elements and "systematic" ethnology. The former starts out from a cultural element (a tool or a legend motif), the latter from an area or a population group<sup>50</sup>. The concept may result in clarity, but its use ought not to lead to the separation of parts and wholes instead of the study of how they are related to one another. In connection with German ethnology, I would rather distinguish between cultural elements and cultural systems. Even if such a system is obviously also rooted in society and could consequently with equal justification be called a social system, the word "cultural" indicates the specific ethnological angle of approach.

In examinations of this type the context occupies a central position. Attention is directed to how the parts are combined into a functioning whole. This can be a kinship system, a production system (fishing teams in a farming community, ironworks in an industrial community), a system for internal help (in a farming community in the form of exchange, in an industrial community in the form of service), and value-systems as manifested in political, non-profit-making and religious organizations. It is hardly possible to make a completely clear distinction between the various types of systems, since one and the same system often fulfills several functions.

Irrespective of the systems' functional alignment, they confront us with overlapping questions. One of these concerns *structure*, or the pattern of organization. We can, like Granlund, distinguish here between the command structure, which is typical of factories and large estates, and the cooperative structure, which is a characteristic of the organization of the village team or the fishing team. However, the structure refers not only to the division of power, but also to the distri-

50. J. Granlund, *Der gegenwärtige Stand* (s. footnote 12). p. 40 ff.; Cf. also the discussion in *Rig* 1962, p. 29, 75.



bution of tasks, roles, rights and profits. This distribution can be determined by custom and formalized in established statutes and regulations. Another question concerns the *integration* of the system, which can be loose or fixed.

The study of cultural systems must be synchronic, since the various units work together. But this does not preclude also studying them on various time-levels, and thus including the aspect of change in investigations of this type. For reporting such synchronic contexts Harald Hvarfner has designed, in his as yet unpublished doctoral dissertation, what he calls ethnograms. These can be threaded one on top of the other if we also want to study a development.

The connection within a cultural system can change. It can consist of the blood-tie in a kinship system, the national origin within an ethnic minority (Swedes in America, Balts in Sweden), or of religion, language or the habitation environment. Cultural unity can be strengthened both through tradition and through external pressure in foreign surroundings. The original inhabitants of a fishing village usually distinguish themselves from the seasonal inhabitants of the same village. Swedes who in their native country have no contact with each other feel the need of joining together when they are overseas. Students from the same province may join together in student unions at their place of study, as city dwellers with common origins may form a club, to name a few examples.

CULTURAL SYSTEMS MUST USUALLY BE STUDIED at the micro-level, since the network becomes otherwise confused and the problem cannot be understood. In country districts a village or a township can be a sufficiently large area; in the city a block may suffice. But we can also direct the study to a work-team or an association. The advantage of studies of this type is that they can be carried out both in farming and industrial communities, both in country districts and in densely populated areas. There is therefore no reason to employ distinctions of the type "city ethnology" or "present-day ethnology". Cultural systems — like variations, behaviour and processes — spread across social and temporal boundaries. It is nevertheless clear that such investigations demand comprehensive source material, and for this reason they usually concern relatively recent occurrences.

Kinship systems of various types have been studied to a much smaller degree within European ethnology than they have within social anthropology. However, the forms of "Ritual Coparenthood" which still occur in southern European farming communities have been studied by Knut Weibust. In Sweden, spiritual kinship was no longer taken into account after the Reformation, and for this reason marriage banns after that period were only concerned with establishing whether kinship and certain diseases constituted a hindrance to marriage<sup>50</sup>. *Family structure* has been studied by Börje Hanssen in a number of works, most of which

51. K. Weibust, Ritual Coparenthood in peasant Societies. In: *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1972; N. A. Bringéus, Lysning. In: *Fataburen* 1969.



are unpublished, while Orvar Löfgren has dealt with the formation of the family in a number of contexts. For example, Löfgren has underlined the role played by varying inheritance practices. In Dalecarlia, where by reason of the division of homesteads it was easy to set up one's own household, the marriage age was low, while in Gotland it was high because people there went further afield and waited for a good match in order not to marry beneath themselves. Counterparts to the principle of equal division in Dalecarlia occur in districts in Norrland and in forested provinces such as Värmland and Dalsland, while a system of single heirs and strategic marriages was typical of farmers in the plains districts and in districts containing large farms<sup>52</sup>.

In particular, *production systems* have been the object of study within Swedish ethnology. Team-work and working teams have been especially developed in a classless society in which hired servants are lacking and the population has been forced to work together personally. John Granlund, who has previously observed such organization systems in northern Dalecarlia, has recently demonstrated that in that area there was also an older folk organization of barrel-teams, created for the purpose of making it possible to meet tax liabilities in the form of deliveries of coal (reckoned in barrels) to nearby metal-works. The interesting point here is that the barrel-teams also functioned in a number of other municipal contexts, analogous with the centrally directed military conscription quotas which were later established<sup>53</sup>.

In a dissertation mentioned previously, Mátyás Szabó compares the Scandinavian and Central European grazing organizations against the background of the structure of housing settlements. The professional herdsmen who characterized the Continental grazing system were suitable to an open village society and are therefore also found in the plains of Scania. The professional herdsmen were differentiated according to the type of animal — cowherds, horseherds, pigherds, goatherds, gooseherds — and there were clear differences of rank between the herdsmen. In Sweden, with the exception of the plains of Scania, grazing was organized within the family, either in turns or through specially organized grazing teams within the mountain pasture area. Surveys of this type are often a prerequisite for special investigations, in which specific problems can be isolated. Kurt Genrup, who has studied the raising of geese, has thus described his dissertation as a "structural analysis". Among other things, the author investigates the nature of the structure of goose-raising from an ecological-economic point of view.

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52. M. Hellspong — O. Löfgren, *Land och stad. Svenska samhällstyper och livsformer från medeltid till nutid*, Lund 1972, p. 237 ff.

53. J. Granlund, *Die Tonnenschaft. Ein Organ der bäuerlichen Zusammenarbeit in Nord-dalekarlien, Schweden*. In: *Ethnologia Europaea* II—III, 1968—1969.



AS EARLY AS THE 1920's SIGURD ERIXON INITIATED a local ethnological research project in a Swedish industrial environment, Skultuna in Västmanland. The research was carried out with varying intensity for nearly half a century, and at Erixon's death he had completed the manuscript of a concluding section dealing with working and the working and habitation environment. This volume, which has been published by C. O. Arnstberg, crowns the most thorough-going description of a Swedish industrial community that has ever been written<sup>54</sup>. This historic work has often been used as a reference work and as a "source", but can hardly be called a pattern for modern ethnological studies of industrial communities. The organization of work in a factory has, however, been the object of more profound studies by John Granlund. Ernst Folke Lindberg of the Institute for Folk Life Research in Stockholm, is working on an investigation of Sala as a mining town, while Mats Hellspong is studying Borlänge as an industrial town. Connected with these investigations, but with a stronger concentration on working life itself, is a dissertation now being prepared by Barbro Bursell in Uppsala concerning the Lancashire smiths at the Ramnäs factory from 1885—1925. In Lund, on the other hand, certain advances have been made in the study of cultural systems in a feudal environment. The estate archive in Scania has proven to be a good point of departure for studies of the organization of work. Orvar Löfgren's investigations of fishermen in the Båtfjorden can also be classified among investigations concerning cultural systems. Employing, among other things, the social anthropological concept of "niche", Löfgren has shown, in several already published small studies of west Swedish fishing villages, the connection between the economy of the fishery, the ecological conditions, tools and marketing possibilities, all of which can be considered as one cultural system in which changes affecting one component can be of the greatest importance for the system as a whole<sup>55</sup>. Similar problems are treated in Lena Löfstrand's continuing investigation of the importance of the hunting of waterfowl in an archipelagic parish, while Marianne Wahlberg is studying the influence of folk art on a closed river valley in the north.

In his masterful and many-faceted dissertation "Deep Sea Sailors", Knut Weibust has chosen to study the social system constituted by a specific type of ship's crew<sup>56</sup>. The boat is a small, limited society on which the men work, live, eat, sleep and pass their leisure time. All the members of this society are dependent upon one another and are forced to rely on each other. Among other things, Weibust investigates the interplay between those who command and those who obey. That he has chosen a fruitful approach is demonstrated by, among other things, the fact that his investigation has been the model for an investigation now in progress of barge-fishermen in the Faroe Islands. The author, Joen Joensen, demonstrates how the social system is given expression by, among other things, the places taken by the fishermen at the gunwale while they are fishing.

54. S. Erixon, *Skultuna bruks historia del III*, Uppsala 1972.

55. O. Löfgren, *Fiskarna vid Båtfjorden*. In: *Varbergs Museum årsbok* 1969.

56. K. Weibust, *Deep Sea Sailors. A Study in Maritime Ethnology*, Stockholm 1969.



### APPLIED ETHNOLOGY

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT ETHNOLOGY, like all other sciences, is influenced by impulses from the surrounding world and its prevailing social and political values. But does this also mean that ethnological research can influence society?

This question is of prime importance, not least for the youngest generation of ethnologists, but before we examine it more closely it may be appropriate to make the following observation. Swedish ethnology can scarcely claim to have attained such stature that a direct influence on the outside world can be said to emanate from ethnological research activities, although this may be believed by ethnologists themselves. Not only ethnology, but historical research in the widest sense of the term has also received a new orientation. Political questions have been forced to give way not only to social but to cultural questions within the educational sector. The reaction against the technocratic society has been given expression in an environmental debate which, although it has so far been directed primarily towards natural resources, has recently been concerned with the people's own life environment. From international problems such as over-population and the lack of food, which we find in statistical abstractions in the books of modern prophets, we turn to our own small world, in which welfare must be measured with increasing frequency in qualitative instead of quantitative terms. It is in these types of social problems, and not in some sort of old-age or leisure-time therapy, that the ethnologist finds his real opportunities.

In an essay whose value bears no relation to its brevity Harald Hvarfner has pointed to the negative consequences which the decision-making authorities have hardly understood can be measured by any other than statistical means, and which have resulted in the so-called cost-of-living index.

"As the valuations in the national standard are unrelated to ecology and to northern ethnic conditions they may have helped substantially to make the most northern parts of the country less attractive from the point of view of localization, an inevitable result of the circumstance that the basis for the valuations has been relatively alien to the district in question . . . It is an essential ethnological task to contribute to a more nuanced scale of valuations<sup>57</sup>". This is one form of applied ethnology in which all ethnologists should be ready to participate, regardless of their political beliefs.

Until now, the services of the ethnologist have primarily concerned local ethnological investigations and his tasks have varied from quick present-day documentation to scientific analysis based on archive material. His purpose may have consisted in documenting the buildings in a city block scheduled for renovation or in a village which is to be incorporated in a densely-populated centre. But the role of the ethnologist has not been limited to providing a histori-

57. H. Hvarfner, The valuation of Welfare in dispersed Settlements by the central Organizations and by the Recipients. In: *Circumpolar Problems*. Ed. by G. Berg, Oxford & New York 1972, p. 80.



cal report or a description of an environment before its destruction; it has also involved providing the basis for decisions from the point of view of municipal politics. Investigations similar to that carried out in the 1960's by Sven B. Ek<sup>58</sup> in Lund and its environs are now being undertaken also by ethnologists in Gothenburg in connection with Gothenburg's Historical Museum, and have also been concerned with allotment gardens, market places, etc. Nevertheless, to my knowledge ethnologists have not yet been employed as social planners by municipal or state bodies; this may be a result of the fact that ethnology normally is not combined with the social sciences in academic education. On the other hand, ethnologists have been given posts as cultural curators in certain towns. There is clearly a necessity for increased information regarding the possibilities for the ethnologist to serve society. But above all the entire complex of questions concerning applied ethnology must be analyzed by the ethnologists themselves.

58. Sven B. Ek, *Stadsundersökningar i Lund*. In: *Rig* 1966; Ek, Nöden (s. footnote 48).