

Ávarp dr. Önnu G. Jónasdóttur í tilefni heiðursnafnbótar við Stjórn málafræðideild Háskóla Íslands, 18. júní 2015

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Þann 18. júní 2015 hélt Stjórn málafræðideild Háskóla Íslands hátíðarráðstefnu í tilefni af 100 ára afmæli kosningaréttar kvenna á Íslandi. Í tengslum við ráðstefnuna sem bar yfirskriftina „Vald og lýðræði 100 árum síðar“ var dr. Anna Guðrún Jónasdóttir, prófessor emerita við Örebro háskóla í Svíþjóð, gerð að heiðursdoktor við Stjórn málafræðideild. Anna Guðrún var fyrst íslenskra kvenna til að taka doktorspróf í stjórn málafræði árið 1991 og jafnframt sú fyrsta til að fá akademískan frama í stjórn mála- og kynjafræði. Því fer vel á því að Anna Guðrún sé fyrsti heiðursdoktor Stjórn málafræðideildar þar sem þessar greinar eiga heimilisfesti. Fræðimennska Önnu Guðrúnar spannar vítt svið og nær til stjórn málafræði, félagsfræði, hagsögu, sálfræði og kynjafræði. Hún var meðal þeirra fyrstu til að fjalla um á fræðilegan hátt um kyn, völd og stjórn mála sem þótti býsna ögrandi þegar fræðaferill hennar hófst á 8. áratug síðustu aldar. Hún er frumkvöðull í því að samþætta stjórn málafræði og kynjafræði og eru merkustu rannsóknir hennar á sviði valds og persónulegra kynjatengsla. Anna Guðrún fluttist ung að árum til Svíþjóðar en hefur haldið tengslum við íslenskt fræðasamfélag. Hér á eftir birtist ávarp Önnu Guðrúnar í tilefni heiðursnafnbótarinnar. Þar sést glögglega hvernig hugmyndaþróun hennar og næmur skilningur á samspili hins persónulega og pólitíska á þátt í að byggja brýr á milli þeirra stjórn málafræði og kynjafræði á sama tíma og hún dýpkar og breiðkar umfjöllunarefni þeirra sem fræðigreina.

Dr. Anna G. Jonasdottir: Acceptance Speech for Honorary Doctorate from Faculty of Political Science, University of Iceland. Given 18th of June, 2015

On June 18th the Faculty of Political Science, University of Iceland, celebrated 100 years of women's voting rights in Iceland with a special conference, *Power and democracy 100 years later*. In association with the conference Dr. Anna Guðrún Jónasdóttir, Professor



emerita at the University of Örebro, Sweden, was awarded an honorary doctorate at the Faculty of Political Science. Anna Guðrún was the first Icelandic woman to complete a doctorate in political science, in 1991, and also the first to embark on an advanced academic career in political science and gender studies. It is therefore highly appropriate that Anna Guðrún should be awarded the first honorary doctorate at the Faculty of Political Science, where these disciplines are located. Her research covers a broad spectrum, including political science, sociology, economic history, psychology and gender studies. She was among the first to deal in a theoretical manner with gender, power and politics, which was considered rather provocative at the start of her academic career in the early 1970s. She is a pioneer in intertwining political research and gender studies and her most important research is in the field of power and personal gender relations. Anna Guðrún moved to Sweden at an early age but has kept in touch with the Icelandic research community. Below we publish her acceptance speech on the occasion when the honorary doctorate was awarded. It reflects clearly how her ideas have developed and her intimate sense for how personal and political factors bring politics and gender studies closer at the same time as she deepens and broadens both of their subjects.

From Iceland to International Love Studies

Ladies and gentlemen, kærur vinir og vandamenn, góðir áheyrendur!

Ég vil byrja með að þakka fyrir þann mikla heiður sem mér er sýndur hér í dag. Það er mér mikil ánægja að mega segja hér nokkur orð um grundvöllinn fyrir nafnbótinni sem heiðursdoktor, nefnilega fræðistörf mín. Meiningin er að gefa innsýn í nokkra aðaldrætti í því sem ég hef verið að fást við síðustu 30-40 árin – frá mínu eigin sjónarhorni séð, eins og gefur að skilja. Ég kalla erindið „From Iceland to International Love Studies“ (*Frá Íslandi til alþjóðlegra ástarrannsókna*). Titillinn er á ensku, og hluti erindisins verður á ensku, en ég vil fyrst segja fáein orð á íslensku.

Þetta er í annað skiptið sem Háskóli Íslands veitir mér sérstaka viðurkenningu. Fyrir nær réttum 30 árum, í ágúst 1985, var mér boðið að halda fyrirlestur við opnun fyrstu kvennarannsóknarástefnunnar hér á landi. Þáði ég það boð, og sá fyrirlestur (sem ég kallaði „Kyn, völd og pólitík“) skipti miklu máli fyrir mig í því verki sem ég var þá á kafi í, nefnilega doktorsritgerð minni í stjórn málafræði. Ritgerðinni lauk ég 1990 og varði hana í Gautaborg í byrjun sumars 1991. Ég kem að þessu aftur. Ég hef aldrei stundað nám hér við Háskóla Íslands, þótt fátt hefði ég viljað frekar eftir að ég lauk stúdentsprófi 1961. En líf mitt fór aðrar leiðir, og draumurinn um háskólanám rættist fyrst 10 árum seinna í Svíþjóð.

Í fræðistörfum mínum hef ég heldur ekki fengist mikið við íslensk efni, en þegar ég lít tilbaka sé ég þó, að a.m.k. þrennt má nefna í því sambandi; og það verða fjögur atriði ef ég nefni líka nokkuð sem ég lærði sjálf mikið af: Ég var andmælandi Auðar Styrkárssdóttur við doktorsvörn hennar í stjórn málafræði við háskólann í Umeå í Svíþjóð 1999. Fyrsta greinin sem ég birti í fræðilegu tímariti fjallaði um íslensk málefni. Hún var um nýsköpunarstjórnina svokölluðu, 1944-46, hið sérstaka fyrirbæri og tímamót í sögu íslenskra stjórn mála. Greinin heitir „Den historiska kompromissen på Island 1944. En

studie kring ett regeringssamarbete mellan arbetarpartierna och högern 1944-1946“ og birtist í sænska stjórn málafræðitímaritinu *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift* 1980.

Síðan má nefna þátt minn í Norrænu menningarkönnuninni (öðru nafni Fimm-bæjarannsóknin) 1974-75. Þessi könnun var angi af stórrí evrópskri, félagsfræðilegri rannsókn á menningarmálum, og liggja eftir mig þrjár skýrslur frá þessu starfi (sjá heimildaskrá/References).

Að síðustu vil ég nefna að þegar ég byrjaði í doktorsnámi við Uppsala háskóla haustið 1977 ætlaði ég fyrst að skrifa ritgerð með þungamiðju í íslenski dagheimilispólítík – eða vöntun á slíkri *lengur* en gerðist á hinum Nordurlöndunum, sérstaklega Svíþjóð. Þetta átti að vera samanburðarrannsókn og athuga hvernig mætti skýra að það dróst svo lengi að hið opinbera tæki ábyrgð á dagvistun barna þrátt fyrir það að útivinnandi mæður með lítil börn voru jafnvel fleiri á Íslandi en víða annars staðar. Ég byrjaði á þessu verkefni og skrifaði fáeinar vinnuskýrslur.

Það var svo fyrir tilviljun, má segja, að ég fór að kynna mér nánar og skrifa um kynjafræðilegar teoríur, sértaklega hugtök og fræðikenningar um hin margþættu valdatengsl milli kynjanna (og líka meðal kvenna og meðal karla) sem virðast vera bæði breytileg og þó stöðugt ójöfn hvar sem lítið er. Þetta var vorið 1979, og ég hafði verið beðin um að halda fyrirlestur við Konunglega tækniháskólann í Stokkhólmi og gefa yfirlit yfir slíkar kenningar. Rannsóknir á þessu sviði höfðu verið að þróast víða um lönd í kjölfar þess að „ný“ kvannahreyfing hafði risið upp „eins og fuglinn Fenix“ (eins og Juliet Mitchell orðaði það í bók sinni, *The New Women's Movement*, 1971, 86) í mörgum löndum og heimsálfum samtímis á árunum milli 1960 og 1970. Ég hélt minn fyrirlestur, lofaði síðan að hreinskrifa stólpana/uppkastið, og það varð svo fyrri hlutinn (af tveimur) í minni fyrstu bók, *Kvinnoteori. Några perspektiv och problem i kvinnoforskningens teoribildning*. Bókin var gefin út nokkrum árum seinna (1984) í ritröð við Högskolan í Örebro, þá með viðbættum, öðrum og lengri hluta.

Haustið 1979 ákvað ég að skipta um efni fyrir doktorsritgerðina og halda áfram að einbeita mér að fræðikenningum og skýringartilraunum á þessu sviði. Þetta var verkefni sem auðvitað krafðist þess að ég afmarkaði mitt svið, gerði grein fyrir hugmyndaramma og aðferðum, og setti fram eigin mótaðar spurningar í leit að svörum. Það tók sinn tíma að koma þessu í viðunanlegt form, og heildin breyttist og bættist í áföngum í og með að ég skrifaði og birti greinar og bókarkafla sem urðu svo hlutar af heildarritgerðinni. Erindi mitt hér 1985 var – eins og ég sagði áðan - afar mikilvægt í þessu langa ferli. Ég greip tækifærið, má segja, til að reyna að orða og koma frá mér eins konar samanþjappaðri heildarmynd af þeim tilgátum og skýringum sem ég hafði þróað og var að skrifa um. Erindið birtist svo seinna, þó nokkud breytt og bætt, fyrst á sænsku sem kafli í bók (1986), síðan á ensku í fræðitímaritinu, *Acta Sociologica* (1988), og varð svo fyrsti aðal-kafllinn í doktorsritgerðinni.

Ritgerðin fékk nafnið *Love Power and Political Interests. Towards a Theory of Patriarchy in Contemporary Western Societies (Ástarkraftur, vald og pólitískir hagsmunir. Tilraun til skýringar á karlveldinu í nútíma vestrænum þjóðfélögum)*.¹ Eins og nafnið bendir til snýst niðurstaða þessa verks um ást og þann sérstaka skapandi kraft og lífsorku sem ég vil meina að yfir-

færist milli fólks í félagslegum tengslum okkar sem kynverur. Ég tala hér um munstur af ójöfnuði (breytilegum, en seigum) í forsendunum fyrir samskiptum kynjanna varðandi það hvernig við njótum – gefum og þiggjum – af þessum sérstaka ástarkrafti (sem inniheldur bæði erotik og umhyggju); þar af leiðandi hvernig útkoman úr þessu sérstaka lífandi ferli af hinni lífrænt-efnislegu sköpun/endursköpun – eða „framleiðslu“ á okkur sjálfum – stöðugt mótar þær kringumstæður sem við lifum í sem félagsverur (félagslegar kynverur) og hefur þannig áhrif á allt þjóðfélagið.

Ég hef aldrei séð eftir ákvörðuninni að skipta um efni, þótt ekki væri það alltaf auðvelt að koma verkinu í framkvæmd. Það er sennilega aldrei auðvelt að skrifa doktorsritgerdir, en efnisvalið gerði mér ekki auðveldara fyrir. Ég skipti um háskóla einu sinni og nokkrum sinnum um leiðbeinanda. En þetta hafðist, og ég held ég fari rétt með, að þetta var fyrsta kynjafræðilega doktorsritgerðin í stjórn málafræði á Norðurlöndum.

The rest of my talk will be in English, and I will try to give a very brief account of what I have been doing from the early 1980s onwards; about the content of my research as it has moved (over time) from *politics and culture in Iceland* to interdisciplinary and internationally organized *Love Studies*. This cannot be any elaborated review. I just want to point out some characteristic features and main themes in my work.

One such characteristic, I would say, is *interdisciplinary work and cross-disciplinary analyses*. All my edited books are the outcome of interdisciplinary collaboration. To take only one example: The introductory chapter in the volume, *Is there a Nordic Feminism?* (1998, edited together with a Norwegian literary scholar and a Danish historian, and which, by the way, includes contributions by two Icelandic scholars) aims to show how fruitful it can be to organize this kind of a collaborative work around some cross-cutting themes and not take it for granted that such a volume should be structured by divisions between countries, between established disciplines, or even between obviously important, existing areas of social life and established domains of study, such as politics, working life, cultural life and so on. In *Is there a Nordic Feminism?* “literary essays and film analysis are integrated with research on women’s struggle in parliamentary politics as well as with gendered interactions in work organizations and in identity production” (Editors’ Preface, 1998, xv).

By underlining interdisciplinary work and analyses that cross various academic and other boundaries, I’m *not* saying that all gender research and gender-related theories should be of that kind. Some of it is, but probably more is being framed as parts of, or integrated in, one or another of the traditional disciplines or domains of study. I guess it will continue that way, and that is not just fine, it is important, I think. So, I’m not defending border-crossing – or borderlessness – as an abstract general principle. Rather, I’m saying “if and when it seems appropriate” we should feel free to do it. To quote David Easton (one of my favorite political scientists) a bit more lengthily: “*It is the very essence of the theoretical enterprise that, if and when it seems appropriate, it should feel free to sever itself from the bonds of traditional ways of looking at political life*” (Easton 1965, viii).

Speaking about political life, I would say that another feature that runs through my

work is a *broad, non-fixed and historically changing conception of* what politics (and the political) is and where it takes place. On the other hand I argue against recent, widespread tendencies to use politics as an all-inclusive category of everything that can be connected with conflict or power of some kind or another, a tendency that often includes rejecting any consideration and relevance of institutional politics in the form of political systems, states, or state-related, thus authoritatively structured, power processes.

The edited volume, *Styrssystem och jämställdhet. Institutioner i förändring och könsmaktens framtid* (1997) (e. *Governmental Systems and Gender Equality. Changing institutions and the future of gender and power*) that I did for the “Public Investigation of women and economic power”, is one example of my attempt to work with such a complex, multidimensional perspective on politics and varying preconditions for social change, and this book includes contributions from three different social science disciplines.

Another example of my attempt to develop a historically informed multi-level analysis of whether/how – as I put it: “Sex [Does] Matter to Democracy” is the article with that title, first published 1988 (and then a chapter in my dissertation). This work is organized partly as both critical and constructive conversation with Carole Pateman (another favorite among political theorists).

My research, as well as my academic teaching through the years, and the Örebro-based research environment that I co-founded and still am a part of, has a broad social science profile. I use to characterize my own work as historically located and empirically oriented social and political theory. What I mean by “empirically oriented ... theory” is that there is not much of a directly normative policy orientation in it; neither is it framed as a theory of justice, nor in terms of ethics or morals. The main aim is to explain social phenomena or state of things that seem to call for explanation; also to problematize the ontological and methodological premises that I have found appropriate in some respects and wanting in others as grounds for explanatory theories. Still I think that, if there is any validity at all in my critical analyses and constructive theories, my work has more than “paradoxes to offer” (to paraphrase the historian Joan Scott’s well-known book title, *Only Paradoxes to Offer*, 1996); they are useful also to directly normatively aimed knowledge production.

I also often underline that my theorization of the formal-legally equal patriarchy is not primarily a theory of the subject, but of society. The focus is on the *socio-sexual relationships*, seen as constitutive of a distinctive dimension/domain of society, a domain that I call political sexuality (in a certain analogy with political economy). Ontologically and methodologically my work is guided by realism, which for me includes a specific reading of historical materialism, critical realism and historical institutionalism. More precisely, my overall research program is to ask feminist questions and try out the just mentioned metatheories and approaches to help answer these questions.

What, then, can I say about my main themes or topics – in a nutshell manner? Let me put the answer in terms of contributions to a number of different debates or interventions (a buzz word today in Academia!):

I have intervened into several international feminist theory debates and in some, at least – I dare say – I have come up with new modes of thought and solutions to seemingly unbridgeable opposites. I will name three (to begin with):

- the patriarchy *vs.* capitalism debate
- the (women's) interests *vs.* needs debate
- the debate about how well – or badly – poststructuralism serves gender studies and feminist theory.

The patriarchy vs capitalism debate – is about which system, or which combination of both, is the main site of the oppression of women. This was a major field of discussion and theory development for more than two decades, from the late 1960s up until the early 1990s; it is still highly relevant, and various new or renewed takes on issues, dealt with in these early years, can be seen in many places also among new generations of scholars.

This was the field I entered as a doctoral student in 1980, but for me, this way of framing the problem (as an either or issue) did not work well enough. Rather than focusing on the *oppression of women* in the overall question, and asking what explains the most of it, the key question here (in our relatively equal societies) should be about the *power of men*. In other words, it is *patriarchy* – the sources and maintenance of men's power, as compared with and over women – that needs to be explained. In particular I thought, and still think, that it is an especially interesting research question why/how a systematic inequality between women and men in *our* part of the world continues. So the main question I raised (in my dissertation) was:

“Why, or how, do men’s social and political power positions with respect to women persist even in contemporary Western societies, where women and men are seen as formally/legally equal individuals, where almost all adult women are fully or partly employed, where there is a high proportion of well-educated women, and where welfare state arrangements, which obviously benefit women, are relatively well developed?” (1991, 11; 1994, 1).

Thus, I put the problem on a kind of, *other-things-being-relatively-equal model*. And the answer I came up with is constructed around love and love power as a vital source of human social (in this case socio-sexual) empowerment that men can – and do tend to – exploit, in women. The assumption is that men can and do “tap into” women's love power, more and on different conditions than what women can, and tend to do, in men.

So to explain men's power (and gendered authority) today in our part of the world, there is more to be seen and named than the gender division of labor or work, even more than men's access to and use of women's labor power; more than old-fashioned ideas and beliefs about women's nature; more than symbols and norms regarding sexual difference; more than men's violence against women.

However, and this is important: when I'm talking about exploitation of love power, I'm not talking about violence, sexual abuse or rape. I'm not asking or aiming to explain the question "*Why love hurts?*", as for instance the sociologist Eva Illouz does in her recent book with that title (2012). On the contrary, I'm talking about what kind of human powers/energies/capacities are flowing, transferred and exchanged – given and taken/received - in the sociosexual relations between people (meaning between women and men as well as among women and among men) under *relatively equal and "normal" conditions*. Ongoing exploitation of love power does not necessarily imply suffering or misery (as is assumed in Illouz's book), it is not necessarily contradictory to happiness. My use of the loaded concept of exploitation is discussed, first of course in the dissertation but also recently, for instance in the book chapter, "What Kind of Power Is 'Love Power?'" (2011).

The (women's) interests vs. needs debate was about whether or not a (social and) political theory, aiming to be relevant for women, should be framed in terms of "interests", and thus somehow in line with almost all established, modern political theory. During the 1970s several feminist theorists in political science and sociology had been discussing interest theory issues for a while. In the early 1980s Virginia Shapiro initiated a more focused debate, asking: "When Are Interests Interesting?" She argued that women as *women* should be considered a group with "representable interests" related *basically* to the "production of children". Against her argument especially Irene Diamond and Nancy Hartsock took the stance not only that interest thought was not pertinent to women's concerns but rejected the interest approach altogether in favor of a theory of needs.

In my contribution to this debate (first published separately 1985 and 1988 and then included as one main pillar in the dissertation) I developed a theory and an empirically applicable conceptualization of gendered interests which transcends both these opposite stances. And I think I can claim that this alternative mode of theorizing interests *and* needs (plus wants and preferences) actually anticipated what was arising and growing as a central issue in feminist debates at the time, namely the importance of thinking about gendered concerns in ways that do not exclude or make invisible the various *identity aspects* that make up the intersectional creatures people always are. For instance, the fact that Chandra Mohanty, in her book *Feminism without Borders. Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (2003), applied my conceptual framework to the situation of Third World women workers in the contemporary global capitalist economy, tells me that all intellectual work accomplished by Western minds, so to speak, is not automatically always biased with respect to non-Western social reality; that it can, when (made and) read carefully, be useful as a prism even for "non-Western eyes".²

The third issue I have picked here is the **widespread and often extremely heated debate concerning post-structuralism**. This "great epistemological turmoil" as Joan Scott put it, (Scott 1988, 41) emerged in the late 1980s and continued through the 1990s and after. The predominance of cultural constructivism, linguistic and literary-philosophical paradigms became strong in feminist theory and gender studies, including theoriza-

tion of gender and politics. In the chapter “Out of Epistemology. Feminist theory in the 1980s and beyond” written with Kathleen Jones, published in our co-edited book *The Political Interests of Gender Revisited* (2009), we entered this debate through a close reading of three leading poststructuralist theorists, Judith Butler, Chantal Mouffe and Joan Scott.

Our aim was “not to reject [wholesale poststructuralist, or other] discursive approaches to studying gender and politics, but to demonstrate their partiality” and limitations (2009a, 19); also to make an argument for a more robust approaches to analyses of the political interests of gender; and to suggest ways to build bridges between materialist and discursive frameworks. A strong motive, I would say, was to go against the often unarticulated premises and absence of substantial arguments by which a straw-man named “modernism” was repudiated in many poststructuralist texts. At the same time our intervention was informed by an ethos that we – with Nina Lykke – called “productive feminist pluralism” (2009a, 17).

Today, I’m onto the question of love again!

Already twenty five years ago, when I was finishing my dissertation, I observed that some new currents in academic research – such as sociological interest in feelings/emotions and the body – seemed to *point towards a shift* in attitude, also concerning love as a relevant topic of study (that is outside comparative literature and readings of the old Greek philosophers). What specifically caught my interest around the mid-1990s was the emphasis on love in a rather specific genre of semi-academic writings, namely in so-called management philosophy, and also the increasing use of “love terms” in different vocabularies about the economy (the economy proper, I should say). An unfinished book manuscript about these matters takes up a lot of space in my drawers, and will perhaps never be completed, but I take this up briefly in a book chapter I wrote in 1999 (but published first in 2009). A key formulation of my hypothesis/assumption about “What’s love got to do with it [the economy]?” is: “The competitive conditions under which capital itself lives today are such that it cannot really sustain itself by consuming ordinary (or even the most qualified) *labor power*. Capital seems to need *love power* too” (2009b, 77).

For the time being I’m involved in two different projects, both run within the GEXcel International Collegium of Advanced Transdisciplinary Gender Studies, the now three-campus collaboration (Örebro University, Linköping University and Karlstad University). One is a 5-year Sweden-based project (together with Linköping) on Intersectionality and so-called Transversal Dialogues.

The other one is a book project, called *Feminism and the Power of Love. Interdisciplinary Interventions*. This book, which I edit together with two young scholars, one in Örebro (Lena Gunnarsson) and the other in Mexico City (Adriana Garcia Andrade), involves a group of ten people from seven countries, and it is a part of a broader research program dealing with what we call “Feminist Love Studies”. I initiated this program in 2013, and the idea grew out of the results from my and others’ work on love in an earlier phase of GEXcel, especially the visiting scholar program, “Love in Our Time – a Question for

Feminism”, run mainly in 2010. The central idea is that it is timely for feminist theorists and gender researchers to look at what was/is happening with the topic of love in Academia.

In the collection, *Love. A Question for Feminism in the Twenty-First Century* (co-edited with US-philosopher, Ann Ferguson, 2014), especially in my own chapter, “Love Studies as a (re)new(ed) field of knowledge interests” we show that there is clearly a growing academic interest in the subject of love since the early 1990s, and particularly after the millennium shift, and that this contrasts with the previous reluctance to consider love seriously in its own terms. Both tendencies (the growing interest now and reluctance/repudiation previously) are observable in both feminist and non-feminist research. But, interestingly, the current attention seems to be even stronger in the latter.

A final note: why should feminist scholars bother about love? For at least two reasons, I think.

First, for the same reason that has made feminists reluctant towards the subject. If love “works” ideologically to subordinate women, it is important to take the lead in framing the new field.

Second, if love is creative, a source of human capacity, that can be “tapped into” with different end results (human growth, economic growth, political (em)power(ment), it is urgent to be vigilant about *how* love is employed or invoked to let growth flourish or to save the world.

Thank you for listening.

Notes

- 1 Doktorsritgerðin var gefin út undir öðrum titli hjá bandarísku forlagi 1994 og í spænski þýðingu 1993. Sem heild kom ritgerðin út á sænsku 2003, þá með nýjum formála. Sjá heimildaskrá (References).
- 2 This alludes to Mohanty’s well-known article “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses” from 1984, also published and “revisited” in 2003.

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