

Pioneering Political Science: The Case of Iceland

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When the International Political Science Association called its Tenth World Congress in Edinburgh in 1976, the assembled body of scholars not only reflected the state of the discipline in terms of analytical interests and theoretical rigour but also showed the dominance of the Great Powers within political science. The Western English-speaking giants – the United States of America, United Kingdom and Canada – led in numbers of delegates and together with West Germany and France accounted for about 60 percent of the congressional membership. Although geographical proximity to the place of assembly undoubtedly encouraged participation from the leading Scandinavian countries, it is noteworthy that Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland contributed 10 percent of the delegates, the three first mentioned being among those twelve nations that topped the membership list.

Whereas the leading Scandinavian countries can thus be counted among the superpowers of political science, Iceland belongs to the developing regions which were characterized by the attendance of only one to three delegates per country. At the Tenth IPSA Congress Iceland was among that half of the countries represented which together contributed only 3 percent of the delegates. Norway alone by far exceeded the total number of scholars from these poorer IPSA regions. Together the four leading Scandinavian nations were responsible for three times the congressional membership of the developing half of IPSA – twenty-three countries, most of which are in Asia, Africa or South America.

The relationship of Icelandic political scientists to colleagues in the other Scandinavian countries reflects an international discrepancy within the discipline. On one side there is a small number of countries that dominate the field in terms of manpower, research, language and the production of theoretical and analytical tools. On the other there is the majority of nations in which political science either does not exist or is entering the early stages of development, under the direction of only a few scholars in each country. It is worth noting that only a third of the United

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Nations was represented at the Tenth IPSA Congress, and half of the attending countries accounted for only a few percent of the total membership.

The developing areas within political science are attempting the well-nigh impossible. With the smallest number of scholars they must each cope with theoretical and analytical advances in a multitude of fields within the discipline, acquire comprehensive knowledge of their own political systems, teach and train students and in most cases also create from scratch a vocabulary of political science in their native tongues. If political science is ever to become a truly international discipline this paradoxical state of affairs must be tackled. If the two worlds of political science keep growing apart the discipline will most likely be fundamentally hampered by the cultural barriers imposed by this segregation. With respect to the subject matter of political science and the need for wide-ranging comparable data, the existence of such barriers can create insurmountable blocks on the road towards scientific maturity.

While providing an account of the development of Icelandic political science, this article will attempt to bring out some of the major problems involved in pioneering political science in a country where the discipline had no roots and thus had to be transplanted from the outside. It is hoped that some of the lessons which can be drawn from the Icelandic experience may indicate guidelines for development. The account might also serve as a notice to the leaders of the political science community that the internationalization of the discipline does not only involve the solution of theoretical and methodological problems which tend to dominate the discussion in advanced institutions, but must also consist of the growth of political science among those nations where it is either in the early stages of development or does not yet exist.

When political scientists and other social science scholars in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland in the early 1970s were reaping the crop that had been growing since the 1950s and 1960s, the virgin field of social science in Iceland was waiting for the first plough. Following increasing demands in the late 1960s for new lines of study to be opened up at the University of Iceland – which for decades had consisted of traditional faculties of theology, law, medicine, languages and Icelandic literature, together with minor studies in engineering and business administration – a Department of Social Science was established in the autumn of 1970, enabling Icelandic students to obtain a B.A. degree in political science and sociology. These disciplines were, however, without any roots in the Icelandic academic or social community; they did not even have acknowledged names in the Icelandic language. The preparations for the new department consisted of the issuance of the official decree and the appointment to teaching posts a fortnight before the Department was opened of two Icelandic graduates who had just completed their studies in England and Sweden respectively; an American guest professor in sociology was hired during the first two terms; library facilities were barely existent. The entrance of political science into Icelandic academia was thus more akin to the landing of the first astronauts on the moon than to the slow advance of the settlers through the Wild West – if comparisons are to be chosen from the history of the New World.

Although in the decades following the Second World War a few Icelandic students had become acquainted with political science during their study of economics, history and other subjects in the Scandinavian countries, England, or the United States, a systematic analysis of the Icelandic political system was not instituted until Stein Rokkan and other directors of the Smaller European Democracies project decided in the mid-1960s to include Iceland, and employed Olafur Ragnar Grímsson as a full-time researcher. The SED work inevitably consisted primarily of data gathering and preliminary analysis of the historical development of the Icelandic system since the middle of the 19th century. As no modern Icelandic history was available, the first research task was to establish what had actually taken place in the past one hundred years. Together with Grímsson's doctoral thesis, *Political Power in Iceland Prior to the Period of Class Politics, 1845–1918*, which grew out of the SED research, the material which was assembled under the SED auspices, due largely to the encouragement of Rokkan and his fellow directors, was the foundation upon which the discipline primarily rested during its period of infancy in Icelandic academe. The SED project was thus the main source from which Icelandic political science advanced after the foundation of the Department of Social Science.

The following sections will provide a general account of the development of the Department of Social Science at the University of Iceland during the first six years of its existence, with special emphasis on research in political science and related areas of sociology. As the former half of this period, 1970–1973, was characterized by the need to build up the teaching required for the B.A. degree, the research efforts have been almost exclusively restricted to the latter half, 1973–1976. In order to distinguish special aspects of the advancement of political science in Iceland the article is divided into the following sections: 1. Administration and Teaching, 2. Research, 3. Graduates, 4. Lessons and Future Prospects. As a list of publications and theses concerning Icelandic politics has not been available for the international body of scholars, such a tabulation is provided at the conclusion of the article.

1. Administration and Teaching

The administrative organization and the need for integrated teaching led to extensive cooperation from the very beginning between the fields of political science and sociology within the Department of Social Science. This cooperation has furthered a joint analysis of political and social structures in Iceland and hindered the formation of administrative barriers that in some other places have prevented scholars basically interested in the same problems from approaching them together from the vantage points of distinct disciplines. So far as political science is concerned, the cooperative setup within the Department of Social Science has been particularly relevant in research on the social structure, especially class divisions and the urban-rural cleavage, and on the party-dominated mass media. It has furthermore been conducive toward providing the students with a wide-

ranging background in social science and a broad analysis of Icelandic political and social development. Thus the integration of teaching and research in political science and sociology has been a significant factor in establishing in Iceland during a relatively small number of years a body of social scientists who share each others' interests in a wide variety of areas. For a small nation such an integration of social science is an essential condition for a firm establishment of the disciplines.

The B.A. degree which the Department awards is based on introductory courses in political science and comparative government, sociology, social anthropology, economics, psychology, statistics, methodology, social and political theory; furthermore, there are courses dealing with Icelandic political and social institutions and behavior patterns and their development from the early stages of modernization in the middle of the 19th century to the present. These subjects are all obligatory for every student. For those specializing in political science there are, in addition, courses in international relations, political sociology, political philosophy as well as optional courses in mass media studies, the analysis of developing countries, philosophy, economics, and law. The degree is finally obtained by completing an extensive thesis (12,000–20,000 words) which generally requires independent research into Icelandic politics. The justification for the requirement concerning the size of the B.A. thesis, which admittedly exceeds that made in most places, is based on the need to employ the students' enterprise in the advancement of political science research in Iceland. The B.A. theses have thus contributed significantly to the data on Icelandic politics which has become available in the last few years. Although this practice has provided the students with valuable experience and enabled them to join the research undertaken in the Department, it has, however, lengthened the normal time of study to four years.

When the Department of Social Science was established at the University of Iceland only two Icelandic teachers were appointed. In the following six years the number has increased to five. In political science there are Olafur Ragnar Grímsson, professor, and Svanur Kristjánsson, lecturer; Thorbjörn Broddason is a lecturer in sociology, Haraldur Olafsson is a lecturer in social anthropology; Thórólfur Thórlindsson was recently appointed guest lecturer in sociology. In addition, a professorship in sociology is vacant. During the last two years the teaching has been entirely in the hands of Icelandic staff members. Previously, the Department employed on a temporary basis – for one or two terms – lecturers from Sweden, England and the United States. With the present employment structure the responsibility for teaching and research is now exclusively and permanently in the hands of Icelandic social scientists.

Although foreign teachers provided valuable international influence in the young department, their contribution to the advancement of social science in Iceland was fundamentally obstructed by the language barrier, which restricted their scope in the areas of both teaching and research; their inevitable unfamiliarity with Icelandic politics and history was furthermore a potential drawback to major analytical contributions. While it has been possible to teach individual courses in English, the creation of Icelandic concepts and the development of political science discourse in Icelandic have been essential prerequisites for the advancement of the

discipline in the University and the community at large. The nature of the Icelandic language prevents the employment of the international social vocabulary, derived primarily from English. To this extent the establishment of these studies in Iceland is a much harder task than in most other countries where political science has already been founded. The translation of key concepts of the different social science disciplines has thus been a major occupation for the Icelandic staff members. Concept formation has to be a significant aspect of both teaching and research.

As the Icelandic language requires abstract concepts to indicate the concrete nature of phenomena, a characteristic which has probably been strengthened by the concreteness which farmers and fishermen in past centuries gave their discourse, it can be extremely difficult to translate the abstract notions which our colleagues in the more advanced places have so proudly created in abundance. It would indeed be considerate of the enterprising concept-makers if they thought in a sympathetic way at least once in a while about the problems which they create for those responsible for political science in other cultural domains. This should especially be the case when the concept innovation is not accompanied by new thought – when the emperor is still the same but only acquires new garments to be presentable at the most fashionable masquerades that are held in every season.

The following Icelandic terms will provide specific examples of what is involved in the obligation to provide translations of all relevant concepts in social science: political science – stjórnmálafræði; elite – kjarni; pluralism – margræði; ideology – hugmyndafræði; socialization – félagsmótun; anomie – siðrof. All these terms are in international currency and as such used in a multitude of languages. In the Icelandic case, however, they have to be translated in a way which simultaneously fits the rules of the language and bears out the meaning of the concept. Such translations of hundreds of concepts are among the most important and the most unenviable tasks given to those responsible for introducing political science to different nations. It is perhaps the major barricade that has to be surmounted if political science is to become an established discipline in all areas of the globe.

When the Department of Social Science was founded in 1970 it was given an administrative status outside the faculty structure of the University. In 1975 the Department was amalgamated with three disciplines that had belonged to the Faculty of Arts: psychology, educational science and library science. This change became effective in the autumn of 1976, when the Faculty of Social Science was created. It is now the administrative residence of political science, sociology and social anthropology together with the other previously-mentioned subjects. The new faculty has given social science a firmer basis within the University of Iceland and created more favourable administrative conditions for its advance.

2. Research

When the Department of Social Science, having established the teaching necessary for the B.A. degree, moved the emphasis in 1973 towards the advancement of re-

search, it was decided to formulate a preliminary research policy for political science. Although the SED project and Grímsson's thesis provided a certain basis from which it was possible to proceed, the key task would be to acquire a general perspective on all major aspects of the Icelandic system. The research policy was therefore constructed on the fundamental premise that a general mapping of all major system parts should be the primary endeavour. In such a way a sufficient overview could be established from which more detailed studies and intensive analytical and comparative efforts could be developed. It was estimated that it might take up to a decade for this preliminary task to be completed. Consequently in the early 1980s the groundwork for a comprehensive and intensive analysis of Icelandic politics would have been laid.

On the basis of this policy the research programme was divided into the following stages:

- (1) The power structure, a continuation of the research which preceded the establishment of the Department;
- (2) The party system, especially the emergence of the class parties and their development in recent decades;
- (3) The legislative institutions with concentration on the *Althingi*;
- (4) The coalition system, especially at the cabinet level;
- (5) Interest organizations, their links to the parties and increasing involvement in the making of public policy;
- (6) The civil service, the 19th century colonial heritage and the major growth in the postwar period as far as institutional proliferation and ever-increasing professionalization are concerned;
- (7) Election studies based on the analysis of historical data and on modern surveys;
- (8) Local government, its organizational structure, links to national institutions and recruitment functions.

In addition to these eight stages, the political science research programme is supplemented by cooperation with the sociology branch of the Department with respect to research in the following two areas: (A) the social structure, especially class and urban-rural cleavages; and (B) the mass media, especially its dominance by the parties. Thus the entire research programme consists of 10 distinct stages.

The Department has attempted to execute the research programme by three separate yet interlocking means. The first involves independent research by staff members. The second is composed of the extensive B.A. theses which have been grouped together under teachers' supervision in order to form specific research efforts: some have dealt with the parties, others with aspects of the power structure or the *Althingi*, and so on. The third consists of cooperative research projects in which the students and staff members from different disciplines take part. The students have thus generally been highly involved in the advancement of Icelandic political and social research. The small size of the staff body made this inevitable if reasonable progress was to be made in a relatively short time. The

students' participation, even as early as in their second or third year of study, has proved to be very valuable – in some cases turning out excellent original work which has contributed some of the cornerstones of our present knowledge. The Icelandic experience thus seems to bear witness to the considerable research resources available in the student body, even at the undergraduate level. With systematic and patient direction this resource can be employed to produce valuable material. Admittedly the students' contribution has been stronger with regard to empirical work and general data gathering; it has inevitably lacked in analytical maturity. But in a virgin field the basic mapping is more essential for further progress than cosmological theorizing in the grand tradition.

So far the realization of the previously-described research programme has been primarily restricted to Stages One to Three, with some minor efforts concerning Stages Four and Five and considerable emphasis on the two stages (A and B) involving cooperation with the sociology branch of the Department. In the next few years more efforts will be put into Stages Four and Five. Although stages Six to Eight will have to wait until the early 1980s for an extensive treatment, some work has already been done on historical election analysis and local power structures. Thus, the ordering of the research tasks in the preliminary programme has not been completely followed. It should, furthermore, be noted that in the immediate future particular emphasis will have to be put on publishing the research that has already been completed. This task is briefly described in Section 4.

In order to provide a general but brief introduction to political science research at the University of Iceland, a summary follows of the main concerns in the chief research areas. The summary includes references to theses, publications and research papers that are listed at the end of the article. Interested scholars should thus be able to trace the works of particular relevance. However, as the research in all areas is still in progress, significant parts only exist in manuscript form or are still incomplete. The works referred to here therefore do not exhaust the available material. The account of the research has been divided into six components:

(1) *The Power Structure*. Following Grímsson's thesis on the Icelandic power structure from the emergence of modern politics in the early decades of the 19th century and through the period of independence politics (Olafur Ragnar Grímsson, 1970), there has been considerable concentration in the Department on extending this analysis to the more recent era of class politics (see e.g. Olafur Ragnar Grímsson, 1976a). Among the specific exploratory emphases have been the interlocking of major institutions, the relationship between the political, economic and cultural sectors as well as the institutional basis of the elite, its recruitment, social origins and cohesiveness created by educational institutions and kinship ties. The research on the general character of the national power structure has been supplemented by individual case studies dealing with community power, e.g. the study of the rule of socialist parties in an eastern town (Smári Geirsson, 1976) and the respective influence of local councilors, building enterprises and municipal bureaucrats in the planning of a major Reykjavík suburb (Steinunn Harðardóttir, 1975). Among such case studies are also a preliminary investigation of the power

exercised by different political and economic interests in the development of the University of Iceland (Gestur Guðmundsson, 1976) and an analysis of women's leadership positions within the Icelandic political system; the latter study is part of a general report on the equality of men and women in Iceland which was prepared at the request of the Ministry of Social Affairs (Guðrún Sigríður Vilhjálmsdóttir and Olafur Ragnar Grímsson, 1975). Furthermore, a preliminary study was made of the role which different political institutions and other actors played in the formation of regional policy, contrasting the situation in the early 1950s with the present (Kristján Valdimarsson, 1976). This analysis was a contribution to a project which dealt with internal migration, with special emphasis on the Vestfirðir area (see 4).

(2) *Political Parties*. The research in this area can be divided into two major components. The first consists of the analysis which Svanur Kristjánsson, lecturer, has conducted on the development of the Icelandic class parties in the interwar period, i.e. from the emergence of class and ideological cleavages in the second and third decade of this century to the appearance of foreign policy, primarily the NATO/USA-base issue, as one of the fundamental factors in Icelandic politics. Kristjánsson's research deals with the complex interrelations between the parties and respective organizations of workers, farmers, employers and cooperative societies, the parties' ideological characteristics and the voting patterns of different occupational groups. Thus the research involves an attempt to deal in a systematic way with the period of class politics which succeeded the independence struggle. Kristjánsson's work provides a major cornerstone in the advancement of Icelandic political science. If it is linked to Grímsson's thesis on 19th century and early 20th century politics, one acquires a foundation for a comprehensive analysis of Icelandic politics from early modernization up to World War II.

The second component of the research on political parties consists of a number of B. A. theses that either analyse one of the major parties or deal with a fundamental issue in the development of the party structure. The merger of nationalism and laissez-faire ideology that characterized the origin of the Independence Party is extensively treated in an analysis of its formation and how it became the largest party in the country (Hallgrímur Guðmundsson, 1975). The account of the Progressive Party deals predominantly with its organizational structure, the links to the Cooperative Movement and how it succeeded in establishing a strong urban following despite having been almost exclusively a rural party (Ingimar Einarsson 1974). The following significant aspects of the complex history of the Icelandic left are treated in individual theses: the three major splits in the Social Democratic Party that led to the formation of a successful left challenger, the decline of the SDP electoral support from over 20 percent in the 1930s to below 10 percent in the 1970s (Guðmundur Bjarnason, 1975), the development in terms of organization and electoral strength from the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (1930-1938), through the United Socialists Party (1938-1968) to the creation of the People's Alliance as a mass party which has achieved twice the size of the Social Democrats (Guðmundur Birkir Thorkelsson, 1975); the ideological development of these three successive parties, contrasting the CP, USP and the PA in terms of Marxism, the class conflict, nationalism, democracy and parliamentarianism, Icelandic cultu-

ral and historical heritage, the links to international communist and socialist movements, the ownership of the means of production and general economic policy (Stefán Karlsson, 1974). The significance of foreign policy, especially the NATO/USA-base issue, as a fundamental cleavage in the postwar period is brought out in two theses. The first deals with the development of party conflict in this issue area from Iceland's entry into NATO to the formation in 1956 of the first Left Government that declared its intention to have the USA base removed (Haukur Olafsson, 1975). The second thesis provides an analysis of the rise and fall of the National Preservation Party (1953–1963) which campaigned almost exclusively on an anti-base platform (Ragnar Arnason, 1974).

(3) *The Althingi*. The research on legislative institutions and processes consists primarily of the following three focuses:

- (a) interrelated minor research papers on the nature and characteristics of the party leadership in the *Althingi*, the issue specialization of different parliamentary parties and groups of M.P.s, the committee system, the relationship of M.P.s to their constituents, the nature and scope of party conflict in the *Althingi*, the increasing role of the government in legislative output and the growing influence of interest organizations and the civil service;
- (b) an extensive survey based on interviews with M.P.s (1972–1973) focusing on their parliamentary work and activities in other areas, thus bringing out their relationship with interest organizations and state bureaucracies, dealing also with the communication process within the *Althingi* and the flow of information to the M.P.s, and analysing the characteristics of different parliamentary parties and leadership groups in terms of nationalism, localism and party loyalties, with an attempt to show how the M.P.s view the Icelandic power structure; and
- (c) a few minor case studies of particular legislative processes, concentrating on how they reflect the power of respective actors both inside and outside the *Althingi*.

Although a great deal of this research is piecemeal and still in progress, two theses have already been completed (Stefán P. Olafsson, 1975 and Bergthóra Sigmundsdóttir, 1975) and a number of research papers are available (see the list of research papers at the end of the article). However, in the near future emphasis should be put on bringing the work in this area together in order to prepare the ground for publication of a comprehensive analysis of the *Althingi* and the forces at play in the legislative process.

(4) *The Social Structure*. The rapid social change which has occurred in Iceland during the past 30–50 years and its effects on the political system make this research area a very significant and fruitful field for interdisciplinary studies. From the sociology side the chief contribution has come from lecturer Thorbjörn

Broddason and his students. Broddason has also been the main director of the work on mass media which is described in part 5. Among the primary concerns in this area have been the changes in population and occupational structure from the middle of the 19th century to the present and how the transformation of the stable rural society and the creation of modern urban Iceland have affected political and social institutions. At the present stage the research efforts have led to individual research papers and theses dealing with particular topics, such as the social structure in a fishing town (Elías Héðinsson and Ingi Valur Jóhannsson, 1975), the reflection of social stratification in primary group relationships (Örlygur Karlsson, 1976), the social origins of pupils in different educational institutions (Helga Halldórsdóttir and Kristín Waage, 1975), and how the recruitment of university students in the 20th century reflects the changing social bases of this potential leadership group (Hannes Olafsson, 1975). Theses dealing with the characteristics of farmers (Ragnheiður Thorgrimsdóttir, 1975), of tenants in the Reykjavík area (Jón Rúnar Sveinsson, 1975), of minority groups in Icelandic society (Sigríður Jónsdóttir, 1975) and of the spread of literature among different occupational groups (Thórir Olafsson, 1977) also provide a wealth of interesting and useful material. Among other works in this field there is a brief analysis of the common notion of classlessness in Iceland (Thorbjörn Broddason and Keith Webb, 1975) and a report on the equality of men and women in Iceland with respect to occupation, education, income and leadership positions (Gúðrún Sigríður Vilhjálmsdóttir and Olafur Ragnar Grímsson, 1975). Following this report a more detailed study is being made of the social position of women in the Reykjavík area. The study will provide data on a number of relevant social and political behaviour patterns of different occupational groups.

In addition to social stratification, which is the interlocking concern of the above mentioned research, the great migration from the rural parts of the country to the urban centres, especially Reykjavík, constitutes the other major focus of research in this area. Migration studies are an essential part of any analysis dealing with the formation of the fundamental urban-rural cleavage in modern Icelandic politics, which has made the centre-periphery division a vital component of political development in Iceland. The primary research in this field consists of the Vestfirðir project which concentrates on migration from and within the Western Peninsula. The project involves data gathering on population changes in all the peninsula's communes 1850-1975, migration patterns in terms of family, age, sex, occupation and other variables, the effects of economic and political changes, the role of governmental bodies - both national and local - as well as the administrative structure with regard to regional policy. Given the available manpower at the Department of Social Science, the assembled data will provide material for analysis for a number of years to come.

(5) *Mass Media*. As all the major national and local papers during the last hundred years have been organs of political parties and the State Radio and Television has been dominated by party-appointed directors, the area of mass media research is highly central in the Icelandic case to the analytical interests of political science. Under Thorbjörn Broddason's supervision four theses have been

written on the news selection processes in radio, television and the press (Sigurveig Jónsdóttir, 1974, Katrín Pálsdóttir, 1976, Stefán A. Halldórsson, 1975 and Hildur Einarsdóttir, 1976) and one on the circulation of different party papers among various social classes in the Reykjavík area (Thorbjörg Jónsdóttir, 1973). In addition, Grímsson has continued his work, begun as a part of the SED project, on the history of the Icelandic press from the early period of independence politics to the present, with particular emphasis on the way in which the press has functioned as one of the main power bases of the party leadership. In 1973 a survey of radio and television listening and viewing patterns was carried out (Olafur Ragnar Grímsson and Erlendur Lárusson, 1973).

(6) *Other Research Areas.* In addition to the preceding five major research concerns, various other problems have been tackled in the Department. So far as political science proper is concerned, the most significant are Grímsson's work on cabinet coalitions in the postwar period and Hallgrímur Guðmundsson's collection of local election data from the National Archives, covering the period from the commencement of local elections in the 1870s to the present. Such data have never before been available and in the future it will constitute highly fruitful material for the analysis of local power structures and their relationship to the national political system, of the emergence of class divisions and mobilisation processes as well as changes in elite recruitment patterns. Apart from research on the social structure and mass media which has already been described, the concentration in the field of sociology has primarily been on the family and education. In addition, a small number of theses have been written in the fields of social anthropology and criminology, which have existed as subdisciplines within the Department; however, a stronger emphasis on the former, under the direction of lecturer Haraldur Olafsson, will undoubtedly achieve in the near future the same status within the new Faculty of Social Science as sociology and political science.

3. Graduates

Since the first three years of the Department's existence were inevitably devoted to building up a succession of courses leading to the B.A. degree, it was not until 1973 that the necessary channels for graduation had been fully established. Since then 54 students have graduated from the Department (three of whom graduated in 1972), 29 of those in political science and related areas of sociology, of whom 14 were in political science proper. As is brought out quite clearly in Table I, political science in Iceland follows the tradition of male dominance within the discipline. Whereas women constitute nearly a half of all graduates from the Department, they are less than a quarter of the political science graduates. While over a third of the male students choose politics as a field of specialization, the female students lean more toward studies of the family, education and particular aspects of the social structure. Thus the position of men and women in society at large is both reflected and maintained within the social sciences. The socialization processes also dominate the advancement of science by influencing how individuals choose their areas of research differently.

Table I. Social Science Graduates from the University of Iceland 1973-1976

	Men		Women		Total	
All areas*	30	55%	24	45%	54	100%
Political science and related areas of sociology	18	62%	11	38%	29	100%
Political science	11	79%	3	21%	14	100%

* Sociology and political science as well as the subareas of social anthropology and criminology. Three of the students graduated in 1972.

To indicate the distribution of B.A. theses in the five specific research areas which were discussed in Section 2, a classification of graduates is provided in Table II. Though the *Althingi* has received a low proportion of B.A. theses, it should be noted that the research papers are primarily concentrated in that area in addition, a few theses are yet to be completed.

Table II. Graduates in Political Science and the Related Areas of Sociology 1973-1976. Classification by Theses

Area	Graduates	Number of theses
1. Power structure	Smári Geirsson, Gestur Guðmundsson, Steinunn Harðardóttir, Kristján Valdimarsson, Guðrún Sigríður Vilhjálmisdóttir	5
2. Political parties	Ragnar Arnason, Guðmundur Bjarnason, Ingimar Einarsson, Hallgrímur Guðmundsson, Stefán Karlsson, Haukur Olafsson, Guðmundur Birkir Thorkelsson	7
3. The <i>Althingi</i>	Stefán P. Olafsson, Bergthóra Sigmundsdóttir	2
4. Social structure	Helga Halldórsdóttir and Kristín Waage, Elías Héðinsson and Ingi Valur Jóhannsson, Sigríður Jónsdóttir, Örlygur Karlsson, Hannes Olafsson, Thórir Olafsson, Jón Rúnar Sveinsson, Ragnheiður Thorgrímsdóttir	8
5. Mass media	Hildur Einarsdóttir, Stefán A. Halldórsson, Sigurveig Jónsdóttir, Thorbjörg Jónsdóttir, Katrín Pálsdóttir	5

Since social science did not grow out of traditional disciplines in Icelandic society and was, so to speak, transplanted from the outside, it was to be expected that graduates might find it difficult to obtain employment. Fortunately and somewhat surprisingly, however, this has not turned out to be the case. Graduates from the Department are now posted within various institutions and agencies and already some seem to have established roots for the disciplines within particular occupations. Some of the graduates in political science and the related areas of sociology are now employed in state institutions, either in administrative or research capacities, others work in the mass media, in interest organizations or as teachers below university level. One-third of the graduates have sought further education abroad, aiming either at master's or doctoral degrees.

4. Lessons and Future Prospects

The development of political science in a new cultural territory can be divided into five stages: (1) teaching, (2) research, (3) publication, (4) professionalization and (5) international integration. The preceding account dealt with the advances which have been made in the Icelandic case in the first two stages, which also involve the creation of political science discourse in the Icelandic language. Before turning briefly to the first steps that have been taken toward the realization of stages 3–5, the major lessons that can be drawn from stages 1–2 should be noted. These lessons hopefully indicate how one can tackle some of the chief problems concerning the development of political science among the majority of nations where it has either just been founded or does not yet exist:

(A) It can be of fundamental importance if prior to the establishment of a teaching institution the prospective staff members are engaged in a comprehensive and comparative research project directed by experienced scholars. The integration of people from different countries that face similar developmental tasks in political science should therefore be among the chief aims of international associations and other cooperative institutions within the discipline. Such preparatory efforts help to further research and provide teaching with a firm basis and thus strengthen the new national institutions.

(B) Although foreign guest lecturers can be of invaluable assistance in the early stages of development they tend, due to the language barrier and their unfamiliarity with native politics and history, to be handicapped when it comes to the development of scientific discourse and extensive research; the training of native staff is thus of key importance for the advancement of the discipline.

(C) The emphasis which established institutions in the field place on research in developing departments has to give way to teaching: the elementary building of courses necessary for the first degree. The status which research has in the international area of scientific competition might tempt staff members at developing institutions to neglect teaching and forget its fundamental importance in a new territory for the long-run prospects of the discipline. Teaching has to be the first priority during the initial years. If successful, it will create a body of advanced students who will enter the field of research, help to further the professionalization of the discipline and thus strengthen its new roots. If on the other hand it fails, any future research developments are endangered. Thus at developing institutions the emphasis must at early stages be reversed: teaching has to take precedence over research.

(D) Although teaching must be given first priority, experience shows that data gathering and elementary research can with the participation of the students gradually commence at an early stage in the development of the discipline. The possibility of the students' contribution to research projects should be carefully investigated. In a virgin field the elementary nature of the research, e.g. gathering of basic data on political institutions and behaviour patterns, makes it particularly suitable for coordinated student participation. For the small number of trained

staff in most if not all developing universities, integration of teaching and research can be an essential prerequisite for successful early development.

(E) A comprehensive evolution of political science in a new cultural territory can be furthered by the formulation of a research programme that is divided into successive stages and includes research efforts concerning all major areas of the political system. By proceeding according to such a programme, the new institution could in about a decade provide its students and scholars in other countries with a comprehensive basis from which more advanced research could continuously develop. The programmatic approach necessitates at each particular stage the coordination and systematic direction of all possible research efforts: staff work, theses for degrees, student participation in research projects, and so on.

(F) The development of political science in Iceland shows the cumulative advantages derived from close cooperation between different social science disciplines. Their problems are basically the same and their analytical and empirical interests, at least in the early stages of development, are highly interrelated. It is thus very important to adopt an administrative framework which encourages such cooperation. The departmental barriers that tend to keep scholars apart at advanced institutions can in developing departments be fatal for the advancement potential of both teaching and research.

In addition to the six distinct lessons that the Icelandic experience serves to indicate, a few other topics of concern should be noted. The problem of translating the ever-increasing multitude of concepts and notions into the native languages of the new institutions has already been raised. The questions it creates about the possibilities of a truly international political science need to be examined systematically in the near future. Coordination and standardization of concept formation within the discipline is of utmost importance for development within new cultural territories. But the language barrier also affects the publication policy which the scholars in the developing areas must adopt. They face a dilemma: by publishing in their own languages, and thus furthering a native political science discourse, they prevent colleagues in other countries from access to the new material; by restricting themselves to one of the international lingua of the discipline, they neglect their own garden.

When the development of political science in Iceland reached the third of the previously mentioned five stages of development, i.e. that of publication, an attempt was made to solve this dilemma by starting a series called *Islensk thjóðfélagsfræði* or Icelandic Social Science Publications (ISSP). Each volume will, in addition to the Icelandic main text, include an extensive summary and a key to all tables in English. Although three volumes have already been published, much greater emphasis must be placed on this activity in the future. Publication of existing research results will therefore constitute a major concern in the Department during the next few years. Stage Three in the development of Icelandic political science will achieve greater importance. The form of the ISSP series admittedly provides only a partial solution to the dilemma created by the two distinct audiences: the international body of scholars and the enlightened Icelandic public.

The two remaining developmental stages – professionalization and interna-

tional integration – have also begun to emerge in the last two years. Icelandic social scientists have established their own society and joined the two separate Nordic associations of political scientists and sociologists. The integrated nature of the Icelandic development and the comparatively small body of scholars have led to such twofold membership; however, a certain specialized division with respect to the two Nordic associations has already appeared within the Icelandic society of social scientists. Although size limitations and lack of financial resources will undoubtedly restrict the role of Icelandic scholars in the international community, it is clear that in addition to the publication stage the stages of professionalization and international integration will during the coming years increasingly mark the development of Icelandic political science. The results of these three stages will all indicate how far the discipline succeeds in establishing roots outside the University and to what an extent it will enjoy the support of a growing profession and a favourable network of national and international contacts.

Although the development of political science in Iceland provides lessons drawn from only a single case, they indicate a general problem area that probably exists in a multitude of nations where the discipline has just been established. Similar problems will undoubtedly emerge if and when political science starts to be developed in those dozens of countries where it is yet not practiced. The analytical strength of political science will increasingly depend on the ability to gain more extensive knowledge of the vast number of political systems that have emerged in recent decades. Scholars in the established Western Powers within the discipline will for both internal and external reasons probably have growing difficulties in obtaining the necessary material on those countries and regions which are still almost or completely unresearched. Thus the continuous extension of data available to political scientists will to an ever-growing degree most likely have to be the responsibility of the very small number of political scientists who work in the developing institutions within the discipline, and who face the same problems which have marked the Icelandic experience. It is thus of utmost importance that the development of political science within new cultural territories become an increasing concern of leading institutions and multi-national associations within the discipline. Without extensive and coordinated efforts in this area it is doubtful if political science will reach the status of a universal field of knowledge in this century.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS, THESES AND RESEARCH PAPERS

As the preceding account makes clear, the development of political science in Iceland has barely reached a stage characterized by continuous publications. The research at the Department of Social Science is still mainly available in the form of theses and research papers. Since this situation inevitably sets Iceland apart from the other Scandinavian countries, it has been decided to list the publications, theses and research papers in the previously-discussed areas here; the bibliography for the other Scandinavian countries which appears separately in this volume is primarily restricted to published material. It is hoped that the following list will thus serve as a further indication of the research which has been conducted in the last few years. Access to the unpublished theses and research papers can be gained by contacting the Department. Unfortunately, nearly all of them are at present only available in Icelandic.

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