



## **Disciplinary Barriers between the Social Sciences and Humanities**

# **Change in Disciplinization: Two Case Studies**

**A Comparative Report of  
Eight European Countries**

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## Change in Disciplinization: Two Case Studies

This report focuses on how disciplinization in academe occurs in eight European countries: Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK. All these countries except Norway are members of the EU, and all are signatories to the Bologna Agreement. They are partners in a specific targeted research project (STREP)<sup>1</sup> on ‘Changing Knowledge and Disciplinary Boundaries Through Integrative Research Methods in the Social Sciences and Humanities’, funded under the European Commission’s Framework 6, Priority 7: ‘Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge Based Society’. A key objective of this project is to understand the barriers to interdisciplinarity in the social sciences and humanities. This report therefore and specifically centres on the question of how disciplinization processes in universities impact on the possibilities of working in an interdisciplinary manner.

The idea behind the topic of this report is that change in disciplinization regarding an interdisciplinary field can best be understood when illustrated by case material. Formal procedures and discourses on disciplinization tell us one side of the story while praxis - how disciplinization is actually done - might tell us another. Taking specific cases as a starting point also makes it possible to illuminate how the different structures, actions etc – all those factors that are recognized as important elements in the process of disciplinization – not only melt together but also contribute to their relative strength, and, most importantly, how these components or elements might change over time. In the *National Reports on Disciplinary Barriers between the Social Sciences and the Humanities*<sup>2</sup> the cases chosen to illustrate change in disciplinization were interpreted and understood in their respective national contexts. Here the very same cases and material will be used for a comparison across national borders so as to see what can be learned from the differences and similarities between the cases. Are there certain ways to go about – particular types of actions – that seem more fruitful, in the long term, when aiming for disciplinization?

### The case of Women’s Studies

In Western Europe Women’s Studies was initiated as the academic response to the women’s movements and the equality ideology of the 1970s. The lack of female professors and of gender perspectives in teaching, curricula and research called for support and collaboration across disciplinary boundaries. It was argued that “gender” did not “belong” to any discipline in particular and that disciplinary barriers as such might hinder the development of understandings of gender. A need for new approaches and methods, for an interdisciplinary approach, was articulated. However, there were - and still are - quite different views both within the countries as well as between them as to if and how Women’s Studies should be institutionalized. Should the aim be integration (criticized as assimilation and mainstreaming) or separation (criticized for ghettoization) within academia, or should it be feminist knowledge organizing outside academia for the average woman? Today, these views may have changed as a result of the experiences with the strategy chosen, as well as a result of new knowledge paradigms and/or a different structural situation. Below we shall discuss all these issues, making use of the graphic model presented on page 5 – inspired by Le Feuvre and Andriocci (2005) but here developed further to fit our case material. We shall use the terms Women’s Studies, Women’s Research/ Feminist

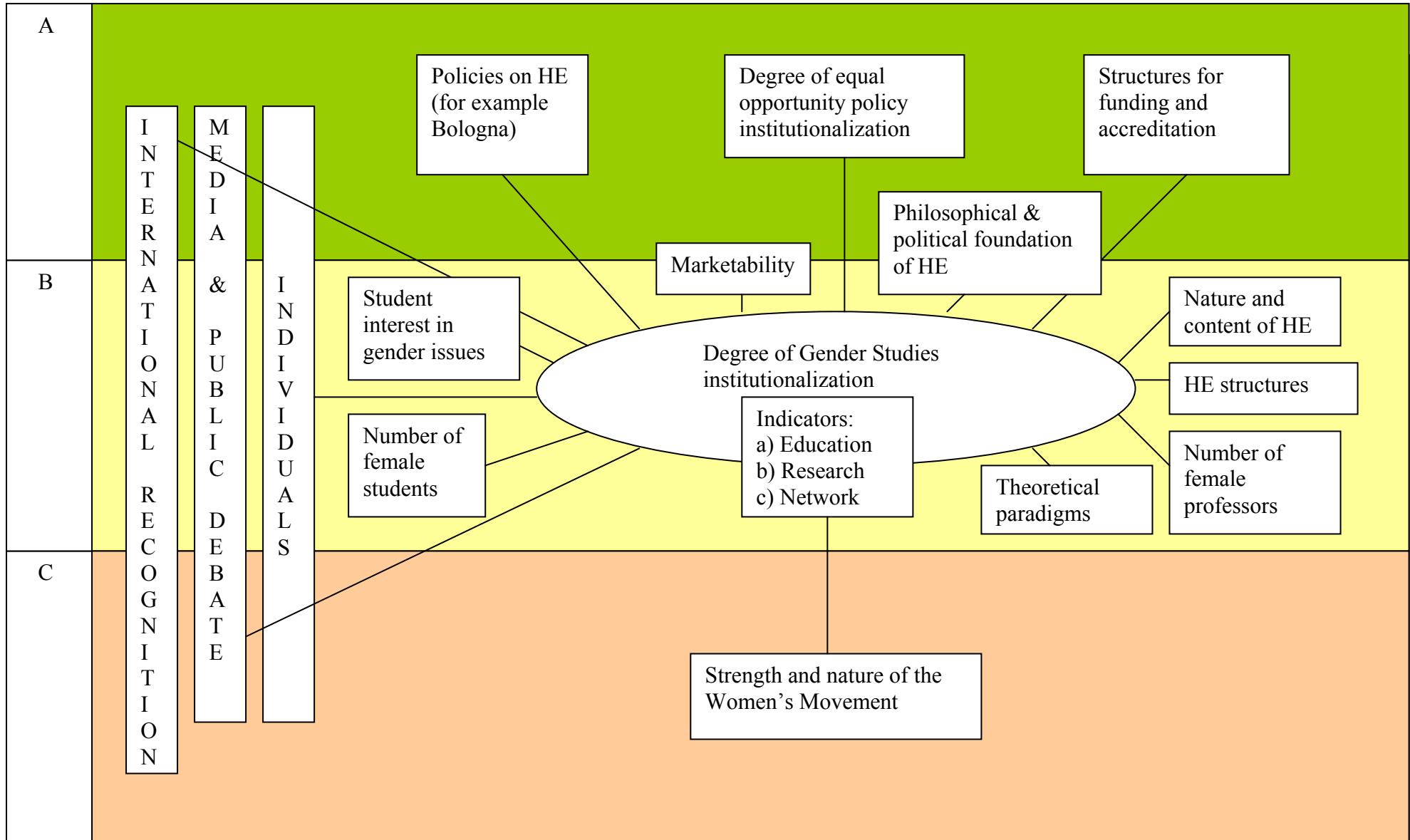
<sup>1</sup> See [www.hull.ac.uk/researchintegration](http://www.hull.ac.uk/researchintegration) for further details.

<sup>2</sup> For full reference see bibliography, see also link at [www.hull.ac.uk/researchintegration](http://www.hull.ac.uk/researchintegration)

Research and Gender Studies and Gender Research interchangeably, trying to transmit the national flavour as well as any change over time within a given national context. Generalizing, the term Women's Studies and Gender Studies will be used to express where we all started from and where we all seem to head.

The aim of the model is to illuminate the components that might favour or disfavour a disciplinization of Women's Studies. The model focuses on components highlighted in our case material, which of course does not exclude the existence and influence of other relevant factors in the process of disciplinization. It is divided into three main levels where B represents the academic context. At this level, components such as university ideologies and structures, nature of teaching and research and so forth are located. Level A is where political strategies and policies are decided, which (are intended to) affect the academic context and the disciplinization process (top-down). The Level C is the grassroots level, where movements such as the women's movement are located. This level also influences the disciplinization process (bottom-up). Both A and C represent outside contexts (that is, outside academia).

When illustrating and discussing change of disciplinization of Women's Studies we may refer to either the field as such in a particular country or a particular Centre for Women's Studies in a given country. Focusing on different levels, both types of cases have their merits and will accordingly be represented here. In both types of cases though the focus will be on institutionalization since this has been the implicit focus in the material used, that is when writing about these cases in the national reports mentioned above. The reason for this focus on institutionalization in the reports might be that they are written in the light of experiences – and discourses – where institutionalization seems to be the only way to proceed. Another reason though might be that disciplinization, understood as the actual doing of teaching and research – that is exploring and developing teaching and research for the sake of feminist knowledge – might be taken for granted or considered old-fashioned/naive and therefore not focused. We will come back to these issues, since they are related; institutionalization affects ways of doing the discipline as well as the other way around. Here we just want the reader to bear in mind that the focus, on institutionalization, is not the only possible one when discussing disciplinization.



## **Women's Studies as a field**

When comparing Women's Studies across different countries we have focused on their respective comparative characteristics regarding disciplinization, that is, we have focused on what strikes us when using a comparative perspective. Accordingly, the presentation below is a selected one with the aim to contribute to a more general discussion of disciplinization processes.

### **The UK**

In the UK the disciplinization of Women's Studies had a typical bottom-up approach in its early days. Individuals (nearly all female) fought to promote the subject into academia. Women's ownership of Women's Studies and the evaluation of its courses as "creative" have been recognized as important factors for its disciplinization. The Women's Movement had promoted new knowledge about gender issues, and in the 1970s gender issues were adopted by traditional disciplines such as English, History and the Social Sciences. Individual female academic staff with an interest in women's issues introduced short, mainly optional, courses.

In the 1980s and 1990s this bottom-up approach was met by an education reform that exchanged short courses for modules. This was done to adjust to the HE system in other countries. However, as a side effect it also paved the way for the emergence of full Women's Studies degree courses. Modules from different disciplines with Women's Studies content were put together to make up new degree courses. On the other hand this modular structure might have undermined the establishment of Women's Studies departments. In the 1980s Women's Studies was a popular subject, especially amongst mature students. At that time there was a policy for widening access to universities. Women's Studies, attracting a group of students that normally would not attend university, fit well with this policy. This in turn led to the establishment of new Women's Studies courses. In 1988, a Women's Studies Network Association (WSN) was established – an important forum for exchanging information and experiences on how to institutionalize the subject.

The first half of the 1990s was the heyday of Women's Studies in the UK, and it faced a rapid change from offering of modules within other courses only to independent Women's Studies courses. The number of Women's Studies degrees rose dramatically. The first Women's Studies degrees were all at postgraduate level. Since these Masters degrees succeeded in attracting students, new undergraduate degrees were also established. However, in the last part of the 1990s the numbers of Masters and undergraduates declined. This was mainly due to the fact that Women's Studies failed to recruit students. The universities started to charge student fees, which might have prevented mature students from attending the courses to a certain extent. Another reason for the decline might be that feminism now was seen as a thing of the past. The heavy focus on marketability accordingly meant fewer courses. The strategy then chosen to attract more students was to establish more specialized Masters.

From the 1980s and onwards feminist research flourished, but Women's Studies remained unrecognized as an independent discipline by the Higher Education (HE) funding bodies. During the 1990s some efforts were made both by individual staff and the WSN to achieve recognition, but this failed. Feminist researchers participating in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) had to apply under traditional disciplines where, at the most, a sub panel for Women's Studies issues was constituted. This way of structuring the RAE ignored the multi- and interdisciplinary

status of Women's Studies and left the subject with very little decision-making power. Accordingly few universities submitted returns to these sub-panels.

In 2005 Women's Studies is still not recognized as an independent discipline. It is not recognized as a discipline within the funding bodies and the student numbers are declining. Some courses have closed down. However, more students than ever are taking modules with Women's Studies content within traditional disciplines. And feminist research is flourishing and encouraged if performed within traditional disciplines. The government also has the core concerns of Women's Studies high on its agenda, which might lead to further funding in the future. A cloudy picture but definitively not a dark one!

Summing up: In a comparative perspective marketability and the recruitment of mature generations of women seem to be the specific characteristic components that have favoured the development of short courses/modules in Women's Studies subjects within the Humanities and Social Sciences. At research level such components have less influence and even though specialization into Women's Studies issues is possible, it is still not recognized as a discipline at the level of funding. The funding bodies are the gatekeepers of disciplinization, unfortunately not only in the UK, as will be shown below, but also in the other old and large European countries. (Griffin et al 2005: 29-39)

## **France**

The picture of Women's Studies in France is quite different. It also started out in the early 1970s, based on the Women's Movement. However, the radical nature of this movement made it hard to fit into the structures of the centralized HE institutions in France. There was scepticism both ways. Feminist academics were in a way betrayed by both parties – seen as militant and unscientific by the university systems and accused by the Women's Movement of letting them down and not being true to the values of the movement. Just like elsewhere Women's Studies started out as informal feminist groups at the universities fighting to introduce the topic into their own disciplines. However, unlike for example the UK, there has been a lack of institutional support throughout.

The institutionalization of Gender Studies did not take the form of a process towards an independent discipline, but was acted out inside traditional disciplines. This integration strategy was the only possible choice due to the strictly disciplinary structure of the French HE system.

In the 1990s there were only five senior lectureships in Gender Studies in the whole country, all of them located in traditional disciplines. Today only two of these survive. Up until 2000 there were no full professorships in Gender Studies. This of course raised problems regarding the supervision of PhD students interested in the subject. Some of the senior lecturers, despite strong international recognition, are not recognized by the small minority of influential academics who decide who is to be promoted or selected. Feminist researchers are seen as “militant” or “unscientific” and accordingly not promoted.

As a whole the development of the Gender Studies courses has been slow in France –due to the lack of administrative support for teaching and research - and only a few of the universities have managed to build up Women's Studies research centres. Since 1995 no new doctoral foundation courses on gender issues have been recognized.

As a result of the combination of these factors, French Gender Studies has ended up in a vicious circle: because of the lack of institutional support for research

there are very few lecturers and professors able to specialize in Gender Studies. Accordingly the capacity for lobbying for developing and establishing new courses and degrees is weakened. And since few people have experience in Gender Studies, very few introduce the topic into their curricula and courses. As a result few students are introduced to gender issues which means that few students specialize in Gender Studies and even fewer go onto PhDs in the subject. These factors, combined with the fact of the strong division between the universities and the research bodies where gender researchers work, lead to a minimal transfer of knowledge on these issues to the future generations.

Summing up: The striking feature in a comparative perspective is the international recognition of French feminist research. Its interdisciplinary appeal and theoretical sophistication have intrigued and inspired gender researchers and students worldwide, and led to many courses in other countries on French feminisms. In these days of internationalization and competition, it is therefore hard to understand the French lack of national recognition and support. Most other countries would have embraced this recognition and made use of it. The centralized and hierarchical male-dominated structures of academe seem to be the major obstacle for the national recognition of gender research, blocking the way at all levels. The fact that academia, traditionally, is supposedly independent in relation to politics and societal concerns to a degree quite different from, for example, the Nordic countries, also diminishes the chances for political pressures for change. Equality politics, in other words, is not a force to count on for changes within academe. The question then is if the Bologna agreement can open up a more flexible way and thereby present a new chance for gender research to thrive within France. (Le Feuvre and Metso, 2005: 36-41)

## **Spain**

In Spain Women's Studies was also initially inspired by the women's movement and was brought into academia through individual lecturers who had been involved in the movement. These women initiated the first seminar in Women's Studies in 1979 and soon other seminars were also established. This whole process was facilitated by the National Institute for Women's Issues but also by the Reform Law for the Universities, which modernized university structures and proposed a closer connection between the university and its social surroundings. The first and second "Plans for Equal Opportunities for Women" (PIOM) provided political backing for the need for Women's Studies and funding for research on these topics. The regional equal opportunities bodies also supported the establishment of Women's Studies in some universities. Despite all of this, the teaching of Women's Studies remained mainly optional and quite marginal in the university system. Research on gender issues, on the other hand, was more properly established.

In 1986 Spain joined the EU. This was a breakthrough for Women's Studies in the country because it gave researchers and lecturers opportunities to attend European networks and participate in EU projects. In 2000 there were Women's Studies research groups in most universities, and research funding was maintained. Moreover, there are now a number of Women's Studies experts that have received tenure and some even full professorships. This has, however, been accomplished through traditional disciplines. The women involved in Women's Studies teaching and research accordingly have to succeed in a traditional discipline in addition to their work in Women and Gender Studies. Women's Studies is still not recognized as a main subject or as an undergraduate degree, which are vital factors for the institutionalization of the subject. And as a subject it is still situated in the margins of

the academic curricula, signalling that feminists have not succeeded in making their research and methods recognized by the traditional disciplines. Having few women (or gender experts) in decision-making bodies does not improve the situation, quite the opposite.

In Spain there is a close relationship between the state and the universities, levels A and B in our model, which is also the case in the Nordic examples. In Spain, however, this close relationship does not necessarily lead to a facilitation of the disciplinization process, but might in fact make it harder. Women's issues are seen as a political topic and as such more vulnerable to political changes. During the eight years of the conservative government, state support for Women's Studies decreased. In 2004 there was political change, bringing forth a hope for a better climate for Women's Studies in the future.

Summing up: Compared to the UK and France, Women's Studies in Spain is not as institutionalized as it is in the UK but far more so than is the case in France. A characteristic component which might work both ways – favouring or disfavouring the development of Women's Studies - is equality politics which due to its bridging of academia and society can be a force contributing to change. As illustrated in the Spanish case, Women's Studies however becomes vulnerable to political regimes and dependent on political goodwill. (Carrera Suárez et al 2005: 29-33)

## **Germany**

In Germany the disciplinization/institutionalization of Women's Studies is a new and quite controversial issue. Until the mid 1990s the dominant idea was that gender issues ought to be integrated into the traditional disciplines instead of established as separate. There were several reasons for this. There was the fear of ghettoization but also a fear of the de-politization of Gender Studies if institutionalized. Another more practical reason was that institutionalization required continual course offerings, something that was lacking. However, a growing number of professorships in gender studies and the founding of research centres led to the first initiatives of institutionalization. In 1997 the first interdisciplinary courses were introduced (quite late compared to the other countries here presented).

Today Gender Studies is offered as courses at Masters and PhD levels as well as in the form of other post-graduate programs. In the last couple of years, at national gatherings of Gender Studies Centres, the issue of integration/disciplinization has been raised in relation to the Bologna reforms concerning BA and MA degrees. This makes further integration of Gender Studies into the traditional disciplines possible, through modules on gender issues in BA and MA degrees. It also makes the development of independent Gender Studies BA and MA degrees possible. Which way Gender Studies in Germany will go, choosing one way or the other or both, is still an open question which also might be quite differently answered at different universities. Choosing both might be a strategy when aiming jointly at the integration and institutionalization/disciplinization of Gender Studies. The Norwegian BA program 'Gender, Feminism and Equality' (described below) might be an illustration of this.

Summing up: Just as in France, Gender Studies in Germany is viewed as so radical that it cannot, or should not, be institutionalized. At the same time though, there is in Germany a specific effort to integrate gender perspectives into the traditional disciplines. That courses and centres have not been developed and established until the late 1990s might imply that (feminist) theory rather than the (feminist) movement has been the foundation for both the legitimation of and

recruitment to the subject. The Bologna process here represents new possibilities in a period when German Gender Studies seems more active and inclined towards institutionalization if not disciplinization.

France, Spain and Germany are all old countries with big populations having their own languages, making them seem and behave in many ways as self-sufficient knowledge producers. The need to fit in and be a part of what counts internationally has not been a necessary condition for the survival of their national education and research within the Social Sciences and Humanities - at least not yet. The European collaboration - of which the Bologna agreement is an offspring - is a new challenge to this situation politically initiated from above. For countries like Norway, Sweden, Finland and Hungary (all in our case material) which are economically and/or politically, small and/or vulnerable, the situation is quite different. Here international comparison and recognition are now viewed as "the only way out". (Krebs et al 2005: 24-32)

### **The Nordic Countries**

The Nordic countries are often treated as a unit. Their geographical location and historical, economical and political ties have favoured collaboration in various fields. And although there are many major differences, for example regarding the bases for their respective economy, they share a welfare orientation in which the equality ideology is a dominant characteristic. Since research collaboration and comparison at the Nordic level is institutionalized (for example through the Nordic Council) regarding gender research and teaching, it might be interesting to see if the disciplinization of Women's Studies is done in a similar way in the different Nordic countries.

In the 1960s 'sex roles' research was already a recognized field of research within all the Nordic countries, headed by distinguished researchers, both males and females. In Sweden and Norway these perspectives were however challenged by the 'new' women's movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. But a platform was there as well as some established gender researchers, which helped to facilitate the institutionalization process. In both countries women's research and teaching was organized hand in hand with the aim to increase the number of women in research. But the institutionalization process of Gender Studies took different paths in Sweden and Norway.

### **Sweden**

In Sweden, in response to feminist pressure, the government funded some undergraduate courses in Women's Studies in 1975, however, insisting on calling the subject 'equal opportunities research'. The first Centre for Women's Research and Women Researchers (the name illustrating the double aim) was established in Lund in 1978 but soon after centres were established at most universities in the country. There, as elsewhere, it started out as a grassroots movement, in the form of a voluntary organization that only gradually got institutionalized as a permanent university unit with allocated space and economic support. A network and collaboration between the centres was organized early facilitating the institutionalization process. The state-funded centres became a significant feature of Swedish Gender Studies, and one of the major forces in the institutionalization of the subject. As an interdisciplinary meeting arena, the centres took the initiative to develop courses in Women's Studies that were offered both there and within disciplines. The modular structure of Swedish higher education, already adopted in

the 1970s, represented an invitation to develop short courses in the subject. As collaborate enterprises they did not demand many resources and were therefore welcomed by all parties. The centres in Sweden accordingly focused on teaching tasks while they were less organized and developed as research units or milieus.

Although Sweden could be classed as the foremost country for equality at the end of the 1980s it still had less than 10 percent female full professors. This resulted in the so-called Tham Initiative, where 40 new full professorships were financed by the state and earmarked for women. Out of these, nine were earmarked for discipline-oriented Gender Studies. This initiative gave Gender Studies a further institutional anchorage. And, importantly, it expanded the possibilities for PhD training and supervision in the subject.

At the research funding level, the initiatives to grant the subject a proper place, have been fewer and less successful. This has been in sharp contrast to Norway, where the National Research Council has been the most important alliance partner of Women's Studies. (Holm and Liinason 2005: 24-6, 31)

### **Norway**

In Norway feminist research was developed within disciplines such as Literature, Criminology, Psychology, Law and so forth in the early 1970s. From these bases initiatives were taken in relation to the National Research Council, to facilitate the further development of Women's Studies, interdisciplinary collaboration and research activities. In 1977 the Secretariat for Women's Research was established and located at the National Research Council. This secretariat was unique in the Scandinavian context, maybe in Europe as a whole. The purpose was to "initiate and promote research on women's life conditions and position in society and to strengthen the collaboration between social scientists and other researchers in the field" (Widerberg et al 2005: 36). It had three major tasks: a) to increase recruitment of women to research, b) to initiate and promote women's research, and finally, c) to disseminate women's research. This implied internal "oppositional" and "underground" work within the Council as well as external work in relation to research environments, universities, and society in general. The interdisciplinary Secretariat was accordingly given the political tasks of both equality and research. The first was fulfilled by investigating and pushing for quotas regarding grants, positions etc. and gathering women in science to inform and support them – for example in relation to research funding. Several and quite substantial research programmes on gender issues single out Norway in the Scandinavian context. The second, the task to promote and coordinate women's research, was fulfilled through supporting or establishing networks and through organizing interdisciplinary and national research conferences on different topics relevant to women's research. Once the different centres were established, the Secretariat also organized annual meetings to discuss the division of labour between these two sets of institutions. The Secretariat was the driving force behind various book series, research-political investigations and journals, which all fulfilled the task to disseminate women's research. Some of the investigations undertaken on the initiative of the Secretariat gave rise to intense debates both inside and outside of academe.

It is difficult to give credit to all the activities emanating from the Secretariat in the 1970s and 1980s when "ordinary" university centres were established elsewhere in Scandinavia. Its national conferences were well known all over Scandinavia, and everybody tried to "get in". In the other Scandinavian countries one envied the Norwegians their Secretariat and all the women's research that was

happening as a consequence. They did not seem to need Women's Studies centres like the rest of Scandinavia. The tremendously well-functioning Secretariat and the political goodwill that surrounded it most likely delayed the establishment of centres in Norway. The Secretariat also made it possible for the centres to concentrate on women's research and leave the task of increasing the number of women in (science) research with the Secretariat, a task that most other centres in Scandinavia – at least in the beginning – had on their agenda. (Widerberg et al 2005: 35-8)

### **Finland**

In Finland, as in Sweden and Norway, the point of departure was the 'sex role' research and discussion in the 1960s. However, the development of Women's Studies had a later start here because the feminist movement arrived relatively late in Finland (at the end of the 1970s) and never gained as strong a foothold as in the other Nordic countries. As a consequence, teaching and research in Women's Studies was also established later. It spread gradually to feminist research; among others through the Nordic Summer School. During the 1980s it became a field of teaching and research, the first seminar was established, and cooperation and networking between Women's Studies researchers started to expand. The funding authorities and equal opportunity policy-making bodies encouraged this development, and funding was given for a coordinator (maybe inspired by the organization of the Norwegian Secretariat). The support of the Research Council and the Council for Equality was very important for promoting the subject, since it was not yet institutionalized in the universities. In the 1990s the activity grew and better resources were offered. During this period Women's Studies became an independent subject at several universities, while integrated in traditional disciplines in others. Eight five-year full professorships in Women's Studies funded by the Ministry of Education (maybe inspired by the Swedish Tham professors) and one by the Research Council, were also established with the intention that the universities should take over the economic responsibility for these afterwards. Today Women's Studies is offered at basic, intermediate, advanced and PhD levels. (Keskinen and Silius 2005: 22-8)

### **Nordic Gender Studies**

As described in the Swedish National Report, collaboration within Gender Studies has been significant for the Nordic countries since the beginning of the 1970s:

This collaboration brought to life a Nordic study circle in the 1970s, a Nordic network in the 1980s and *The Nordic Journal of Women's Studies* (NORA) in the 1990s, to mention but three of an array of Nordic collaborations in gender studies. In 2004, a Nordic Research School of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies was established, where PhD students from the Nordic countries take part in separate PhD courses. The Nordic Research School is a collaboration of 37 Women's and Gender Studies departments, centres and units in nine countries in the Nordic regions of Europe (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and North West Russia). The Nordic initiatives have been sustained by the possibility of applying for grants from a number of trans-Nordic research funding agencies. The Nordic Academy for Advanced Study (NorFa) is one such agency. Moreover, Research Councils in the Nordic countries have included collaborative bodies, which have funded trans-Nordic

research projects. Finally, the Nordic Council of Ministers has played an important role as a funding agency (Holm and Liinason 2005: 25).

Summing up: Characteristic for the Nordic countries is political support and support from the research funding bodies. Although universities have been just as slow as in most other western European countries in granting women researchers and feminist researchers full professorships, initiative and money have come from the outside, from the public sector. The smaller the country, the closer the connections between researchers and politicians. In Norway quite a few feminist students and researchers of the 1970s and 1980s, today hold strategic positions both within the Ministry of Education, the National Research Council and the Government. In Sweden, a country twice the size of Norway, these connections are not as close, direct or outspoken. But here equality politics present a constant force attacking the walls of academia.

Focusing on Women's Studies as teaching activity or as a research activity seems to be more the result of the HE structures of the respective country than a result of strategic decisions. If one is not allowed to offer undergraduate courses or even courses at Masters level, then research training and organizing is the only option (Norway). Finally, it is quite obvious that Women's Studies in the respective countries benefits from the Nordic comparisons, competitions and collaborations. What one country achieves, the other ones can also demand.

### **Hungary**

In Hungary Women's and Gender Studies is not yet a fully recognized discipline. It is not codified in the ministerial register of existing disciplines, and there is no relevant section in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences nor a disciplinary committee in the funding bodies for Women's and Gender Studies. Moreover, there are no departments of Gender Studies at any state-funded university in Hungary. Women's and Gender Studies today is organized either as a centre or as a specialization within an existing 5-year university MA program. As the latter, courses are offered to students, but they are not awarded a recognized degree in the subject. Research centres may or may not conduct teaching, but they are eligible to apply for funds for research projects. Courses dealing with gender issues are taught in various disciplines. There are also conferences and workshops on the subject, the latest was held in 2004.

Institutionalizing Women's/Gender Studies in Hungary today confronts specific problems related to the socialist past when women's issues were party issues. The theoretical orientations within gender research today might however make this process easier. Not relying on a women's movement or equality politics might make it easier to recruit new generations of students and researcher to the subject as well as legitimizing its existence in relation the university structure and research funding bodies. (Jakab et al 2005: 34-7)

### **Centres for Women's Studies and Gender Research – Cases from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Spain, Germany and Hungary**

Taking centres as a starting-point when discussing disciplinization and institutionalization, the first question is of course whether they have been a platform to further this process, or not. And if they have, has that contributed to more or fewer gender perspectives being considered within the traditional disciplines? What is the relationship between developing Women's Studies at a centre and developing Women's Studies within the disciplines? Do they strengthen or undermine each other?

**Nordic Centres: The Christina Institute for Women's Studies (Helsinki), The Department of Women's Studies (Gothenburg) and The Centre for Women's and Gender Research (Oslo)**

Reading the story of the establishment of a Centre for Women's Studies and Gender Research, like for example the case of the Christina Institute at Helsinki University is illuminating (Keskinen and Silius 2005: 23-8). Three points are striking. First, the structural hindrances to interdisciplinary teaching and research; the organization of disciplines into faculties makes interdisciplinarity hard to organize and recognize. A budget system modelled hereafter further increases the difficulties for interdisciplinary institutionalization. As a result, and this is the second point, enormous efforts and support including from outside academy, are needed even to achieve the slightest success. Thirdly, navigating in this rough sea is by necessity tactical rather than strategic. One looks for openings and hopes for a better sea and better weather tomorrow. Accordingly, the situation one finds oneself in, or ends up in, is not of one's own choice but rather a result of the possibilities at hand.

This pattern we found in all the cases of Centres for Women's Studies and Gender Research, not only the Nordic ones. But we also found certain differences between and within these components. The Nordic Centres here discussed have a similar institutionalization story, although the length of the process varied. They all started out as networks, offering courses and/or seminars, which they institutionalized over time so as to facilitate their continuity and further development. In Finland this institutionalization process started later and was therefore probably both smoother and faster than was the case for the two other Nordic Centres. The timing, with established women and feminists both within and outside academia, was right. And besides, the neighbouring countries already had their centres...

The location of the centre in the university structure has been problematic for them all. In Gothenburg (Sweden) and Oslo (Norway) the centres were located directly under the vice-chancellor, which has some merits regarding independence in relation to disciplinary claims but on the other hand is a drawback financially since the flow of money is linked to the structure of faculties and disciplines. In Gothenburg the centre was relocated twice. First it was part of an interdisciplinary faculty and later of the Humanities. In Norway it is still directly under the vice-chancellor but since the reform of HE it is financially and administratively (regarding teaching and examination) located in the Faculty for the Humanities. The Christina Institute in Helsinki is also located in the Faculty for the Humanities. None of the centres consider this to be a good solution, since it disfavours the interdisciplinary development of teaching and research.

The development of courses and research at the centres has taken different forms for structural reasons. In Gothenburg credit-giving courses were offered in the 1970s, due to the openings that the modular structure of the Swedish HE represented. In the 1980s this activity expanded to all levels. At the end of the 1990s the centre, now renamed the Department of Gender Studies, offered a complete undergraduate programme. And in 2004 it was granted the right to provide PhD training. With three lectureships the prime activity of the Department is teaching; alongside these positions there are also two professors and five researchers.

In Oslo, the Centre was not allowed to offer credit-bearing courses at undergraduate and Masters levels until 1999. The Centre accordingly organized its activities around research, establishing a research milieu for both researchers and visitors. Seminars and courses – which the participants had to seek approval from their own disciplines to get credits for attending – were offered to graduates and

postgraduates and with these as platforms, networks and research applications and programs were established. When this research-stimulating activity was evaluated by an external evaluation committee it was considered highly fruitful; it made possible to argue for both more resources and a more permanent institutionalization of the Centre. In 1997 it was made permanent and in 1999, finally, it was allowed to offer credit-bearing courses. In 2003 when the Bologna inspired reform of the HE in Norway was introduced, the Centre was the largest Nordic interdisciplinary research centre with one full professor – as Head of Research – three professor II positions – one in philosophy, one in political science and one in medicine – one lecturer II position in technology, three research positions and five administrative positions. The Centre also houses six PhD students, three post-doc scholars, six Masters students and four “freelancers” or “key kids”, i.e. researchers who can use the facilities but who do not have a desk or an office of their own. All in all, there were about 25 researchers (of which 2 are men) representing both Humanities and the Social Sciences in a research context with disciplinary diversity as its foundation, strength and character. The list of disciplines represented – Art History, Theology, Archaeology, Philosophy, Literature, Media and Communication, History of Ideas, Music, Pedagogy, Social Anthropology, Sports Science, Technology, Political Science and Sociology – illustrates this point.

The reform of HE presented a possibility to develop education in the subject, making use of the resources of the Centre and its milieu. Below we will present its BA in Gender Studies as an example of how this was done in praxis but also to illustrate that institutionalization and disciplinization can go hand in hand with integration and in fact increase activities related to the subject

In some ways the Christina Institute presents itself as somewhere between the Centre at the University of Oslo and the Department at the University of Gothenburg. Just like in Gothenburg it started out as a network offering courses and a Women’s Studies program, although more than a decade after its conception in Gothenburg. The Christina Institute was established as a department of the Faculty of Arts 1991 and a professorship was made permanent in 2001. The fact that it has taken on national tasks regarding both teaching and research - it is for example responsible for the coordination of the National Research School for Gender Studies, coordinates a national network for virtual Women’s Studies and is a coordinator for national projects in developing Women’s Studies - has facilitated the institutionalization process. The Institute accordingly stresses both teaching and research activities and hosts a professor, a lecturer, a coordinator and eight researchers and PhD students. Despite debates about disciplinization, on how far one should go in trying to establish Women’s Studies as a main subject, this has in fact been achieved. From 2003 students could do both MAs and PhDs at the Institute. The Institute was actually one of the first to propose a Masters program along the Bologna model and it was regarded as a pilot project by the Faculty. The Bologna process and the new degree structure – and its accompanying new budget model - were very important for the disciplinization of Women’s Studies at the Helsinki University. It meant new openings, facilitated by a new and more flexible structure. And the Institute took this invitation right away, just like the Centre in Oslo.

Summing up: The three Centres have all increased their teaching as well as research activities during their period of existence. They have all gained more positions and resources and they have all been highly praised and evaluated both inside and outside academia. Their institutionalization is not regarded as hampering the integration of the subject within the disciplines. In fact, it is argued that it works

the other way around, as the case of the BA at the Centre in Oslo, described below, illustrates. The debate about integration or disciplinization has run all along. In the 1980s and 1990s the positions were more outspoken and clear, while the development over the last couple of years seems more pragmatically oriented. Without much debate disciplinization and integration now seem to be done as parallel processes. This might be because the time for the big debates about the big distinctions are over, or have moved to other, more theoretical grounds. Or maybe experience seems to prove that disciplinization and integration tend to go hand in hand and further each other's development. The fact is that at least institutionalization today is no longer an issue for debate in the everyday life of the Centres. So far institutionalization has generated resources for both research and teaching in the subject from which the other disciplines have also benefited. And the restructuring of HE, as a result of the Bologna process, represents a chance to further institutionalization and disciplinization of the subject, which the Centres have been quick to grasp. (Keskinen and Silius 2005: 23-8; Holm and Liinason 2005: 26; Widerberg et al 2005: 37-8)

### **The case of a BA degree in Gender Studies – disciplinization and integration!**

In 2003 a new interdisciplinary Bachelor programme titled 'Gender, Feminism and Equality' was offered at the Centre for Women's Studies and Gender Research at the University of Oslo. For many years the Centre struggled to be allowed to offer courses that gave credits, but it met resistance both from above – the board of the university – and from below, from some of their fellow feminists at the faculties. The arguments were of course different. The board did not want to grant educational rights (and examination rights) to a non-permanent institution (the Centre was not made permanent until 1997), which on top of it all was placed administratively directly under the board (giving them extra work and responsibility), and not under the faculties like other departments and institutions. The feminists – those who expressed resistance – in the faculties feared both for their own jobs and courses but also for an increased ghettoization of feminist perspectives. Slowly, but still successfully, feminist perspectives and gender research had won some terrain in the departments of the Social Sciences and the Humanities. Feminists had received teaching and research positions, courses were taught, feminist/gender perspectives were represented in the general curricula, and students could be supervised. Integration seemed not only possible but also an important path to follow, even though a perpetual fight seemed necessary to guarantee and expand gender perspectives. Change from within, changing the doxa of the disciplines, had always been an important goal for academic feminism. And now that we had finally managed to get a foothold, was a strengthening of the Centre really the right strategy? With this as a background one may wonder how it was possible for the Centre to develop and have a full-fledged interdisciplinary Bachelor programme accepted.

A foundation was laid when the Centre took the initiative to develop a shared introductory course for two semester courses at Bachelor level: 'Gender and Society' and 'Gender and Culture'. These belonged to the Faculty of Social Sciences ('Gender and Society') and the Faculty of Arts ('Gender and Culture'). The Centre wanted to develop interdisciplinary thinking and perspectives, and also thought that they could increase the quality through the use of the research environment (famous guest researchers and so forth) and the network that the Centre represented. When the Centre was made permanent they had a strong case, and their model for the two courses was finally accepted. The Centre was accordingly to offer an introductory course – running over four weeks – and then the faculties were to offer their "own"

courses, just as before. The Centre hereby received the right to teach courses that gave credits, while examination rights and the administration thereof still belonged to a faculty – the Faculty of Arts. This new model was not applied until 2000–2001, and since the Centre had put a lot of energy, time and resources into developing the new course, the Quality Reform of 2003 – which might have wiped it all out – represented a threat. Mobilizing to keep the right to teach courses now meant thinking in terms of Bachelor or Masters programmes. And inspired by their widely liked introductory course, they decided that they would make use of the reform situation – where invitations to think innovatively, creatively and in a modern way circulated – and develop a Bachelor programme with a gender perspective. The argument for choosing to develop a Bachelor and not a Masters programme was that a Bachelor programme would draw in and inform the students at an early stage in their studies. It was further argued that the programme – if it was successful – would produce students who would demand gender perspectives at the Masters level. This would put pressure on the departments to integrate and develop gender perspectives, and it would be a foundation on which the Centre could later both develop and legitimate a Masters programme in Gender Research and Gender Perspectives.

Presenting their preliminary plans to develop a Bachelor programme the Centre was allowed to establish an interim-board (just like other Bachelor programmes) to handle it all, a formal necessity since the Centre – as earlier mentioned – is not under the administration of a department or a faculty. Thus half the victory was won, since it meant that they were given the right and the chance to offer a degree programme at Bachelor level.

Two aims were clearly expressed from the very start. The programme was to have both a political/practical and a theoretical/research agenda, it was in other words meant to be directed both towards those who wanted to work more practically with equality issues and those who wanted to develop a gender perspective more generally (including those planning to do research). With this aim in mind they developed a “two-track” model – also used by other programmes – in which the student after some introductory courses could choose the subject area Gender Equality or the area Gender Studies with Subject Specialization. That is, actually two Bachelor programmes were offered but with a shared foundation. The second aim was that the programme was not to be a dead-end in relation to the disciplines. It had to be possible for the students to proceed to Masters studies; the disciplines were not to be able to lock them out. But since most Masters degrees require a certain amount of points or specific courses in the discipline in question, these requirements had to be built into the Bachelor programme offered by the Centre. Having a focus on Gender Perspectives, the Centre could not open up their programme to all kinds of disciplinary courses without such perspectives. The Centre accordingly approached all the disciplines that their future students were likely to proceed to Masters studies in, to see what they had to offer. In addition disciplinary mandatory courses in methods and/or theory, courses with a gender perspective were to be part of the 80 points demanded (out of the 180 points which make up a Bachelor degree) for entry into Masters studies. Indirectly this made disciplinary gender perspectives and courses visible, and constituted a pressure to keep it all up and/or develop it. In the disciplines where such courses were lacking, the centre could offer their own courses or courses offered by other disciplines, but the discipline in question had to approve these in relation to the 80 points. On the basis of such negotiations contracts with 16 disciplines were outlined, making it possible for those students choosing the subject area Gender Studies with Subject Specialization, to proceed to Masters level in the

discipline they had chosen to major in within the Centre's Bachelor programme. For those choosing the track Gender Equality and lacking the prerequisite 80 points in disciplinary courses, there is so far only one Masters programme to which they formally have access and that is the one offered by the Department of Interdisciplinary Culture Studies at NTNU in Trondheim. However, it is quite possible also for students taking this track to plan their choice of courses so as to be able to enter a specific Masters programme.

Summing up, the model accordingly consisted of mandatory, introductory and interdisciplinary courses on gender and gender perspectives (first year), two paths for the second and third year; one focusing on equality and the other focusing on a particular discipline where courses offered by the discipline in question are taken. Since the students have a great deal of freedom of choice in the second and third year, students from the two tracks might very well end up taking the same courses. It should also be noted that due to the reform the disciplines themselves are now to offer more interdisciplinary courses and give credits to courses from other disciplines. Choosing Gender Studies with Subject Specialization did accordingly not mean a restriction to a discipline in any narrow sense. Quite the opposite. There were plenty of courses to choose from, including of a more interdisciplinary kind.

Such a model – impressive in its logistics and for its efforts to combine gender perspectives and disciplinary foundations, theory and praxis, the interests of the students with those of the staff – was of course impossible to turn down. It could not be accused of ghettoization, quite the opposite. It would instead contribute to the strengthening of gender perspectives within the disciplines. And it was “society-oriented”, offering a focus on practise (gender equality) as well as a research focus. The design of the model undermined any serious criticism and resistance, and no such criticism was in fact articulated. So, in 2003 ‘Gender, Feminism and Equality’ was offered as a Bachelor programme at the University of Oslo, alongside all the other new Bachelor programmes. If the model had been less disciplinary and/or less practise-oriented and the contextual situation less favourable, the outcome might have been different. The turmoil of change and the demand for and expectations of innovative and creative solutions made it possible to present such a Bachelor programme. On the other hand, the amount of new Bachelor programmes presented and the time pressure in implementing the reform probably resulted in less attention and visibility, and thereby probably also less resistance than would “normally” have been expected. But, and that should be stressed, the programme was founded on thorough work, had been through a scrutinized reading in a committee and had gained recognition from those in charge. So it was a complex situation but definitively also a historic opportunity that the Centre managed to take up. As Berit Ås, a Norwegian feminist researcher expressed it: “If you are not ahead of time, the time will never come” (in Widerberg et al 2005: 32-5).

### **The Women' Studies Group at the University of Oviedo, Spain**

Women's Studies at the University of Oviedo is considered to be one of the most productive Gender Studies contexts in the country. Early on they established seminars that were the platform for the development of a PhD program in Women's Studies, one of the first in the country, approved in 1995. Since then this program has run uninterruptedly and trained over 150 students from all over the country. Within academia the Women's Studies Group has focused on research activities and they participate in international networks and national associations. But they have also formed two official research groups: 'Alternativas' which coordinates research in

Women's Studies and 'Intersecciones' which combines Women's Studies with postcolonial studies, diasporas and multiculturalism. The Women's Studies Group has also developed activities related to the outside world. In cooperation with the Asturian Institute for Women's Issues they give workshops on film, literature and creative writing all over the regional territory. Thus young researchers are offered a chance to access employment related to Gender Studies. The students' high interest in the subject and their chances of related employment, have been recognized by the university. At the national level though the Doctoral Program has not been approved by the 'Mención de Calidad' (Quality Mention), despite its record of results in research, number of students, PhD theses completed, figures which all have been above those of other approved programmes. Its interdisciplinary character seems here to have been the main obstacle and objection. Not having power in the bodies where national decisions regarding research are taken, like for example the National Agency for the Evaluation of Quality and Accreditation granting the 'Mención de Calidad', mentioned above, further hampers the institutionalization and disciplinization of the subject. Recognition at national research level is accordingly the main obstacle to the institutionalization and disciplinization. This is also true at the local level, and at specific universities, of which Oviedo is an example. (Carrera Suárez et al, 2005: 31-3)

### **The Centre for Interdisciplinary Women's and Gender Research, at the University of Oldenburg and The Cornelia Goethe Centre for Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Frankfurt**

The Centre at Oldenburg University was not founded until the year of 2000. Since 1997 a minor interdisciplinary course in Women's and Gender Studies has been offered but now, as a result of the restructuring of HE along Bologna lines, two MA programs/degrees in Gender Studies are being planned. Presently one can take a minor course 'Magister' in Gender Studies and a degree in Cultural Gender Studies at PhD level. And here the role of the Centre has been vital although its main focus is on research. The Centre was established as a result of the increased visibility and intensification of already existing gender research, rather than the other way around. It was a smooth process due to the reform character of the university but also due to the explicitly articulated need for universities to support women's equality. Besides, the personnel working on gender issues in different disciplines were already there so it hardly represented any new costs. With the Centre as a platform a series of publications in interdisciplinary gender research were initiated and they also succeeded in establishing Women and Gender Studies as a main research focus in the 'target agreements' between the university and the Ministry of Science and Culture in Lower Saxony (Krebs et al 2005: 25-9).

Unlike the Centre at Oldenburg, the Cornelia Goethe Centre at Frankfurt University does not offer a degree in Gender Studies but they do offer courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels to students from different disciplines. It has been their outspoken policy from the very start, and still is, that they were not to 'go for' disciplinization but for integration and the strengthening of interdisciplinary research and teaching activities with the disciplines as a foundation and platform. To further these activities a Centre was founded with the express support of the ministry but lack of financial support from the disciplines delayed the whole process. This Centre was founded in 1997 and renamed in 2000. The Centre is primarily and foremost a research centre with its aim to initiate research projects in the subject. The programme

of the Centre, however, rests on four pillars: teaching, research, interdisciplinarity and international orientation (Krebs et al 2005: 29-32).

Summing up, the two German Centres have – so far – chosen different strategies regarding disciplinization. As research milieus, however, they have both favoured institutionalization. This in turn seems to have favoured further research activities and funding. In the light of the oncoming restructuring of HE which the Bologna agreement necessitates, the Centre in Oldenburg intends to develop and intensify its teaching activities and offer new MA degrees in the subject. The Centre at Frankfurt will also intensify its teaching activities but only to offer modules within disciplinary programs. Which strategy will be the most successful regarding the further development of Gender Studies and Gender Research both within the disciplines but also across them, is of course an open question. Experiences from other countries though seem to imply that a double strategy is the most successful way to proceed.

### **The Gender Studies Research Centre at ELTE University of Budapest**

This Gender Studies Research Centre is located at the Department of Social Policy and Social Work, in the Faculty of Social Sciences. In 2001 it was officially allowed to give courses and offer a specialization to the students in the department. The Centre offers one or two credit-bearing courses each semester but no qualification or certificate is given at the end of the studies. The program of the Centre is multidisciplinary; actual interdisciplinarity occurs mainly at the PhD level. Since the subject is not recognized as a discipline by research funding bodies nor the Ministry, launching a BA degree program has not been possible. The view held by the Head of Research of the Centre, the only permanent position so far, is that Gender Studies should be located at Masters level.

The Centre is young and small. The Department of Gender Studies at the Central European University in Budapest can however function as a significant and influential predecessor. Here an MA in Gender Studies and a PhD in Comparative Gender Studies are offered, and the staff is both considerable and permanent. As such the Department is both visible and influential, which in the long run also can contribute to an improvement of the situation of the Gender Studies Research Centre. (Jakab et al 2005: 35-7)

### **Other Fields, Other Stories?**

Does disciplinization and institutionalization occur along the same lines in other interdisciplinary fields as well? We found that disciplinization in fields other than Women' Studies is quite varied and accordingly hard to compare. Our reports illustrate the importance of the different components of the model (presented on page 5): Continuing Education in England and East Asian Studies in Spain were both state-initiated and pushed for from above, although the economic interests behind East Asian Studies are so clearly articulated that it could just as well be classified as market-initiated. Cultural Studies in Finland, Political Theory at the University of Frankfurt in Germany, Human Ecology at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, Cultural Anthropology at the University of Pécs in Hungary and Sociology and Human Geography at the University of Oslo in Norway, have all been initiated from inside academia albeit some primarily for economic and administrative reasons rather than disciplinary ones. Education Studies in France has also been initiated by the academic community, but, for disciplinization to take place, active state support was necessary (and forthcoming). Here we will focus on a couple of these cases to discuss

the importance of the components of the model when comparing two different fields within a country but also across national borders. What distinguishes Women's and Gender Studies from most of our other cases of disciplinization is the importance of the grassroots movements in initiating and promoting the field into academia. Only Human Ecology can be said to have ties, links and support from a similar movement through its connections to the environmental movement. Most of these other cases illustrating disciplinization seem to have evolved from inside the academic contexts, from committed individual academics and/or facilitated by the university decision-making bodies.

### **Cultural Studies (Finland)**

Cultural Studies in Finland is a quite interesting example of a process that has emerged mainly from interests from within the academic context. In the early 1980s when it emerged, the structure of the universities was strictly disciplinary. In spite of this some researchers from both the Humanities and the Social Sciences started to cooperate. Cultural Studies became the uniting theme and arena where culture was studied from many different disciplinary perspectives. In contrast to most of the other cases presented in this report throughout its 20 years of existence Cultural Studies has continued to be a quite loosely organized network, consisting of researchers interested in cultural research. It never aimed for a traditional way of disciplinization by for example establishing a degree programme and defining theories and methods in order to distinguish it from other fields. Instead it has had quite a flexible institutionalization process, and has contributed to the integration of the field into several disciplines. Keskinen and Silius (2005) define Cultural Studies as a combination of many research approaches, as a field that is loose and wide-ranging but still has developed a separate approach and discourse.

A Research Unit for Contemporary Culture - later renamed Research Centre for Contemporary Culture - was established at Jyväskylä in 1985, focusing on multidisciplinary research and the training of PhD students. The Centre decided not to offer an MA, since the field was thought to be better suited to PhD level. The Centre has encountered problems when being evaluated since the evaluators have focused on accomplished PhDs and Licencias, rather than research network activities. A large amount of the work of the Centre has accordingly not been recognized in the evaluation processes.

A Cultural Studies Network was established in 1984 supported by the Academy of Finland. It grew rapidly in the following years. However, because of its loose organization it faced problems when trying to fit into the more formal structures of the universities. There has been an ongoing discussion within the network regarding the need for more formal leadership and the idea of establishing Cultural Studies as a scientific community. One of the reasons behind this was that Cultural Studies was not recognized as a member in the Federation of the Finnish Learned Societies. Again the organizational structure and membership system of Cultural Studies was to blame. The network has now changed its membership structures and will make a new application. If this is considered enough, they will continue to be a network instead of a scientific community. However, there are still different opinions on this matter within the network (Keskinen and Silius 2005: 28-32).

Compared with the Women's Studies in Finland, Cultural Studies seems to have been more loosely organized and the aim for establishing an independent discipline seems to have been less evident. Moreover, the field of Cultural Studies met more resistance from the university structures than Women's Studies. However,

Women's Studies also faced resistance when trying to establish a Masters, but that problem was solved by the new degree structures implemented by the Bologna process. When comparing the two centres, the strategies chosen seem to have been different. Where Cultural Studies has chosen to be multidisciplinary thereby not using so much energy on integration into the disciplines, Women's Studies has aimed more for interdisciplinarity, however, not without internal discussions. Moreover, Cultural Studies has focused primarily on PhD training and research, while Women's Studies in addition to the focus on research has established an undergraduate programme and in the last years also a Masters programme.

The Department of Sociology and Human Geography at the University of Oslo is another case emerging mainly from inside academia. However, the reason behind this establishment was mainly administrative. The two disciplines now share space and administration for financial reasons, but there is no research or teaching cooperation between the partners. One of the problems is the relative size of the two disciplines, which makes the –“little brother” fear being overrun by the bigger one, and “the big brother”, in the position of being self-sufficient, is taking little notice of the other one. But the main cause for the lack of cooperation is that this disciplinization was not initiated or driven from below, that is from the researchers and teachers involved, quite unlike the case of Cultural Studies in Finland.

### **East Asian Studies (Spain)**

East Asian Studies is a good example of a process evolving from outside the academe. Here the influence of the state played a major role. It emerged only in 2003, and in a very short period of time managed to achieve a high level of disciplinization. In 2003 it already had established an official degree - and the main guidelines for the curriculum – which is offered at four universities in Spain. The reason behind this quick development was the strategic interests expressed by the Spanish Government and the local councils. This strategic way of developing a discipline is seen as quite remarkable in the Spanish context. The stated reason was that East Asia is of growing importance on the world market, which was therefore seen as a strategic area for development. The Spanish presence in the area was however quite marginal and mutual knowledge was considered to be lacking. In a strategic plan made by the Spanish government the need for increasing the political and economic cooperation with the area was expressed. In order to obtain more knowledge about the area the first step by the government was to establish the ‘Casa Asia’ (the House of Asia). This house coordinates all institutions, companies and academic and cultural bodies that are involved with East Asia. It has three main working areas: the economic, the academic and the socio-cultural. The training of East Asia experts occurs within the academic area. Another task is to train experts that can train others. There were already previously some ‘Asian Studies’ courses. The ‘Casa Asia’ supports these courses and works for further development and establishment of new courses in the field and for the promotion of a second cycle degree and a MA degree in East Asian Studies at Spanish universities. Student interest is high. The courses are, however, in most cases taken outside the traditional curricula and are not part of the syllabus of official degrees.

As a whole and because of the extensive goodwill from the government the disciplinization process went smoothly, and East Asian Studies has in a short period of time been more fully institutionalized than Women's Studies in Spain, despite Women's Studies' more consolidated position within Spanish universities

The disciplinization process of East Asian Studies is influenced by a combination of the different components from level A of the model (p. 3). Political policies initiated and promoted it, which in turn opened up funding possibilities. The marketability component seems to have been quite strong in this case. This was, however, quite different from the marketability regarding Women's Studies in the UK, where student demand was necessary for further development. In the case of East Asian Studies it was the market or the economic strategies of the Spanish government that led the way, and East Asian Studies seems to have been a kind of tool for economic and strategic political interests. This is also a good example of a problem-solving field of research where the needs of society were decisive in the development of a research field. The components from levels B and C do not seem to have been so important in the process. No grassroots movement was pushing for the subject to be established nor was there a tradition in Spanish academe for Area Studies of this kind. In the implementation process the B-level has of course been active, but the initiatives did not come from there (Carrera Suárez et al 2005: 27-9).

This way of institutionalizing a field is different from the one used by Cultural Studies, presented above. The East Asian Studies was initiated from above and the purpose was more explicitly to meet the needs of society as defined by the government, while Cultural Studies emerged from inside academia and for more academic purposes. Moreover Cultural Studies had to adjust their institutionalization to the structures of the universities and funding bodies, while the same kind of structures paved the way or facilitated East Asian Studies.

This disciplinization process is also quite different from that of Women's and Gender Studies in Spain. Women's and Gender Studies in Spain has a longer and more established history, when it comes to the number of courses and degrees, the amount of teaching and research done in the field etc. Still East Asian Studies has reached a higher degree of disciplinization. One likely reason for this difference – in effect the only reason - is that East Asian Studies has been initiated by people in decision-making positions, which has not been the case for Women's and Gender Studies.

### **Human Ecology (Sweden)**

Human Ecology is an example of a disciplinization process where both the initiative and the hindrances emanate from within the academic context. The field has faced a number of changes and restructurings throughout its history. The most dramatic of the changes was the dismantling of The Faculty of Thematic Studies at the University of Gothenburg. In a restructuring of the university, initiated by the vice-chancellor, interdisciplinary fields administrated by that faculty were relocated to other faculties. Some see this as a suffocation of the long interdisciplinary traditions of the University of Gothenburg. The restructuring also constituted a threat to the renewal of their professorship. The fact that Human Ecology was interdisciplinary from the start is considered to have made it more vulnerable than interdisciplinary activities that were organized as cooperation within a faculty.

Human Ecology was one of the first interdisciplinary fields at the University of Gothenburg. It emerged in 1972 when a Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies of the Human Condition was established. Key persons from different disciplines ran seminars and courses. Already by 1971/1972 a PhD course was established. In 1978 Human Ecology was organizationally brought together with another emerging discipline, Peace and Development Research, and together they formed a department. Three years later, in 1981, a professor was appointed in Human Ecology. The first

courses were not based on coherent curricula nor on printed books but on oral presentations by the people involved. The relevant literature was only gradually developed. In 1979/80 PhD training gradually emerged, and in 1991 an international conference on Human Ecology was held in Gothenburg. Education in Human Ecology had now developed at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. In both the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies and Human Ecology as a field several disciplines were involved that otherwise had little contact. Important for the interdisciplinary development were some individual academics that stressed the need for an open attitude between the disciplines and the importance of creating a social milieu that would contribute to the exchange of ideas. The key persons and pioneers of the Centre and Human Ecology are now retired and the disciplines have separated. Peace research was moved to the Faculty of Social Science and the Faculty of Thematic Studies administered Human Ecology.

The Faculty of Thematic Studies was established in the mid 1990s, as an addition to the traditional faculties. It was meant as a shared resource for all faculties, and a platform that was to work actively for new forms of cooperation between disciplines, faculties, other universities, regional and national authorities regarding interdisciplinary research and development.

In 1999 the vice-chancellor initiated a one-man investigation. The aim of the investigation was to stimulate interdisciplinarity. One of the results of this investigation was that the Faculty of Thematic Studies was abolished in 2002. Human Ecology was relocated to the Faculty of Social Science, and there formed a new Department for Global Studies of the Human Condition together with the Centre for Asian Studies, the Centre for Middle East Studies and the Centre for African Studies. The plan for the units transferred from the Faculty of Thematic Studies to the Faculty of Social Science was that they were to share housing with the Departments of Social Anthropology and Peace and Development Research. Together all these units were reorganized into one department named The Department of Environmental and Regional Studies of the Human Condition. Human Ecology was established as a post-graduate subject in 2003. In 2004 a full-time professorship was re-established in Human Ecology. In 2003 the department established a School of Global Studies in cooperation with the department of Peace and Development Research. They cooperate regarding undergraduate and postgraduate education and research. A professorship in Global Studies was announced in 2004.

The Faculty of Thematic Studies is quite unique in our case material. This Faculty tried to facilitate the development of interdisciplinary fields of study. It seems to have been an important meeting place for researchers from different disciplines and a good environment for the exchange of ideas. However, the Faculty of Thematic Studies had fewer resources than other faculties. Accordingly the faculty did not have enough power to keep good interdisciplinary research projects going (Holm and Liinason 2005: 26-32).

Both the Women's and Gender Studies and Human Ecology were situated under the Faculty of Thematic Studies at the University of Gothenburg. However, the dismantling of this faculty seems to have had different consequences in the two fields. While the restructuring made Human Ecology more vulnerable (their professorship was threatened) and less independent (it was again located in departments with other disciplines), Women's and Gender Studies - in spite of the many difficulties - seems to have had a steadier institutionalization and disciplinization process over the years.

## Concluding Remarks

In western Europe Women's Studies has had a similar start. The women's movement ignited an interest which, transformed into academia, resulted in short-term courses within most disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. As such, as specialized courses, gender perspectives were integrated into the disciplines. The next step was to develop PhD training or a Masters degree or specialization in the subject, while undergraduate/Bachelor degrees had to wait. Even though the reasons for this development are varied – practical (one is not allowed to offer undergraduate credit-bearing courses (Norway)) as well as ideological (a disciplinary undergraduate education is widely considered to be necessary before specialization) – strategically, and in the long run these might prove to be wise tactics. Scarce resources are hereby channelled into the more academically prestigious level at the same time as research competence is built up which in its turn can be used to further Women's Studies issues in both research and teaching. This will produce resources to work for a BA degree in Women's Studies... In most countries there seems to have been a dual strategy, going both for integration and disciplinization. But the reasons for this and the alliance partners have changed over the past three decades. While the force was once with the women's movement, it now seems to be with the new theoretical-political paradigms (post-structuralism, queer, post-colonial etc). Here gender is made a theoretical issue (not least by the older generation of feminists) attracting the interest of younger-generation students and researchers. With this as a platform there is a new push for interdisciplinarity and maybe also for disciplinization of gender issues. The Women's Studies Centre is the natural meeting ground for developing both research and teaching along these lines and it is also here that we find that these new perspectives flourish. Coming from within academe, theoretically sophisticated and still quite challenging, this might be a more successful road to disciplinization than the outside political alliance partner of the women's movement - at least today.

It also seem as if a more flexible HE structure favours the development of Gender Studies. The Bologna agreement regarding BA and MA degrees might here present new possibilities for the institutionalization and disciplinization of the subject. Being more comparable, across national borders, might also favour such a development. The offer of BAs and MAs in the subject or as specializations at those levels in one country can be used to push for similar arrangements in another country. European competition and collaboration can be expected to increase and that does represent a chance to improve the situation in countries lagging behind regarding the institutionalization and disciplinization of Women's Studies. Generally speaking, there seem to be more support for Gender Studies from outside academia, than from inside. There is an outspoken political support today, if not from below, and from a movement than from above, and from those in power. The so-called femocratization (the feminization of bureaucracy) represents new possibilities, including for radical Gender Studies.

Comparing Women's Studies with other interdisciplinary cases of disciplinization, it does not seem as if Women's Studies has had a harder time. In fact, Women's Studies seems to have not only survived variations as to the amount of support and alliance partners, but actually even strengthened its position over time. One of the reasons seems to be the actual institutionalization - in the form of centres, jobs, courses and degrees - that has taken place more or less continually over the last two or three decades in most European countries. The case of Cultural Studies in Finland clearly illustrates what happens when such institutionalization efforts are not made. Institutionalization in one way or the other seems to be the only way to get

academic recognition and funding. But, as the case of Human Ecology at Gothenburg University in Sweden also illustrates, institutionalization is not enough to preserve a subject. Here it looks as if it was the very interdisciplinary character and organization of the subject that made it a victim in a restructuring process where the traditionally disciplinary university structure played the upper hand. And of course there were no political ideology and interest groups around to support them, at least not with the same general acceptance and power as that related to equality issues. Summing up, one could say that Women's Studies has several legs to stand upon, both politically – in the form of the women's movement and equality politics – and theoretically. So when one leg is weak there is always the other to rely on. The strength of these legs of course varies over time and from country to country. But having strength in both legs definitively seem to make institutionalization and disciplinization an easier task than if one relies primarily on one leg, which the case of Women's Studies in France can be said to be an illustration of. Relying primarily on economic interests, on the other hand, as illustrated by the case of East Asian Studies in Spain, seems to be the absolutely easiest and fastest way to achieve disciplinization. And maybe this will be one of the future challenges for Women's Studies.

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