

Graduate School of International
Culture and Communication Studies

Examination Report on the Doctoral Dissertation

Applicant	
Name	FAVERO SOUZA, Thais
	(Last Name / (Middle Name) / First Name)

Dissertation Title · Subtitle : (English)	WOMEN'S RIGHTS IMPLEMENTATION STUCK IN TIME AND HINDERED BY TRADITION
	Analyzing Japan's Persistent Commitment/Compliance Gap Regarding Women's Right to Work Through the Lens of a "Spiral Model" of Feminist Norm Diffusion
Dissertation Title · Subtitle : (Japanese)	時代の流れに取り残され、慣習に疎外された女性権利 の実施
	フェミニスト法拡散の「らせんモデル」を通して女性労働権利に関 する日本の絶え間ない確約・応諾ギャップの分析

*Even if the dissertation is written in English, a Japanese language translation of the title and subtitle must also be submitted.

2019/12/19
YYYY/MM/DD

To Dean of Graduate School of International
Culture and Communication Studies,

Examination Committee

Chief Examiner Paul Bacon Signature

(Affiliation•Title: GSICCS, Professor)

Sub-Examiner Gregory Dvorak Signature

(Affiliation•Title: GSICCS, Associate Professor)

Sub-Examiner Taisaku Ikeshima Signature

(Affiliation•Title:GSICCS, Professor)

The Examination Committee members report the results of the dissertation examination and the oral defense below.

1. Degree: Doctor of Philosophy (in International Culture and Communication Studies)

2. Curriculum Doctorate (*Katei Hakase*)

3. Examination period

Dissertation examination: From 2019/11/7 To 2020/1/17
YYYY/MM/DD YYYY/MM/DD

Oral defense: 2019/12/19
YYYY/MM/DD

4. The results of the dissertation examination and the oral defense

*Please write down Pass or Fail in both categories.

Dissertation examination: PASS

Oral defense: PASS

5. Summary of the Dissertation

As per attached sheet

6. Table of Contents

As per attached sheet

7. The results of the dissertation examination and the oral defense

(About 3,000 characters in Japanese or 1,000 words in English)

(1) Evaluation and summary of the dissertation examination

(Including Summary of the Dissertation)

The candidate wrote a very good doctoral thesis on the implementation of the female right to work in Japan. She used the spiral model as her theoretical framework with which to assess and benchmark movement towards this goal. This model is one of the leading frameworks used by scholars wishing to assess the extent of human rights norm diffusion in particular case studies. The candidate demonstrated a very high level of understanding of the model, and how it should be implemented, including the scope conditions, and mechanisms of norm diffusion associated with it. She also extensively surveyed developments in the theory over the first ten years in which it operated, culminating in a major restatement of the theory by the original authors. The candidate also suggested three substantial improvements to the theory herself. These theoretical innovations are one of the ways in which the thesis is original and contributes to learning in the field. Despite the near universal popularity, relevance and application of the theory, this is the first time that the model has been systematically applied to a Japanese human rights case study. The candidate was able to establish that while this human rights case study had developed to the point where legislation had been passed, there was a significant commitment/compliance gap, between levels four and five of the theory. This is in keeping with the findings of other applications of the theory to case studies in economically advanced societies. International legal instruments on women's rights have been signed, but have either not been meaningfully transposed into Japanese domestic law, or they have been transposed but not invoked in hard domestic cases. Furthermore, through detailed targeted qualitative interviews, the candidate was able to establish that there are serious resource and competence difficulties within the leading Japanese NGOs which try to address this human rights issue. Also,

these groups are ageing, lacking in English skills, and insufficiently connected to or coordinated with international human rights movements that can often be so important in achieving compliance. The spiral model is an heuristic device which identifies the elements that need to be in place for successful human rights diffusion in particular case studies, and therefore helps to identify key problems and shortcomings to be addressed in particular cases. This model was applied systematically and with sensitivity and care to the Japanese case, yielding valuable and original research findings.

The specifics of the final content of the thesis aside, the candidate has been an ideal student throughout the entire process. We met regularly, and she was always very quick to produce high quality draft chapters, and then revise them equally quickly in the light of critical feedback. All of the major bureaucratic thresholds within the GSICCS process were cleared in good time, and the candidate is set to complete her thesis within three years. She has produced a refereed article for *Transcommunication*, and she has also presented her work several times in professional environments at Waseda and in Europe. This includes presentations to leading academics, including to one of the leading architects of the spiral model, who was impressed by her, and gave her detailed feedback which was incorporated into her final thesis. The candidate is also contributing two book chapters based on content from her thesis to a refereed Routledge monograph which will be published in late 2020. There is considerable potential for the thesis to be published in both English and Japanese as a single-author research monograph. There is also scope for the candidate to deepen the application of the model to this case study, and also to apply this model to other case studies on the female right to work in Asian and Latin American states, based on her advanced understanding of the model.

The three examiners were strongly and unanimously of the view that this was a very good thesis, and clearly comfortably over the threshold required to award a doctoral degree.

(2) Summary of the oral defense (including Comments and Questions)

The oral defense took place on December 12 2019, and lasted for 90 minutes. The candidate made a very clear and high quality presentation of the content of her thesis, which lasted 30 minutes, as she had been instructed to do by the Chief Examiner. There then followed one hour of rigorous questioning to which all three of the examiners contributed actively.

Following the session, the examiners agreed strongly and unanimously that the candidate had made a professional and vigorous defense of her strong thesis. They agreed that the defense as well as the

thesis itself were clearly of a quality deserving of the award of a Pass grade at the doctoral level.

This notwithstanding, further to the candidate's oral defence, several minor corrections were required by the examiners panel. These corrections were communicated in detail to the candidate by the Chief Examiner in writing, and the candidate produced these corrections within a matter of days. These corrections are summarized below:

1. At the request of Professor Dvorak, following questioning on the matter, the replacement of 'we' with 'I' throughout the thesis.
2. At the request of Professor Dvorak, following questioning on the matter, the demonstration of greater awareness of the issue of 'positionality' – what sort of biases and assumptions the candidate brings to the project, and to methodology, etc, as a result of being a Brazilian female, albeit one who has spent many years in Japan, and is fluent in Japanese. To address this request, the candidate added text to the introduction and the conclusion, and also to the section of her thesis where she discussed her interview rationale, and methodology. The candidate also inserted a definition of positionality in the introduction.

The candidate reflected on such 'cultural assumptions' she might bring to her analysis, given that there is a tradition of successful supranational legalism in Latin America, in the introduction, and in the theory chapter, where localization theory was discussed.

In the section where the candidate discussed her interview set-up and methodology, she reflected on the possibility that people might give different answers in interviews, based on their positionality with regard to different interviewers. The candidate addressed the issue of whether interviewees might withhold information from her because she is not Japanese, or whether they were more open and honest with her because she was not Japanese. In response to this line of questioning in the oral defense, and in her minor corrections, the candidate also made the point that her methodology was designed to anticipate and screen out this kind of possibility, by creating questions which operationalize a theory of universal human rights in as value-neutral way as possible.

In the sections where she addressed the issue of positionality, the candidate restated her belief that there are such things as universal human rights, and that while she respected the need to account for the possibility of positionality impacting on research, the spiral model/diffusion model attempts to anticipate and screen out these concerns.

3. In response to questions from Professor Ikeshima, and in subsequent minor corrections, the candidate clarified how she addressed the issue of tradition in her thesis. There was some overlap here with the discussion of positionality and the candidate's response to this issue of positionality. It was clarified in response to the tradition question that the spiral model analyzes a universal human rights script that the Japanese government has signed up to and implemented to some degree, and that the model benchmarks human rights norm diffusion progress, but equally importantly can act as an heuristic to identify places where the script is not implemented.
4. In response to questions from both sub-examiners, the candidate also offered a clearer explanation in the oral defense of what the spiral model theory does. The candidate also incorporated this explanation into her minor corrections, in both the introduction and conclusion. It was clarified that the model offers an ideal-typical conceptualization of what happens when the spiral model/norm diffusion process works well. As such, the model offers an heuristic to help us identify what doesn't go to plan, or what is 'messy'. The candidate also made additional references to this in her methodology chapter, where she discusses some of the limitations to the spiral model theory. The candidate added emphasis to her acknowledgement of criticism of the theory as being unilinear, and a product of its time, when academics were invoking the third wave of democracy, and the end of history. The candidate reconfirmed her belief, and that of the contemporary academic literature on the spiral model, that the theory is still valuable today if we show awareness and recognition (reflexivity) of this issue. This restatement was written into the introduction and conclusion, and the chapter that discussed the spiral model.
5. Prof. Ikeshima also identified several typos that he wanted corrected, running across several pages of the thesis, as addressed by the candidate in her doctoral dissertation revision chart.

The Chief Examiner circulated both his list of suggested corrections, and a draft of the candidate's corrected thesis to the two Sub-Examiners. Both Sub-Examiners confirmed in writing that they agreed that the list of suggested corrections communicated by the Chief Examiner to the candidate was an accurate reflection of the corrections they had requested in the meeting, and also that the candidate had satisfactorily made these necessary minor corrections to her thesis. As a result of the minor corrections having being addressed quickly, and in a highly satisfactory manner, all three examiners were happy to confirm their strong belief that the candidate should now be awarded a Pass grade for both her thesis, and her defense of the thesis.